

PCC's Virtual Suggestion Box

Suggestions & Responses

2023-2024

(Archived suggestions and responses can be found on the T-Drive:
Executive Council Meeting Minutes: Suggestion Box Archives)

Suggestion Box Comment 25 (12/7/23)

The "new" selection committee for the Employee Excellence Awards Nominations doesn't appear to have inclusion, diversity or equity. How was this group actually selected?

Response:

Thank you for your question.

The selection committee for the Excellence Awards stemmed from the subcommittee that was formed to revamp PCC's process. A standing tradition at PCC and a common practice at other colleges whose processes we benchmarked is to allow the previous year's winners to help decide the winners. Last year, there were 4 faculty and 4 staff winners. Those 8 individuals were asked to help select the next year's winners. Representatives from the Faculty and Staff Associations were also asked to be a part of the selection process; finally, the committee that revamped the process thought it would be a good idea to have one rotating dean (so there would be an odd number on the selection team, in the event of a tie). The committee felt there needed to be some Student Development representation on the selection committee, so Dean Tasha Williams was selected to be the eleventh member of the selection committee. The selection committee, therefore, reflects intentional choices to create a pool of members across the campus-- previous winners (which will change after we select new winners this year with our new process), representatives from our two associations, and a rotating dean.

Throughout this entire process, our goal has been to produce a much better process, one that addressed the issues and concerns members of our PCC community have expressed. The process has been simplified; there is now concrete, specific criteria by which individuals will be evaluated (which is also tied to the revised evaluation instruments); individuals can self-nominate or be nominated by their peers; there are clear rubrics which have been developed so the selection committee has clearly defined criteria to evaluate nominees; and the selection committee will receive blind submissions with names redacted (so people are assessed solely on merit and outstanding work).

One of our many goals at PCC is continuous improvement, so as we embark on this new process, as always, we will solicit feedback and make adjustments as necessary to our process.

Suggestion Box Comment 24 (12/7/23)

Could someone please explain the process that was used to form a committee to revamp the Employee Excellence Awards selection?

Response:

Thank you for your question.

Because there is no standing committee specifically for this purpose, a committee was formed to address the feedback and concerns raised from last year's process. Since our awards pertain to Faculty and Staff Excellence, both the Faculty Association Chair and the Staff Association Chair were asked to be a part of this committee. In addition, because the process is funded via monies allocated to the Foundation, a representative from the Foundation was selected to be on the committee. The program runs through our Human Resources and Organizational Development (HROD), so a representative from Human Resources was asked to serve on the committee. Two deans, both of whom work/oversee/collaborate with a lot of faculty and staff across campus (and had a detailed log of concerns, questions, and suggestions concerning last year's process), were also asked to be a part of the committee.

It was very clear that there were a lot of questions and concerns from last year's process, so this group was tasked with responding to those questions/concerns and crafting something that would be much clearer and more equitable.

We are making concerted efforts to ensure we are listening to the feedback we are receiving, and the development of this committee and the revamping of this process was all a direct result of the feedback received from last year's awards process.

Suggestion Box Comment 24 (11/30/23)

It seems like every month there is something wrong with our pay, leave, retirement, etc. It is unsettling how often things are done incorrectly in payroll. What is being done to make sure leave and pay is processed correctly going forward?

Response:

Thank you for your concern. We are working diligently to ensure that we are error-free in our payroll department. If you have any questions, issues, or concerns with your payroll, leave balances, or retirement, please submit a Human Resources ticket at <https://piedmontcc.gofmx.com/human-resource-requests> and we will address the issue immediately.

Suggestion Box Comment 23 (10/30/23)

The vending machines in E Building seem to constantly have problems and take money. There is no way for most to get their money back when they use cash. So there are two issues to be addressed.

Response:

We have reached out to the vending company and are currently awaiting their response. If the vending machine experiences any malfunctions and fails to return your money, please visit the cashier at the business office to request a refund.

