

**Spring 2025 USDA Advisory Board Meeting – Minutes**

Tuesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

3:00pm

[Zoom](#)

Agenda

<b>USDA Advisory Board Members</b>			
<b>Sitting Dean:</b> Dr. Anna Badalyan			
<b>Dr. Glen Baghdasarian</b> LACC – Present	<b>Dr. Wendie Johnston</b> Pasadena Bio Collaborative – Present	<b>Violet Perez</b> Capitol Food Company	<b>Lilian Were Senger</b> Chapman University – Present
<b>Denise Foley Santiago</b> Canyon College	<b>Helene Martinez</b> FIBR	<b>Terry Quenzer</b> Bioscience Workforce Development Hub – Present	<b>Barry Thompson</b> USC – Present
<b>Rosemarie Christopher</b> Food SMART Strategies – Present	<b>William (Bill) Ortz</b> USDA	<b>Dr. Armando Rivera-Figueroa</b> LACCD – Inactive	<b>Grisel Ponciano</b> USDA
<b>Dr. Amir Keshavarz</b> LACC – Present	<b>Sunil Mangalassary</b> CSULA – Present	<b>Dr. Harmit Singh</b> Cal Poly Pomona – Present	<b>Craig Lund</b> Eurofins – Present

1. Introduction(s)
  - a. USDA Advisory Board Members
    - i. Advisory Board Members introduced themselves.
    - ii. Dr. Anna Badalyan, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness was present in meeting as sitting Dean.
  
2. FST Pathway Update
  - a. Articulation
    - i. Dr. Amir Keshavarz provided updates on articulation.
    - ii. As of March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Chemistry 072 (Food Chemistry) articulated with Cal Poly Pomona’s FST 1250 course (Introduction to Food Science and Technology).
    - iii. Dr. Keshavarz mentioned that Chem 071 was recently approved for Cal-GETC areas 5A and 5C which meets the requirements for physical sciences with lab. The course is fully articulated and its transferable to both UCs and CSUs effective Fall 2025.
    - iv. Dr. Baghdasarian informed the USDA Advisory Board that significant progress has been made for the grant particularly in the planning and development of the programs proposed in said grant. The Board was also updated on recent developments with USDA. The draw-down system that is used to make drawdown on program funds is on hold, so no reimbursements are authorized for the program, however, this is an action by the federal government while they review federal programs. In conversation with the USDA federal officer, our Program is in good standing and will continue as normal.
    - v.
  - b. COA

i. Occupations/Job Titles (LMI) in Food Science & Tech

1. Dr. Baghdasarian indicated that the USDA grant identifies collaboration between both institutions necessary to facilitate the transfer process for students. We want to make sure we have a defined pathway that students can enter to transfer to Cal Poly Pomona (CPP).
2. CPP is our collaborating partner for the USDA grant. The purpose of the grant is to clearly define and delineate the educational transfer pathway for students that are pursuing a career in Food, Science and Technology (FST) and transferring to CPP.
3. Much of the foundational work has already been done in connection to the establishment of the transfer pathway.
4. With guidance from Cal Poly Pomona's FST faculty, LACC has been working on developing and offering a new Associate of Science in Food Science and Technology (AS FST) degree program and a new Certificate of Achievement in Food Chemistry.
5. For the Certificate of Achievement (COA) in Food Chemistry, we must research LMI data to make a case for creating the need to create COA.
6. Conversations about the certificate ensued on how food science is projected to grow and the availability of gainful employment with livable wages for entry level positions.
7. Advisory Board members noted the different types of titles and industry occupations available to students with obtainment of a COA in Food Chemistry.

- Food Scientists
- Technologists
- Flavorists, Safety Auditors
- Quality Assurance and Control Technicians
- Product Development Scientists
- Food Safety Coordinators

**Industry Occupations**

- Food Manufacturing
- Dairy Product Manufacturing
- Scientific Research and Development Services
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Bakeries and Tortilla Manufacturing
- Education and Hospitals (State Government)

8. The Advisory Board expressed their excitement over development of the COA for Food Science and indicated that these would provide the foundational skills for entry level positions in Food Science.
9. Dr. Keshavarz and Dr. Baghdasarian shared the sequence of classes that we are proposing for the Certificate of Achievement in Food Chemistry.
10. The Advisory Board reviewed the proposed courses for the COA and agreed that these courses would equip students with the critical skillsets, knowledge and lab experience needed for the workforce.
11. All Board members support development of COA in Food Chemistry.

