

Ideas go through ringer to become classes

Kyle Steele

Feature Editor

Each term the course catalog hosts a wide selection of new and different classes, but how do these courses develop and become available at Clackamas?

While the initial stages of creating a class may vary, all ideas have to go through the same basic trials before they can be funded. Committees, deans and the state all have a hand in the creation of every course and what each of them means for students who will be transferring to a four-year university.

The idea

"In my department, offering a new class is a largely collaborative process between an instructor and the department chair," said English Instructor Trevor Dodge.

Dodge has created a number of English classes, including Games and Literature and Introduction to Literary Theory, which are new to

the college this term.

Concepts for classes are generated by more than just instructors and department chairs; businesses, professions and even students can be part of this step.

"A new class may come from an instructor's passion for a particular subject, or from a need we see students or the community have, or an area of interest that is new," said English Department Chair Trista Cornelius.

Writing up an outline

Once the subject of a new course has been established, the next step is for instructors to write up a course outline.

"This form helps faculty make learning outcomes, grading criteria and course content concrete and consistent," Cornelius said.

Included in the outline are student learning outcomes, which describe what the course will teach students during the length of the term and why the class is wanted or necessary.

After the first draft is finished, it is then given to the department, department chair and the dean, who finalize details and needs that they feel the class should meet.

All the way to state

When the final touches have been made to the course outline, it is time to fill out a New Course Form.

Questions on the form regard how the class will meet degree requirements, the goals of the class and the number of credits.

"Coming up with ideas for new courses may be different for each department, but the process to the state for having them approved is the same," Curriculum Office Administrative Assistant Lynda Graf said.

The state reviews the information and weighs it against similar courses offered by other community colleges and four-year universities. Once it has been reviewed by the state and has passed all testing, it can be entered into the course catalog for the next year.



Illustration by Kyle Steele Clackamas Print

Other considerations

While many courses are registered with their own course number provided by the state, some experimental courses initially receive a 199 or 299 number from the college.

"We can run a class under those numbers twice, and then we need to get an official state number," Cornelius said. "The only catch is

demand," Graf said.

Some instructors and department chairs seek input, in order to mine what the student body needs, so that their department better serve the school.

Cornelius said, "I go to the deans routinely and ask what they heard students needing [or] in terms of classes, times, days

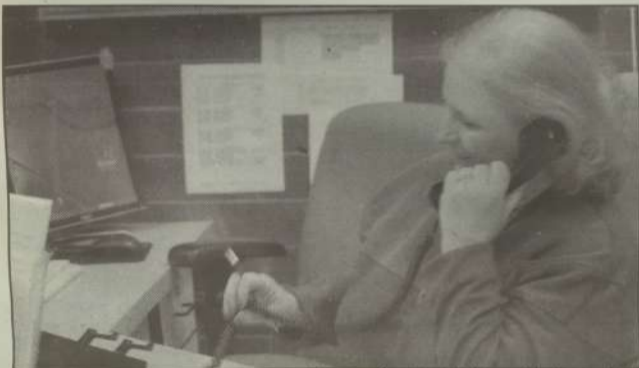


Photo by Sean Van Walchren Clackamas Print

Operator Judy Clark answers the phone from her desk in the Community Center on the Oregon City campus.

Judy Clark: the voice of Clackamas

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A desk near the south entrance of the Community Center could be considered the nerve center of the entire campus. Running that area is Judy Clark.

Clark works as the switchboard operator, a job that requires answering questions and connecting callers to their instructors or department extensions. The position usually makes her the first person

a caller will actually talk to over the phone, and has made her the official voice of the college.

"I enjoy helping and directing people," she said.

In addition to her duties as the switchboard operator, Clark does reception work, as well as helps students and staff with their questions in person at her desk.

"There is a satisfaction in knowing you can help people and that they appreciated the information we give them," she said.

A 20-year employee of Clackamas, Clark still greets people walking by with a smile or a quick hello in between calls, and keeps up a warm and friendly attitude.

"Clackamas becomes a family to both staff and students," she said, "and one of my goals is to help everyone as much as possible so they can have a successful college experience."

Outside of her job at the college, Clark enjoys spending time with her real family, especially her grandchildren, whose ages range from three to



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