

Focus Award Guidelines

1. Focus Awards are a way to help students see beyond individual courses to a cluster of related courses, the successful completion of which is worthy of recognition. Full-time faculty members who share an interest create the award. Focus Award faculty advisors identify LDC (lower division collegiate) courses addressing a theme and lay out possible combinations of courses students can complete to earn the award. Focus Award faculty advisors are responsible for keeping the list of courses and requirements for the award up to date, recruiting, advising and mentoring students pursuing the award, and disseminating information about the award and its subject matter throughout PCC and beyond.
 - Focus Awards have a minimum of 12 credits, with 12-20 credits seen as the standard range. *Focus Awards of greater than 20 credits may be approved if it can be demonstrated that the additional credits do not negatively impact degree completion.*
 - Focus Award courses are selected based on the CCOGs, so that the course will meet award requirements no matter where or how PCC offers the course or which faculty member teaches the course.
 - All Focus Award courses must also meet transfer criteria for AAOT, AS, and/or OTM.
 - With permission of the Focus Award advisor, it is possible to substitute one course to meet Award requirements even though it is not specifically listed as a Focus Award course. This would occur when a student completes one particular section of a non-listed course that supports the Focus Award requirements. *For example*, a section of WR 121 could be built around a set of readings having to do with China and be counted towards the Asian Studies Focus Award; even though WR 121 is not on the list of courses for that award, it has a focus that is consistent with the Focus Award.
2. Each Focus Award must demonstrate a connection with an academic major at one or more of PCC's transfer institutions. PCC Focus Award faculty advisors should not only review course requirements with 4-year colleagues but also explore ways in which students can be "handed off" to the major program at the transfer institution and seek specific scholarship opportunities for PCC students moving up. Ideally, students would have specific contacts (e.g. faculty and advisors) at each transfer institution, so the transfer to the degree program is seamless.
3. Written material describing the Focus Award must clearly state that it is not a certificate or degree officially sanctioned by the state and does not appear on the student's transcript. It also identifies an administrative office for student contact, program award tracking and presentation of the completed award.
4. Proposals for a new Focus Award and revisions to a Focus Award must be submitted to and approved by the Degrees and Certificates Committee of the EAC before faculty advisors can make the award.
5. To ensure each Focus Award is up to date and aligns with the current guidelines, the Focus Award faculty will be advised by the Degrees and Certificates Committee if the guidelines change and if revisions to the Focus Award are needed.

Operational

Faculty wishing to propose a new Focus Award or revise an existing Focus Award should contact the Curriculum Coordinator in the curriculum office prior to the Degrees and Certificates Committee submission deadline for the catalog year in which the new/revised Award will appear.

<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/academic/eac/curriculum/degree-certificate-committee/meetings.html>

Updated Guidelines from Degrees and Certificates Committee February, 2014