

# **Effective Practices for Educational Program Development**

ADOPTED SPRING 2018

**ASCCC EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMITTEE 2016-2017**

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## How To Use This Paper

This paper is intended to be used by faculty and other college personnel to understand and safeguard the role that faculty play in educational program development and as a resource for effective practices in educational program development. The primary audience for this paper is the faculty member who has a broad understanding of educational programs and curriculum development but is only involved in the process intermittently, such as when industry or transfer requirement changes necessitate modification to a program or the program review process leads to new and modified curriculum. This paper is not intended to be a “how to” manual for curriculum approval processes; rather, it is a guide for program development from the policy side and does not provide a step-by-step curriculum approval process outline. Additional guidance on the nuts and bolts of curriculum development and approval processes may be found in the Academic Senate papers *The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide Revisited (2017)*<sup>1</sup> and *Ensuring Effective Curriculum Approval Processes: A Guide for Local Senates(2016)*.<sup>2</sup> In addition, while this paper refers to program review and program discontinuance processes, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) contends that these processes should be separate. A more thorough discussion of program discontinuance can be found in the ASCCC paper *Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective Revisited (2012)*.<sup>3</sup>

Members of the ASCCC Educational Policies Committee began the task of developing this paper during the 2016-2017 academic year, and the 2017-18 committee completed its creation. The paper focuses on the types of programs colleges may create as well as the faculty collaboration, andragogy, and standards that should inform program development and modification.

## Introduction

The most important components of an academic institution are the educational programs it offers. California Education Code and accreditation standards emphasize the essential nature of a college’s educational programs to that college’s existence, and often a college’s programs reflect the individual personality of the college and the uniqueness of the community it serves. In California Education Code §66050 and §66010.4(a), the legislature delegates to public institutions of higher education the responsibility to provide educational programs that are appropriate and valuable to the communities they serve in order to advance California’s economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services. Furthermore, the regional accreditor of the California community colleges, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), requires that the educational programs offered by a college are consistent with the college’s mission (Eligibility Requirement 9, Standards II.A.1, II.A.6).<sup>4</sup> These statements

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1 *The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide Revisited (2017)* (<https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/COR.pdf>)

2 *Ensuring Effective Curriculum Approval Processes: A Guide for Local Senates (2016)* ([https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/Effective%20Curriculum%20Approval%20Process\\_0.pdf](https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/Effective%20Curriculum%20Approval%20Process_0.pdf))

3 *Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective Revisited (2012)* ([https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/Program\\_Discontinuance\\_Fall2012\\_0.pdf](https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/Program_Discontinuance_Fall2012_0.pdf))

4 *ACCJC Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation (2014)* (<https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Eligibility-Requirements-Adopted-June-2014.pdf>)

indicate the importance of educational programs to a college's core mission of providing viable and relevant programs of study to a community in order to support the community's economic and cultural growth.

## JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PAPER

During the Spring 2016 Plenary Session of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, the delegates passed the following resolution:

Resolution 9.02 SP 16 – Develop a Paper of Effective Practices for Educational Program Development

Whereas, “Educational program development,” which is an academic and professional matter identified in Title 5 §53200, involves the development of all certificates and degrees and is therefore inherently a curricular matter;

Whereas, The Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy has identified several recommendations that have resulted in a focus on the development of educational programs, including the following:

- Evaluate, strengthen, and revise the curriculum development process to ensure alignment from education to employment.
- Evaluate, revise, and resource the local, regional, and statewide CTE curriculum approval process to ensure timely, responsive, and streamlined curriculum approval.
- Improve program review, evaluation, and revision processes to ensure program relevance to students, business, and industry as reflected in labor market data.
- Develop robust connections between community colleges, business and industry representatives, labor and other regional workforce development partners to align college programs with regional and industry needs and provide support for CTE programs; and

Whereas, Faculty and colleges would benefit from a paper specifically dedicated to effective practices for developing and revising all educational programs;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges develop a paper on effective practices for developing and revising all educational programs and bring the paper to the Spring 2017 Plenary Session for approval.

## DEFINITION OF A PROGRAM

When colleges are determining policies for establishing programs, broad and competing definitions of an “educational program” can cause confusion. Per Title 5 §55000 (m), an educational program is “an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education.”<sup>5</sup> Similarly, according to the accreditation standards of the ACCJC,

<sup>5</sup> § 55000. Definitions. [https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I12CF9B4BDA2340B3B01F2DFD1231396A?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I12CF9B4BDA2340B3B01F2DFD1231396A?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=(sc.Default))

an instructional program is “a combination of courses and related activities organized for the attainment of broad educational objectives described by the institution.”<sup>6</sup> These definitions set the term “educational program” apart from “educational support programs,” which provide necessary services to assist students with their pursuit of an award or other educational goal. While policies around the creation of educational programs may differ from those for establishing educational support programs, the processes should inform each other and be integrated to ensure that they are relevant to the educational and employment goals of students and effective in achieving their purpose and mission.

## Educational Program Development: Before The Curriculum Committee

**T**he development of an educational program often begins with the determination of student need by faculty, with support from administration. In other cases, administrative or industry partners may bring a request or an idea for a program to faculty. Whatever the origination source, programs are developed based on stated student learning outcomes determined by faculty in consultation with students, administrators, advisory boards, and other stakeholders. Courses are developed for inclusion in programs in alignment with program learning outcomes that support students’ end goals, including but not limited to employability and transfer, and are designed to provide relevant instruction in a timely manner.

