

Program Viability Committee Summary

May 6, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. – Zoom

Members present: Garrett Rieck (Noncredit Faculty), Christopher Boltz (Theatre/CTE Rep), Lisa Hooper (Curriculum), Nicole Faudree (Business/COCFA Rep), Jason Burgdorfer (MSHP), Jesse Vera (Adjunct Counselor & AMSA Faculty Co-Advisor), Julie Hovden (Counseling), Regina Blasberg (Applied Tech), Dr. Omar Torres (CIO) & Erik Altenbernd (History)

Guests: Marilyn Jimenez (Academic Senate Administrative Assistant), Harriet Happel (Dean of Career Education and Integrative Learning & CTE), Paul Wickline (Associate VP, Instruction), Dr. Kathy Bakhit (Dean of HPPS), Carl DeCarlo (Chief, Consultant), Keith Kawamoto (Fire Technology) & Terry Winter (Nursing)

I. Routine Matters

1. Call to order: 10:04pm
2. Approval of 3/18/21 meeting minutes:
 - a) The minutes were modified to ensure the use of title Physical Therapy is being used correctly. Motion to approve the meeting minutes from May 18th by Lisa Hooper, seconded by Dr. Omar Torres. Unanimous. Approved.
3. Approval of the Agenda:
 - a) Motion to approve the agenda by Chris Boltz, seconded by Jesse Vera. Unanimous. Approved.

II. Discussion

1. Program Initiation: Fire Academy – Keith Kawamoto, Harriet Happel and guest
 - a) There was a correction made to change from Program Initiation to Program Modification.
 - b) **Background:** Historical information going back to 2000 relating to this program has been included in the CANVAS shell. This program is a partnership between COC and [LA County Fire Department](#). COC has been working on obtaining a DSA approval for the [LA County Del Valle Regional Training Center](#) as a 3rd site. There is an opportunity to modify curriculum to include a Fire Academy. Per the [Office of the State Fire Marshall \(OSFM\)](#), there is a difference between a Fire Technology Program and a Fire Academy. Chief De Carlo has been hired on as a consultant to assist with the development of this new program. Chief De Carlo shared a presentation.
 - c) **Introduction:** Chief De Carlo is an advocate for the Community College as he considers himself to be a product of the Community College System. He has spent most of his time in higher Ed and the community college in terms of employment and research. Chief De Carlo has 27 years of experience and has seen the value that men and women create on the Fire Service in our communities. He is 3rd generation in his family to serve the community. *What is a Fire Academy?* It is a place where students go to learn to be a Fire Fighter.
 - d) **Fire Technology Accreditation bodies:** Student engage in training and oftentimes earn a State Certification which are required to work in the profession. Fire Academies are guided by Global Consensus Standards, [The National Fire Protection Association \(NFPA\)](#). In this case in [NFPA 1001](#) applies to firefighter one, which is the first step as a career Firefighter in the State of CA.
 - e) **Certifications:** Certifications in Fire Academies are influenced locally by states. Specific training requirements are added to the curriculum. CA is widely respected across the country as a leader in Fire Service Professional Development. The current US Fire

Administrator is a former Fire Marshall from the State of California. The state of California has additional requirements on the Fire Academy which is a positive. The Certifications that students earn in Fire Academies are stackable and transferrable. If students want to move into a leadership role in Fire Service they will need to move on to Bachelor's degree.

- f) **National Professional Development Model:** The model shared was developed by the Fire Service of Higher Education and by the [US Fire Administration \(USFA.FEMA.gov\)](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/), it lays out the 4 pillars of professional development in Fire Service Development in the Fire Service Education. This is largely associated with college degrees it's the "why?" behind, "what we do." Training is largely associated with certificates and it's the "how to do what we do." In between this professional development is the experience and applying knowledge and skill sets in the real-world environment. There is a high emphasis on seniority. Self-development is also very important and it is the ability to grow emotionally through emotional intelligence and the ability to handle difficult situations.
- Firefighter I and II; Special Certification and FOI: Supervisor titles are associated with an Associate's degree.
 - FOII: Manager title is associated with a Bachelors
 - FOII: Administrator and FO IV: Executive is associated with a Masters.
- g) **Advantages to Offering College Credit Courses:** The [U.S. Fire Administration](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/) has adopted a lot of what the Academy is saying in terms of a linear pathway to degree completion and the elimination fragmented course taking. This training leads to college credit. When courses are offered with college credit it opens up the opportunity for access to student loans and opens up access to underserved and at-risk populations. The trend has been, by most Academies to offer courses in non-credit. However, Community College programs are typically accredited Fire Academies and are part of an Associate's degree or are stackable certificates. The advantage to stackable certificates is the candidate gets the certification from the state to get a certification from the College, the college then gets a degree completion through their creditors. The model for this Fire Academy will place the college in the best practices within the national scope of professional development, Fire Service.
- h) **Accreditation:** Accreditation is important not only regionally at COC but also through the CA office, the State Fire Marshall. This program would seek accreditation as an Accredited Regional Training Program. This validation looks at 3 core concepts, Access, Quality, and Affordability. This leads to the [International Fire Service Accreditation Congress \(IFSAC\)](https://www.ifsac.org/) degree assembly accreditation. These two accreditations are the gold standards in the fire service and correlate directly to best practices in higher education.
- i) **Facilities:** COC has access to the Los Angeles County Del Valle Regional Training Center and most institutions do not have access to this type of facility. This training location needs to be well funded and maintained to serve students well in a Fire Academy.
- j) **Human Resource:** Professor Kawamoto is a strong leader of this program. Dr. Torres stated that the district needs to find the necessary funding to support the hiring of a possible Faculty Director that would oversee the working of the fire Academy throughout the year. Classified staff support is also needed. The district is committed to supporting this program. There is an existing ISA agreement with LA County, COC is responsible for some of the supplies. There is also a clause in the contract in which funding goes into a Del Valle account. These funds are used to purchase additional equipment needed to support the Del Valle site. There is a mutual agreement in which LA County and COC ensure instructional needs are met in terms of supplies, consumable and equipment.

