

Administrative Response to Program Review Think Big Program November 2015

On November 13, 2015, the Think Big SAC presented their Program Review findings to an audience of PCC administrators and others with an interest in the discipline. Both the written report and the presentation were informative and thought provoking. Your presentation 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 Think Big Program and Program Review; B) observations/recommendations; and C) provide the administrative response to the SAC recommendations.

Noteworthy Efforts or Achievements

- A model partnership with Caterpillar, Inc. that provides a successful transition for students from classroom to employment. This includes equipment donations from Caterpillar, Inc. of the most recent up-to-date equipment.
- 100% job placement of the students in the last five years.
- 100% of the last cohort that started the program, graduated.
- Ryan Walker, Think Big student, won the National Skills USA competition in Diesel Technology beating out 32 other diesel students representing their states from across the country. It was also the first time that an Oregon champion in any skill area won nationals.
- 75% degree completion of the students from 2011 – 2015. Students who do not obtain a degree are missing either Math 65 or Writing 121. Efforts are being made to ensure more students obtain their degree.
- A model for advisory committee participation and commitment.
- Successful changes to the curriculum for both A/C and Electrical classes that resulted in both student test scores and troubleshooting skills improvement.
- Superior contamination control in the main shop due to the ability to move welders and grinders to another space.
- Intentional use of online learning and efforts to help students adapt to this modality in order to support their professional advancement after leaving the program.
- Continual improvement in curriculum to ensure it is up to current industry standards.
- Strong collaboration with Gen Ed instructors in sections offered for DST students.
- Change in assignment of instructors to classes that resulted in students receiving both fundamental and advanced courses by the same instructor. The consistency of instruction has improved students' comprehension of the material.
- A pre- and post-test for students offered by the Association of Equipment Distributors (AED). This provides the faculty with needed information regarding the strength of the curriculum and where changes should be made.
- Faculty stay current in the field by attending professional development trainings.

Observations/Recommendations

- The response and descriptions offered to questions relating to assessment of student learning were minimal, falling quite a bit short of what is expected from programs in order to support the regional accreditation of our college. While the 100% hire rate is laudable, and suggests an overall satisfaction from the dealers who recruit and support (and then hire) the students, direct evidence that students have met the learning outcomes of the program were not described, and no data were offered. (Annual assessment reports were not referenced – we did check those, and they were similarly light in information). Our accreditation requires that we document that students have met the learning outcomes (not just employment outcomes) for our degrees and certificates, AND that the program uses results of assessment of student learning outcomes to inform program improvements. We ask that the SAC make better use of your assigned assessment coach, and providing informative description and data of assessment results and related changes in annual reports. The next Program Review should provide a more detailed summary of evidence that students are meeting the degree outcomes, and specifically identify changes made to improve teaching and learning that were made as a result of assessment findings.
- We support your observation that the assessment cycle could be improved by adding some specific assessment areas to the curriculum that match PCC's core outcomes.
- You comment that the goal to “recruit, hire and retain a diverse and qualified faculty and staff” has been achieved, but you do not indicate how this is so.
- The SAC is considering an Electrical Power Generation certificate/degree.

Administrative Response to Think Big Recommendations

A. What is the SAC planning to do to improve teaching and learning, student success, and degree or certificate completion?

- Writing 121DL continues to be a struggle for the students. We have set aside a period in the class before Writing 121 is offered where the writing instructor meets the group and explains the expectations. This will be the first time we have done this and we should be able to see the effect at the end of this term as they complete their class. *We appreciate the thoughtful solution to the Writing 121DL successful completion issue. We look forward to hearing about the results of this plan and if there was an increase in the success rate for the students.*
- Math is a struggle but I believe this is a problem throughout the college. We would like to eliminate the Math 60 class offered in the students first term. Requiring this to be completed or tested out of before they start the program would allow for more time to study and complete the heavy workload required in the first term. I believe this would help not only with retention but also with the students' abilities to master their classes. *We support your plan to move Math 60 out of the first term of the program. We also recommend that you reach out to the Math SAC for possible alternative supportive paths for students in your program to complete their degree.*

- We continue to add more relevant lab assignments and incorporate new training aids into the curriculum. There are always improvements that can be made to how classes are structured and presented. Noting best practices and making changes when warranted. *We support continuous improvement in curriculum.*
- The Faculty will continue to attend industry trainings and global conferences to keep pace with our forever changing and advancing industry. *We support professional development training to keep pace with industry.*

B. What support do you need from the administration in order to carry out your planned improvements?

1. The program is in need of additional space. Caterpillar made an exception when allowing the program to run in the current space provided and it has become very clear that additional space is warranted. The students are in very close quarters with large heavy training aids and this presents a safety issue when we have a full program. We have determined faculty that have been able to make do with the space provided but as we move into larger class sizes we spend a lot of time moving training aids and working around things instead of being able to focus on the current class project. *We recognize the need for additional space for this program. Please continue to work with your Division Dean to advocate for space.*
2. Many of the ThinkBIG Colleges have built new buildings to promote safety and student learning allowing for the best use of class and lab time. *We recognize the need for additional space for this program. Please continue to work with your Division Dean to advocate for space.*
3. If we are unable to increase our lab size we would like to add an additional crane to better utilize the space we have. *We recognize the need for additional space for this program. Please work with your Division Dean regarding the option of adding an additional crane to your current space.*

Closing

In closing, we want to again thank the Think Big SAC 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 on-going work on continuous program improvement.

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

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