### WHEN IS A NEW PROGRAM NEEDED?

The Academic Affairs Division of the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office maintains the *Program and Course Approval Handbook* (PCAH), currently in its 6th edition.<sup>7</sup> The PCAH defines five criteria used by the Chancellor’s Office to approve certain credit and noncredit programs and courses, and these five criteria should drive the development of academic programs. The five criteria include the following:

- **Appropriateness to the Mission:** Programs must be designed for the appropriate level of instruction offered by community colleges. Programs must address a valid transfer, occupational, basic skills, civic education, or lifelong learning purpose. Programs should also be congruent with the mission statement and master plan of the college and district.
- **Need:** New programs that meet stated goals and objectives in the region must not cause harmful competition with an existing program at another college. Need is determined by multiple factors, including but not limited to educational master plans, accreditation standards, program review, economic development interests, labor market data, and community surveys.
- **Curriculum Standards:** Title 5 mandates that all credit and noncredit curriculum be approved by the college curriculum committee and the district governing board. CTE credit programs must be reviewed by

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6 ACCJC Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits <https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Institutional-Degrees-and-Credits.pdf>

7 *Program and Course Approval Handbook*, 6th Edition. [http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Credit/2017/PCAH\\_6thEdition\\_July\\_FINAL.pdf](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Credit/2017/PCAH_6thEdition_July_FINAL.pdf)

Career Technical Education Regional Consortia. A proposed program must be consistent with requirements of accrediting agencies as applicable. Programs are designed so that successful completion of the program requirements will enable students to fulfill the program goals and objectives.

- **Adequate Resources:** In developing a new program, the college commits to offering all of the required courses for the program at least once every two years. Hence, the college must have adequate resources for faculty, facilities and equipment, and library and learning resources.
- **Compliance:** The design of the program must not be in conflict with any state or federal law.

Faculty seeking to develop a new program should ascertain that the program meets all five of these criteria by beginning a proposal at the discipline or department level in consultation with other faculty members, their dean or other responsible administrator, their local curriculum chair, and, as appropriate, their college's institutional research office. For CTE programs, faculty should consult with local industry leaders or the program's advisory board. While college administrators do not write nor approve curriculum, they have scheduling authority and familiarity with college resources and with laws and regulations related to California's community colleges and should therefore be included in program development discussions.

## **BENEFITS OF CREATING A NEW PROGRAM**

The design, creation, and implementation of a new program are based on expected benefits. Such benefits may include but are not limited to the following:

- Increased opportunity for students
- Increased student success
- Increased student retention
- Increased enrollment
- Increased employment in the region
- Enhanced regional economic development
- Improved transfer rates

## **COMMUNITY NEED**

All community college programs must meet the needs of the communities they serve. When designing new or revising existing programs, faculty must use data gathered from many sources to ensure that the program is appropriate to the community. Data can be acquired from local K-12 districts about student graduation and college-going rates and from labor market surveys and advisory boards for career and technical education programs. Creating new programs where no need exists can result in frustration on the part of students if they are not able to transfer or find employment after completing the program.



## ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM

The faculty's decision to propose a new program should rely on a demonstration of need based on verifiable data and consultation with transfer institutions, advisory committees, and community partners as appropriate. Anecdotal data should not be the foundation for a new program, nor should a program be created based on the desire of a single faculty member, administrator, or industry partner. A new program should be embarked upon only after extensive faculty collaboration, discussion, and planning and after a review of quantitative and qualitative information such as labor market data, local industry need, and transfer institution consultation as well as consideration of available resources and the long-term viability of the proposed program. Examples of questions that faculty might ask when debating the creation of a new program could include:

- Has documentable student interest that warrants creating the program been demonstrated?
- Are local transfer institutions expressing an interest in the program?
- Does any aspect of the college's accreditation status or license to operate require the program?
- Does any legislative requirement mandate that the college offer the program?
- Does an employment market exist in which students may benefit from the proposed program?
- Will the program lead to employment that provides graduates with a sustaining wage?
- Can the student learning outcomes of the program be met by an existing program, or can an existing program be revised to address those program learning outcomes?

## VITAL CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPACTS

The implementation of a new program will undoubtedly have an impact on existing programs and on the college's resources. Benefits and drawbacks, both intended and unintended, will occur. In order to anticipate these impacts, the college should have processes in place for thorough vetting of a new program not only before the program is created but during and after its implementation as well.

Colleges should discuss practical and vital considerations before offering a new program, such as enrollment expectations, resource needs, and the impact of new courses and programs on existing programs. The impact of a new program on other programs is often not realized until after implementation. Therefore, understanding these concerns associated with introducing a new program into a college's ecosystem of programs will help the college to plan ahead and be ready to address any issues.

- Colleges may see decreased enrollment in or demand for other college programs. This situation can cause a decrease in course offerings and available FTES for programs that already exist, which in turn will impact the need for faculty in some fields. While colleges should not plan educational offerings and schedules around faculty contract obligations or teaching assignments, faculty members are likely to raise concerns if they see changes to their workloads or a decline in demand for their programs.

- The college should have a clear expectation for anticipated enrollment prior to creating a new program. When enrollment expectations are not met or the expected demand for the new program does not materialize quickly, colleges may respond by decreasing the resources invested in the new program without allowing the program time to find its fullest audience. Colleges should have reasonable expectations around enrollment patterns for the program and avoid making snap decisions regarding resources in the early days of a program's existence.
- The college may find that faculty and staff are not available for the program. In rapidly emerging fields and new programs, maintaining trained faculty can be difficult, in part because they are often siphoned away to work in industry. Colleges should anticipate the need to recruit and maintain faculty for any new program
- Equipment costs may be higher than expected. Colleges should undertake a review of the total cost of ownership for a new program prior to creating the program in order to ensure the program's long-term fiscal stability.
- Facilities may not be sufficient for the new program. Instructional space, including lab space, unique to a program's learning outcomes should be discussed and ensured prior to creating a new program. Colleges that overlook the facility needs of a new program may find themselves without sufficient room space for current offerings as well as new course offerings and may then need to reduce offerings in some areas to satisfy the new program.

Regular program review can help to predict possible impacts from implementing a new program. When considering a new program, colleges may also wish to examine program review documents from similar or recently implemented programs to determine potential issues.

