

COMPREHENSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Moreno Valley College

Fire Technology Program
Ben Clark Training Center
Summer 2011

RCCD

RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT

Web Resources:

<http://www.rccd.edu/administration/educationalservices/ineffectiveness/Pages/ProgramReview.aspx>

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**Riverside Community College District
Fire Technology Program
Comprehensive Program Review:
Summer 2011**

A. Mission and Relationship to the College(s)

The Fire Technology Program at Ben Clark Training Center (BCTC) of the Moreno Valley College is an academic and occupational/vocational program that serves the community by providing basic and advanced firefighter education and training. The Fire Technology discipline provides accessible and affordable post-secondary education to students seeking a career in the fire service. Successful completion of the program leads to attainment of a high-paying professional career that will advance the socio-economic status of the students and the communities they serve by providing resources for themselves and others. The Fire Technology discipline works in partnership with other educational institutions, business, industry, and community groups to enhance the student's educational experience.

B. History

The last comprehensive Program Review for Fire Technology was completed in fall 2007. Since this time, the program has experienced significant changes including moving office locations, expanded facility renovations, staff reclassifications and program leadership restructuring. Additionally, the Public Safety Education and Training Program (PSET) received a five-year Title V grant for Hispanic Serving Institutions in the amount of \$2.8 million to expand access and provide services for all students, including the Hispanic-student population. The grant, in part, addresses technological program improvements and implementing real-life scenario-based practical skills applications for fire technology courses. In addition to these resources,

FIPSE Grant Funding

PSET was awarded a FIPSE (Funds for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education) grant of \$600,000 to expand the capacity of the basic Fire Academy through the addition of a part-time Fire Academy, and to address the lifetime physical fitness needs for fire academy cadets.

Facilities Improved

In 2007, the leadership at Ben Clark Training Center (BCTC), which included Riverside Community College District (now Moreno Valley College as of January 2010), Riverside County Sheriff's Department, and CAL Fire/Riverside County Fire, began discussing a facility plan that would better serve the student population and agencies that utilize the Ben Clark Training Center. These discussions led way to a large expansion at BCTC whereby office space, classroom facilities, and fire department drill grounds were developed.

In spring of 2008, two PSET programs, the Fire Technology Program and the Emergency Medical Services Program, moved from their former location at 16791 Davis Avenue to renovated Cal Fire

space at 16888 Bundy Avenue at the Ben Clark Training Center in order to better serve students, while the Law Enforcement Program remained at 16791 Davis Avenue with Sheriff's Administrative services. The move expanded the office space and facilities from approximately 540 square feet to over 1,000 square feet, and now includes a reception area, copy/storage room, staff and faculty offices, employee break and lounge areas, as well as restroom facilities for staff and students. In addition to expanded office space, the newly renovated CAL Fire facility also includes an integrated computer lab for utilization as a comprehensive student resource center providing student assessment, counseling, and orientation services for new and returning students in public safety education and general education courses. Over the course of 2008-present, student services expanded to include DSPS, Veterans Services and Financial Aid. In summer 2010, student services technicians for the ADJ/Law Enforcement Training Programs were combined with the technician for the Fire Technology/Fire Academy Program to create a consolidated Admissions and Records office in the CAL Fire building. Today, the facility at 16888 Bundy Avenue serves as the hub of student services at BCTC with updated signage added to the BCTC facility in early 2011 to provide directions for students to their appropriate program locations.

Previous to these location changes, classroom space was perhaps the most inhibiting component of the 16791 Davis Avenue location. Classrooms were often double-booked or room capacity and did not adequately accommodate the number of students. In spring 2008, modular classrooms were installed, and in fall 2008 all Fire Technology Programs were moved to modular classrooms located across from the Fire Technology offices at 16888 Bundy Avenue. The modular classrooms provided for consistent room scheduling, and for classes to begin and end in the same classroom space. The Fire Academy Program, which is a 19 Unit Program, has a dedicated classroom with wireless access. Additional wireless access has been requested for the other classrooms at BCTC.

Drill Grounds Improved

Also in the spring 2008, the Riverside County Fire Department began construction at BCTC to expand the drill grounds, and by 2010, the drill grounds included two fire/rescue towers, roof props, a burn building and hot cube, a drafting and pump testing facility, equipment and apparatus bays, public restrooms, a fuel facility, and equipment props. Because of these additions to the drill grounds, all Fire Academy Activities can now be completed at BCTC instead of multiple locations required prior to this in order to complete the certified training courses.

