

Richard Gentry, Fall 2023, Self Study

I. Response to Recommendations of the Previous Review

1. I continue to engage with the professional development offered by Los Rios and the SCC campus. Additionally, I have partnered with others in the AERC to hold five PD events during PD week on OER materials.
2. It was mentioned that I was to confer with the department chair and dean before working with outside groups, and I feel that it was unreasonable to recommend how and where I dedicated my service. Especially considering that at no time was I unavailable to help out on any reasonably scheduled department or division-related work and never missed any required events. I feel I met or exceeded all expectations of support of the department, division, and institution.
3. I completed my first two Associate degrees and am now lacking just 2 courses to receive my third Associate degree and qualify for transfer to CSUS.

II. Review Cycle History

Because of the changes in my duties, I am down to two courses. However, I have taught 12 of the 20 courses in the MET program.

1. MET 352 Mechanical Systems Calculations
2. MET 357 Drawing Mechanical Systems

I feel lucky to have taught 60% of the courses in the program and to have an excellent working relationship with my peers. Due to my knowledge of the classes I have taught and with the repeated discussions with my peers about the struggles our students have in their courses, I make continuous revisions to my material so that our students can become more successful in future semesters.

I have completed the conversion of 3 courses to 3 OER textbooks that I have updated, remixed, or authored.

Lastly, I am working with my peers to create competency-based testing in our classes so that we can have a more equitable and honest measure of what skills our students have.

III. Professional Activities

I have continued to work with the BEST Center as a participant and now as a presenter. Joining the BEST Center has allowed me to meet peers across the nation and learn from their experiences.

I am continuing to work on OER textbooks for my MET 352 course. I have made some headway; however, with other pressing commitments, progress has slowed down. I will continue to put in the time and effort to finish these projects as studies have shown overall that OER textbooks contribute to a successful student.

I have successfully curated through Libtext two OER textbooks: one for MET 256, now on its second major revision, and another for MET 257. A third for MET 357 is partially authored by me, along with remixed content.

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As time permits, I continue to work in the HVAC/R field during the summer break so that I can stay abreast of any developments and use that knowledge to influence where my classes go. Additionally, I still consult with industry to solve their problems on an ad hoc basis and bring those situations back to the classroom.

IV. Service

A. Service to your department/area

- **Leadership During Changes:** Steered the department through significant faculty and staff transitions, ensuring continuity and alignment with educational goals.
- **Student Opportunities:**
 - Revitalized the MET Club, guiding students in running it successfully.
 - Organized a career fair and open house every semester for our students post-COVID, attracting various industry players and enhancing the department's profile.
 - Technology Integration: Introduced cutting-edge instructional technology to enhance both teaching and learning, thereby setting our labs on par with the newest facilities on campus.
- **Lab Upgrades:** Committed to a dynamic lab upgrade schedule, using available funds efficiently to ensure our facilities meet current industry standards.
- **Web-Based Course Map Program:** Developed a course map program for MET and IMMT to streamline student curriculum navigation.

B. Service to the college/ district

- **Committee Involvement:** Actively participate in multiple college groups and committees, including Academic Senate, AERC, College Council, DCC, Distance Education, EITC, Achieving the Dream, Program Review, and Workload Committee.
- **Cross-Departmental Partnerships:** Collaborate with other departments and programs to co-create solutions and initiatives that benefit students across disciplines.
- **Institutional Impact:** My committee work and inter-departmental collaborations aim not just to fulfill a role but to make meaningful contributions that drive institutional success and student outcomes.
- **Faculty Enablement:** Developed ParsePanther, a web app that allows faculty to rapidly and accurately check whether students meet prerequisites for the courses they teach. This tool streamlines the enrollment process and enhances course integrity.

C. Service to the community

I volunteer with my neighborhood association for community events, such as tree planting and neighborhood cleanup. Additionally, as part of the neighborhood association, we team with our local councilwoman and school board members to help with various community events, such as park days.

I continue to donate blood every two weeks, as energy permits and have even given a presentation on donating to a college speech class.

