

**Administrative Response to Program Review
Computer Applications/Office Systems
Prepared by Dr. Craig Kolins
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On February 6, 2015, the Computer Applications/Office Systems SAC presented their Program Review findings to an audience of PCC administrators and others. Both the written report and the presentation were informative and thought provoking. The presentation provided an opportunity for engagement through an informative and interactive dialogue.

This Administrative Response will: A) note Commendations and Achievements of the CAS/OS Program and your Program Review; B) offer suggestions and observations; and C) provide an administrative response to the CAS/OS SAC recommendations.

Commendations, Noteworthy Efforts or Achievements

- Development of common assignments and exams that provide an exceptionally strong basis for assessment.
- Crafted a process for course takeovers using a master course shell model using the QM rubric.
- Strong summary of how assessment results are used to make course and program-level improvements with a 5 year assessment plan in place.
- State-wide program for the Administrative Office Professional Degree.
- The interdisciplinary nature of the Website Development and Design degree in collaboration with CIS, BA and MM.
- District-wide PCC Club for Website Development and Design
- Service offered to the College for 1:1 over the shoulder training for PCC employees.
- Goal to align your faculty demographics more closely with those of your students.
- High completion rate of CASABS cohort students who continue in the CAS/OS program to earn Certificates or AAS degree.
- Prioritization of PCC's accessibility criteria to meet and exceed them.
- Scheduling of Cross-Listed courses which allows students to have several options and class times from which to choose.
- Integration of Community-Based Learning in many CAS/OS courses.

Suggestions and Observations

Dual Credit – We applaud CAS/OS's work with PACTEC to articulate a significant amount of dual credit. Based on declining enrollments college-wide, it would be strategic to work with dual credit articulated high schools to start aligning courses they offer with PCC's five Career Pathway Certificates for High School students to make progress toward completion of a Career Pathway Certificate of Completion while they are still in high school that encourages them to enroll at PCC directly after high school.

Accessibility of DL, CBWEB, and F2F Courses--

While not described in the written report, a presenter shared a strategy that aligns with the collaborative accessibility process to propose that a task force be created to discuss the accessibility needs of CAS/OS courses and how to solve them. The DL Accessibility Advocate and others from the DL department are willing to work with the CAS/OS SAC on such a task force. Other stakeholders from Disability Services should also be invited to participate in this task force. Through a collaborative process, the full range of issues and solutions may be uncovered and discussed. We will ask your Administrative Liaison, Dr. Karen Sanders to work with DL and DS. It should be determined if other SACs need to be involved in this work.

Administrative Response to CAS/OS Recommendations

1. Enrollment & Scheduling Management Recommendations:

- The CAS/OS department chairs are working towards a year-long schedule for CAS/OS specialty courses. This will allow students to plan their schedules without fear of a last-minute cancellation.
- We would ask for support for district-wide scheduling of specialty courses within the CAS/OS Admin and Web programs. This may mean allowing low enrolled courses to run if cancellation would negatively affect students in the program (e.g., no other sections offered that term or within the next two terms if a student is near graduation.)
- We would further ask that all division deans supporting CAS/OS would agree to the above suggestion and communicate with each other when a section is being considered for cancellation.
- Allow the CAS/OS program two years to work out this extended schedule beginning with the 2015- 16 academic year. This will allow department chairs to work on adjusting full-time faculty workloads without severely impacting part-time faculty schedules.
- The CAS/OS department would like fair and consistent guidelines regarding FTE. We need to know if we will be moving towards a district-wide FTE count for CAS/OS. Will funding models be based on individual campus FTE or what is good for the entire district?
- We would ask that administration consider keeping low enrolled campus sections open at various times to provide opportunities for all students to have access to that mode of instruction. It should be noted that more than one low enrolled section district-wide be allowed to run as traveling between campuses may be a hardship for some students. (See following section on the importance of classroom-based courses.)

We applaud your willingness to work on an annual schedule for your SAC. We know that our funding model will change as a result of the college-wide enrollment decline. We understand that some of your specialty courses are low-enrolled. We recommend you work with your respective division deans and DOIs to explore alternatives to scheduling that are not based on FTE—we are intrigued to learn about recommendations that come forward.

2. Curriculum Development Support Recommendations:

We recommend that Administration support our rapidly changing program through:

- Funding and/or release time for curriculum development projects that are required as a result of changing software/technology.**

LDC and CTE SACs have limited access to curriculum development funding. We appreciate the willingness of the CAS/OS SAC to work collaboratively in creating shared course shells.

You have made it clear to us that your current workload is very challenging due to the rapid changes of software and that the resulting workload is not sustainable. We would like for you to consider whether or not the goal of providing students with step-by-step directions is what our students need to think critically and be successful in the workplace. It sounds like students will need to understand concepts in Excel (or other software programs) rather than relying on specific directions especially given the rapid changes taking place. We understand that step-by-step instructions are important in Beginning levels due to the students' varying levels of limited technology competency and literacy. However it may be necessary for CAS/OS faculty to rethink your instructional approach to enhance the critical thinking skills of our students. Beyond introductory courses, to what extent are such explicit time-sensitive instructions necessary, versus teaching students how to adapt to changing software?

