

CAREER & EDUCATION

Interest Grows in Chinese Culture, Language

PCC expands Asia studies at Cascade, SE Center

A growing interest in Chinese culture and its languages has been met with new course offerings at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus at 705 N. Killingsworth St. and Southeast Center at 2305 S.E. 82nd Ave.

"It's hard to ignore China and it's logical for us to do this," said Nancy Wessel, the Cascade Campus division dean of Liberal Arts and Pre-College Education.

Wessel said there is growing interest in Asian studies with incoming students. Local high schools also have Chinese language programs that the PCC program can tap into.

"We are starting to try to reach out to the high schools that have the Chinese language classes so they can move smoothly over here into the second-year level," Wessel added.

The PCC program's only instructor Hsiao-Yun Shotwell said the credits from her courses can be transferred to universities.

Shotwell started teaching Chinese language classes at Portland State University before joining PCC several years ago. Her courses fill up quickly and contain between 25 and 30 students per class for a total of almost 60 first-year language students.

Eli Patton, 28, of northwest Portland is one of those students. A web development major, he wants to transfer to PSU with a degree in Mandarin to accent his computer



Portland Community College Chinese culture and language instructor Hsiao-Yun Shotwell with her class at the Cascade Campus in north Portland.

science work because of the significance of China in his field.

"I heard some good things about the program so I wanted to start here," Patton said. "It's a very diverse group of students and half of them are non-traditional. There are high school students, a girl that is 15 years old and Asian American students that want to speak the language and learn their own culture. There are a lot of students in their 30s, 40s and 50s, too."

Patton is involved with the new PCC Chinese Club where 26 students can meet off campus to dis-

cuss their homework and provide a needed support structure. Because of the challenging nature of learn-

ing Mandarin, he said it pulls everyone together into a tight-knit group of students.

"It's difficult because you need to study every day," he said. "But it's a really engaging community."

Low-income Schools Shorted

A new report from the U.S. Department of Education documents that schools serving low-income students are being shortchanged because school districts across the country are inequitably distributing their state and local funds.

The analysis of new data on 2008-09 school-level expenditures shows that many high-poverty schools receive less than their fair share of state and local funding, leaving students in high-poverty schools with fewer resources than schools attended by their wealthier peers.

The data reveal that more than 40

percent of schools that receive federal Title I money to serve disadvantaged students spent less state and local money on teachers and other personnel than schools that don't receive Title I money at the same grade level in the same district.

"Educators across the country understand that low-income students need extra support and resources to succeed, but in far too many places policies for assigning teachers and allocating resources are perpetuating the problem rather than solving it," said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said.

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