

# Program Review

## Executive Summary

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### **Plastics and Polymer Engineering Technology**

Majors Reviewed:

- *Plastics & Polymer Engineering Technology, B.S.*
- *Plastics & Polymer Technology, A.A.S.*

2015



A strength of the Plastics & Polymer program is the employability of its graduates. As demonstrated by strong placement rates, the graduates are in high demand (locally and nationally) and are capable of making an immediate impact in their place of employment. The volume of employers who attend the College's Career Fairs, and other on-campus recruitment opportunities, indicates that the program's talented graduates will continue to be in high demand in the coming years.

The Plastics & Polymer program at Penn College is one of five Plastics Engineering or Engineering Technology programs accredited by ABET's Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission. This accreditation, coupled with very strong industry support and connections, makes the department a national leader in plastics education and has added to Penn College's reputation as Pennsylvania's Premier Technical College. The presence of the plastics program, and the Plastics Innovation and Resource Center (PIRC), is also seen by industry and government as one of the feature economic draws in the region and in the state.

A number of the department's faculty are nationally recognized; all bring strong industry experience which clearly enhances the hands-on learning that occurs in the classroom and labs. They strive to keep current with rapidly changing technology through attendance at national workshops and presentations, as well as through industry connections.

Through analysis and development of this program review, the following recommendations have been proposed:

- Continue working to posture the department for success in the next ETAC/ABET self-study and team visit (Fall 2018). Specifically, the department must develop budget provisions for training workshops for faculty and administration, continue to refine its assessment model, and improve student learning as assessment data indicates.
- Continue development of the Master Equipment List (MEL) to address the shortcomings of the program's aging equipment. The focus will be on key pieces of processing equipment where equipment failure (and lack of duplication) would affect student learning objectives. Continue working with PIRC, the industry advisory committee, and institutional advancement to secure equipment donations as opportunities arise.
- Build new opportunities for students to participate in competitions and activities at a national level. Greater participation in these activities should generate additional scholarship opportunities as well as opportunities for equipment donations.