If a significant portion of a course needs to be changed every time there is a version update, this pedagogical approach is not sustainable given the rapidity of changes and the corresponding need for our students to develop skills to succeed under those conditions. In addition, the IIP Committee needs to meet the needs of a range of LDC disciplines and CTE programs. Perhaps there is a way to explore the possibility of a one-time IIP proposal to support a different pedagogical approach that would enhance students' development of critical thinking the regularity of the CAS-OS SAC applying for IIP funding. Perhaps there is a way to explore the possibility of a one-time proposal to support students' development of critical thinking.

In PCC's Multimedia program, software is provided through the Cloud and updates happen anytime. If there is a new plug-in, a new functionality, a new feature or interface, students come to class excited about an update that is waiting for them.

Likewise, CAS/OS students do not need to be taught how to use software in a static state; rather they need to develop a familiarity with the primary functionalities and ways to apply the software to a variety of projects. There needs to be a college-wide approach to this strategy and the DOIs and Division Deans look forward to working on this with you.

- Improve parity amongst campuses for professional development opportunities.

Each campus struggles to provide professional development opportunities to our faculty and staff. Please continue to apply for Professional Organizational Development (POD) funds. When we can, the campuses will try to fill the gap for professional development to cover what POD funding won't cover.

3. Support for Accessibility Modifications to DL Curriculum Recommendation:

Provide funding and labor to assist us as we continue to update DL curriculum to meet accessibility standards.

Compliance for accessibility of fully online courses is a college-wide responsibility. College instructional leaders, instructors, online curriculum adopters, Distance Learning and Disability Services all play a role in ensuring accessible web content is provided to our students with disabilities.

Accessibility requirements are driven by legal mandates-- the college interprets the mandates, related case law, and responds by adjusting policy and practice accordingly. Distance Learning is tasked with building awareness and educating others about how to meet the responsibilities within fully online courses, which we do in partnership with online program leaders. The accessibility guidelines used in online courses flow from that structure. Just as accessibility standards are established in partnership, the DL department, instructors, and others need to work together to meet the standards.

The recommendation asks for assistance, in the form of funding and labor, to deal with accessibility-driven curriculum updates. Funding is not provided for tasks (i.e., providing accommodations and learning support for student with disabilities) that are considered part of normal workload for instructors. There are resources currently available for funding updates to curriculum driven by accessibility needs. Distance Learning does accept requests for revision of online courses that need accessibility updates; there are IIP grants available for curriculum development. CAS/OS course developers should continue to access these resources for support. Also, adopting accessible curriculum materials up front can eliminate much of the cost of making materials accessible after the fact, thus lowering the costs of accommodations. DL provides course materials design advice and homework platform testing that can help instructors select and adopt accessible materials.

The CAS/OS SAC participated in a DL-supported accessibility study in 2014. The findings of that report describe how CAS/OS instructors can improve the

accessibility of their courses by implementing the strategies they researched. Using these strategies consistently will lower the immediate workload and costs to make materials accessible when students with disabilities enroll. When students who need an accommodation enroll, DS assists with web content reformatting when accommodations are requested.

The rationale upon which the following recommendation was made-- "The Distance Learning department has required all online courses to include the required accessibility guidelines for online curriculum" is not accurate. The DL department regularly reviews the accessibility of online courses and, when barriers are found, asks instructors and SACs to plan to provide equally effective materials within one year; the courses are scheduled without being fully accessible. Less restrictive accessibility issues are dealt with upon enrollment by students needing an accommodation and the courses are scheduled without being fully accessible.

While not described in the written report, a presenter proposed a process by which faculty hands off the development of materials needed to meet accessibility requirements to Distance Learning and Disability Services to design/develop and then provide back to the instructor to compile into the online course.

Steve Beining, PCC's eLearning Manager, provided his perspective on this strategy:

"This proposal presents some problems. Chief among the problems is the fact that instructors and the SAC guide the selection of curriculum and instructors assess students; handing off the design/development of equally effective materials places DL or DS staffers in the role of the instructor. DL and DS should not make curriculum choices for the faculty or choices for how students with disabilities should be taught and assessed. The instructor must be available, at least, to plan and direct the work of others in this process." It's clear that instructors cannot simply hand off this responsibility to others; they must have a role to play a role in this."

We also consulted with Kaela Parks, Director of Disability Services. Her response follows:

"Disability Services is not actually tasked with proactively converting inaccessible content. DS is tasked with facilitating the accommodation process, which means converting materials on an individualized case by case basis. Distance Learning who reviews courses for alignment with Quality Matters and other standards and Instructional Support who help faculty with proactive design considerations."

4. Dual Credit Support Recommendation:

Create a designated Dual Credit liaison position within our SAC.