## Types of Programs

College or district policies regarding educational program development should define the various types of awards (degrees and certificates) given by the institution. The type of program created should be based on the needs of students and the program learning outcomes that students are expected to accomplish in order to complete the program and to be successful in their future educational and employment goals. The following list of award types is based on regulations established in Title 5 and explained in detail in the *Program and Course Approval Handbook (6th Ed.)*.<sup>8</sup>

- Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- Bachelor of Sciences (BS)
- Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T)
- Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T)
- Associate in Arts (AA)
- Associate in Science (AS)

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<sup>8</sup> *Program and Course Approval Handbook*, 6th Edition. [http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Credit/2017/PCAH\\_6thEdition\\_July\\_FINAL.pdf](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Credit/2017/PCAH_6thEdition_July_FINAL.pdf)

- Certificate of Achievement (16 or more semester degree-applicable units or 24 or more quarter degree-applicable units)
- Certificate of Achievement (8 or more semester degree-applicable units or 12 or more quarter degree-applicable units) which require approval by the CCCCO in order to be included on a student's transcript.
- Certificate of less than 16 credit semester units or 24 quarter units that may be created and does not require approval by the Chancellor's Office; however, these certificates are not transcriptable and cannot be called a "Certificate of Achievement," "Certificate of Completion," or "Certificate of Competency."
- Noncredit Certificate of Completion: a sequence of career development and college preparation (CDCP) courses in short-term vocational or workforce preparation areas.
- Noncredit Certificate of Competency: a sequence of career development and college preparation (CDCP) courses in ESL or in elementary and secondary basic skills.

Specific minimum requirements for each of these types of educational degree and certificate programs are delineated in Title 5 and the PCAH.

College policies often divide educational programs into broader categories based on the educational or employment goals students enrolled in the program may have. These categories can include transfer programs, career technical education programs, and noncredit programs.

## **TRANSFER PROGRAMS**

Transfer educational programs are developed to support student goals of transferring to other institutions within the California system of higher education or to out-of-state or private institutions. Transfer programs must take great care to keep up-to-date with changes in articulation agreements between the college and other institutions and with the standards and requirements in place to accept students at other institutions. In addition, transfer programs must adhere to accreditation standards intended to ensure transfer policies and articulation agreements are fair to students, transparent, and consistent with standards of academic rigor.

### **ASSOCIATE DEGREE FOR TRANSFER (ADT)**

The most recent development in the category of transfer educational programs is the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT). ADTs are associate degree programs created in response to Senate Bill 1440, the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act (Padilla, 2010), which is codified in Education Code §66746(a). The completion of an ADT fulfills the lower division component of a baccalaureate major at a California State University and guarantees transfer to a CSU at junior status, although not necessarily to a particular campus or major. In addition, once at the CSU, students can complete a bachelor's degree with as few as 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of coursework. The ADT degree is intended to make transfer to the CSU system smoother for students and is designed to align coursework at the community college with courses offered at the CSU.

The process to develop an ADT begins when community college faculty and CSU faculty from across the two systems collaborate to create a Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC), which specifies courses that should be included in every college's ADT for a given discipline, either as required courses or as important support or

electives. A second bill, SB 440 (Padilla, 2013) required colleges to create and offer ADTs in disciplines in which a TMC had been established and the college had an existing associate degree. When new TMCs are developed and released, colleges have 18 months from the release of the new TMC to develop the ADT if they offer a traditional degree program in that discipline.

In addition, SB 440 (Padilla, 2013) mandated the development of TMCs in at least four areas of emphasis, although local colleges have more flexibility around how or if they develop these degrees. The Intersegmental Curriculum Workgroup (ICW) defines an area of emphasis as an interdisciplinary curriculum designed to prepare students for an array of majors at the CSU.<sup>9</sup> In the wake of SB 440, ICW recommended creating area of emphasis TMCs in four areas: Law, Public Policy, and Society; Global Studies; Social Justice Studies; and Social Work and Human Services. Additional information on area of emphasis TMCs can be found in the article “Area of Emphasis Transfer Model Curricula: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About AoE TMCs.”<sup>10</sup>

## ASSOCIATE DEGREES

While the ADT has received the most attention in recent years, the traditional associate degree still serves several important purposes. Per Title 5 §55063, the associate in arts degree or associate in science degree includes demonstrated competence in reading, written expression, and mathematics as well as satisfactory completion of at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable credit coursework including at least 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in a major or area of emphasis. The primary differences between ADTs and traditional associate degrees are that ADTs may not exceed 60 units and have specifically defined course requirements within a major. Traditional associate degrees may serve students who have broader goals than those for which an ADT is designed. An ADT is not an option for majors that do not have a published TMC or for programs that primarily serve students who wish to transfer to a system or institution other than a CSU. Concerns also exist regarding majors with high unit counts, especially in STEM areas, where faculty are challenged to create a meaningful educational program within the strict parameters of the ADT. Recent experiments regarding pathways for transfer to the UC similar to or based on the ADTs are the subject of ongoing discussion, but until the time when an agreement similar to that with the CSU is in place, many students are better served by the traditional associate degree.

While associate degrees are often thought of in connection with transfer preparation, every California community college offers associate degrees that serve a population of students in pursuit of educational or career preparation that only requires a two-year program, with no further coursework necessary to enter a workplace or to satisfy a student’s academic goal. These degrees may provide students with the highest level of professional training in an industry and make students eligible for employment.

