

Pierpont Community & Technical College Exhibit 8B

Program Assessment - Summary of Retention/Graduation/Placement

The Pastry & Baking program enrolled 28 total students in 2015-2016 academic year, and both programs enjoyed a 100 percent retention rate from fall to spring semester. Previously, students were required to officially declare only one concentration while working on more than one concentration in actuality. Beginning fall 2017, students will be allowed to declare multiple concentrations within the Food Service Management major.

Pierpont's Culinary Arts and Pastry & Baking programs graduated a total of 23 students in academic year 2015-16: 11 in Pastry & Baking. This includes fall, spring, and summer graduations.

Our institution lacks a centralized office for gathering data on graduates, but the cohort nature of our program allows us to stay in contact with our graduates through social media, community service, civic engagements, and reciprocal professional relationships. A Google survey of 2015-16 graduates yielded a 26% response rate that indicated 50% of our graduates were employed, but not currently in the field, while a full 33% were currently employed in the field.

In addition, two students from the Culinary Arts program completed summer internships at the Greenbrier Sporting Club, and the program looks forward to at least one of them being invited to apply for full-time employment.

Also, the Culinary Arts and Pastry & Baking programs each boasts a graduate now employed by Lautrec at Nemaquin Woodlands Resort in Farmington, Pennsylvania, one of only 23 Five-Star, Five-Diamond restaurants in the world. The Program can proudly say that 10% of its graduates that year are now employed at one of the most exclusive dining establishments in the world.

At least five other graduates in this academic year are working directly in the food service industry, from up and coming local restaurants and bakeries to resorts. At least two students are pursuing higher education and are now enrolled at our sister institution, Fairmont State University, with whom we share a campus. Three other students are not currently employed: two have decided to remain stay-at-home mothers for the time being and another student is suffering an illness.

In short, of the 23 graduates, we are certain that seven are now employed directly in the food service industry and two graduates who are postponing employment while they work toward a Bachelor degree and an MBA.

Our students are required to participate in practicums and internships before graduation, and they are evaluated by these practicum site supervisors using 13 different criteria:

- Work attitude
- Responsibility for assigned tasks

- Appearance and personal hygiene practices
- Motivation
- Time management
- Use of available resources
- Decision-making skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Creativity
- Teamwork skills
- Ability to follow directions
- Reasoning ability
- and, application of program knowledge competencies to assigned tasks.

In fall 2015, 17 students participated in this practicum experience. They are ranked on a 5-point scale, with 5 being “very good” and 1 being “very poor.” 14 of the 17 students were ranked at 3 or higher on all criteria.

Students collectively earned top scores in the criteria of “Work Attitude,” “Responsibility for Assigned Tasks,” “Appearance and Personal Hygiene Practices” and “Reasoning Ability.”

No student earned a rating of “1” in any category. Typical employer comments include the following:

“Very good worker!! We will miss him” and “Overall very good employee...” Some employers provided more specific detail: **“XXXXX did her internship here over the summer. I saw a big improvement when she came back for her practicum. She still could use a little work on making decisions on her own, but for the most part she did very well.”**

Twenty students participated in the spring 2016 practicum experience. Students earned top scores in “Teamwork Skills,” “Ability to Follow Directions,” and “Application of Program Knowledge competencies to Assigned Tasks.” No students earned scores below 3.

In addition to the practicum site supervisor evaluations, the programs also administer a confidential questionnaire to graduates sitting for the practical CC/CPC exams. We incorporate the student feedback in to our program assessment and plans for improvement.

Regardless of overall performance, we believe our graduate feedback to be as important as our employer feedback. For example, an anonymous respondent made the following comment in spring 2016.

The program faculty is adamant that students are given opportunities in at least three other courses and in volunteer opportunities to demonstrate those skills and encourage currently enrolled students to take advantage of all learning opportunities in which they can practice their skills both in the classroom and in their practicum and internship experiences.

We encourage our students to practice butchery and knife skills outside of the classroom, and based on this graduate's comments, we will include this note of encouragement in writing on each classroom syllabus rather than just announcing it in class.

“Sample Syllabus Statement: ALL students of the FOSM major, including Pre-Culinary and PrePastry/Baking, are strongly encouraged to practice butchery and knife skills outside of the classroom. Please submit a market order to the lab manager by the Tuesday of the week before the product is needed and schedule a practice session with a Chef Instructor.”

In addition to the practicum experiences provided to students, all prospective graduates must also complete an internship. Employers complete a Preceptor Evaluation/Competency Profile for each student. Both majors are evaluated against these basic criteria:

- Food/Kitchen Sanitation & Safety
- Catering & Banquet Production
- Purchasing/Business Operations
- Responsibility/Work Ethic/Attitude

Pastry/Baking students are evaluated against these criteria:

- Pastry
- Baking
- Production

Five for Pastry/Baking. (Many students are still completing their internship hours.) Results show that students excel in the criteria of **Safety & Sanitation Practices and Responsibility/Work Ethic/Attitude**. (Most students did not have the opportunity to be evaluated on Purchasing/Business Operations because those tasks fell outside the scope of their assigned duties.)

Of note is the fact that our Pastry/Baking students excel in the **Production** category where they are involved in daily mise en place, creating daily specials, and assisting in daily menu production and presentations. The co-curricular experience of the internship allowed the Pastry/Baking students to gain experience in workplace volume/production and planning on a “real life” scale.

The following feedback was provided by Preceptors for Pastry/Baking students:

“XXXX is an excellent employee, always on time and professional. Her baking skills are advanced for her limited experience, and her nightly work on the line is always organized, well-prepared, and beautifully plated.”

“XXXXX has been such an asset to our establishment. Her attention to detail and work ethic are exemplary. I’m thrilled she would like to continue with us.”

These detailed responses from Preceptors inform the program that in addition to developing students’ skills, we must also mentor our students to learn that their confidence should be used as a tool for effective leadership and teamwork.

We are especially proud of what a local Chef Educator in our service region and member of our Technical Advisory Committee has noted:

“...it is great to see so many recent graduates in the local scene...Talking to restaurant operators, it seems that Pierpont graduates are ‘a hot commodity’ for employers. Kudos on that!”