

Administrative Response to Program Review Geology and General Science Programs August 2016

On April 15, 2016, the Geology and General Science 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 Geology and General Science Programs and Program Review; B) observations and recommendations; and C) provide the administrative response to the SAC recommendations.

Noteworthy Efforts or Achievements

- Program goals aligned with PCC strategic plan throughout the review and the recommendations.
- Acknowledgement and steps being taken to provide wrap-around services to students. This includes encouraging students to consider Geology as a future career and providing the students with additional information including potential research and internships.
- Changed the name of the SAC to Geology and General Science to reduce confusion caused by the previous name.
- Updated and revised the CCOGs to clearly indicate that the courses included lab credit.
- Created two new introductory courses with lower Math prerequisites than other G/GS courses to accommodate students who had not met the higher Math prerequisites.
- Partnership with the IDES program.
- Collaboration with SAGE 2YC.
- Student feedback during program review presentation was insightful.

Observations and Recommendations

Regarding assessment of student learning: The shift from your former assignment-based assessment to the multiple-choice pre- and post-quiz described in the program review is worth revisiting. We understand that there are challenges and compromises with both approaches, but encourage the SAC to continue to develop approaches that would provide more meaningful results. This could be done by sharpening the assessment focus (content in a narrower set of courses or on a smaller number of outcomes) and/or by conducting assessment via normal “embedded” course assignments (an assessment best practice). We understand the difficulty of engaging faculty in assessment that seems disconnected from their teaching, and encourage the SAC to continue to experiment with assessments that would have intrinsic value for teaching and learning. Please consult with your Assessment coach, and the Dean of Academic Affairs for help in developing your approaches to achieve the balance of focus and participation that result in assessments of the most value for student learning.

Administrative Response to Geology and General Science Recommendations

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

- Supporting Student Success. *We appreciated learning more about the pedagogical approach you plan to take with your courses. We support a project based team problem solving approach that will be relevant to the communities in which our students live. We also support your aspirational goal “to develop a set of G/GS courses that have all the attributes of excellent STEM teaching and learning as outlined by the South Metro-Salem STEM HUB.”*
- Promoting Pathways. *We support your goal of reorganizing the courses into a coordinated collection. This includes the challenge of providing wrap around services such as career, scholarship, internship and transfer information and advising as part of instruction. We also support your aspirational goal to help students become involved in research and internships.*
- Broadening Participation. *We support increasing the number of diverse students in your classes by reducing barriers and creating an inclusive, culturally relevant learning climate. We also support your aspirational goal “to weave practices that broaden participation in our SACs way of doing things to the point that the next time a full-time instructor position opens in our SAC potential candidates from underrepresented groups are not put off by the lack of diversity at PCC...”*

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

1. We need three additional full-time faculty. Our most pressing need is at the Cascade campus, where there is currently no full-time presence. Given the number of classes taught by part-time instructors, our next more pressing needs would be at the Sylvania campus, and then at the Rock Creek campus. We need expertise in distance-learning (DL), meteorology, and oceanography. Ideally, we would be able to attract excellent candidates who would add greater diversity to our SAC. *The creation of new faculty positions are made collaboratively at the district-level and are based on a number of factors, including full-time/part-time ratios in a subject-area versus other disciplines, whether enrollment is increasing or declining, whether additional faculty are needed to maintain a program’s viability, external accreditation and/or professional standards, and other considerations. The Cascade Dean of Instruction is aware of this request and has placed a position on the faculty priority list for the Cascade campus.*
2. We need support for Field-Based learning. The two main things we need are: transportation for students (vans), and an easy mechanism for making student fees available to support field trip costs. *The DOIs recommend establishing fees for the classes to fund field-based learning experiences. This has been requested*

from several SACs and work is underway with the Budget Office to determine an appropriate mechanism. We understand your request to purchase vans, but it may be more cost effective to rent the vans. Please work with your division deans and our Transportation Department on potential scenarios.

3. We need equipment and lab tech support to allow for a more common hands-on curriculum across campuses. The most important pieces of equipment are lap-top computers (need 7 each at Sylvania and Rock Creek), and on-campus weather stations. Additional equipment would include stream tables (at Rock Creek and Cascade) and ground water models (Cascade). Equipment is not as valuable without lab support to set up, tear down, and maintain the equipment. We ask for lab tech support at each campus. Such support could be half-time positions or a combination tech support/instructional position. *Please work with your division dean to ensure the equipment is placed on a priority list for the division. The positions should be placed on the campus position priority list.*
4. We need time for SAC members to interact. This involves instructor scheduling, the purchase of web cams, and the addition of a Winter term SAC in-service day. *We acknowledge the need to spend time interacting with members of your SAC. Please work with your division dean regarding the purchase of web cams and to discuss a potential change in scheduling. Regarding the addition of a winter term SAC in-service day, this is a negotiation item. Please bring it up with the Federation.*
5. We ask PCC to continue to provide and to expand support for professional development, including funding for conferences, workshops, and technical training for lab and field equipment. This includes travel funds as well as funds for substitute teachers for faculty attending a conference or workshop. *We support the need for faculty professional development and recommend you speak with your division dean about potential sources of funding. During this biennium additional funding has been identified and is available through the Office of Professional and Organization Development. Please consider applying for these funds.*

Closing

In closing, we want to again thank the Geology and General Science 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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