Suggestion Box Comment 22 (10/20/23)

We received the email about doing the required Vector training. Though I see the topics covered as important I was sad to see that something DEI related was not required. Specifically, when there was a course entitled "Implicit Bias and Microaggression Awareness" available. This would have been a great opportunity to make sure there was a college-wide effort to understand these terms, and the importance of making sure they aren't happening on our campus. I encourage PCC to take these types of opportunities to incorporate more training like this. I do want to point out that I know these training courses happen on our campus, but this would have been a great opportunity to make sure all individuals had at least a required opportunity to go through this type of training.

Response:

PCC has a policy that requires employees to undergo training on five different topics, out of which Bloodborne Pathogens, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment are mandatory. Since there have been complaints about the length of the training sessions in the past, they have been limited to 1 ½ hours. While previous trainings used to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) topics, the courses have been modified this year to include new information and instruction on topics related to employee wellbeing. If you have any suggestions for specific topics to include in the yearly training, don't hesitate to contact the Professional Development Committee and share your feedback. Your input will be considered not only for annual training but also for convocation and other training opportunities.

PCC's commitment to DEI goes beyond a single training session and is embedded in various ways. The 2021-2031 Strategic Plan includes DEI objectives in each strategic initiative. Moreover, the Diversity/Global Awareness Committee arranges college-wide and professional development activities that promote educational equity and cultural diversity. This committee's efforts help advance DEI throughout the year.

Suggestion Box Comment 21 (10/16/23)

The new copiers and printers have been on campus for approximately 6-weeks, and they still have not been updated to have finishing (staples and hole punch) capabilities. Every time the question is asked, we are only told that "it is coming" and "we are waiting on the manufacturer." If the order has been placed with the company, shouldn't IT be able to give a date for when this can be expected to be fixed?

Response:

I want to thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to address the finishing capabilities of the new copiers and printers on campus. I completely understand your concerns and frustration regarding the delay in getting these capabilities up and running.

I want to clarify that we are actively working on this issue and have been in regular communication with the manufacturer to expedite the process. While we share your desire to have this resolved as soon as possible, there have been some unforeseen challenges on the manufacturer's end that have caused delays.

However, I want to assure you that we are committed to providing you with a concrete timeline for when the finishing capabilities will be fully functional. As of now, we anticipate that the finishing capabilities will be in place by November 3rd, 2023. Please rest assured that we are actively monitoring the progress and will do everything within our control to meet this deadline.

Suggestion Box Comment 20 (9/20/23)

Could you please clear up if the college is moving forward with Neogov as previously discussed or NeoEd that was presented at the Town Hall on 9/15/23?

Response:

The college will be moving forward with NeoEd which is a product of NeoGov that is specific to educational organizations.

Suggestion Box Comment 19 (9/18/23)

I think there should be a policy put in place regarding assignment due dates. Some courses require students to submit assignments on weekdays. This is not feasible for a student who has to work full time and support a family. I have spoken to several students who had to withdraw because they couldn't adhere to the weekday due dates.

Response:

We encourage and trust faculty to consider all students and to provide ample time for students to complete assignments. Because every discipline and each course is different, we do not mandate a weekend-only assignment calendar through policy. Faculty are our subject-matter experts and are the best ones to decide when assignments are due for their respective courses. If there are questions or concerns about a particular course, we encourage individuals to talk directly to faculty members, as they are the ones tasked with ensuring students meet course learning objectives.

Suggestion Box Comment 18 (9/18/23)

Some of the refurbished exterior restrooms now have doors that are lockable from the inside. This can create safety issues/concerns in various ways. This can become an area for physical or sexual assaults. It can also provide an area for inappropriate physical/other activities especially among some of the younger students on campus.

