

Life Science Division Program Review

Executive Summary

In 2009-10 the faculty of the Life Science Division conducted their program review of the following areas: Administration of Justice, Anatomy/Physiology, Automotive Technology, Aviation, Biology, Dental Assisting, Hospitality, Fashion, Interior Design, CAD Lab, Nutrition, Health/First Aid/CPR, Human Services, Marine and Science Technology (MAST), Ornamental Horticulture, Medical Assisting, and the Division Office. Support team members who participated in this review include John Anderson, Tracie Catania, and Laura Franklin.

Program Strengths and Support Team Commendations

The support team noted the following strengths in the Life Science Division and commends the faculty and staff for their efforts.

- There is strong community involvement by many of the programs, including contacts and working relationships with other colleges, high schools, businesses, local museums, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and research facilities. One example is the Biology department's partnership with Cabrillo College and UC Santa Cruz to increase enrollments of minority students in the sciences in a National Institute of Health-funded program called ACCESS.
- The Automotive Technology program has applied for national certification by NATEF (National Automotive Training Education Foundation). This department has also received Perkins/VATEA funds to develop hybrid technology curriculum and has been named a "Green Business" by Monterey County for practicing and teaching environmentally-safe hazardous waste disposal. The faculty has reached out to COOP as well as to ENSL and Math to collaborate to improve opportunities for Automotive Tech students within the Auto classes as well as in related educational experiences.
- The addition of new full-time faculty in Dental Assisting and Interior Design have made positive contributions to their programs and the Division. In addition there is a core of dedicated and experienced adjunct faculty in Hospitality, Nutrition, Biology, Human Services and Ornamental Horticulture without whom many courses would not be able to be offered.
- High student demand and budget reductions have added pressures college-wide. Life Science faculty have increased the numbers of students in lecture sections of many courses and even traditionally non-peak afternoon courses are often filled.

Challenges

- The Division has requested the initiation of the Program Discontinuance policy for the Marine and Science Technology (MAST) and Fashion programs to determine their viability and look at ways to revitalize them if possible.
- Staffing continues to be a challenge on many fronts for Life Science. There is an ongoing challenge to find qualified adjunct faculty particularly in Automotive Technology and Anatomy/Physiology. One full-time faculty member is responsible for managing all of the Family and Consumer Science (FACS) programs; for the previous thirty years there have been two full-time faculty in FACS. Adjunct faculty in the Dental Assisting program have had to be trained in accordance with required curricular changes and teaching ratios. The sudden resignation of the first-year full-time Medical Assisting instructor will also pose challenges not only in staffing classes for summer and next year, but in furthering delays in the re-evaluation of that program's direction.
- Many students' lack of preparation for the rigors of college study is evident in the sciences. High enrollment demands are further challenged by students' need for support to succeed.
- Enrollment in some science courses is dependent on the number of admissions allowable each year in the Nursing Program. While a decreased enrollment in some courses would be more manageable, if Nursing continues to decrease their admissions due to budget constraints, we could also see the domino effect of further enrollment declines in science.

Goals

- Hire net-new full-time faculty in Automotive Technology, Hospitality, and Anatomy/Physiology. We also need to replace the full-time faculty in Medical Assisting due to a recent resignation.
- Conduct a needs assessment to determine the feasibility of adding evening sections of Microbiology lecture and lab.
- Plan for move out of the Life Science building and for the remodel of the LS building.
- Expand course offerings at the Education Center in Marina.
- Continue the implementation and assessment of SLOs and GLOs in all programs.
- Continue to upgrade equipment and software for the benefit of student learning, despite dwindling resources.

Support Team Recommendations

- Review benefits to MPC of continuing to offer only one course in Aviation. This appears to be an independent course offered by Monterey Bay Aviation for which they provide staff (paid by MPC), facility, equipment and advertising.
- It would be helpful to clarify the relationship between MATE and MAST and their relationship/s to MPC. Perhaps this will be clarified through the program discontinuance process initiated for MAST; it would be helpful for the greater MPC community to have a better understanding of these programs/areas.
- We would encourage the division to consider a possible reorganization of the Family and Consumer Science (FACS) department in light of the fact that there is now only one full-time faculty member in that department and several varied programs within it. This could potentially also relieve some of the burden being carried by the division chair in that department.

Overarching Issues

- Funding for supplies and equipment is not keeping up with increasing costs.
- Maintenance of the cleanliness of our classrooms and buildings (LS and FACS). Specialized programs in biology, anatomy, health care, and culinary arts have specific requirements which are not always met. Both the LS and FACS buildings have issues with the control of temperature and lighting.
- Communication with IT needs to be improved. IT is researching a problem report/status check program that we may be able to implement college-wide so we can all track status of work requests.