

Administrative Response to Program Review Aviation Science March 2019

On March 1, 2019, the Aviation Science SAC presented their Program Review findings to an audience of PCC administrators and others with an interest in the discipline. The presentation was informative and thought provoking. It provided an opportunity for engagement with those in attendance through an informative and interactive dialogue.

This Administrative Response will: A) note particular highlights of the Aviation Science Program and Program Review; B) provide observations and recommendations; and C) provide the administrative response to the SAC recommendations/resource requests.

Noteworthy Efforts or Achievements

- Kudos for an excellent program review presentation. The presentation was engaging and demonstrated the commitment of the faculty to student success and opportunity. It was well planned and balanced. Thank you!
- Decreasing the cost of the program to the students by bringing the ground school classes back to PCC from individualized instruction at HAA to classroom group instruction.
- Planning to offer “flipped” classroom method for some courses and ensuring they are high quality by recruiting instructors who can teach in this type of modality.
- Development of a survey to help track recent graduates, as well as to assist in assessing the quality of the PCC program.
- The purchase of computer-based airplane and helicopter simulators. These simulators assist in reducing the cost of training to students by thousands of dollars during the course of their program.
- The simulators have also proven beneficial to the Aviation Maintenance Technology program to teach students certain skills that are needed for the maintenance of aircraft.
- An active Advisory Committee who provides feedback from the industry and is then incorporated into the program.
- Career Encounters is a partnership between Beaverton School District and PCC. Several of the CTE programs worked together to create and organize this program. High school students from Beaverton attend PCC on a part-time basis for one-term. The students spend 2-weeks in each department, so they spend a total of 8-hours in the Aviation Science program. This gives students an opportunity to earn college credit and learn more about the CTE programs that are offered at the Rock Creek campus. The Beaverton High School provides all of the protective gear and pays for the tuition and fees.

Observations and Recommendations

- We recognize that a rebuilding of the Aviation Science program will need to be made due to the elimination of VA-funded students. We support your efforts to return the curriculum to one that is student-centered and focuses on quality. Once the curriculum has been revised, we support the need for advertising of the program not only regionally, but perhaps internationally as well. We recognize that you will need help from the Marketing Department to develop an effective plan to advertise and promote the program. In addition, we also recognize the need to increase our focus on the large international market as we have had international students successfully complete the program.
- Rebuilding the curriculum will also give you the opportunity to design course and program outcomes so that they lend themselves to meaningful assessment and can be used even from the beginning to inform instruction. It is not necessary to focus on statistical significance, which, although emphasized by the Learning Assessment Council, is indeed difficult when there are a relatively small number of students. While one goal of assessment is to demonstrate that student meet the outcomes of programs, accreditation is putting increasing emphasis on how assessment can help inform instruction (where are students struggling, and what can we do to support their learning?). While we often have a sense of this, and make ad hoc corrections, a systematic approach to measuring key outcomes can be very valuable. An example of this was described in our accreditation [Mid-Cycle report](#) -- see pp 6-8). We recommend that you connect with the LAC CTE Coach assigned to AVS, and/or the Office of Academic Affairs for assistance.

Administrative Response to Recommendations

SAC Related Recommendations:

- **Flight Training Improvement Efforts.** Steps need to be taken to address the student frustration with their flight training progress, particularly in, but not limited to, the airplane program. Hillsboro Aero Academy (HAA) has been a steadfast and excellent partner to the program over the last 20 years and continues to make efforts to improve the experience for our students. It is our recommendation that we conduct a thorough examination of the relationship between HAA, PCC students and the Aviation Science program to identify ways to improve, with the goal that the students' experience at HAA be as positive as the experience here at PCC, as it has been in the past.

We support this plan to make improvements between HAA, PCC students and the Aviation Science Program.

- **VA Compliance.** It cannot be overstated how much support PCC has provided in trying to comply with the ever-changing VA rules for aviation programs. Their focus on providing access for Veterans to the education of their choice has been steadfast. However, the incremental narrowing of VA interpretation of the rules, as well as the capricious nature of enforcement, has resulted in higher expense for the students (and

taxpayers), less flexibility and higher frustration for the students and potential financial liability for the college should further retroactive reinterpretations occur. Given our current understanding of the rules for VA approval, we recommend that an honest look be taken at whether compliance with VA rules and a quality flight-training program are still compatible. To remain VA approved, we recommend that a full-time compliance officer/program manager be hired immediately.