Response:

There are several items to be taken into consideration when determining the locking style of exterior and bathroom doors. While locking from the inside may raise security concerns, so does not being able to lock from inside, for example, sheltering in place. All exterior classroom doors lock from the inside for this purpose. However, your concern is valid and warrants additional research and coordination. This issue will be put on the agenda for the next Grounds, Safety, and Facilities committee meeting.

Suggestion Box Comment 17 (9/15/23)

Is there a possibility to get a water dispenser / ice machine for the Person Campus in the E building dining/common area for staff and students to use? The Café can get or sell you ice while they are open, and S100 is usually locked, and not really accessible to students. It would be nice to be able to fill bottles with ice & water at any time during operational hours.

Response:

Thank you for your suggestion that would be beneficial to our employees. The facility services team in partnership with the building, grounds and safety committee will staff this request to determine an appropriate location. As a reminder in the interim the café is available to provide ice at no charge with your container

***Suggestion Box Comment 16 (9/14/23)**

It seems that the HR employees time could best be used for training in their positions, especially due to their inexperience in these roles. Not sure how regularly working in the Pacer Café will help improve their job skills or their availability to all of the current and future college employees they are supposed to be here to serve.

Response:

PCC has enlisted a temporary agency to fill in as needed for the PCC Café to alleviate the use of other PCC employees. However, there are limited resources available on short notice due to sickness or emergencies. Any closures or limitations are being published by email with as much advanced notice as possible.

Suggestion Box Comment 15 (9/11/23)

In light of a Code 200 at PCC during the first week of classes, and the active shooter situation at UNC-CH, can the "Panic Button" remain logged in on the classroom computers? Currently, faculty is required to log into the Panic Button in every classroom they use every day. It seems as if the Panic Button could be automatically assigned to the classroom and the room phone number. It seems like a system that I am sure PCC is paying significantly for could work more efficiently for the safety of campus.

Response:

The Panic Button can still be used even if you do not enter your name and phone number daily. Security will still know the location if you're using a desktop.

Suggestion Box Comment 14 (9/11/23)

I thought we followed the PCC policies. Policy 5.15 is for new hires, not already hired. Also, it states only "criminal background checks". The process provided to us seems to ask for more than criminal background checks! If I refuse to submit to a company where I do not trust what I am reading, will we lose my job? Is there an alternative plan?

Response:

Suggestion Box Comment 13 (9/8/23)

Suggest that the Business Office has a back up plan in place when the Cashier is not here to better serve our students. Several times recently during registration students have been unable to have holds removed or pay tuition due to other employees in the Business Office being directed not to answer the phones.

Response:

Our goal is to always ensure the students are being accommodated in the business office. We have students that are unable to get through by phone due to having only one line, but we do return all voice mails as a priority. The recent changes with the bookstore caused issues and resulted in tying up the line more this past registration period.

Currently, Surkeithus is the primary back up for the cashier and as such answers the phone, covers the window, and responds to voicemails in the cashier's absence. We have recently trained both our new Accounts Payable Technician, Laura, and our new Purchasing Specialist, Carrie, to be able to take payments (only) should both Surkeithus and Kim be out at the same time.

We have hired an Accounts Receivable Supervisor, Steven, who starts 9/18/23 which will allow more focused attention to the students. There are plans in place to move Accounts Receivable down to Building E, which will provide a better space and allow us to have more than one phone line to assist students as well as being a more convenient location for them.

Suggestion Box Comment 12 (9/8/23)

It would better serve the employees if the position of HR Director directly reported to the President.

Response:

With the CFO's departure, we will be working to determine the appropriate reporting structure for the new HR Director.

Suggestion Box Comment 11 (9/8/23)

Suggest that the Director of HR position be filled by an outside candidate with an HR background and knowledge of the State System. This is a crucial position.

Response:

We will be outsourcing the search for this position along with the positions of CFO and Foundation Executive Director.

Suggestion Box Comment 10 (9/8/23)

Why is the process checking more than criminal history? I am happy to provide the criminal search, but not the rest. This seems like a military style of action, where the military owns everything about us.

