

New group focuses on improving retention

Patty Salazar
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Whether you are coming to Clackamas Community College straight from high school or returning to school from the workforce, students can have difficulty navigating their way into college. Luckily for students, faculty members see the obstacles that they face and have created a program to help.

Think about when you first started at CCC. How easy was it to register, set up the placement test, enroll in classes or know where to look for resources? To some students, it was a breeze. To others, it could be stressful and frustrating.

That is why the First Year Interest Groups, or FIG, were created to help students get

on track with their goals, help build relationships with faculty and create friendships with students with the same goals.

Although initially there were four FIGs, the only one that is continuing in Winter term is the Business and Writing FIG that is led by Stephanie Schaefer, Amanda Coffey, Bill Waters and Tanya Patrick.

The Business and Writing FIG was created for students whose goal is to get their business degree. It has helped build a miniature community within the larger community college campus. It consists of four linked courses for the semester with four instructors and the same students in each class.

The courses all count towards the Associate of Science Oregon Transfer Degree in business that CCC offers to students.

Schaefer, who is the instructor of Human Development

121, said she likes to see students interact, and connect with one another which wouldn't normally happen at a two-year college.

"We don't have resident halls where you meet your life-long friends and stick with [them] for a year," Schaefer said. "This is our answer to that."

Schaefer explained that the four faculty members had separate ideas about creating something to help students be more successful. It was not until they shared those ideas with each other in Spring term that the project got traction and took off.

Austin Carter, who is currently in the Business and Writing FIG, explained that he was having trouble scheduling classes. He decided to join FIG once an adviser suggested it to him.

"I think the biggest plus is

the small class sizes," Carter said. "We are all together in all of our classes so there is more of a connection between the students and teachers."

For Carter, one of the main ideas for after completing the program is for students to continue taking classes together to make the transition much easier.

Cody Howell, who is also enrolled in the Business and Writing FIG, said the biggest plus for him is that the courses are connected and assignments can be used for more than one class.

Starting in winter term, Schaefer's Human Development 121 is going to be offered to students enrolled in the FIG for free.

"It is exciting and new," Schaefer said. "The feedback I am getting is that students are enjoying this class so we plan to keep it but remove barriers."

Schaefer is concerned students might see the class and might not think it is important. To encourage students to sign up HD 121 is going to be free to students in the FIG program.

Although the program is focused on Business and Writing, students shouldn't be opposed to join, explained Coffey.

"WR-121 and BA-131 teach skills students need for all classes and future employment and BA-101 is a common elective taken by students in any major," Coffey stated.

For Winter term the Business and Writing FIG will let students be on campus three afternoons a week.

"Students can sign up for the FIG and not have to worry about whether they can get into one of their classes, or about having an awkward or unworkable schedule," Coffey and Waters stated.



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Left to right: Cody Howell and Jin Kuen Hong sit with Stephanie Schaefer, instructor, to plan out their class schedule for Winter term. The small class sizes make it possible for the students and instructors to have a more personable connection with each other.

What's Up With... unapproved posters around campus?

Sequoia Allen
The Clackamas Print

No matter the time of year, dozens of brightly colored flyers and posters can be seen around campus, amassing on the walls of the hallways and fluttering in the breeze outside. As the term goes on, the impromptu wallpaper only grows thicker, occasionally to a fault.

Many people post flyers, for many different reasons: clubs, hoping to attract students to their meetings, businesses advertising their goods and services and students sharing news of an event or a room to rent.

All must follow the same rules, however, in order to spread the word via postings around campus. These rules are laid out by the Associated Student Government, although not everyone knows this. In order to post a flyer or poster, it must be taken to ASG to

be approved by the Promotions Officer. This goes for all the clubs and individuals on campus, and even for other members of ASG. Haley Campa started her term as Promotions Officer this fall, and she seems to be taking to the job with great enthusiasm.

"The purpose of the event doesn't matter," Campa said. "But in order to put a poster up [ASG must] stamp it."

In order to be approved, all posters must contain certain core elements. They must clearly state the date and time of the event, contact information and be laid out in a visually appealing manner.

Including a visual is highly recommended, although not required. After these requirements have been met, the material is stamped and may be posted. As long as the posters are placed on brick walls or bulletin boards, the campus is fair game. However, it's a mistake for people to think they're off the hook after their poster has been approved. Campus Services is not

tasked with removing all the old flyers.

Debbie Mullins, assistant to the dean of Campus Services, said firmly that "ASG is in charge of that."

ASG is ultimately responsible, but they should not have to take down the posters that are posted by other clubs or individuals. The rule is that the person or club who posted the items must also take them down when they are no longer applicable — or after 30 days. Unfortunately, this rule is widely ignored, and sometimes even ASG fails to remove its own posters.

Signs declaring that "all items posted on campus must be approved for posting by Student Activities" and that direct potential promoters to contact ASG are prominently posted on many bulletin boards in central locations on campus. The limitations of this system are highlighted by groups who do not spend the majority of their time in these locations.

The Horticulture Club is a

perfect example of this. The horticulture center is located in Clairmont, a building that is a good 10-minute walk from ASG's office in the Community Center. Chris Flickema, president of the Horticulture Club, was surprised when asked whether the current system worked well from her club's point of view.

"I'm not aware of having to do that," Flickema said of the process. She also stated that they've never had any problems with their flyers being taken down, despite the fact that they were not officially approved for posting.


However, while the system may not run entirely smoothly, the campus has hardly dissolved into total poster anarchy. In fact, Campa says that ASG has not received any complaints on these issues during her term. The only complaints have been that some flyers were not eye-catching enough, an issue which she tries hard to solve by working with the creators of various flyers prior to posting.

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