

2013-14 Program Review

# Best Practices Form

**Instructions:** *Submit this form as a separate attachment with your completed Program Review.* Programs often do something particularly well; usually they have learned through assessment—sometimes trial and error—what solves a problem or makes their programs work so well. These are often called **Best Practices** and can help others. Please share the practices your program has found to be effective. The contact information lets others know whom to contact for more information. This part of Program Review is linked to the Student Success Strategic Goal: “Become an exemplary model of student success by developing and implementing best practices.” For examples of Best Practices visit the [Program Review Committee’s website](#).

Program/Department:           Geology           Name of Chair/Director/Manager:           Kenward Vaughn          

Email Address:           jpierce@bakersfieldcollege.edu           Phone:           395-4391          

**Best Practice(s):**

*The geology/earth science program primarily supports students who are completing geology, earth science and geography classes as a core requirement for their degree. However, it is common for some students to take a higher level of interest in our program and change their major to geology, earth science or geography. Typically, students change their majors in part because our program works well to excite and raise the students’ hidden passion for science. Throughout the semesters, faculty members of the geology program have adopted several positive instructing strategies that promote higher levels of student retention and increased student passion for the content material. Below are brief descriptions of various instructing strategies use by instructors that demonstrate best practices used in our program.*

**The use of I>Clickers**

*During lectures and lab, instructors employ the use of I>clickers to check student understanding and allow students to observe how well they understand the material compared to the class.*

**Get the student to read the chapter BEFORE attending class lecture**

*Students complete various chapter reviews before hearing the actual lecture. With this strategy, faculty have observed that students are better prepared to comprehend content material and student questions are commonly ask at higher levels within Bloom’s Taxonomy.*

**Mandatory Study Groups**

*Instructors have implemented mandatory study groups that meet once per week. Students, in groups of no more than 4, schedule study sessions and meet once per week. Statistics demonstrate that students who regularly meet with their study group score higher on exams and retain content material at higher levels.*

**Holding students accountable during lab/lecture class**

*During many lecture/lab class settings, instructors have created various methods that randomly call on students for answers. For example, some instructors pull student names from a “container” and require them to answer a question “on the spot”. Using this strategy, Instructors have observed that student attention is exponentially increased and all students are held accountable for answering questions as opposed to the few that typically blurt out responses.*

**Curriculum Alignment workshops before each semester**

*The geology program implements a curriculum alignment workshop prior to each fall and spring semester. All instructors (full time and adjunct) meet and separate into their particular content area and compare syllabi to align both lecture and lab content. In other words, a student can take a geology lecture with one instructor and the geology lab with a different instructor and both the lecture and lab topic will be aligned with the same content material. Faculty has observed that the curriculum alignment has eliminated student confusion regarding “where are we” and highly strengthens retention of concepts within our program.*

The above instructing strategies represent a few of our programs best practices which continues to strengthen the programs retention rates and inspire students to pursue a major in geology, earth science or geography.