Response:

*See response to suggestion 8.

Suggestion Box Comment 9 (9/8/23)

I have completed background checks for many school systems for substituting, test proctoring, or volunteering. And only the "criminal background" was conducted! Person County Schools uses this webpage (<https://www.pcsnc.org/page/volunteer>) to conduct the criminal background investigation. The process from public school systems never pulled personal information (character, general reputation, personal characteristics, mode of living, medical, or credit standing). So why is PCC requesting more information? Did you read the fine print in the process- it is alarming to me! And where are the boundaries to what this company can pull. By giving authorization to this process – who knows what will be pulled. Very unfair!

Response:

*See response to suggestion 8.

Suggestion Box Comment 8 (9/7/23)

Statement of Policy 5.2.2.2.1. "The offer is contingent upon review of the approved candidate's criminal background check". So why is the background questionnaire investigating additional information. "The investigative consumer report may contain information concerning your character, general reputation, personal characteristics, mode of living, or credit standing." And "There are many types of consumer reporting agencies, including credit bureaus and specialty agencies (such as agencies that sell information about check writing histories, medical records, and rental history records)." I have nothing to hide, but I feel this is an invasion of my privacy.

Response:

Though we've gently mentioned that this was coming – through a college-wide memo shared back in May, and through recent Administrative weekly newsletters, we acknowledge that we should have sent a heads up that the CBC process was about to begin, along with clarification of what the process entailed, since it is a new process for most.

Many of us with prior work experience have at some point completed an authorization for an organization to conduct a CBC as a condition of employment. But we're not used to it coming directly to us from a **third party**, we're not familiar with the slew of **consent forms** that accompanied this request, nor are we used to being pinged for additional information in a format that looked suspiciously like **spam**.

Our CFO shared a letter dated back to **May 7th** that explained what would happen and from whom the email would arrive. And then there was a delay, so it wasn't top of mind. We attempted to remedy that by including it in admin weekly updates, but we were still surprised with the vendor's poorly worded email, that made it sound as though we were all in trouble. You are not being *considered* for employment or *active consideration*; you are **employed**!

The intention of this effort is to finally honor our responsibility as a public organization to make sure that CBCs become a **routine part of our hiring process**, while reaching back to fix a long-standing gap of not having done so with current employees. Some of you, like me, already have CBCs on file with the College because of your job title, for example – those who work in our prisons, at clinical sites, and with our childcare center.

Some of our lessons learned (I'm sure more will come) are:

- send out more **timely reminders** when something new is about to occur.
- ask **all supervisors** to specifically mention this to direct reports as a double check.
- work with the vendor on the **language of the initial email**.
- explain in greater detail that the **disclosures** were for access to databases checking for criminal background concerns that might not show up if they only looked at one source.

We know how important communication is when we're all so busy and we are clearly hurting without a PIO. We will work to do better.

In the meantime, we're asking you to complete the CBC forms as requested, knowing that there may be a follow-up to validate that they have pulled the correct person's contact information. We'll make some

time at next week's town hall to answer any additional questions you might have about this process; we already have several virtual suggestion box items on this topic.

Suggestion Box Comment 7 (9/7/23)

I suggest we have random drug testing for ALL PCC employees.

Response:

It is the policy of Piedmont Community College (PCC) to provide employees, students, and visitors an environment that is free of illegal drugs and alcoholic beverages, thereby allowing them to achieve their personal, professional, and educational goals. PCC is committed to complying with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug-Free Workplace Act; therefore, the unlawful possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcoholic beverages by students, employees, or visitors on a college-owned, -leased or -controlled property or at any college-sponsored event is strictly prohibited. [Reference PCC policy – 2.12](#)

Paragraph 10.1 of the policy further states “Any college employee may be required by their supervisor or college administrator to submit to a drug and/or alcohol examination.”