In the two-short weeks since the program review, the college has made the decision to no longer accept VA benefits for students who are enrolled in the AVS program. Please note that there will be a teach-out of the current VA benefitted students.

- **Aviation Career Pathway Project.** The Hillsboro School District (HSD) Aviation Career Pathway project has the full support of our Industry Advisory Committee and SAC. If successful, it has the potential of being replicated in other school districts in the PCC area, potentially providing a flow of local students to the program. It has the highest potential of any source of students to move us towards a more equitable student demographic. The Oregon International Airshow is standing ready to provide some funding and is playing the role of coordinator between HSD and PCC. HSD has committed to hiring faculty as early as fall of 2019. It is our recommendation that we pursue this opportunity with all available resources.

We support this exciting new opportunity to develop an Aviation Career Pathway project with the Hillsboro School District. We look forward to learning more about the project as it progresses.

Administrative Support Related Recommendations

- **Aviation Career Pathway Development.** Though it is too soon to know exactly what the demands will be, it may become necessary to support the Hillsboro School District (HSD) in development of curriculum for the Aviation Career Pathway Project. PCC has already invested some travel resources and grant funding to investigate other, similar programs. HSD has also made this investment and is intending to hire faculty, but there will need to be heavy interface between the HSD faculty and PCC faculty in both the Aviation Science and Aviation Maintenance Technology programs during the curriculum development phase. Future resources may be required in the way of release time for the current Aviation Science full-time faculty or special project funds for Aviation Science part-time faculty. There may also be a need to host an “Aviation Summer Camp” for middle school students who have chosen the Aviation Career Pathway.

We look forward to learning more about how we can support the development of the Aviation Career Pathway. We do realize that resources will be needed to develop curriculum including potential release-time for the full-time faculty. Please continue to work with your Division Dean as the resources needed are identified.

- **Compliance Officer/Program Manager.** In order to stay in compliance under the VA rules, we recommend immediate hire of a full-time Compliance Officer who can give their full attention to making sure that the program and every Aviation Science student stays in compliance with current understanding of the regulations.

With the decision having been made by the college to no longer accept VA benefits, it is our understanding that the request for a Compliance Officer is no longer needed.

- **Sim Room Support.** The simulator room is proving to be an excellent investment for our students. They are computer-based simulators and, like all computers, they will need updates, upgrades and repairs. We have approval for work-study hours to keep the room attended, and currently have one student helper with technical expertise that has helped to keep the simulators running. Some provisions for ongoing maintenance needs to be made.

Please work with your division dean to identify sources of potential funding to be used for ongoing maintenance and the replacement of equipment. With the change in the way that PCC is now using Perkins dollars, there may be an opportunity to access Perkins equipment dollars for your needs.

- **Curriculum Development.** As we begin teaching the new classroom ground courses this fall, we recommend taking a close look at each course to see if it makes sense to “flip” the course, offering the lecture online so that class time can be spent exercising the knowledge. We may need funding for existing full- and part-time faculty to accomplish this, and help from faculty in other departments, such as Rock Creek Math, who have already been successfully involved in flipped classroom teaching.

Offering flipped classrooms can provide an excellent opportunity for students to learn in a classroom setting. As you mention, you have some experts in your division who can provide you with best practices. We encourage you to experiment with this method to see if this is a positive methodology for your students. If funding is needed, please work with your division dean to determine various sources for funding at PCC.

Closing

In closing, we want to again thank the Aviation Science faculty and staff for sharing the results of your program review with us. We enjoyed learning more about the discipline, your successes and plans for the future. We look forward to supporting your ongoing work on continuous program improvement.

Administrative Response submitted by Cheryl L. Scott, with input from and on behalf of the Deans of Instruction and Dean of Academic Affairs.

Kendra Cawley, Dean of Academic Affairs
Karen Paez, Dean of Instruction Sylvania Campus
Jen Piper, Dean of Instruction Southeast Campus
Cheryl Scott, Dean of Instruction Rock Creek Campus
Kurt Simonds, Dean of Instruction Cascade Campus