

CO-OP EDUCATION TASK GROUP

FINAL REPORT

March 17, 2009

Task Force Members:

Marilyn Alexander, Chair, Landscape Technology, Rock Creek
Jerry Brask, Chair, Paralegal, Cascade
Kate Dins, Division Dean, Cascade
George Knox, Academic Professional, Co-Op Ed, Sylvania
Heather Lang, Associate Dean of Student Development, Rock Creek
Nancy Pitzer, Academic Professional, Co-Op Ed, Rock Creek
Denise Roy, Co-Chair, Architecture, Sylvania
Kurt Simonds, Division Dean, Sylvania
Steve Ward, Interim Dean of Instruction, Rock Creek/Division Dean, Sylvania
Becky Washington, Academic Professional, Co-Op Ed, Cascade
MaryLou Webb, Division Dean, South East Center

Following a recommendation in the management response to the Faculty Federation grievance regarding Co-Op Education pay at the Rock Creek campus, our group was established as a joint labor-management committee to clarify Co-Op goals, practices, and roles at PCC. Specifically, our group was charged to:

1. Identify desirable outcomes of Co-Op Education for PCC students.
2. Identify practices that can be applied consistently throughout the college to achieve the desired outcomes.
3. Identify consistent roles that faculty, academic professionals, and administrators should fulfill to achieve the desired outcomes.
4. Assess whether the methodology for pay derived in 1984 is still appropriate.

We met every three to four weeks from March through December 2008. We offer this report to the college community, including the Joint Negotiation Team, for appropriate action.

Consistent with regional accreditation standards, the principle that guided our deliberations was to assure that the PCC Co-Operative Education Program is academically rigorous. At our April meeting, we agreed that CCOGs are critical to maintaining academic rigor.

We discussed and agreed on a set of general outcomes for all Co-Op Education courses, which Jerry Brask took forward to the Curriculum Committee for the Paralegal Co-Op

course, with the understanding that the outcomes would serve as templates for all Co-Op courses. The Curriculum Committee approved these outcomes:

- Work productively in the workplace field.
- Apply acquired (classroom) skills, knowledge, and training in a work place setting.
- Understand the skills and demands of work in the field in order to make informed career decisions.
- Communicate appropriately in the workplace.
- Continue to explore career opportunities.

We also examined the outcomes of Co-Op CCOGs for Architecture, Landscape Technology, and Writing against these general outcomes, and we concluded that the outcomes performed well overall in distinguishing effective Co-Op CCOGs. We therefore recommend that SACs update their Co-Op CCOGs, including reviewing their Co-Op outcomes. In order to assure consistent academic rigor, we recommend that the Curriculum Committee appoint a sub-committee to help review Co-Op outcomes. Members of our task force have indicated their willingness to serve on such a sub-committee.

Our task force also reviewed state and PCC Co-Op requirements and best practices, as well as considered syllabi for selected Co-Op courses. The following tables identify the parties that we believe should be responsible for required and recommended practices. Two important principles inform these tables: (1) Effective Co-Op learning requires structured student reflection, and (2) the instructor must be responsible for site visits to assess student learning. Importantly, faculty hired to teach Co-Op courses must meet SAC Instructor Qualifications.

TABLE 1. Co-op practices required by State guidelines and PCC policies:

Practice	Responsible Party
1. CCOG/outcomes	Department/SAC
2. Syllabus	Department/Faculty
3. Guidelines for student eligibility	Department/SAC
4. Site Development	Specialist, faculty, dept and student cooperate in development. Student responsible for selection unless otherwise assigned by department.
5. Site approval for learning	Faculty
6. Site approval for meeting legal, college and administrative reqs.	Specialist

7. Training agreement and learning objectives approved—required before enrollment.	Faculty. Signed by student, employer, faculty, and specialist.
8. Enroll student in Co-op.	Specialist
9. Workers comp coverage	Specialist
10. Reflection (e.g., classroom, meetings, journals, logs, etc.) in actual Co-op course; not a separate seminar. To be evaluated.	Faculty specifies method in syllabus. Student responsibility.
11. Site Visit/monitoring	In person by faculty, unless good cause for faculty designee (cannot be a specialist) or alternative monitoring.
12. Grade entered (P/NP recommended)	Faculty
13. Co-op records maintained to ensure compliance with college/legal reqs.	Specialist

TABLE 2. Recommended practices and responsible parties.

We recommend the following practices be adopted by the department, faculty or specialists in embedded seminars, courses, trainings or one-on-one advising, etc., in addition to Co-Op courses.

Practice	Responsible Party
1. Job skills & techniques, including resumes, interviewing skills, cover letters, etc.	Specialist (faculty, dept. as needed)
2. Demonstration of skills development and work-related accomplishments by use of portfolios or demonstrations at the site visit.	Faculty
3. Education of students regarding workplace issues such as sexual harassment, workplace basics, managing conflict, responding to criticism, labor laws, discrimination, professionalism, etc	Specialist

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4. Workplace skills and techniques, including time management, work ethics, problem solving, interpersonal relations, conflict resolution | Specialist
(faculty, dept as needed) |
| 5. Career exploration activities, including brainstorming, research, etc. | Faculty, Specialist,
Department |

Our recommendations regarding responsible parties in Table 1 imply some modification of the Co-Op pay system developed in 1984. That system required faculty to be responsible for two necessary Co-Op functions: setting learning objectives and evaluating student learning. We strongly believe that faculty must visit Co-Op sites to do the latter, and we also believe that faculty must provide structured reflection experiences to assure insightful student learning experiences. This increased faculty responsibility will require additional time.