- The person in this position would be a full-time faculty member with release time to serve as liaison for Dual Credit. In addition to their part-time teaching load at PCC, they would be responsible for reviewing articulation agreements and conducting assessment of high school faculty who have articulation agreements with CAS/OS courses.

- This person could also work to develop new relationships between CAS/OS and local area high schools through regular classroom visitations. These relationships would provide an avenue to market the CAS/OS program to local area high schools.

The SAC recommendation is to create a designated Dual Credit liaison position (FT faculty member with release) to serve as liaison for Dual Credit. We understand the motivation behind this recommendation, given that the Dual Credit work has fallen disproportionately on two very dedicated full-time faculty members. However, providing release time for a FT instructor to provide Dual Credit support is not a sustainable solution, especially if it established a precedent and was requested by many CTE programs and LDC disciplines. It is probably not the ideal model in any case, since more engagement with additional college faculty generally is better than focused engagement via a single college instructor.

PCC has adopted a model and process that is designed to distribute the responsibility for supporting Dual Credit across a larger number of faculty. PACTEC will work with the Division Dean(s) to identify faculty who can provide support for either alignment or evaluation and the faculty will be compensated appropriately. If the CAS/OS SAC is concerned about specific subject-matter expertise, especially for establishing course alignment, we would ask the SAC to identify faculty who can support the alignment of courses or sets of courses. We also recommended that the SAC consider developing a summer workshop that is offered by several other CTE programs and LDC disciplines, to both orient new Dual Credit instructors and also provide a robust annual connection between several (not just one or two) of our CAS instructors and High School teachers.

5. Consistent and Equitable Cooperative Education Resources Across the District Recommendations:

To help achieve consistency in Cooperative Education, we recommend the following:

- Collaboration and coordination of Cooperative Education resources between the Cooperative Education departments on each campus. Equitable resources should be available to students at all campus locations.
- Development of a Co-Op process that is the same at all campus locations.

We applaud that you require students to earn Co-Op credit as a requirement for your certificate and degrees. Many CTE no longer require a co-op experience. We realize there is not parity among the campuses. Your respective division deans will need to work with our Student Services colleagues who offer Co-Op services to PCC students. Southeast Campus does not have dedicated employees to provide Co-Op services to students who want to enroll in Cooperative Education.

6. Consistent and Accessible Tutoring Across the District Recommendations:

To improve student success in CAS/OS courses, consistent tutoring resources should be available at all campus locations, specifically for the following courses: CAS133, CAS170, CAS140, CAS216, CAS206, CAS215, and CAS111D/W.

It is difficult during this time of declining enrollment and budget uncertainty to provide additional funding for tutors. Thanks for identifying the above courses for which students could use tutoring support at campuses that offer these courses. Your respective Division Deans and DOIs can work with Student Learning Center Coordinators to provide funding sources for CAS/OS tutors. We applaud the Cascade and Sylvania Campuses for committing funding for tutoring offered for web classes in their Student Learning Centers. Starting last fall, the deans responsible for managing the Campus Student Learning Centers—Nancy Wessel at Cascade, Jackie Sandquist at Rock Creek, Craig Kolins at Southeast and Karen Paez at Sylvania have been meeting to discuss consistency to provide tutoring services. We will share your recommendation with them.

7. Consistent and Accessible Technology Across the District Recommendation:

Designate a district-wide TSS representative or team to oversee the software requirements for CAS/OS at all PCC labs, classrooms, and SLC locations.

This will require College-wide and Campus coordination. We realize that each TSS Campus Manager works closely with campus-based CAS/OS faculty to install software in classrooms and labs. We also realize that there are different processes on how this happens. Based on another recommendation in your written report, you also recommended that the Campus Libraries have software installed on Library computers. This recommendation will impact other college-wide CTE programs and some Lower Division Collegiate disciplines. As you suggest, an Ad-Hoc team may need to be established to make some recommendations to TSS, DOIs and other College-wide stakeholders. The Deans of Instruction will work with Karen Sanders, your SAC Administrative Liaison, TSS and others college-wide stakeholders to explore this possibility.

8. Cross-Discipline Coordination of Web Development & Design Courses Recommendation:

- We would like Division Deans across the district to become aware of issues involving curriculum overlap between disciplines.
- We do not have a “perfect solution” to this problem, but are open and willing to explore new options.

Curriculum overlap between CTE programs and LDC disciplines happens as the result of being a single college that shares a College-wide curriculum among multiple campuses. We sincerely appreciate your willingness to collaborate with other SACs (e.g., CIS, Multi-Media, Graphic Design and others through the curriculum development process when developing new courses, Career Pathway Certificates of Completion, Less than One Year Certificates, One-Year Certificates and Degrees.

Closing

In closing, we want to again thank the CAS/OS SAC for sharing your recommendations and your Program Review with us. We learned more about the program, your successes and plans for the future. We look forward to supporting your on-going work for continuous program improvement.

Administrative Response submitted by Craig Kolins, on behalf of the Deans of Instruction and Dean of Academic Affairs.

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