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9 ICW Working Definition of Area of Emphasis <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BytmZpyqw5B5RnpZcmpwYXpxLW8/view>

10 “Area of Emphasis Transfer Model Curricula: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About AoE TMCs” Rostrum (September 2015) <https://www.asccc.org/content/area-emphasis-transfer-model-curricula-everything-you-ever-wanted-know-about-aoe-tmcs>

## THE AREA OF EMPHASIS ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND ASSOCIATE DEGREE FOR TRANSFER

Title 5 §55063 provides for the creation of an associate degree in a major, which consists of courses typically in the same discipline or TOP code, or an area of emphasis, where courses have been determined to be related through a college's local curriculum approval process. This provision has led colleges to create associate degrees that combine courses in a general field of study that impart to students similar skills and knowledge rather than limiting the required courses to one or two disciplines based on a focused content area. A few examples of titles for area of emphasis degrees include Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts with an Emphasis in Humanities, Associate in Arts in Liberal Arts with an Emphasis in Communication and Writing, and Associate of Science in Liberal Arts with an Emphasis in Science and Mathematics. Courses in these types of degrees often have been placed in the same general education area of the four areas identified in §55063: natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and language and rationality. In addition to traditional area of emphasis degrees, SB 440 (Padilla, 2013) provided for the creation of specifically defined area of emphasis ADTs as well.

### **Advantages and Disadvantages of an Area of Emphasis Associate Degree**

Area of emphasis degrees provide students with greater flexibility to take courses within a broad, general area of study without focusing too closely on a specific major or highly concentrated content area. Students who have amassed many units in a general area of education at one or multiple colleges have found these degrees useful for applying their varied coursework to meet the requirements of a single degree. Another advantage for students is that often many of the courses they choose to fulfill their core program requirements can be double counted as meeting the general education requirements of the degree.

However, there are some disadvantages with area of emphasis degrees. These degrees tend to include a long list of courses from which students can choose to meet the minimum unit requirements, leading students to feelings of confusion and being overwhelmed when making choices around which courses to take. The inclusion of sometimes four or five times as many courses as a student would need to graduate also creates the impression that the area of emphasis degree is simply a general education degree and lacks value as transfer preparation for a major. Area of emphasis degrees also open faculty to charges of creating a program for the purpose of ensuring that a certain course or courses are offered by having these courses be part of a degree. Additionally, students may find themselves at a disadvantage during the transfer process if the colleges to which they wish to transfer do not value the omnibus approach to completing a program and do not accept the area of emphasis degree as preparing a student for upper-level coursework. Finally, students who pursue these degrees may encounter complications with their financial aid awards, especially in conjunction with gainful employment regulations and federal financial aid eligibility.

With the recent system-wide emphasis on guided pathways frameworks at colleges and developing term-by-term program maps with specific, limited recommendations for course-taking, area of emphasis degrees are likely to come under more scrutiny to ensure that their focus is student-centered and that they provide a valuable award for students to promote transfer and employment goals.

### CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR TRANSFER PREPARATION

A certificate of achievement for transfer preparation includes coursework taken to satisfy transfer patterns established by UC, CSU, or another accredited public postsecondary institution. This type of program must consist of 18 or more semester units or 27 or more quarter units of degree-applicable coursework. Faculty may decide that such a certificate serves a local purpose due to agreements with their local CSU or UC schools in order to help students better define their pathway of instruction and to support a seamless transfer. A certificate of achievement that is 8 or more semester units or 12 or more quarter units of degree-applicable coursework may be called a certificate of achievement with approval by the California Community College's Chancellor's Office.

### BACHELOR'S DEGREES AT THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

In 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 850 to create a pilot baccalaureate program for 15 community colleges across California in order to fill a growing workforce demand for college-educated, skilled workers in fields such as health, science, and technology. At this time, data has not been reported regarding the effectiveness of this pilot program, as the first graduates have just completed their programs in 2018.

## CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Career technical education (CTE) programs provide students with academic skills and technical training designed to prepare them for successful transition into a specific industry or job. CTE programs include associate degrees and certificates in disciplines such as accounting, radiology, nursing, dental hygiene, business, paralegal studies, and many other fields where a clear trajectory can be mapped from learning outcomes to industry standards for employment. These programs are intended to propel the California economy forward by providing students with skills that lead to employment and helping to provide California companies with the talent they need to compete on a global scale.

### CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATE DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT

While some CTE areas warrant the preparation provided by an associate degree, many CTE programs serve students through a certificate of achievement or a series of certificates created to provide training for students wishing to work at various levels of an employment sector. Although many CTE programs do not lead to transfer, a growing number of these programs are adding transfer-focused elements to their requirements, as advanced training at a four-year university is becoming necessary for success over the course of a student's career in the industry. The number of semester or quarter units for an associate degree or a certificate in a CTE area is the same as for transfer preparation; however, faculty creating CTE programs must take additional steps in the curriculum approval process that include consultation with industry partners and practitioners to meet Title 5 requirements, the requirements of external accreditation agencies, and industry standards.

## INDUSTRY NEEDS

An important goal in CTE programs is to ensure that the programs are innovating and keeping up with changing industry needs. Often colleges undergo an examination of industry needs through both short-term and long-term planning led by a program’s advisory board as well as the college’s strategic planning processes. CTE programs are meant to address workforce training needs so that the community college system can provide students with the training they need for career advancement and provide a well-prepared workforce for employers.

## ADVISORY BOARDS FOR CTE PROGRAMS

The federal Carl D. Perkins Career Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 requires that “Each local educational agency (LEA) receiving Perkins IV funds must involve parents, students, academic and CTE teachers, faculty, administrators, career guidance and academic counselors, representatives of tech prep consortia (if applicable), representatives of business and industry, labor organizations, representatives of special populations, and other interested individuals in the development, implementation, and evaluation of CTE programs” (20 U.S.C. § 2354 (b)(5)). Furthermore, California Education Code states, “The governing board of each school district participating in a career technical education program shall appoint a career technical education advisory committee to develop recommendations on the program and to provide liaison between the district and potential employers” (EC § 8070), while Title 5 §55601 states that the governing board of each community college district participating in a vocational education program shall appoint a vocational education advisory committee to develop recommendations for the program and to act as a liaison between the district and potential employers. Every CTE program must have an advisory committee, and that committee serves a vital role in helping the program to remain dynamic and in touch with its local, regional, and state-level communities. Committee members should include employers, employees, current students and recent alumni, faculty, program coordinators, department chairs, deans, articulation partners, CTE counselors, and other pertinent partners.<sup>11</sup>

## LABOR MARKET DATA

When career technical education programs are created and reviewed, faculty use data to affirm the demand for jobs in an industry. Many data sources are available to assist faculty in demonstrating that their programs lead to employment in stable and growing industries. A primary source for this information is the Labor Market Information Division of the California Employment Development Department. In addition, the 2015 recommendations of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy have led to the creation of tools such as the LaunchBoard that provide needed data to faculty for program development.