- **MQE Qualifications:** An Instructor of record would appear on the certification. An Assistant instructor will appear when they sign on specific skill sets. The director would be a college employee and would need to meet the MQ's as a faculty member. It was clarified that the Directory would not be the instructor of record. It is also suggested to see current job descriptions of similar job titles. Active Practitioners would teach areas of specialty. There has been some discussion between LA County and the college regarding taking over training. Training Firefighters is considered a public good, which differs from other CCC's disciplines as this is not a profit. These MQ's would be defined by COC and by the State Fire Marshall's Office.
 1. *Any master's or bachelor's degree and two years of experience working in the field; OR*
 2. *Any associate's degree and six years of experience working in the field; OR*
 3. *College work equivalent to an associate's degree plus 6 years' experience working in the field. Successful completion of 40 semester units of associate degree level courses, including a minimum of 18 general education course units required for the associate degree and 320 hours of academy training and six years' experience working in the field.*
- k) **Fire Tech Program Curriculum:** EMT is a requirement of the current Fire Tech. program. EMT is not a course that is in the Fire 1 Curriculum. This is either a pre-req or something done after completion for the Fire Academy. This requirement will remain as is until the meeting with the state Marshall's office takes place. There are 305 required hours for Firefighter 1, will these hours be offered over 16 weeks? The proposal states this program will be offered only on weekends, which means 8 ½ hours on Saturday and Sunday. Chief DeCarlo has been doing some research and will be presenting soon new curriculum for Firefighter 1. In addition to weekend hours there may be certain times such as 3-4 hours a week where scheduled hours will take place at the Del Valle training facility. There is also some discussion in having COC conduct all initial firefighter training and through its Fire Academy and LA County could potentially redeploy those resource for other areas of professional development. In regards to pre-requisite for the Fire Academy program, students need to take core Fire Technology classes such as 101, 105 and 109. There are some CCC's which offer the Fire Tech Academy as one long full-time semester.
- l) **Substantive Change Proposal:** Paul Wickline, Dr. Kathy Bakhit and Harriet Happel have all worked on putting together a substantive change proposal that is required to be submitted to the local ACCJC accreditor to formalize the training at the Del Valle site. This proposal has been submitted to Dr. Omar Torres. It will then be submitted to the college's mobile creditor ACCJC before the end of the spring 2021 semester. It is anticipated that this program will be approved over the summer 2021 and will take effect for the upcoming fall 2021 semester. Part of the motivation behind creating a Fire Tech Academy at COC is due to a recent bond measure from LA County.
- m) **Fire Technology Program Student Population:** 50% of the students served in this program are LatinX. In looking at the work of the institution and the Call to Action the Vision for Success is gold. COC is a Hispanic Serving Institution. 50% of the population does cater to LatinX students. Local efforts are in support of DEI and this is very important for the college. It is important to also recognize that the college is trying to create a pathway of employment and be supportive of social and economic mobility for students.