Accreditation Received from the State Fire Marshall's Office, 2007 - 2012

In April 2007, the State Fire Marshall's Office awarded accreditation to the Fire Academy/Fire Technology Program as an Accredited Regional Training Program, the highest level of accreditation, which is valid for five years. A provision of this accreditation is that the program offer an Associate of Science in Fire Technology and provide an Accredited Fire Fighter I Academy. In addition to these offerings, the Fire Technology Program offers the full series of Fire Officer and Chief Officer Classes, both of which became degree pathways in 2008.

New Positions Filled for a Manager, Classified Staff and Full-time Faculty and other support positions

In 2009, the District commissioned a study of classified positions for the entire district. During this study, the use of part-time "hourly" employees was prohibited, except as seasonal employees; as a result, the District converted these positions to permanent part-time positions. This conversion affected two positions in the Fire Technology Program, creating two part-time classified positions, Truck Operations Coordinator and Fire Technology Assistant.

Several personnel changes occurred in 2009. The first full-time fire technology faculty position, who also serves as the Department Chair for PSET, was hired for the department. In 2010, the Fire Technology Director's position, which had been a classified manager's position, was converted to an academic manager's position with the title of Director of Public Safety Education and Training. This director's responsibility includes not only fire technology but also initiatives that may expand across all disciplines, including student services. In addition to the director and faculty position, the unit employs a Fire Technology Program Assistant, Truck Operations Coordinator, Fire Academy Coordinator, which is a full-time contracted position with CAL Fire, Part-Time Fire Academy Coordinator, an Instructional Department Specialist, and two permanent part-time clerk typists.

Achieving Center Status Letter of Intent

In 2010, Riverside Community College on behalf of Moreno Valley College submitted a letter of Intent to the State Chancellor's Office of California Community Colleges to establish an educational center of the Moreno Valley College at BCTC. In March 2011, RCCD was notified that the Letter of Intent had been accepted by the Commission on Post-Secondary Education.