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11 CTE Advisory Boards—Roles, Responsibilities, and Effective Practices” Breakout, ASCCC Curriculum Institute (2016)  
<https://www.asccc.org/content/cte-advisory-boards-%E2%80%93-roles-responsibilities-and-effective-practices>

## REGIONAL CONSORTIA RECOMMENDATION

In compliance with California Education Code and Title 5 regulations §55130(b)(8)E, prior to the offering of new or substantially modified CTE programs, all such programs are reviewed by their regional consortia, which are typically comprised of CTE faculty and administrators from the region. Each program submitted includes program goals and objectives, a catalog description, program requirements, enrollment and completer projections, similar programs at other colleges in the service area, labor market information and analysis, and advisory committee recommendations. Once the regional consortium has reviewed the proposal, it will provide a recommendation to the Chancellor's Office. This recommendation focuses on regional labor market needs and avoiding the duplication of programs. While the consortium's recommendation is an important aspect of the CTE curriculum process, regional consortia do not have approval authority for programs.

## STACKABLE CERTIFICATES

Stackable certificates are most often associated with CTE programs. A stackable certificate is a part of a series of certificates that can be accumulated over time to develop an individual's skills and qualifications in order to help that person move along a career path or up a career ladder to different or higher paying jobs. The alignment of expected course-level objectives and learning outcomes with program-level outcomes is essential to the development of stackable certificates. Outcomes for one certificate then act as entry skills and align to the course and program-level outcomes for the next certificate in the series. Since every certificate that a college awards should be meaningful in achievement and beneficial to students in terms of employability, stackable certificates are often closely aligned with stages along a career path in a specific industry and require collaboration with local employers and advisory committee members for their development.

## NONCREDIT PROGRAMS

In recent years, significant attention has shifted to the development of noncredit curriculum. Not only can noncredit programs support student success by offering free, flexible instruction in a variety of fields, but they can also lead to certificates that provide a sense of accomplishment for a student as well as a meaningful statement in the workplace of a student's abilities. Noncredit programs face similar scrutiny for approval as credit programs, must be approved by the local curriculum committee and governing board, and must be approved by the Chancellor's Office.

## NONCREDIT ENHANCED FUNDING (CDCP)

When a noncredit certificate program meets certain criteria, that program is eligible for enhanced funding beyond the normal allocation for noncredit. Noncredit programs classified as career development and college preparation (CDCP) include courses that prepare students for employment or for success in college-level credit coursework. Education Code 84760.5 establishes four categories of noncredit instruction as being eligible for enhanced funding: English as a second language, basic skills, short-term vocational, and workforce



preparation courses. In accordance with Title 5 §55151, colleges may claim enhanced funding for a sequence of noncredit courses that culminate in a certificate of competency or a certificate of completion. Per Title 5 §55154, colleges may also offer an adult high school diploma for enhanced funding if the program requires students to satisfactorily complete at least 160 credits of high school level coursework and to demonstrate competence in reading, writing, and mathematics at a level generally accepted as appropriate for awarding of a high school diploma. More and more colleges have begun exploring the potential that robust noncredit offerings may provide to support students in many of their educational goals. Additional information regarding noncredit CDCP enhanced funding can be found in the most recent edition of the *Program and Course Approval Handbook*.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE COURSES OR PROGRAMS

Community service courses play a role in fulfilling the missions of some colleges by providing educational offerings to serve a community's unique needs. Per California Education Code §78300(a), a district may “establish and maintain community service classes in civic, vocational, literacy, health, homemaking, technical and general education.” These offerings may include classes in the visual and performing arts or other areas and are “designed to provide instruction and to contribute to the physical, mental, moral, economic, or civic development” of participants. Community service classes provide no credit units and are offered outside the regular college credit and noncredit programs, and they therefore cannot be included in programs that culminate in an award that is recognized by the Chancellor's Office. Title 5 explicitly states that general apportionment funds may not be used to fund community service courses, which are only made available to students who pay a fee intended to cover the full cost of the course. According to the paper *California Community Colleges Guidelines for Community Services Offering*,<sup>12</sup> community service class fees cover the direct costs of instruction such as the costs of the instructors or supplies and indirect administrative costs such as staff support and facilities expenses. A community service program is not required to be included in the college's catalog and does not generate apportionment.

## ADDITIONAL DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

Some colleges offer defined sequences of courses that closely match the definition of a program in Title 5 but are not eligible to culminate in a transcriptable degree or certificate. Per Title 5 §55070, colleges may offer a certificate that is less than 16 credit semester units or 24 quarter units with local board approval; however, colleges are not allowed to call these awards certificates of achievement or to place these certificates on a student's transcript unless the certificates are approved by the CCCCO. For example, colleges often support English as a second language certificate programs in which a student may receive a certificate of participation, specialization, or any other term the college chooses to use. However, that type of certificate is not transcriptable and only provides documentation that a series of courses or other requirements has been completed, although the completion is not recognized by the CCCCO.

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12 *California Community Colleges Guidelines for Community Services Offering (2012)* <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Miscellaneous/CommunitySvcsOfferingGuidelinesFinal10.24.12.pdf>

## GRANT FUNDED CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

To meet community needs, especially needs of local industry and workforce, community colleges often partner with external agencies or seek additional local, state, or federal funding sources. These grant funds are dedicated to the creation and support of a specific educational program and to supporting student success outside of the classroom. Typically, such funding may only be used for a specific purpose, and reporting to an external agency is required. All grants should identify and provide specific benefits to a college that are in alignment with the college's mission. Additionally, per Education Code 70902(b)(7), local academic senates are the primary constituent group responsible for curriculum and academic standards. Given that responsibility, the development or maintenance of educational programs, even those established through external funding, should be led first and foremost by faculty in consultation with administrative partners. Faculty and administration should work together to develop processes for applying for external funding sources and the dispensation and reporting around those funds as part of their colleges' budget processes. See Appendix C of this paper for a model policy for addressing educational programs created using grant funding or other funding outside of a college's FTES allocation.