V. Efforts Taken to Stay Current

A. Efforts taken to stay current in your field

To keep current with the HVAC/R field, I continued to work during the summer break when possible, as I have found this time invaluable for me to keep my skills fresh and my thoughts focused on the skills our students need to be successful.

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Additionally, among other endeavors, I attend seminars from manufacturers and industry supporters such as PG&E. These seminars cover new topics, and they have also helped me innovate how I teach.

B. Efforts taken to stay current in your assignment

Much of the committee work I have done has helped to keep me current with my assignments. The connections I have made and collaborations from this work have given me so many ideas to use. Sometimes they will not work for my classes or my teaching style, but they allow me to reflect on what and how I teach.

I also subscribe to several newsletters, blogs, and chronicles, such as The Chronicle of Higher Education, to help me see a larger picture of what I do as my newest profession.

Future Directions

A. Assessment

Strengths

Empathy: One of my most valuable skills is empathy, which fosters a comfortable environment for colleagues and students alike. This trait enhances open dialogue and helps me better understand what people need. Student reviews and direct feedback affirm the importance of this quality in my teaching and leadership roles.

Areas for Improvement

Continuous Learning: The more I teach, the more I recognize the layers and complexities in educational dynamics. I'm open to understanding that I have more to learn and am always seeking new perspectives.

Task Management: As someone passionate about my work—work that directly affects the success of our students—it's challenging for me to say "no" to additional responsibilities. I recognize the need to manage my commitments better to maintain a sustainable work-life balance.

Ongoing Efforts

Self-Awareness: My commitment to understanding both my capabilities and limitations helps me focus on areas for improvement, enriching not just my own experiences but those of the people I interact with.

B. Goals

Faculty Diversification

- **Accomplishments:** Successfully transitioned from a homogeneous faculty composition to one that is culturally, ethnically, and gender diverse, thereby enriching our department and its educational offerings.
- **Next Steps:** Continue this trajectory by nurturing our current students to become the diverse role models and faculty of the future, fostering a culture of inclusivity and belonging in our educational environment.

Daytime Program & Youth Recruitment

- **Objective:** To create a daytime program that caters to a younger demographic, lowering the average age of program participants.

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- **Strategies:** Target recruitment efforts towards transition-aged youth, partnering with local high schools and community organizations to raise awareness of the program's benefits and opportunities.

Building on Vision and Success

- **Objective:** To strengthen what we excel at, based on the needs of both the industry and our students, thereby solidifying our strong reputation for the long term.
- **Strategies:**
 - Engage in ongoing dialogues with faculty, students, and industry stakeholders to identify areas of growth and improvement.
 - Build a robust industry and alumni support network to prepare for financial uncertainties and future faculty recruitment.
- **Status:** Currently engaging with key stakeholders in meaningful conversations aimed at fortifying our reputation through deliberate actions and decisions.

C. Resources

Areas for Improvement: Marketing, Communication, and Institutional

- **Focus Marketing Shortcomings:**
 - Our MET program deserves better online visibility, especially in local HVAC training searches. We should be outperforming for-profit organizations that are less reputable but more visible due to effective marketing.
- **Slow Hiring and Facility Upgrades:**
 - The hiring process takes an inordinate amount of time, hampering our ability to adapt and grow.
 - Communication regarding facility upgrades is often scant or non-existent, creating uncertainty and hindering planning.
- **Institutional Focus on 4-Year Transfers:**
 - The college's overwhelming focus on preparing students for 4-year institutions overshadows the value of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs like ours.
- **Limited Exposure to CTE Programs:**
 - First-year experience programs rarely include tours of CTE programs.
 - While STEM initiatives are a focus on campus, it's important to note that the 'T' for Technology often goes underrepresented. These initiatives should better incorporate technology-focused departments like MET and IMMT, which are key to providing the practical, applied skills that are increasingly demanded by today's industries

VII. Other

I recognize and acknowledge the purpose of this self-study form, and with that did not include every article read or meeting attended.

VII. Attachments

Syllabi

1. MET 352 Mechanical Systems Calculations
2. MET 357 Drawing Mechanical Systems