

## Sign Language Interpretation and Deaf Studies Program Review

### Administrative Response

May 3, 2016

Thank you for your presentation on April 15, 2016, during which you highlighted program achievements, curriculum and assessment changes, and program needs. Your written report was detailed and informative. Throughout the Program Review process, you demonstrated your commitment to our students and to the Sign Language Interpretation profession.

This Administrative Response will: a) note particular highlights within your discipline and Program Review; b) offer suggestions and observations; c) provide the administrative response to the SAC recommendations; and d) include closing comments.

### **Noteworthy Efforts or Achievements**

- Student success is a recurring theme throughout your Program Review. We acknowledge and appreciate the steps taken to replace the previous Qualifying Exam for internship placement with the Benchmark Assessments which provide opportunities for students to receive detailed feedback and supports them in their progression through the Programs.
- You have engaged the Advisory Committee as you went through the revision process of the previous Qualifying Exam and used their feedback as you also made curricular changes.
- You initially created a Portfolio assessment and, based upon feedback you received from students and the Advisory Committee, replaced the Portfolio with the Benchmark Assessment. We acknowledge and appreciate the time you invested in developing an authentic, meaningful, and usable system for assessment that helps both students and faculty understand the degree to which students individually and collectively have mastered the skills, concepts, and outcomes needed in the Sign Language Interpretation and Deaf Studies programs.
- Throughout this extensive process of revising these assessments, you acknowledged the value of what was learned from the portfolio approach and what has been learned so far from the new benchmark assessment approach and how working through these has helped faculty better understand how students learn very challenging skills and how students demonstrate cultural competency in these programs.

### **Suggestions and Observations**

- We acknowledge and are pleased to learn that initial feedback on new Benchmark Assessments that were implemented in Fall 2015 is very positive. Please remain in communication with your Division Dean as you move forward with this new assessment process. We expect that degree/certificate completion rates will improve once you have fully implemented this new process. You will likely continue to refine the assessment process, and we encourage you to be consistent with each new cohort of students so that they have clear information throughout their time in the program about how they will demonstrate their success and what standards they will need to meet.
- We acknowledge that you have met with the Advisory Committee since 2011 either once or twice a year with the exception of 2014 when you did not meet. As reported by you and documented in the meeting minutes, the Advisory Committee members have given valuable feedback on professional employment needs in the field of Sign Language Interpretation and in aligning the curriculum to meet those needs. We recommend that you meet with the Advisory Committee frequently enough to receive timely feedback as you move forward with the new Benchmark Assessments. It would appear from the program review that meeting twice a year works well.
- Articulation agreements, such as the one you are developing with Gallaudet University, need approval by the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. Please forward any relevant documents to Kendra Cawley, Dean of Academic Affairs. It may also be helpful to include the Dean of Academic Affairs in the conversations with Western Oregon University. Both your agreements with Portland State University and with Marylhurst should be reviewed to make sure that they are still up to date, and Kendra Cawley can provide expertise here as well.
- The instructor qualifications listed in the Program Review are not identical to those posted on the College website (which were last revised in 2011). In addition, the requirements for Related Instruction on the website need to be revised to comply with the recent Recommendation from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. We understand that Related Instruction has been changed in the recent curricular revision. Please follow up with an appropriate revision to your Instructor Qualifications. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the Dean of Academic Affairs.

### **Administrative Response to Sign Language Interpretation and Deaf Studies SAC Recommendations**

#### **Recommendations for the SAC**

We acknowledge and appreciate your dedication to our students, to your discipline, and profession, and we support all of your Sign Language Interpretation and Deaf Studies recommendations for continual improvement.

## **Recommendations for Administrative Support**

### **1) Offer Multi-Year Contracts in ASL.**

Multi-Year Contracts (MYCs) are being offered as part of a three-year pilot beginning 2016-17. The designation of future MYCs will be determined by administration sometime next year. Thank you for letting us know that you would like to see some of those offered in ASL. Please stay in contact with your Division Dean for future updates.

### **2) New Computers in Lab CT 235.**

We acknowledge your request for computer replacements in this lab and understand that the equipment is needed to support assessment software. Please continue to work your Division Dean who can advocate for this need should additional campus equipment funds become available. Your Division Dean can also reach out to IT to keep them abreast of Program needs.

### **3) Podium Computer in CT 234.**

Please work with your Division Dean and IT to inquire how the podium in CT 234 can better meet your Programs' needs.

### **4) FT Faculty Position in American Sign Language (ASL).**

As discussed during your Program Review presentation and in the body of your written Program Review, we acknowledge your request to add a FT Faculty position in ASL. A number of factors are taken into consideration whenever a new full-time faculty position is requested in any discipline across the College. In addition to the number of sections taught by full-time faculty, other variables are taken into consideration such as fill rates, enrollment trends, SFTE, and ability to fill and retain positions in fields with high demand. You shared a number of important points regarding this request including:

- Currently, all ASL sections are taught by part-time faculty.
- In recent years finding qualified ASL faculty has become much more difficult. Competition has increased dramatically, resulting in significant turnover among our part-time ASL faculty. Recruitment and retention of good part-time ASL language instructors is both more challenging and time consuming than it was even five years ago.
- High faculty turnover has increased the need for mentoring and has made it difficult to maintain consistency and excellence throughout the ASL curriculum.
- Assigning one of the two full-time SLIP/DS faculty to direct the ASL offerings is not a viable solution since both SLIP/DS full-time faculty already have their hands full with their CTE programs. The Faculty Department Chair is responsible for teaching SLIP/DS courses during the day and conducting ASL class visitations during the day and evening which is also very challenging.
- ASL is similar to the other World Languages disciplines in terms of the need for continual updates and improvements in teaching methodologies, curriculum, and instructional materials. All the other World Languages have at least one full-time faculty member per language.

- The success of students in SLIP is heavily dependent upon the rigor and effectiveness of ASL courses which are prerequisites for the CTE programs and are the primary means students have for developing the ASL proficiency needed for the CTE programs. A dedicated full-time faculty member in ASL would help support faculty development to improve teaching effectiveness. Supporting this request would be consistent with PCC's goal to create a culture supporting diversity, equity and inclusion.

We ask that you continue to dialog with your Division Dean regarding the need for a full-time faculty position in American Sign Language.

### **Closing**

Your SAC was granted a year's extension on the program review so that you could move forward with the reforms you were undertaking in an effort to improve completion rates. We support the steps you have taken and share your optimism that these changes will lead to more students successfully completing our SLIP/DS programs.

In closing, we thank the SLIP/DS SAC for sharing the results of your Program Review. Both your written report and your presentation allowed us to learn more about opportunities and challenges. We recognize and appreciate your dedication to our students including the extensive support you provide them during their educational journey at the College.

Administrative Response submitted by Loretta Goldy on behalf of the Deans of Instruction and the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Kendra Cawley, Dean of Academic Affairs  
Loretta Goldy, Sylvania Interim Dean of Instruction  
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