## WHICH PROGRAM TYPE IS THE RIGHT ONE?

Once discussion around a new program has begun and the student learning outcomes for the program have been written, faculty must determine what type of program—associate degree, certificate of achievement, etc.—will best serve students. The following guiding questions may help faculty determine the most appropriate structure for a proposed program:

- What level of preparation must students achieve to be considered proficient in the discipline, field, or industry relevant to the program?
- What type of program is recognized as appropriate or valuable in the eyes of employers in the field or industry under consideration?
- Which degree-applicable skills or courses are needed to help students achieve the program learning outcomes? How many courses will a student need to complete to achieve those outcomes?
- What is the value of general education to achieving the program's learning outcomes?
- Can students benefit from the program without the program appearing on their transcripts?
- How flexible should the program be to best serve the students who will benefit from it?
- How will a student's financial aid eligibility be impacted by the program?

Faculty may feel motivated or even obligated to include as many courses in a certificate or associate degree program as they offer in their disciplines in an effort to make certain that graduates are fully prepared for the next steps toward their academic or career goals. However, faculty should work to include only those courses with student learning outcomes or course objectives that are needed to help students learn and demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and abilities that are the reason for the program to exist. Including more courses in a program than are necessary to achieve the program's discreet goals may negatively impact the time a student must take to complete the curriculum and either transfer or find employment.

## Moving A Program Through The Curriculum Process

### CONSULTATION

All curriculum decisions should fall within the purview of the local curriculum committee, including the creation and modification of educational programs. Ideally, when the need for and appropriateness of an educational program is open for discussion, all discipline faculty, full-time and part-time, are involved in the discussion and have input into the design of the curriculum and the learning outcomes that drive the program. Such consultation may take the form of department meetings, discipline group meetings within a department, or a discussion regarding a new program explored in an annual program review or evaluation process. For CTE programs, consultation may also occur with an advisory board or with industry partners. Whatever form the discussion and collaboration takes, collecting input from many faculty voices and viewpoints can only support the development of a richer and more comprehensive program to meet the needs of students. This collaborative process is challenging when a discipline or area of study has only one or no full-time faculty to provide leadership for a program's development. When this situation occurs, colleges should remember that one of the tenets stipulated in the *Program and Course Approval Handbook* and expected by the Chancellor's Office for the creation of a new program is that adequate resources, including faculty, should be identified before moving forward with the creation of a program.

Faculty should also consult with their administrative partners when developing or modifying an educational program. While faculty are the discipline and curriculum experts, the logistics and resources needed to offer an educational program should be discussed with administration early in the development stage, and many local curriculum processes require documentation of such consultation prior to consideration by the curriculum committee. Very practical questions regarding facilities requirements, human resources, and technology needs should be examined early on to avoid creating curriculum that cannot feasibly be offered to students. Administrators can also serve as resources for faculty in understanding the many laws, requirements, and accreditation standards that must be adhered to when developing new programs.

Occasionally, conflict may arise when an administrator seeks to establish or modify an educational program without proper consultation with faculty. These situations often involve influence from agents outside of the college, such as local industries or companies that are interested in programs that provide training beneficial to their specific industrial sectors. While such programs may have merit, discipline faculty must always be involved when designing credit or noncredit curriculum to verify the need for the program and to ensure that students will benefit from it.

While faculty maintain purview over curriculum offered using state apportionment funds, a college may at times be contracted by a specific employer or organization to offer short-term, industry-specific courses as not-for-credit contract education. These arrangements typically do not involve curriculum developed by the college faculty, and college monies are not used to support them; therefore, faculty are sometimes only minimally involved, if at all, in developing this type of curriculum, and local curriculum committee approval may not be required. However, because such instruction still represents the college, good practice involves consultation with relevant faculty before a college enters into such agreements.

## WHERE TO FIND HELP AT YOUR COLLEGE

Faculty who are interested in developing a quality program should seek out the college resources available to assist them in doing so. The college curriculum chair is the primary faculty leader in matters of curriculum. The curriculum chair is tasked with working effectively with the local academic senate, the college administration, faculty, and staff and will understand what is necessary for a program to be viable and how to move the proposal effectively through the approval process. In addition to the faculty curriculum chair, the college articulation officer is knowledgeable about transfer requirements and is a key advisor to faculty and the curriculum committee on how curriculum proposals can affect course-to-course articulation and acceptance of courses for general education credit by receiving institutions. Finally, a college's curriculum specialist can often provide a big picture view to the curriculum committee and discipline faculty beyond the approval process itself and can identify issues that may adversely affect curriculum approval at the governing board and Chancellor's Office levels that may not be evident to the faculty.

## PROGRAM CODES

During the program development process, the curriculum committee will place the program into the appropriate state or federal code based on the expertise of the discipline faculty. The *California Community Colleges Taxonomy of Programs* (TOP) manual, first published in 1979, is maintained by the Chancellor's Office and provides a system of numerical TOP codes to facilitate the categorization, collection, and reporting of information on programs and courses that have similar outcomes in different colleges throughout the state. This coding is used to report data to the state and to determine funding. Proper placement of a program or a course within a TOP code should be discussed and determined prior to program approval. CTE programs in particular must address a valid occupational purpose. In addition to assigning a program into a TOP code, all courses must be placed in a TOP code as well; however, a course does not need to be in the same TOP code as the program in order to be included in that program.