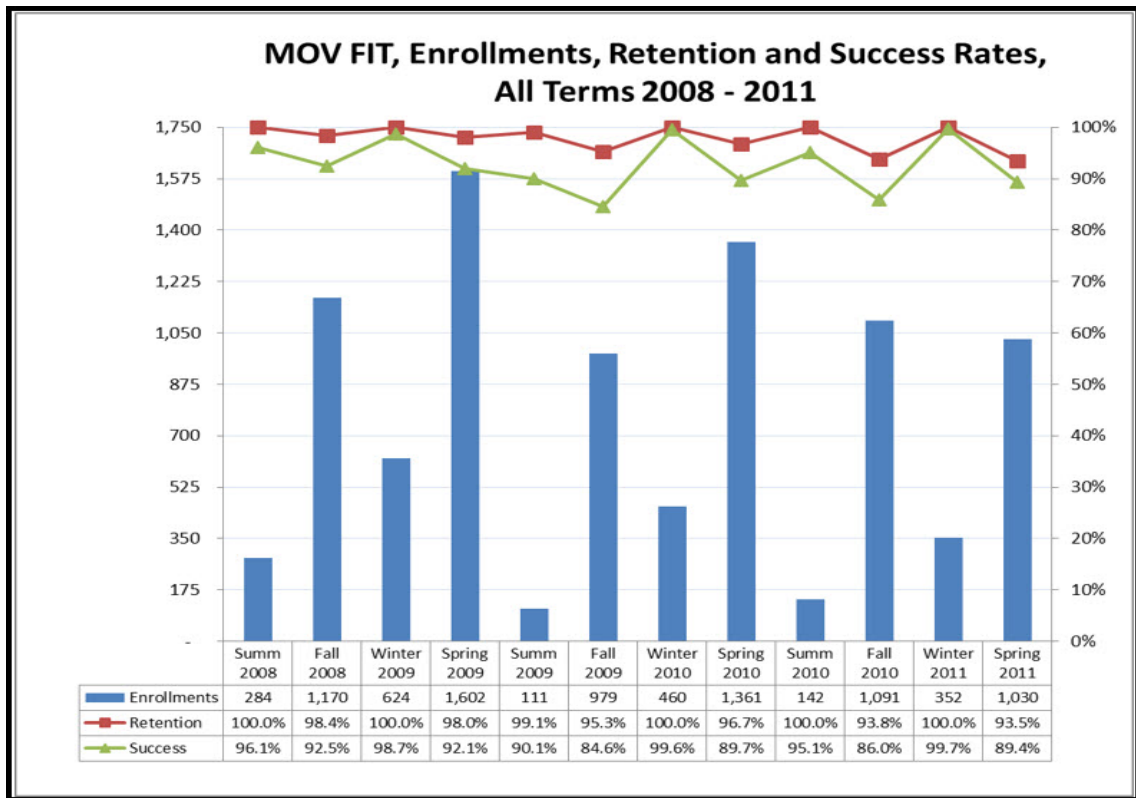
C. Data Analysis and Environmental Scan

The current economic downturn and the budget reductions experienced by the regional fire technology industry since 2008 have had a direct impact on program course section offerings and student enrollments in one of the programs, the professional development track, but has had only a modest effect on semester-based course enrollments. Comparative Fire Technology Program data, collected by the Office of Institutional Research, reflect the following significant trends since the last comprehensive Program Review:

- The professional development track, Fire Officer and Chief Officer, which accounts for all winter programming has experienced an approximate drop of 25% in enrollments from 2008 to 2010. This is due to the fact that the industry has experienced uncertainty with regard to hiring and promoting fire personnel.
- The semester-based courses have remained relatively stable for the fall semesters during the period 2008-2010, while the spring semesters indicate moderate fluctuations throughout this period. In 2009, enrollments rose due to the addition of section offerings in Fire Technology after the cancellation of Law Enforcement courses at BCTC. However, in 2010, when the District mandated section cuts, the enrollments returned to the 2008 levels. This enrollment trend is expected to continue for the academic year 2011/2012.
- Overall success rates in all course offerings are high, although total course section success rate declined by 7.82 percentage points from fall 2009 to fall 2010 (91.86% to 84.04%). From spring 2009 to spring 2010, the success rates are similar (92.31% to 92.44%), but are higher than fall semester success rates during the same period.
- Overall retention rates in all course offerings are high, although there are slight declines in retention from the period 2009-2010. From fall 2009 to fall 2010, retention in all course offerings declined by 2.91 percentage points (97.63% to 94.72%), while retentions rates for spring 2009 to spring 2010 declined by 3.38 percentage points (97.86% to 94.48%).

Based upon this information, the program does not plan to make any significant changes to its scheduling patterns. However, to ensure maximum enrollment, the unit continues to actively market

its fire technology classes by expanding the BCTC/Fire Technology website, using social media such as Facebook and Twitter, continuing outreach to local high schools, and promoting degree pathway awareness in the classroom. The program will also continue to work closely with its partners, the Riverside County Fire Chiefs' Association, the Riverside County Training Officers' Association, and CALFIRE/Riverside County Fire in meeting industry demand for professional development to serve as many students as possible.



D. Programs and Curriculum

Fire Technology programs and curricula are dynamic to meet the needs of the industry. Moreno Valley College currently offers four degree pathways: Fire Technology (Core Courses), Fire Academy, Fire Officer, and Chief Officer. Moreover, Fire Academy, Fire Officer, and Chief Officer at the Ben Clark Training Center are certified and accredited by the State Fire Marshall's Office.

In order to expand access to all students, including underrepresented students, a part-time fire academy was developed and established in January 2011 with the funding and support of a Title V Hispanic Speaking Institution grant through the Department of Education. This is a seven-month program that meets two nights each week and every other weekend. In all other aspects, the academy conforms to the standards and curriculum of the fulltime academy.

Because of significant injuries to students in the physical fitness component of the Fire Academy in 2009 and 2010, faculty and staff began development in fall 2010 through spring 2011 of a prerequisite fitness class designed to decrease the number of injuries, and thereby increase the number of graduates from the academy. With funding support from the FIPSE grant, the new curriculum was developed, professional development was provided to faculty through the ISSA

(International Sports Sciences Association), and new gym equipment was purchased. This new course, FIT S3A has been approved and will be implemented in fall 2011.

In spring 2011, the program employed two part-time instructors to begin updating the Fire Technology Curriculum. To date, sixteen of the seventy-nine courses have been updated, while funding from the Title V grant has allowed six additional course updates. The goal is that all Fire Technology courses will be updated on a three-year rotation.

