



June 11, 2024

Dear Jared and Automotive Faculty,

Thank you for taking part in this inaugural year of the Department & Program Review (DPR). The focus of the DPR redesign was to simplify the compilation process, to highlight successes and voice critical needs, and to connect the College plan to a department or program's vision. Your engagement in this process is important, and we applaud the time and effort you spent reflecting on your program and analyzing the work you are doing.

Strengths of your program

We were pleased to hear about the many student, success-based improvements and accomplishments in recent years. The following are some of these examples:

- **Engaging Teaching Methods:** Introduction of interactive lectures and practical learning tools like increasing the use of customer cars and transitioning over to digital textbooks.
- **Customer Feedback Integration:** Implementation of a fillable PDF survey to align customer car problems with course content.
- **Adapted Class Schedules:** Adjustments made to class schedules to better accommodate student needs and common schedules.
- **Formation of New Advisory Board:** Establishment of a new advisory board, positively impacting workforce engagement.
- **Extended Program Reach:** Partnerships with Warm Springs, Madras, and JBarJ are great examples of how we can better serve our underserved communities.
- **Internship Opportunities:** Collaboration with Lithia Motors, including a student toolbox fund, aimed at providing internships is a stellar example of maximizing the value in community engagement.
- **EV Training Integration:** Recent program updates including electric vehicle (EV) training, reflecting advancements in automotive technology.
- **Community Engagement:** Participation in community events like car builds, donations to Meals on Wheels, and hosting car shows and fundraisers for CCI BBQ.

Challenges of your program

We know that the successes highlighted above were also accompanied by several challenges for the Automotive program. Your report makes it clear that hiring is priority issue in your area and that recruiting qualified instructors has been difficult. However, we also noted from your report that you have had several hiring "wins" since your last DPR. We encourage you to analyze what worked in those situations, including personalized

outreach efforts, strategic marketing, and appealing to many of the “fringe” benefits that come with working at a place like COCC. While there are limitations to how well COCC can compete with the compensation of private industry for potential instructors, we do know that many of our faculty report high satisfaction with the work/life balance at COCC and the support offered by our College community. These aspects of the job can be compelling for the right candidate. We offer additional suggestions for addressing the hiring challenge in the next section of this letter.

Your report also made it clear that Automotive faces several space and equipment challenges – perhaps not a surprise given the unique nature of your discipline. We recommend engaging both your dean and chair on some of the more manageable challenges, like the issues you note with the projector or noise in the space. There are a number of potential and reasonable ways for the College to address these types of challenges. The need for more space will certainly require more planning and likely a well-developed proposal that clearly connects to the priorities and goals of our current strategic plan. We recommend working with your dean to develop an understanding of how addressing this challenge might fit in with the College’s workforce goals.

Goals and needed resources

Regarding the strategic initiatives and potential areas of growth that you discussed in your report, we want to share the following:

Goal 1: Recruit more Part-time faculty

Your recently-revived advisory board and community partners (such as where your students do their internships) would be great resources for recruiting more part-time faculty. Strong partnerships require much care and keeping, so find opportunities for regular interactions and let them see you as a strong, dependable partner with whom they want to work.

Goal 2: Expand the footprint of our modular self-paced classes in volume and further geographical reach

Taking your program to other locations is a great way to expand your reach and serve the Central Oregon area’s automotive needs. Your report mentions several specific ideas. Continue to work with your dean to identify funding needs and sources to help achieve this goal.

Goal 3: Build out our hybrid curriculum to include the latest EV technology and ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems)

You have made a good start with this in acquiring EVs for students to work on over the last two years. Now you will need to seek funding for the kind of training you will need for your instructors, which you note will be pricey. In our response meeting, we discussed the possibility of a train-the-trainer approach in which you send one faculty member to learn and that person returns to teach others. If this is not feasible, work with our grants office and your dean to identify funding sources for this work.

Goal 4: Find Space in Redmond to house the entire Automotive Program at or near the COCC Redmond Campus

This will be a big project and will require some careful planning and resource allocation (and possibly fundraising). With your dean, explore this in line with the College's current priorities as expressed in the Strategic Plan and other guiding documents so that you can map out a reasonable plan. While this does not appear to be aligned with our current SP, it may become more central in the future, especially if we are trying to meet regional workforce needs.

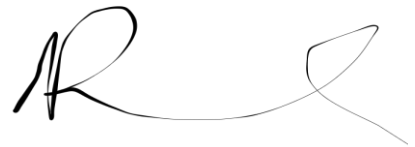
Thank you for your ongoing dedication to student readiness. Together, we can build on our achievements, address the challenges ahead, and meet the evolving needs of our students.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out. We look forward to working collaboratively to enhance the quality and impact of the Automotive program.

Sincerely yours,



Annemarie E. Hamlin
Vice President of Academic Affairs



Nick Recktenwald
Director of Assessment and Curriculum

Michael Fisher
Instructional Dean