

## Administrative Response

### Political Science

May, 2016

We thank you for your hard work, dedication, and commitment to your discipline, profession, and students. This response contains 4 sections: 1) Commendations, 2) Suggestions/observations, 3) Response to recommendations/areas of SAC needs and 4) Closing comments.

#### 1. Commendations

- \*The Program Review discussion provided significant insight into instructional challenges in the teaching of Political Science at PCC and in Oregon.
- \*The Program Review discussion provided useful history and context of the instructional program at PCC.
- \*Political Science faculty have supported student leadership and engagement efforts.

#### 2. Suggestions and Observations

Assessment: The several examples of assessment-driven instructional change at the course level were good, although the connection with assessment results was not very clear. At the SAC project/Core Outcome level, the example is summarized so briefly that it was not possible to discern what assessment had occurred or what changes were made to improve teaching and learning. While there was somewhat more detail in the corresponding 2014-2015 annual Assessment report, the rubric was not designed to provide any substantive information about whether weakness in students' performance was related to Environmental Responsibility, Self Reflection, or Communication (the latter not even the subject of the assessment, though figured strongly in the rubric presented). While the narrative suggests good intentions on the part of the SAC, the description of project, results and response were not well developed. We recommend making use of an LAC Coach for support with design and execution of future SAC-wide assessment strategies and results.

#### 3. Recommendations requiring funding: Restore the full-time position at Cascade.

This is obviously the central recommendation of the Program Review document and presentation. However, an objective analysis of enrollment data does not necessarily support this

recommendation. Political Science enrollment in unduplicated headcount is down at Cascade by 35.9% over the past five years and down by 48.4% since the peak of 2012-13. Four modestly enrolled courses in one term does not necessarily constitute an irreversible trend, especially since enrollment in Political Science is down by 12.3% across the district over five years and down 25.5% since the peak of 2012-13. Furthermore, a position shared by two campuses, Cascade and Southeast, as suggested as another possibility, does not necessarily provide the full benefit to the campus community of a full-time faculty member dedicated to one campus only.

A possibility that emerged during the Program Review discussion, however, may be worth further consideration. That suggestion was for an interdisciplinary position between Political Science and a related discipline, such as History, Ethnic Studies, or Student Leadership Development, or with a focus on the underserved and/or activist communities. Such an interdisciplinary position could both anchor Political Science at the Cascade Campus and broaden the reach of the position in such a way as to attract more students and have a larger impact on the campus community. While there are challenges with hiring and maintaining interdisciplinary positions at PCC, the DOIs would like to engage the SAC in exploring the possibilities for such an interdisciplinary instructional position at Cascade.

**Additional Support NOT Requiring Financial Resources:** The Political Science SAC asked for administrative support in creating a state-wide civics requirement that could be fulfilled either in high school or college. Such a civics requirement could be met by courses in Political Science or U.S. History.

While content knowledge of Political Science and US History would certainly benefit the our community, it is the College Core Outcomes that we ask students to achieve in the attainment of associates degrees, and there are multiple disciplines in which students can achieve those outcomes. The DOIs encourage the Political Science faculty to engage with their PCC colleagues in discussions about General Education, Core Outcomes, and Guided Pathways as ways to ground civics, Political Science, and History courses more solidly in the PCC curriculum.

#### **4. Closing Comments**

It is apparent that the Political Science SAC is interested in growing its enrollment and reach. Meaningful assessment data, objective analysis of enrollment data and trends, and some flexible and creative thinking about possible interdisciplinary approaches would strengthen your arguments.

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