

# Program Review

## Executive Summary

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### School of Business & Hospitality

#### Majors Reviewed:

- *Culinary Arts and Systems, BCA, B.S.*
- *Culinary Arts Technology, CY, A.A.S.*

April 2015

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**Pennsylvania  
College of  
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Academic programming related to food preparation and food service management has a long history at Penn College, dating back to the late 1960s. The culinary degrees, CY and BCA, both fit well with the College's mission of providing education and hands on technical training that lead directly to employment in the field. The culinary programs also contribute to the College at many levels and represents the best the College can offer. Prospective employees, advisory committees, friends of the College, and the public are regularly entertained in the facility and around the campus. The culinary programs also frequently engage in activities that garner positive publicity for the College. Such activities include the Little League World Series, the Kentucky Derby, the Visiting Chef Series, the PA Farm Show Culinary Connections, and the College's Centennial celebrations and Gala.

While retention has been a significant concern over the years, these programs have shown considerable growth until the past two semesters. Our research indicates that the dip in enrollments parallels a similar decline in all culinary programs across the nation. One article from *Wall Street Journal* indicates an increase in base salaries across the hospitality industry as the economy improves resulting in the industry's struggle to compete for talented employees. Job opportunities remain strong for both programs both regionally and nationally, but also brings strong competition from other culinary schools both regionally and nationally. As we move forward our focus will be on assessment, retention, programmatic changes and/or new programming that maintains our mission while addressing our need to maintain a higher rate of enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

To help us attain the aforementioned goals we have identified a number of findings and recommended actions for both of our degree programs. The key findings and recommendations are:

Finding:

- Retention and graduation rates remain points of concern with both programs. Successful graduates, however, continue to report positive job placement and satisfaction with the programs.
- While assessment is seen as a priority, the department needed to build a more robust plan to measure newly revised program goals and course objectives.
- Culinary Art Technology reaccreditation is on schedule with a site visit planned for fall 2015; faculty have successfully addressed all recommendations from the last reaccreditation report.
- Culinary arts and Le Jeune Chef Restaurant continue to positively impact the College and campus community.

Recommendations:

- Maintain a robust schedule of assessment for both programs.
- Continue to review program curricula for opportunities to focus on niche markets and skills within the culinary field that might distinguish the school's program (i.e., minors, sustainability focus, other industry certifications), and develop curriculum and resources that support such a distinction.
- Reinvestigate ACFEFAC accreditation for the BCA program and possible inclusion of more business course that exist within the College catalog.
- Analyze low enrollment and retention issues within the culinary programs and implement necessary changes.

- Develop new marketing efforts and outreach opportunities to reach perspective students.
- Implement an internal graduate survey during students' final semester to garner much needed data regarding student satisfaction and success.
- Explore cost effective purchasing practices that are specific to the unique needs of the curriculum, Le Jeune Chef, and in support of teaching sustainability.
- Deliver an employer survey for internship properties to collect and analyze industry recommended skills and competencies of successful culinarians.