Equipment and Technology Improvements for the Program

With the assistance of Perkins, Title V and FIPSE grants, the Fire Technology program was able to expand the acquisition of equipment and improve technology within the program. These equipment purchases included a new Thermal Imaging Camera, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBAs) and an air-filling station, ladders, wildland gear, extrication equipment, additional firefighting tools, SMART instruction technology systems, and wireless access to the Fire Academy Classroom. The program is also expanding into hybrid, web enhanced and on-line delivery of courses. Currently, the Fire Academy is web-enhanced and FIT-1 and FIT-2 are scheduled for hybrid delivery in fall 2011.

E. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

The Fire Technology Program has been actively engaged in Student Learning Outcomes Assessment since spring 2010. The faculty has identified SLO's for all of its courses and is currently assessing approximately 25% of its courses, with full implementation scheduled by 2012. A comprehensive report of SLO assessment and reporting was completed during the annual program review, submitted in May 2011.

F. Collaboration with Other Units Including Instructional, Student Services or Administrative Units

Collaboration with other units within MVC includes Financial Aid, DSPS, Veterans Services, Counseling, EOPS, and Assessment. These services are critical for students. With the retirement of the Veterans Services staff member, the vice president of student services has assigned student services' staff to address providing veteran services not only on the MVC campus but also at BCTC. In addition, a mobile veteran's unit has been planned to provide information about veteran's benefits to students at both the MVC campus and BCTC. It is critical that these and other student services remain a fundamental part of the comprehensive student services program to be provided at BCTC, for they were identified as essential services needed at BCTC for MVC's accreditation.

The Fire Technology Program, whose Fire Academy prerequisites include students to be EMT-certified, works closely with the EMS program. Since most fire departments require firefighters to be EMT certified, many departments are considering priority hiring to firefighters who are also licensed as paramedics. The Fire Technology Program also works closely with Administration of Justice Law Enforcement Programs in collaborative partnerships at BCTC.

G. Outreach Activities

BCTC has been working with Brandman University to provide general education classes for students that would matriculate to RCCD. PSET is also working with CSUSB to develop a bridge program for students in Public Safety to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration.

The Fire Technology Program works closely with all local fire departments to receive their industry expertise and insight. The Riverside County Training Officers Association for the Riverside County Fire Chiefs' Association serves as the Fire Academy Advisory Board. The Program also works closely with the California State Fire Marshall's Office, the accrediting agency for the Fire Technology and Fire Academy Programs, in delivering courses for the professional firefighter.

H. Long Term Major Resource Planning

Need for a Permanent Facility

The Public Safety Education and Training Program (PSET) is in need for a permanent building(s) to support students, faculty and staff. Currently, classes are held in temporary portable classrooms with inadequate instructional technologies for today's population. Future infrastructure needs include expanded and upgraded wireless access for classrooms, integration of SMART Boards, document cameras, as well as lighting and seating associated with professional classrooms.

Due to the age of the buildings at BCTC, the HVAC systems (Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning) are antiquated and inefficient. The facility that serves as faculty and staff offices, are in need of improvements to meet the demands of a modern office setting. These improvements include expanded bandwidth for optimal internet connectivity, an electrical system that can accommodate an office workload, and an HVAC system that is reliable and efficient. The facilities at BCTC are rented by the College from the County of Riverside.

I. Summary

1. Continue work toward the Fire Technology Program goals and objectives of the Department of Education Federal grants, Title V and FIPSE:
 - Beginning in January 2011, implement the Part-time Fire Academy that will serve the needs of Riverside County's diverse public safety and special district populations.
 - By September 2011, improve retention and completion rates of Fire Academy students through the implementation of a new physical fitness course, FIT S3A, tailored to the needs of firefighters, in order to reduce the occurrence of debilitating injuries throughout the duration of the Fire Academy.
 - By September 2011, implement FIT 1 and FIT 1, two core courses in the Fire Technology Program, as hybrid courses.
2. By September 2012, complete assessments of all SLO's in all Fire Technology courses and

continue assessment on an ongoing basis thereafter.

3. Increase degree completers through the continued relationship with Brandman University.
4. Sustain the implementation of comprehensive Student Services at BCTC which includes Admissions and Records, DSPS, Veterans Services, Financial Aid, EOPS, Counseling and Assessment.
5. Continue to develop courses and certificates to meet the job performance requirements and professional development needs of Public Safety students such as the two new certificates, Fire Investigation and Wildland Firefighting.
- 6.

J. Recommendations to the Program Review Committee

(none at this time)