

Environmental Science Task Force

Progress Report Spring 2009

Recommendations

1. The Task Force recommends that since the A.S. degree was in place at the time of the agreement and since the agreement is not working to the benefit of both parties (HCC and UF) as called for in the agreement (UF agreement page 1, Section 4, Appendix G), that the agreement be revisited under the provision for coordination (Section 10). The Task Force recognizes that curriculum modifications may be required that are mutually beneficial.

Follow up: The HCC administration raised this recommendation with UF administration as part of its negotiations during 2008 to extend the Joint Use Agreement. UF was unwilling to modify its policy that only the Associate of Arts degree is acceptable for transfer to the UF College of Agricultural and Life Sciences as a junior. It does not appear presently that there are any viable articulation agreements that can be established with the University of Florida for HCC's A.S. degree in Environmental Science Technology.

2. The Task Force finds that the fees charged by D.H. Paul are excessive (\$11,000 more than an A.S. Degree) and impede a student's entry into the program (especially low income populations); graduation (and therefore retention) is not encouraged by the D. H. Paul literature; that existing or new HCC-developed courses can be implemented and substituted into the A.W.T. curriculum by HCC, and therefore recommends non-renewal of the D.H. Paul contract upon its contractual termination date of December 31, 2008.

Follow up: An agreement has been signed with D. H. Paul to phase out the joint program by May, 2010, and to teach out the students who were in the joint program as of December, 2008. An HCC task force has been assembled to develop a Water Treatment program that would be offered by HCC without D. H. Paul as a partner.

3. The classroom facilities have been upgraded to the college's 21st Century Standards; however, laboratory facilities are in need of upgrading. Although the lab facilities are not operated in a way to violate health and safety code, the Task Force recommends that immediate steps be undertaken to expand and remodel and upgrade the chemical laboratory and remodel and upgrade the soils laboratory or relocate to appropriate facilities at another location.

Follow up: Plant City Campus administration is pursuing several alternatives to accomplishing this important goal.

4. The Task Force recommends that an ongoing marketing campaign be launched for the A.S. program potentially including advertisements being made through the print and radio media markets, and direct mail pieces sent to graduating seniors and to diverse populations. The Task Force also recommends that counselors and advisors are given appropriate information about the program and steps are undertaken to correct coding deficiencies by program faculty. Capacity building strategies should be implemented, as well as strengthening ties to industry, with recognition that low enrollment classes will continue during the phase-out of the D.H. Paul contract.

Follow up: A task force is currently developing a plan to address all components of this recommendation for the program. Coding deficiencies have been examined. It appears that the primary source of error lies with non-environmental students who are enrolled in EVS courses for elective purposes only, i.e., EVS 1001.