Administrative Response
Culinary Assistant Program Review
February, 2013

We thank you for your dedication to your program and students as you’ve created, maintained and improved the Culinary Assistant Program at PCC. The presentation was thoughtful, thorough and well organized. We were impressed with the great turnout of support from internal and external stakeholders that included students, parents, and advisory committee members and other community partners. It was one of the largest audiences to date for recent program reviews.

The administrative response contains three sections: Commendations, Administrative Response to Recommendations and Closing.

Commendations

• Your program was named “Best Program” at the Oregon Association of Vocational Special Needs Personnel (OAVSNP) conference.
• Creation of your Program’s Core Outcomes Assessment Form
• Assessment driven changes to the curriculum including the creation of new class activities that both accommodate different learning styles and connect course content and concepts to practical application/skill development.
• The mapping of courses to Core Outcomes and continually adjusting the student expectations to meet current standards for the program.
• Use of alternative teaching methods that facilitate student learning including the development of an at-home, after school, “Kung Fu Project” to engage students in the learning process for skill practice and to enhance student ability and efficiency.
• A high program fill rate and strong course retention and completion rates.

Culinary Assistant Program Review Recommendations related to Teaching and Learning

1. Partnering with business establishments for internship/volunteering experience would be an invaluable asset for the graduates of this program. Often volunteering shows a possible future employer what the volunteer is capable of and could lead to permanent employment. Our students have to meet many challenges to succeed in life, and this program offers them a chance to be an independent, self-sufficient member of society. For many, this program is the last chance they have to ensure a future without depending on their family and others. We continually adjust the program expectations to meet current standards and our students work hard to meet them.
Administrative Response: We encourage you to consider developing internship sites for your students while they are enrolled in and assist them with exploring opportunities after completing the program. Please work with your supervisor to follow the college policies concerning internships, on-the-job training and cooperative work experiences at off-site locations. Given the expansion of the cafeteria at the Southeast Center and the new cafeteria at the Cascade Campus, we encourage the Culinary Assistant program to explore how it could expand at other PCC campuses with expanded food service departments. We realize this would require additional staff to observe students at additional field sites and would require a commitment from the Food Services Department as well.

2. During the Advisory Council Meeting in March, 2012, one of the members commented that our graduates, although they do well in an actual employment setting, are lacking work momentum. Our SAC believes extra instruction and practice time could enhance our students’ job skills and productivity. Since the hands-on training time in school is not adequate for students to develop speed, extra time for skill practice at home could enhance their abilities and efficiency. An at-home-after-school “Kung Fu Project”, developed as a result of collaboration between instructor and students’ family members, that allows students to assist in preparing meals and performing household chores at home, could greatly increase our students’ skill level and work speed.

Administrative Response: We commend you for the development of this initiative. It provides students with an opportunity to master their skill development needed to meet program outcomes.

Culinary Assistant Program Recommendations requiring funding/administrative support
1. Waive Technology Fee if Lab Fee is added:

PCC Food Services Department, our partner in student-training, had suggested collecting a Lab Fee, in addition to other tuition charges, for using their facilities for training. Realizing the difficulty for our students to obtain financial support for college, PCC Administration approved to waive the Lab Fee in the past decade. Under the current economic climate, public financial support for our students has been sharply reduced, the Lab Fee addition would likely be the “straw that breaks the camel’s back”. We request the Technology Fee be waived if a Lab Fee has to be added.

Administrative Response: It is our understanding that the Food Services department has changed their decision to require PCC Culinary Assistant Program students to pay a facilities usage course fee. It is important that the Culinary Assistant Program and Food Services Departments collaborate for this program to be successful. One recent example of
strengthening this critical partnership was to include Food Service Department managers in the selection process to hire Chris Brady as the Coordinator for the Culinary Assistant Program who replaced Lee Fan.

2. Financial Aid rule, Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program Status

The new 2012-13 financial aid eligibility requirement of a “non-modified diploma” will leave many new students wanting to attend this program fending for themselves to provide tuition payment. Since the majority of our students with cognitive and/or intellectual disabilities would not be able to graduate from high school with a regular or a non-modified diploma, they are not qualified for financial aid. In many cases they just cannot afford college. For our students this is another road block stopping them from having a chance at achieving an independent future, as many of them could not afford college having no means to receive financial support. As we all know, receiving a college education and experiencing that achievement in life is as beneficial for students with disabilities as for students without.

We would like to seek another avenue to help the modified-diploma holders in receiving government funding for college – “a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Program Status”. As announced by the U.S. Department of Education: “Institutions that offer a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program can apply to the Department’s Federal Student Aid Office to have their CTP Program approved so that eligible students may be considered for the Federal Pell Grant, FWS and FSEOG funds (Title IV Federal Aid)”. We believe our program meets, and often exceeds, all the requirements established for obtaining Title IV eligibility as a CTP Program. There is everything to gain for students that qualify for, attend and graduate from this program. However, the application process is complicated and time-consuming. We would like to solicit adequate assistance and support from our PCC Administration to help us obtain this important CTP Status for our future students.

**Administrative Response:** Since the program review, PCC’s Financial Aid Office has explored this possibility and it was determined that this strategy was not a strategy that PCC would pursue at this time. Our Financial Aid Director, has determined that our Culinary Assistant program would not qualify for eligibility based on the The specific shortfall of the following requirement in 34 CFR 668.231:

(5) Requires students with intellectual disabilities to have at least one-half of their participation in the program, as determined by the institution, focus on academic components through one or more of the following activities:

(i) Taking credit-bearing courses with students without disabilities.

(ii) Auditing or otherwise participating in courses with students without disabilities for which the student does not receive regular academic credit.

(iii) Taking non-credit-bearing, non-degree courses with students without disabilities.

(iv) Participating in internships or work-based training in settings with individuals without disabilities; and

(6) Provides students with intellectual disabilities opportunities to participate in coursework and other activities with students without disabilities.

Perhaps (5)(iv) is a valid activity through the cafeteria but (6) is not evident in the review. It appears that the Department of Education wants students in the program to interact with students without disabilities.
If you feel the Culinary Assistant program can address this, or that our Financial Aid Director has misinterpreted something and that the opportunity to interact exists, then he will submit it for consideration.

We encourage the Culinary Assistant Program Coordinator to encourage students to apply for PCC Foundation Scholarships to reduce the program costs for students who are not financial aid eligible. The Food Services Department also has a Foundation account for student scholarships. Culinary Assistant Program students may be eligible to apply for that scholarship. Finally, given the strong support for Culinary Assistant Program by internal and external stakeholders, it should consider establishing its own PCC Foundation account for student scholarships for students who may not eligible to receive federal financial aid.

Closing
As you work on assessment, make sure to connect with your Learning Assessment coach, who can help you understand the college expectations for conducting and reporting the assessment of Student Learning Outcomes at the different levels (course, degree/certificate and Core). It was apparent through your written Program Review report and the presentation that you take great pride in your students and the Culinary Assistant program and have a commitment to continuously improve it.

Administrative Response submitted by Craig Kolins on behalf of:

Craig Kolins, Dean of Instruction, Southeast/Extended Learning Campus
Kendra Cawley, Dean of Academic Affairs
Cheryl Scott, Interim Dean, Rock Creek Campus
Kurt Simonds, Dean of Instruction, Cascade Campus (not in attendance at program review)
Jeff Triplett, Dean of Instruction, Sylvania Campus (not in attendance at program review)