

Program Review – Annual Program/Discipline Update
Administrative Response and Follow Up
Spring 2021-2022

Program/Discipline: Dealer Service Technology (Think Big)

SAC Chair(s): Sander Torgeson

SAC Administrative Liaison (Director or Program Dean): Karen Sanders

Other Dean(s) or Director(s): N/A

Department Chair(s): Jesse Norconk

Other Faculty / Staff: Dan Brotherton, Kevin Comstock

Date: April 15, 2022

Administrative Response

I would like to thank the ThinkBig department (DST) for the hard work, dedication and service your entire faculty and staff team provide to your students and to Portland Community College. Your program has been successful for many years, and I would like to commend all of you for working hard to provide quality programming in this chaotic time. Thank you!

This administrative response is intended to both recognize your efforts, and provide you with some suggestions for the future. Specifically, it will:

1. Highlight the strengths and successes of the program as evidenced in your report
2. Recognize areas of challenge or concern
3. Address your future goals
4. Provide recommendations for next steps

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Strengths & successes of the program as evidenced in your report

Retention strategies: Intentional retention practices that I understand have been successful over the last several years include: High touch / constant communication between faculty and students, regular communication among faculty, and implementing the strategy of informing dealerships on a regular basis of their students' grades in order to ensure that if a student is falling behind the Dealer knows this immediately and can provide support. I encourage the department to continue these practices and to continue to evaluate if additional strategies might be needed for the students in the EPG track.

Extremely high number of degree completers: The data in this area tells a story of a strong academic program. Over the last three years an average of 90% of the students enrolled in the program completed the AAS degree. This is impressive, not only for the high numbers, but also for the fact that due to the structure of the program the students are already employed in the field and they don't need the degree - only the CAT specific curriculum - to continue working - and yet almost all of them enroll and complete the gen ed requirements as well.

Faculty training: I have been impressed with the faculty's commitment to training and professional development. Having all faculty complete the CIAP training in order to help maintain consistency across courses and instructors is a good strategy to maintain the high quality of the program. I also commend the foresight to cross train more than one instructor in EPG. I believe this part of the program is going to grow substantially and having two fully trained instructors will facilitate this growth.

Resiliency: The program has successfully navigated simultaneous and significant change in the past two years. The rapid pivot to remote learning as a result of COVID-19, the change in leadership, the challenges of returning to campus and offering courses in the context of time consuming safety planning and the design and move into a new facility - all happened at the same time - and yet you continue to offer high quality instruction and support for your students. You are amazing!

Areas of Challenge (highlighted by the SAC) & Next Steps

Challenge: Enrollment - specifically that it is controlled by the Dealerships and ThinkBig is not an open entry program.

Response: As we move out of the pandemic, there is an opportunity to take a more proactive approach to recruitment in partnership with the dealers.

Next Steps: I encourage the faculty to work with the Pathway Dean and the Chair of the industry advisory committee, to develop some specific and intentional outreach strategies that target each of the dealerships. Ideally, some or all of these strategies can be implemented for fall term 2022 cohort recruitment. Extra emphasis should be put on developing an EPG specific plan.

Challenge: Increasing the gender and ethnic diversity in the program

Response: Although student recruitment is not under the direct control of the program, there are some strategies that can be used to try and influence the gender and ethnic makeup of future ThinkBig student cohorts. The department has already implemented a mandatory Title IX training in the new student orientation curriculum and individual faculty members have begun talking about PCC's commitment to DEI with individual dealerships.

Next Steps: As part of the recruitment strategies described above, intentionally integrate DEI activities and strategies.

Conclusion:

Thank you for completing the Annual Program Update. I commend all of you on your resilience and dedication to the students. I look forward to engaging with you in your future work as you fully move into and utilize the new building and build out the EPG program.

Thank you,

Karen Sanders, Pathway Dean - Advanced & Applied Technologies