



Institutional Effectiveness Report to the Cerro Coso Community College Academic Senate:

**FIRE TECHNOLOGY Program Review**

The IEC would like to commend the Public Services department for carrying out the first-ever program review of the FIRE TECHNOLOGY program. The department has the difficult task of justifying the existence and growth of a program that has never had more than a toe-hold at the college: no content expert to knowledgeably design curriculum, little budget for equipment and supplies, and no viable pathway to completion. As a consequence, the program has sputtered over the past several semesters, averaging 16.5 students per section at IWV since Fire courses were reintroduced in Fall 2010.

The committee identified several areas of improvement:

**Recommendation 1.** The program review should identify the student population more effectively. In some parts of the document, the potential students for this program seem to be volunteer firefighters who just need a course or two or low unit certificate; in other parts, they seem to be transfer students who are seeking advanced study in fire science. Who are the students? What do they need? The committee recognizes the answer to this question may be complex; if so, that complexity must find its way into the document. This is the program's fundamental question because everything else about the program design—size of the program, courses to be offered, delivery method—is predicated on the answer.

**Recommendation 2.** The program review should address how local fire agencies are currently addressing their needs. If current needs are being satisfied, or only a handful of jobs become available each year, where is the niche for Cerro Coso? Why is this program needed, especially as currently designed at 33 units with sixteen separate elective courses?

In addition to the above recommendations, the committee would like the department to consider:

- The statement is made that similar programs at Bakersfield College, Antelope Valley College, and Victor Valley College's would not have any effect on our enrollment. Why not?
- Many of the courses have a lab component. What's involved in the labs? What sort of equipment is needed? Where is the equipment going to be stored? What would be annual equipment and supply costs?
- Mention is made of an employer survey that is given annually. Who fills this survey out, what are the results, can it be attached?
- Is expanding into the online environment the right move at this time? What evidence does the department have an online population is out there wanting to take classes?

**Conclusion:** Given the sputtering status of the program and the lack of clarity about the students it intends to serve, the committee feels the department would be better served by a program review that treats the program almost as if it were brand new, providing solid data to address the fundamental questions: who are the students, what needs do they have, what form should the program take to address those needs, and what should the roll out of the program be over the next three and six years to solidly support student learning.



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## **PARALEGAL Program Review**

The IEC would like to commend the Computer Information Systems/Business department for carrying out the first-ever program review of the PARALEGAL program.

The committee identified several areas of improvement:

**Recommendation 1.** The program review must satisfactorily address the employment questions of whether there are any jobs out there for graduates, how many of those jobs are in the College's service area, and how many Cerro Coso graduates in the last six years have gotten jobs or achieved job advancement. As a CTE program, these are fundamental questions. The committee recognizes that the department may not have answers; in which case, a major conclusion of the program review should be action plans to address them.

**Recommendation 2.** The program review must satisfactorily address why are there so few completers in the program overall. The data warehouse shows the capstone course PARA C290 has run every spring since 2008 averaging seven enrollments at census date. The program itself averages 3.5 completers a year, with a peak of 5 in 2008-2009. Yet the program review makes no attempt to address this fact or explain why it is so.

**Recommendation 3.** The program review contains a large amount of distracting repetition, much of it drawn directly from the program's original application to the state. Moreover, the information repeated is sometimes inaccurate. The program review should cut down on the repetition and expand the critical analysis. In general, the committee would like the department to complete a more professional-looking document: prompting questions should be removed, fonts and margins regularized, etc.

In addition to the above recommendations, the committee would like the department to consider:

- Who are the students in the program (e.g., those seeking jobs or those already with jobs)? How does the department know? How does it affect program and course design and delivery?
- If PARA C101 is the "gateway" class to the program as indicated, why is it not prerequisite to the other courses?
- Why does the Program Matrix not have the elective courses itemized?
- Why is there a different set of program learning outcomes identified for the program in some of the description sections?
- If the employers' headquarters are out of state making it difficult to track jobs, what plan does the department have to get this information?
- What supports the conclusion in improvements needed that the program needs a program-specific advisory committee?
- Why is there no six year plan developed for where the department would like to see the program at the time of the next review?

**Conclusion:** The committee believes the PARALEGAL program review is a good start but does not in its current form complete a critical analysis that addresses the program's significant issues or is ready to be presented as a finished document that adequately represents the College and Senate.



Institutional Effectiveness Report to the Cerro Coso Community College Academic Senate:

**WELDING Program Review**

The IEC would like to commend the Industrial Arts department for carrying out the first-ever program review of the WELDING program.

The committee identified several areas of improvement:

**Recommendation 1.** The program review should make better use of SLO data. In the part of the document reserved for SLO summary and analysis, only student grades are referenced. The department *has* completed SLO's on these courses, so it is unclear why they are not used. Doing so will also help the department more effectively analyze whether or not students leaving the program are properly prepared for employment and how the department knows that—two items that are not currently discussed in the document.

**Recommendation 2.** In description and analysis, the program review should keep the Welding Processes program separate from the Welding Technology program. Technically, these two different programs should require two separate reviews; combining them saves time and avoids redundancies. But in the sections where it is appropriate to separate them, they should be treated separately.

**Recommendation 3.** The program review should satisfactorily address the employer/employment questions of where completers of the programs are getting jobs or achieving job advancement and what the relationship is with current employers, including local companies sending employees to us for training. As a CTE program, these are fundamental questions. The committee recognizes the department may not have answers to some or all of the issues raised by these questions; in which case, a major conclusion of the program review should be the development of action plans to address them.

In addition to the above recommendations, the committee would like the department to consider:

- The program review discusses how successful the program is but then says it is moving to a 'cohort model.' Why? What gaps are in this program that the move is designed to address? How will it improve student learning?
- If the cost of materials has gone up, why haven't materials fees?
- Is there nothing to say about the advisory committee aside from listing the names, such as the role the committee plays in SLO development/assessment?
- What constitutes curriculum currency in welding? The current section is unclear.
- Why would a school-based website for marketing purposes be appropriate for this program that has no online component?
- Why is there no six year plan developed for where the department would like to see the program at the time of the next review?
- In terms of document finish, could the tone be adjusted and the prompting descriptions and questions for analysis be removed?

**Conclusion:** The committee believes the WELDING program review justly celebrates the department's offerings, which are popular, but does not in its current form complete a critical analysis of employer relations, SLO assessment, and student preparedness after graduation. It is hoped a revision will also result in a more consistently professional tone throughout.