Programs are also assigned a numeric code based on the United States Department of Education's *Classification of Instructional Programs* (CIP), which provides a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions in similar disciplines nationwide. Finally, the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is a statistical standard used by federal agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. These codes are also applied to courses and programs.

# Evaluating A Program

## PROGRAM REVIEW

**P**rogram review is the process by which institutions seek improvement of instructional delivery and learning outcome success through introspection and reflection upon a program's components, processes, and systems. Too often, the main impetus for having a program review process is an institution's accrediting agency, even though most people would agree that completion of a

comprehensive program review is a best practice for short-term and long-term planning. Following a robust and thorough program review, appropriate program revisions and new program development may be initiated.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Educational programs are developed based on stated student learning outcomes determined by faculty in consultation with students, administrators, advisory boards, and other stakeholders. Courses are developed or validated for inclusion in programs by aligning course-level student learning outcomes with program learning outcomes that support students' end goals, including but not limited to employability and transfer, and are designed to provide relevant instruction in a timely manner. Prior to inclusion of a course in a program that leads to a degree or certificate, faculty should determine that the student learning outcomes for a course are in alignment with and support attainment of the program's learning outcomes. The assessment of program learning outcomes and the use of assessment data to inform program planning are central to several accreditation standards, and that assessment should be done regularly and with adequate documentation that the assessment results are used in planning.

## **DATA IN PROGRAM REVIEW**

Program statistics and data are usually derived from within institutions themselves. This data, in theory, is drawn from the outcomes determined by the faculty and is a record of student performance measured by the faculty. For example, if a measured outcome in a course requires the students to perform a certain task successfully, then the data record may include a description of the task, the operation, the definition of success, the percentage of both trial and failure, and the overall student success in a given course section for that task. Including such components in outcomes assessment data may help the program review process be more informative. Some college districts post such data on their websites, while others require a formal records request if others desire the information.

Data on course, degree, and certificate completion is mandated at the federal and state levels and by accrediting bodies. Such data should be accessible to the faculty through their college or district and should be consistent with the information held by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. While data on student demographics is also mandated at the federal and state levels and by the accrediting body and should also be available on the college or district website, interpreting and understanding the implications of this data may be difficult. Faculty should work with their college research specialists to interpret this data. Colleges should develop a culture of data literacy and offer professional development opportunities for anyone involved in program review in order to ensure that all parties are comfortable discussing data and performance metrics that have been adopted by the college.

## **PROGRAM REVIEW AND GRANT-FUNDED PROGRAMS**

The institutionalization of grant-funded programs must be considered during program review. Grants generally provide initial funds to design a program, gather initial instructional resources such as equipment, and implement the program. A college should quickly move to discussions around allocating funds to support the program on

an ongoing basis, assuming the program is viable. Programs that are sufficiently important for one-time funding are at least worthy of consideration to be institutionalized and made ongoing. As an embedded component of an institution's review of grant-funded programs, consideration should be given to whether the program will be maintained and supported by the college as long as the need for the program exists.

## Program Modification And Discontinuance

All programs should embrace opportunities to grow and evolve when program review reveals modifications that could help the program more successfully meet the needs of students as well as those of the industry or transfer institutions that benefit from the education preparation these programs provide. This review is generally conducted as part of a regular program review cycle that is also the basis for short- and long-term strategic and budget planning at most colleges. However, at times programs may embark on a program review that goes beyond the standard process to determine whether significant curriculum changes, resources, or other program elements are required to improve program outcomes or to justify the continuance of a program. Additionally, many categorical programs funded by state or external sources have viability and progress reporting requirements that constitute a program viability study.

### THE ROLE OF FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION, AND TRUSTEES

As mandated by Title 5 §53200, local governing boards must either rely primarily on or mutually agree with academic senates in the areas of curriculum development, degree and certificate requirements, educational program development, standards and policies regarding student preparation and success, and the process for academic program review. Program viability and discontinuance considerations are inherent in those all of those processes, most specifically in the area of educational program development. Discussions regarding program viability leading to potential modifications or discontinuance can be challenging for faculty depending on who initiates the conversation and what the perceived motivations may be. Faculty leadership in this process can create greater opportunity for a collegial, student-centered, and academically relevant analysis informed by reliable longitudinal data. The involvement of a college's academic senate is especially crucial in disciplines taught only by part-time faculty, who are often less likely to be involved in college planning processes, causing their voices and perspectives to potentially be absent or diminished. In cases of program discontinuance, faculty have the responsibility to consider programs for suspension or discontinuance when student demand or other factors have led to a loss of viability and to work collegially with the administration when concerns regarding program viability are brought forward.

Administrative voices tend to focus on fiscal viability of programs as well as student need and success. Because administrators may be aware of issues such as environmental changes or workforce data regarding a program, they need to ensure that programs are routinely reviewed, advisory boards are consulted in the case of CTE programs, plans are developed, and actions are taken to ensure that the strength and vitality of programs are sustained. The role of a dean or a chief instructional officer is to provide support for faculty during the review of a program, and if a recommendation for discontinuance results from this process, administrators, working with the local academic senate, facilitate the implementation of program discontinuance processes by providing necessary resources and support. Administrators must make certain that recommendations are

carried out and that all contractual and legal requirements regarding employees are met and students' needs are accommodated.

