WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT PCC PROGRAMS?

2015 In-service Breakout Session

Date: September 14, 2015
Facilitators: Chris Chairsell, Karin Edwards and Jim Langstraat
Scribe: Mary Kalafatis

What makes a PCC education unique?

• We care (according to students).
• Engaged faculty and staff
• Small classes
• Developmental education program is a focus. We get students college-ready to go beyond PCC.
• We help get students who come here as “marginal” up to standard.
• Students find connections.
• Lots of diverse types of educational programs, lots of opportunities.
• We’re well distributed throughout Portland metro area.
• Large and growing distance-education programming
• Our courses are relevant to future employment opportunities.
• There are lots of support resources (centers) that are accessible. We work hard to let students know they are there.
• CTE programs rock; distance learning is key; CTE programs offer a skill set to students to help get them gainfully employed.
• Continuing education offers life-long learning at PCC from one class to many opportunities.
• PCC is big and serves lots of students.
• Faculty members feel more connected than at other places.
• PCC is the most positive, helpful place to work.
• It’s unique that we are close to Washington and thus serve many areas.
• Relationship between administrative, faculty, staff and bargaining has been positive.
• Strong dual credit program/relationship with high schools.
• Better resources for CTE programs; i.e., farms, facility resources, labs, child development centers.
• Well-respected in the community.
• Compared to others, PCC hires out in front and is able to get top candidates.
• Enormous respect for the craft of teaching!
• Honors program is unique to community colleges.
• Partnerships with employers for job and internship placements.
• Leaders in making online course materials accessible.
How would you describe PCC’s approach to teaching and how might that be different from other places?

- Student-centered and moving intentionally to be more interactive and engaging.
- Thanks to our Subject Area Committees (SACs), we have worked hard to improve consistency across course offerings even though we have many instructor and many campuses. This is a big accomplishment.
- Course Content and Outcome Guides (CCOGs) make our course outcomes transparent and accessible.
- The manner in which we account for student and teaching hours creates problems.
- In Early Childhood we access providers in the community. Our students gain work experience and then apply and share what they learn back in the classroom.
- Pretty strong professional development opportunities, Teaching Learning Centers etc. to enhance us as professionals.
- Our governance structure puts a dean “on the ground” closer to the work of faculty and students.
- PCC has quite a bit of information on the website, which allows a lot of looking in.
- CTE classes have immediate relevancy to needs; courses are focused and applicable.
- In the Early Education program, we strive for diversity in classrooms and in our work. We are intentional in all we do.
- In developing on-line courses, PCC has a great rubric to develop to ensure that well thought out and quality classes are offered.
- Innovations in the classrooms are often difficult to start and sustain due to want/desire to be consistent across all campuses.
- Our enrollment model dictates which courses will run. Which courses students enroll in drive which classes are held and which are cancelled.
- Integrated diversity—we don’t kid ourselves. We know we have work to do in this area of inclusion and equity, and we are willing to do it.
- Institutionally, we have a commitment to self-improvement to teaching and what is done in the classroom.
- We have a system that functions well for going after a student who is not performing well in the classroom. Our CPN system helps alert us and get students back and involved.
- Program review process is really good; helps in our self-analysis and reflection and thus improvements.
- There are a lot of lab techs at PCC for students.
- When approached with sincerity, SAC assessments do lead to marked improvements in the classroom.
- Library is integrative in our teaching.
What motivates classroom (and other) learning at PCC?

- For CTE programs, contacts with industry come and speak directly to our students; industry members have expressed to our students that they are ahead by attending and completing at PCC and learning transferable skills.
- CTE instructors have come directly from industry, which helps to inspire students.
- Students are here to improve their lives, get jobs and improve themselves. They are focused.
- CTE programs have advisory committees that are extremely helpful.
- Many CTE programs have dedicated advisors to assist, and there are a lot of hands on education opportunities for students to work on equipment.
- We work hard to make conversations in non-CTE class relevant and valuable to all students (i.e., philosophy).
- We have a strong commitment to create skills that are applicable to any walk of life, including critical thinking and communications.
- We are passionately committed as educators to say: “This is what it means to experience knowledge and to be an educated person and contribute to our community.” Faculty members embody this in the way we teach and relate to our students.
- Compassionate and authentic relationships that students and faculty have in class
- Passion for the success of students.
- Students are motivated by leadership opportunities at PCC, ASPCC, legislative process opportunities and other participatory activities.
- Students are excited to see that they can make a difference and are learning what they need to know at PCC, service learning, social justice, etc.
- Unique partnerships with internships, overseas opportunities, dedicated partners in the real world offering working experiences drives excitement.
- Professional development opportunities in terms of mentoring, courses, seminars and orientations are available to faculty and staff.
- Classroom learning is motivated by place; knowledge-seeking individuals in the community at large come to PCC to help drive their own success.
- Our graduates seek us out and know our success.
- Our painfully long hiring process does result in highly qualified teaching/instructors.
- Information sharing about scholarship opportunities helps students afford and stay in college.
- Students are motivated when engaged in the real work and in the field; for scientists, this creates more motivated students.
- Student service support centers create motivation with students. Their guidance helps students succeed.
- Broad course offerings motivate students.
• Leaning is fun! Makerspace, art, etc. collaboration works.
• Community-based learning motivates and engages students.
• On-campus childcare centers are helpful to the success of students.
• Offering online classes ensures that we reach more students who can’t physically come to campus.
• Rigor in the classroom—we are holding students to a high standard.

What would you change?
• We need more full-time faculty and to raise the number of faculty and the number of paid hours. We need more paid hours for faculty time to innovate, plan and create coursework to ensure quality.
• More closely integrated credit and non-credit offerings.
• Need more designated time to plan and implement and improve course offerings. This is particularly key to SAC responsibilities and tasks.
• Transfer students need to have the same type and amount of professional advising as CTE students.
• More availability of counselors and all-day crisis counseling would be helpful to students and would support the efforts of our student support centers.
• We need better coordination between campuses in scheduling.
• We should methodically develop transfer pathways to align with four-year institutions and align academic advising with majors.
• It is wonderful to have a lab for science students (i.e., MakerSpace).
• Website needs more information to assist students directly; need to make website more robust so that students find the exact person/department they are seeking.
• Institute and support a college-wide honors program.
• More opportunities for media/technology to be incorporated into the learning.
• Professional development for classified staff.
• Encourage more on-campus life for our students. When we are able to develop a cohort, learning increases exponentially.
• Look at varying ways of managing teaching time.
• Recognize that differences in learning styles and more hands-on rather than lecture style approaches may improve learning outcomes.
• Institute some form of health care services for students on campuses.
• Institute something like the new faculty institute for adjunct instructors.
• More preparation/training so that current faculty/staff can advance upward at PCC i.e., become a department chair, dean, etc.
• Higher baseline for technology expertise and literacy for faculty and staff
• Expansion of cooperative education to make more accessible to more students
• Reducing textbook and materials costs for students by giving incentives to faculty to think more creatively to reduce the amount and cost of books and materials in the classroom.
• Two weeks for spring break; one week at thanksgiving; limited teaching after 5 p.m.
• Training part-time faculty on a department basis rather than a district-wide basis will create stronger teams.
• Better communication with part time faculty.
• Pay part-time instructors for training and orientation.
• Dual credit—With regard to courses taught at high schools, dual credit needs a rigorous assessment process to ensure that those instructors/courses meet our standards and outcomes.
• We must motivate part-time faculty to participate on committees—and compensate them.