- When there is reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use
- After an accident
- After an injury

Suggestion Box Comment 6 (8/16/23)

Housekeeping has to do a better job of cleaning our facilities. These first appearances formulate opinions for our customers. Classrooms, bathrooms and common areas are starting to look awful. Work orders are submitted, supervisors spoken to and still same results. Excuses are made about staffing level shortages or inability to keep employees. That honestly shouldn't matter. These facilities should be clean especially the first week of school. Vacuuming, mopping, collecting trash and cleaning surfaces should happen daily. When you observe the staff not working for most of the day, the excuse of staff levels is absurd. Please do a better job.

Response:

If have a specific housekeeping/custodial need you can submit a work ticket at <https://piedmontcc.gofmx.com/maintenance-requests/new>. If you have specific issues that go unresolved or issues that are urgent in nature, feel free to contact Ed Morrah or Larry Coleman.

Suggestion Box Comment 5 (8/7/23)

Human Resources needs to have a mailbox for staff and faculty to leave envelopes in when their exterior door is closed and locked.

Response:

In most cases the Human Resources Office remains open and accessible. However, there are some occasions where there might be a need for the door to be locked. Most recently the door has been

closed but not locked due to construction noise. An exterior mailbox is not a viable solution due to the possibility of sensitive HR related information being contained in HR documents. As an alternate solution intra-office mail is available.

Suggestion Box Comment 4 (8/7/23)

1) refill the hand sanitizer stations throughout the campus and make sure they are working 2)remove the Covid info that are on the buildings and update the boards with current info

Response:

Our facility services team strives to make campus as clean and safe as possible for our employees and students. We monitor hand stations as part of cleaning process. However, if there is one or several hand station locations that are not working I would encourage you to place a maintenance request at <https://piedmontcc.gofmx.com/maintenance-requests>.

Suggestion Box Comment 3 (7/12/23)

HR should be more proactive and send out a notice when there is a major change in the way things are done. The most recent was the change to part-time pay, June and July no longer paid at the end of June. Prior to that there was no notification about leave not showing on our paystub for two months during the transition to self-service.

Response:

The practice of paying part-time staff for June and July was a process that wasn't documented in our policies or internal procedures. Due to staffing changes the current staff was not aware of this practice. We are working with college leadership to determine the pay process for June and July of next year and will give employees better notification. The leave balances missing from paystubs was a state level issue and we were not aware of it until notified by the state. If you have any question related to pay stubs or other related HR issues you may submit a help-ticket at <https://piedmontcc.gofmx.com/human-resource-requests>.

Suggestion Box Comment 2 (7/11/23)

As of right now, it seems like the mini grant is only offered once a year, as far as applying for goes. It would be great if this was available to apply for every semester. I have many ideas and I am trying to keep notes for the next go around, but a year is a long time to wait.

Response:

Thank you for your suggestion. The foundation budgets a certain amount each year for mini-grants. If we award more often than once a year, those funds don't go as far. It is suggested that you approach your dean or director with your ideas to see if other funding is available. Many times we have seen mini grant proposals get funded through sources already available at the college. The college also contracts with a grant writer, who can look for opportunities to meet that need, as well.

Suggestion Box Comment 1 (7/10/23)

High Schools stop out lists; mailing targeting parents of students identifying as first gen; mailing targeting PECIL students' parents; survey PCC alumni that graduated with an Associates to see where they are in their career/education; showcase students and parent who graduated from PCC.

Response:

Thank you for your comments. We are currently in the process of expanding our target audiences. We have had great success with using mobile ads and digital marketing campaigns. This use of technology has increased our ability to reach more people in our service area than ever before, including high school stop outs, graduates, parents, and alumni. Student success stories are a great way to showcase our services and programs at the college. Be on the lookout for more stories this fall. Additionally, we are adding part-time recruiters to our staff to maximize our traditional outreach efforts within Person and Caswell Counties.