

SCCC/ATS Board Meets, Approves Retirements/Resignations

The Seward County Community College/Area Technical School Board of Trustees met Monday, Feb. 3 to hear a wide variety of presentations regarding programs and grants.

The board approved a program review for the Social Science program, the Machine Tool Technology program and the Trucking Driving program with the next full review scheduled for five years.

Gary Damron, Social Science instructor, gave an overview of his programs and the general education classes that make up this area.

He said many of social science classes are part of the general education requirements for students to obtain a degree. These courses prepare a student to transfer to a four-year college or university. One of the greatest challenges is working with students who are also enrolled in developmental classes in both English and reading. Students need to have strong reading and writing skills to be successful in the social science classes.

Damron said the instructors also give a pre-test and post-test to their students to see what their knowledge level is when they begin a class compared to when they complete a class. Although numbers were down last fall in social science classes, he said, the program has seen a 33 percent increase over last five years. One goal of the department is to create consistency among all faculty members in course objectives, assessment, and support materials.

Butch Garst is the instructor for the Machine Tool Technology program. His challenge is to work with high school students and encourage them to complete the college-level program after they graduate from high school, said Larry McLemore, division chair. Garst is working hard to reposition the class delivery times so that it is more like traditional college curriculum. Presently, the classes are offered 8 a.m-4 p.m. and don't allow for students to come to a class at varying times.

The introduction of the Waterjet cutting machine as part of a Kansas Department of Commerce grant program three years ago has helped strengthen the program and the training of its students. The Waterjet is CNC-controlled and is the first CNC-type machine that primarily fits inside a welding program/shop. All CNC-controlled machines operate with coordinates, which are generated from computer drawings through the drafting program.

McLemore gave an overview of the Truck Driving program, which is adding an evening section beginning in March. The instructors hope this will bring in new students who cannot attend a six-week program that is offered Monday through Friday. The SCCC/ATS is licensed by the state to administer the CDL driving test to the students in the college's program.

The program now has a forklift component since more truck drivers will at some time be asked to load and unload their own cargo. In addition, the program has added a new part-time instructor and one additional truck.

Dr. Suzanne Campbell, STEM project director, gave an overview of the annual performance report of the U.S. Department of Education Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) grant. The first program added through the grant was Sustainable Agriculture Resources, which has developed its second-year curriculum.

The second program, Food Science and Safety, offered Introduction to Food Science this spring with a full program slated for fall 2014.

As part of the proposal, the college is planning to combine construction and equipment costs from year three and four to expand the Hobble Academic Building for Food Science and Safety.

Steve Wiens, Title V project director, gave an overview of that grant program that includes Corrosion Technology, Process Technology and the newest program, Natural Gas Compression Technology. The Natural Gas program has been offered for three years as a non-credit program. The Kansas Board of Regents approved the program in November as a credit program beginning January 2014.

Although the Process Technology program has distillation equipment and a biodiesel reactor installed and tested, the college continues to promote and encourage enrollment in the program.

With the introduction of personnel to help with distance learning, more and more programs, including Corrosion Technology are offering their courses online.

Overall spring enrollment is up, said Celeste Donovan, dean of student services. The challenge now is to retain those students this semester as well as through next fall for those who are not graduating. The college's retention rate is 66 percent, which is a higher rate compared to peer institutions.

As part of Career and Technical Education Month, the college will sponsor a "Bring a Friend to College Day." Current students will be encouraged to bring someone to campus to see what they do in a program.

Dr. Duane Dunn reported that Gov. Sam Brownback continues to support new state dollars to encourage high school students to enroll in career and technical programs and then continue their education at the college level to receive industry-recognized credentials. SCCC/ATS' distribution was \$309,131 for 1,007 credit hours for high school students enrolled in the college's career and technical education programs last fall.

In other action, the board

1. Approved the retirement of Sandy Brisendine, nursing instructor, and the early retirement of Roy Hamey, Welding Technology instructor;
2. Accepted the resignation of Ron Garber, Natural Gas Compressor Technology, effective Jan. 17; and Stephanie Wells, director of the Adult Learning Center, effective Jan. 22;
3. Approved changes to the Professional Employees Association constitution;
4. Approved the annual audit report as presented by Linda Billings of Byron Bird and Associates, which was an unmodified report;
5. Changed the June board meeting to Monday, June 23;
6. Changed the July board meeting to Monday, July, 21;
7. Renewed the current business agreement with EOS International for an integrated library system in the amount of \$7,024; and
8. Extended administrator contracts through FY2015.

The SCCC/ATS Foundation annual meeting will be at noon on Feb. 26.

The Board will meet Monday, March 3.

February is Career and Technical Education Month.

SCCC/ATS