- n) **LMI Data:** LMI data can be skewed. [The Center of Excellence](#) measures LMI data by taking the number of awards, awarded across the region and do an evaluation of the number of job postings through [Economic Modeling Specialist International \(EMSI\)](#). However, public safety agencies typically do not post their job openings through EMZ due to security reasons and instead post through their own websites. Harriet did ask the Center of Excellence to not include data from Ventura County and to instead use LA and South areas as these are part of LA county. Otherwise, the data will show there are more awards than there are jobs. There is also a concern with the number of retirements due to the political environment. 25% of current firefighters nationally are projected to retire in the next five years. There is also the wildlife land firefighting component. In the last two-month CA went from a priority for wildland firefighting to a seasonal 12 months out of the year. A lot of firefighters are cross trained in both structural, wild land firefighting and paramedics. The implications for this is that there will need to be a lot more hiring of firefighters. Last month the state governor's office issued almost a half-billion-dollar grant to start educating communities about fire prevention as this is seen a threat to the economy.
- o) **Employment Assistance for students:** Dept Chair, Keith Kawamoto shared some visual displays that he uses with his students. In addition, the Fire Technology 101 Class: Fire Protection Organization (*now referred to as Principles Emergency Services*), the first chapters are dedicated to the hiring process. Chair, Kawamoto uses this chapter as a framework such as what are the different agencies, how to identify who is hiring, as Fire Departments don't hire every day of the year and only hire once a every two years. Student also learn about the etiquette and culture. Through funding with Perkins and SWF Chair, Kawamoto held interview seminars and talks to students about extracurricular credit. While the state fire marshal's offices do not have a requirement to show students how to find jobs this information is embedded in the program. The hiring process to become a structural firefighter has several different steps. The minimum qualifications for a Fire Department is to be 18 years old, have a high school diploma or GED and have worked as an EMT. Students need to set themselves apart from their competition by conquering the first 3 steps:
- **Step 1: Submit a job application.**
 - **Step 2: Pass a physical ability test.** Students need to demonstrate that they have the physical endurance to perform the duties of the job. Students need to meet certain vision and medical requirements. Pass a written exam to demonstrate they're smart enough to do the job. Student will have gain all the knowledge needed to pass the written exam in the Academy. Work was recently done to develop curriculum that will help students pass the physical examination.
 - **Step 3: Take an oral interview.** Student are taught to carry a proverbial backpack with them when they go into the interview. They tell the interviewer why they are better than the 72,000 people that are applying. They need to state that they for example, serve in the military, worked as an EMT and that they have a degree and graduated from COC.
 - **Background Investigation:** These investigations are very detailed and looks to find out everything an applicant has done their whole life.
- p) **Non-Academy Students:** There was a question regarding how many students who do not go through an Academy get hired? This data will be collected. There are some counties that do not require a Fire Academy and they will train them after they have been hired. However, student who do go through a Fire Academy have a higher chance of being

hired. The smaller Fire Departments do not have the times or resources to put applicants through a Fire Academy. Those smaller departments will use the programs such as at COC as a baseline for hiring. It is also important to note that just because there is a Fire Academy in Oxnard or Glendale that does mean there is fair and equal access for all students. As Oxnard College would favor students from Oxnard a COC student would be third tier down. Will LA County allow instructors from other college to teach at Del Valley Training? All instructor are BOT approve by COC and being a share site, if instructor meet the MQ's they will be permitted to teach those classes. It is also important to create diversity within the faculty teaching.

- q) **Hart High School Cadet Fire Academy:** The Hart District has been running their Cadet Academy using high school curriculum for several years. They will soon be moving their Cadet Academy program to Castaic High School. LA County is very interesting in making this facility available for things like Career Exploration days.
 - r) **Next Steps:** The plan for spring 2021 is to meet with the State Fire Marshall's Office (COSFM) as this is the first step in the accreditation process. This meeting will help to more fully inform the perspectives in terms of the exact number of credit hours. This will help to outline what each of the skills will require in terms of infrastructure expendable supplies and also qualifications for faculty members. For summer 2021 the next steps are to work with Professor Kawamoto on Curriculum Development and discuss how to structure this curriculum in terms of the COC philosophy. For spring 2022 work will be done on the approval processes through regional accreditation as well as the State Marshall office and IFSAC. The last step would be for initial course offering in the fall of 2022.
 - s) The proposal was changed to a program modification as this is not a new department but this is a new program that will live under an existing department. Existing pre-requisites can be used for the Academy but the Academy is new curriculum.
 - t) **Motion** for Program Initiation for Fire Academy by Dr. Omar Torres, seconded by Chris Boltz. Unanimous. Approved.
2. Program Discontinuance: Green Gardener – Regina Blasberg
- a) This item will be tabled and this program will NOT be discontinued.
 - b) The senior Lead at Pitchess Detention Center (PDC), who helps run the Education Based Incarceration (API) program, is requesting a Green Gardener program. The request is for a vocational program related to gardening as they is a garden at PDC. Garrett and Diane Avery will be touring this location.

III. Reports

- 1. Year One Status Report: Construction Tech and Manufacturing Program Modification – Tim Baber and Harriet Happel
 - a) This item was tabled.

IV. Adjournment: 11:32 pm