

Program Review Executive Summary

Forestry

Majors Reviewed:

- *Forest Technology (FR), A.A.S.*

April 2017



The Forest Technology degree is a long standing and popular offering at Penn College. The curriculum focuses on applied technology and is accredited by the Society of American Foresters (SAF). The curriculum sequence is designed to educate students to be skilled forest technicians upon graduation. Some highlights unique to this degree include a hands-on harvesting class with log truck, wheeled and track skidders, integration of GPS/GIS technology through multiple classes, a wood products class with a functional sawmill and new kiln, and a 250+ acre outdoor learning lab at the Earth Science Center campus.

The program enjoys an active industry advisory board that strongly promotes opportunities for graduates. Membership of the board has expanded in recent years, bringing a wider range of industry professionals. Traditional job opportunities as forest technicians with private and government agencies continue to be strong. In addition, a growing number of employers in the wood products industry are actively seeking the College's Forest Technology graduates. The program faculty are working with several wood products associations to develop new opportunities.

Faculty continue to promote new opportunities for forestry students to earn industry certification and have recently added The Game of Logging, which is a certification focused on open-face tree felling with chainsaws. Students also have an opportunity to compete with the Woodsmen's Team at various events in the Mid-Atlantic region against other colleges. These competitions provide students with excellent opportunities to highlight their skills and to network within the forestry community.

A summary of significant recommendations follow:

- Continue monitoring faculty-to-student ratios in labs to stay in compliance with SAF standards.
- Continue participation in community projects that benefit students and highlight their skills.
- Explore ways to participate in Pennsylvania Envirothon and FFA events.
- Continue development of PC Now in additional schools.
- Increase outcomes assessment efforts through a purposeful plan.
- Review heavy equipment needs for the program and add an all-terrain utility vehicle for use in the harvesting class.
- Expand collaboration with Workforce Development and Continuing Education to offer more forestry training.
- Connect and cultivate alumni for program development and student engagement.
- Target recruiting in new areas to promote enrollment growth.