

## **Synthesis of PROE**

### **Q1. What was the purpose of PROE?**

PROE was a project which required all occupational programs using Perkins monies to complete a review process every five years. Some of those interviewed felt that the purpose was the improvement of occupational programs, although others felt that at the institutional level it amounted little more than an accounting process.

### **Q2. What was the process used in PROE?**

PROE required participating programs to complete a standardized questionnaire which included information on instruction, equipment, facilities, texts, and job placement. Students in the program as well as advisory committee members were asked to fill out questionnaires. Data on program enrollment were also included. After all required information had been compiled, it was submitted to the state.

### **Q3. What do you feel PROE accomplished?**

Some of those interviewed felt that the report provided them with useful information or confirmed beliefs they already had about OCC programs. Others believed that it forced the review of programs and created an opportunity for discussion among faculty and administrators. Some, however, felt that PROE's primary accomplishment was the satisfaction of the state's requirement.

### **Did the process help you accomplish your day to day responsibilities?**

Most interviewees did not feel that PROE was useful in accomplishing their daily responsibilities.

### **In comparing purpose to results, to what extent was it successful?**

Some of those interviewed believed that while PROE was not useful to them personally, it at least provided the faculty with some feedback on their programs. In addition, advisory committees had to be convened to complete PROE requirements, which was viewed as a positive result. Finally, some felt that PROE substantiated the need for updated equipment in many of the occupational programs, which was also a positive result.

### **What about PROE was not successful? What caused the problems with the model?**

Those interviewed felt that PROE was unsuccessful for a number of reasons. First, many believed that the process did not include an adequate feedback mechanism, so that results were never fed back into the college. The sense was there that was little or no follow-up

to integrate findings into the curriculum once the data had been submitted to the state. Others felt that the process lacked real buy-in from faculty or administrators, and was thought of as a compliance tool rather than a learning or improvement tool. Some believed that the emphasis on paperwork limited the program's success, and that the questionnaire format did not adequately convey student opinion as a limited number actually completed the forms. Finally, some commented that PROE findings often indicated a need for new or updated equipment, but there was no budget to make these improvements.

### **How could the model have been more successful at OCC?**

Most felt that PROE would have been more successful had the college found a way to better integrate its results back into the institution. Specifically, there should have been an attempt to implement recommendations from the advisory committees, and those involved should have been held accountable for making sure that appropriate steps were taken. Others felt the college could have done a better job of emphasizing that PROE was a tool for program improvement and not just a state requirement.

**CRITERION IV****PROGRAM REVIEW for OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION (PROE)**

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**Summary of Eight Focus Group (5-6 Deans, 1-2 Faculty) Interview Transcripts:*****Purpose of PROE and process used --***

Starting in 1978, the state required all occupational programs using Perkins monies complete this form of review process every five years. It was a questionnaire process that involved students, faculty and advisory committees. It required compiling statistical data on the program, gathering objective information about the program, and asking for comments about the program.

Questions related to program instruction, equipment and facilities, texts, and job placement. Advisory committees were asked to determine the benefits of the programs and/or needed improvements to the programs.

An administrator summarized the report.

***What did PROE accomplish?***

- ◆ Good picture of what needed to be changed.
- ◆ Sometimes the report confirmed what was known, sometimes faculty learned from it.
- ◆ The report was successful. The data was reliable.

***Most of the administrative responses did not indicate that it helped in accomplishing day-to-day responsibilities.***

***Comparing purposes to results, to what degree was PROE successful?***

- ◆ Faculty did have to review programs in a systematic manner every 5 years.
- ◆ Advisory committees had to be convened, although often it was for the purpose of completing the forms.
- ◆ Substantiated the need for updated equipment.

**PROE (Continued)*****What was not successful?***

- ◆ Often it was hard to implement because of no funding.
- ◆ Faculty were reluctant because of resistance to making changes.
- ◆ Lots of paperwork involved.
- ◆ Handled as a compliance tool rather than a learning tool.
- ◆ No follow up, no evidence that anything was done.
- ◆ Not integrated with curriculum process.
- ◆ Outdated format, did not include special populations.
- ◆ Limited number of students in programs filled out forms. Students would use the form to evaluate the class rather than the program.
- ◆ Results weren't fed back.
- ◆ Equipment issues predominated.
- ◆ Bad was often edited out in the document sent to the state.

***How could PROE have been more successful at OCC?***

- ◆ Effort made to make PROE an integrated part of college evaluations.
- ◆ Have administrators that care about the recommendations; get administrative support for five-year plans.
- ◆ Make the purpose to improve the programs.
- ◆ Attempt to carry out the recommendations; some sort of follow-up process; hold persons accountable.

***Other:***

- ◆ One respondent quite bitter:  
"Occupational faculty are second-class citizens."  
Low opinion of administrators; criticism of curriculum process.

**PROE (Continued)****CONCLUSION**

Respondents generally agreed that the process was fundamentally good. It forced review of programs, discussion among faculty and administrators, and meetings of advisory committees. Responses provide evidence that whenever there is review of a program, there is some good; however, there must be accountability coupled with responsibility, and the process must be connected to institutional planning.

Overall, there was an negative perception of PROE. Five of seven respondents said that results were not substantial, and that there was never any follow up. Often lack of funding prohibited equipment purchases and facility upgrades. Respondents were critical of administrators for not supporting plans and critical of faculty for sometimes being reluctant to change.

The synthesis group noted that here is an example of an endeavor that was the right thing to do, but that lack of an institutional plan coupled with project accountability caused it to be ineffective. Administrators blamed faculty and faculty blamed administrators. Accountability and responsibility is not a unit item — it must be shared by everyone.

PROE.RPT