Course #	Course Name	Units
<b>Chem 060</b>	Introduction to General Chemistry	5
<b>Chem 071</b>	Introductory Food Chemistry	4
<b>Chem 072</b>	Food Chemistry	3
<b>Chem 101</b>	General Chemistry I	5

c. AS FST

- i. In addition to the COA in Food Chemistry, the USDA grant requires collaboration with both our grant partner and industry to guide development of an Associate in Science Degree in Food, Science and Technology.
- ii. An Associate in Science (AS) in Food Science and Technology provides foundational knowledge in food chemistry, microbiology, safety, and processing.
- iii. The Advisory Board alluded to the different types of jobs students can apply for with an AS FST, some of which include the following:
  - **Food Lab Technician**
  - **Quality Assurance (QA) Technician**
  - **Food Safety Technician / Inspector**
  - **Production/Process Technician**
  - **Sensory Technician / Taste Tester**
  - **Packaging Technician**
  - **Food Service Supervisor / Manager (with experience)**
- iv. An Associate in Science in Food Science and Technology can lead to various entry-level positions, particularly in quality control, research and development, and production.
- v. This degree would further help prepare and equip students with the intermediate to advanced academic, laboratory and scientific skills for higher-level positions in the food chemistry industry.
- vi. The Advisory Board fully supports the vision and mission of the USDA grant and is committed to working with the Chemistry Department and the USDA Grant TEAM to facilitate career exploration opportunities to students pursuing their certificate or their AS Degree.
- vii. The Board believes this is a growing field and opportunities to capitalize on this field are abundant.
- viii. Rosemary Christopher from FOOD SMART Strategies indicated that they look for the Certificate of Achievement or Associate in Science Degree when hiring to ensure students have the central chemistry/laboratory background for the higher skills jobs in the food industry.
  1. Apprentices Programs are available for students that want to become certified in jobs related to Food Chemistry, Culinology, Food Safety, Food Handling or any other field related to Food, Science and Technology.

- ix. Cal Poly Pomona proposed showcasing their campus, food laboratories and facilities to introduce and attract students to Food Science.

### 3. Program Implementation

#### a. Timeline

- Simona Ramirez, USDA Program Coordinator addressed the Board with updates on the timeline for COA and other efforts.
- Simona informed the Advisory Board that significant progress has been made on the USDA grant and it has required working part and parcel with CPP.
- The most fundamental activities consist of developing the COA in Food Chemistry and the Associate in Science Degree in Food, Science and Technology.
- The goal is to ensure we have clearly and defined and delineated pathway for students to enter.
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#### b. Outreach/Marketing Plan

##### i. Website

- External website has been developed. It is in the process of being reviewed and updated with the most up-to-date information.
- Once the COA and AS FST has been submitted for review and these go through the appropriate approval channels, we will have a timeline for when the major will be offered to students. We anticipate the major will be declarable starting Fall 2026.
- The plan is to tap into the First Year Experience (FYE) Program, specifically the incoming cohort who will be starting Fall 2025. Working with FYE will offer opportunities to work with new students and promote the Program to students who are receptive to taking the Chem 071 class and further explore this field.

##### ii. Feeder High Schools

- LACC will work in partnership with our Feeder High Schools to create awareness and advertise program to students when they are in High School. This partnership will be critical to ensure we start the marketing campaign while students are still considering career pathways.
- Although we will work with our HS partners to promote our Program, we have determined that we will not carry out the Concurrent Enrollment component.
- We believe that the focus for High School students should be on creating awareness and highlighting the development of the transfer partnership between Los Angeles City College (LACC) and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona). Given that Food, Science and Technology (FST) is an emerging field, and this major has not been offered at any of the sister colleges within our Los Angeles Community College District, it is fundamental to develop and launch an effective marketing campaign to create knowledge about the Program.
- Focusing on outreach and a marketing strategy to introduce and engage students to Food, Science and Technology during High School will result in a

better outcome as we can expose students to the major before they declare a field of study. Investing in experiences such as High School field trips, career exploration days and experiential learning days will help increase awareness about the Program and create interest within our K-12 community and students.

iii. Registration Events

- LACC will capitalize on campus registration events to ensure we take advantage of every avenue and opportunity available both on and off campus.
- Will work with First Year Experience (FYE) Program to reach out to newly onboarded students to promote Program and inform students of Chem 071.

4. Other

a. Next Meeting: TBD

- i. Meeting ended at 4:04pm.