For district governing boards, involvement in the discussion of program modification or discontinuance is in an oversight role. Although faculty and administrators are the parties most commonly responsible for analyzing a program's viability and making a recommendation regarding discontinuance of a program, the decision to discontinue a program ultimately rests with the governing board. More specifically to CTE programs, Education Code §78016 requires that every vocational or occupational training program offered by a community college district be reviewed every two years by the governing board of the district to ensure that each program remains viable, meets a documented labor market demand, and does not duplicate other programs in the area. The board's review should include effectiveness measures as well. A board's decision to discontinue a program should be based on a collegially agreed upon and deliberative process that ensures that district planning documents and district policies are consulted and followed, including any relevant administrative procedures, the college's mission statement, the strategic plan, educational and facilities master plans, and other planning documents. After discontinuance, board members are responsible for responding to concerns from the community and upholding the collegial processes used to reach the decision. Given the authority that boards have to discontinue programs, faculty should be mindful of this possibility and develop credible and comprehensive viability review processes that are data-informed and focused on the needs of students and not faculty.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION BEYOND PROGRAM REVIEW**

Program modification is often conducted as a result of a program review process; however, faculty in a given program may benefit from creating a review process that is distinct to their individual program and more comprehensive than the one-size-fits-all review found in most program review documents. Also, because program review cycles vary from college to college, having an ongoing process of self-evaluation and data collection that can be maintained outside of the program review cycle may be useful. Certain types of data—such as enrollment trends, student demand, and occupational outlook—may be common to both program review and an individual program's assessment of its health, and institutional data typically used in periodic program review may be necessary. Whatever other options may exist, program review should not be used as the sole determiner of program viability or discontinuance if the program review process is overly generic. For ASCCC positions and effective practices for program review, please refer to the paper *Program Review: Setting a Standard* (2009).<sup>13</sup>

## **PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Community college districts are required by current statute and regulation to develop processes for program discontinuance and minimum criteria for the discontinuance of occupational programs (Education Code §78016 and Title 5 §51022). Additionally, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges requires institutions to make provisions so that enrolled students have legitimate and accessible opportunities to complete their programs when programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed.

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13 *Program Review: Setting a Standard* (2009) [https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/publications/Program-review-spring09\\_0.pdf](https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/publications/Program-review-spring09_0.pdf)

ACCJC Standard II.A.15 states, “When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.”<sup>14</sup> Program discontinuance is also an important discussion when colleges have seen an overly ambitious expansion in programs, which can confuse students and put strains on a college’s finite resources. The ASCCC paper *Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective Revisited* (2012)<sup>15</sup> provides important information on metrics to consider in order to satisfy Education Code, Title 5 regulations, and accreditation standards.

## Conclusion

A college’s educational programs define the institution within the community and in the minds of its students. Faculty, as stewards of the curriculum, must constantly explore new innovations and developments in their fields that may call for creating new programs and revising existing programs to keep educational opportunities relevant and rewarding for students. Faculty collaboration with industry partners, students, and administrators drives colleges to reach higher educational summits and explore fertile new ground in the name of academic and professional success for California’s 2.1 million community college students.

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14 ACCJC Standards (2014) <https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Accreditation-Standards-Adopted-June-2014-Annotated-with-Policies-and-Regulations.pdf>

15 *Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective Revisited*. (2012) <https://www.asccc.org/papers/program-discontinuance-faculty-perspective-revisited>



## Appendix A: References

### ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES (ACCJC) REFERENCES

*ACCJC Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation (2014)* <https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Eligibility-Requirements-Adopted-June-2014.pdf>

ACCJC Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits <https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Institutional-Degrees-and-Credits.pdf>

### ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES (ASCCC) REFERENCES

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*Ensuring Effective Curriculum Approval Processes: A Guide for Local Senates* (2016) [https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/Effective%20Curriculum%20Approval%20Process\\_0.pdf](https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/Effective%20Curriculum%20Approval%20Process_0.pdf)

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Resolution SP16 9.02 “Develop a Paper on Effective Practices for Educational Program Development” <http://asccc.org/resolutions/develop-paper-effective-practices-educational-program-development>

### California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) and Other References

*California Community Colleges Guidelines for Community Services Offering* (2012) <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Miscellaneous/CommunitySvcsOfferingGuidelinesFinal10.24.12.pdf>

ICW Working Definition of Area of Emphasis <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BytmZpyqw5B5RnpZcmpwYXpxLW8/view>

*Program and Course Approval Handbook*, 6th Edition. [http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Credit/2017/PCAH\\_6thEdition\\_July\\_FINAL.pdf](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Credit/2017/PCAH_6thEdition_July_FINAL.pdf)

Title 5 §55000. Definitions. [https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I12CF9B4BDA2340B3B01F2DFD1231396A?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I12CF9B4BDA2340B3B01F2DFD1231396A?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=sc.Default)

## Appendix B: Sample Educational Program Development Policies And Procedures

### AP 4020 PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The College Curriculum Office coordinates and guides the curriculum processes. The course initiator should discuss plans with department faculty, deans, curriculum representative, advisory committee (if appropriate), and articulation officer (if appropriate). Upon consensus, the appropriate proposal form is completed per the College curriculum management system (Curricunet) in accordance with applicable regulations.

The completed proposal shall receive a technical review by an approved subcommittee appointed by the Curriculum Committee. Any revisions shall be addressed prior to full Curriculum Committee review.

Following technical review approval, the proposal shall be forwarded for full Curriculum Committee approval consisting of two readings. Proposals shall be evaluated for appropriateness to mission, need, quality, feasibility, and compliance. For specific criteria, see Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges Program and Course Approval Handbook available in the Curriculum Office.

The College recognizes the primacy of faculty in the area of curriculum development. Accountability for quality, effective curricula that meet applicable standards is a shared responsibility. The Curriculum Committee, a committee of the Faculty Senate, consists of a faculty curriculum chair, Faculty Senate President or designee, articulation officer, two representatives (elected on alternating years) from:

- Athletics and Physical Education
- Business and Applied Technology
- Health Sciences
- Language Arts
- Mathematics and Science
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Visual and Performing Arts

In addition, two representatives shall come from Counseling and Matriculation representing student services and two representatives shall come from Instructional Support. There may be occasions when a particular area may not be able to have two sitting members on the Curriculum Committee, however, that will be up to the area in question. It is the Curriculum Committee's position that each area will have the opportunity for equal representation.

Learning modalities, including distance education, hybrid and CIW impact pedagogy, and therefore must be represented within the membership of the Curriculum Committee.

In addition, the following shall be considered standing positions on the Curriculum Committee due to the nature of the curriculum approval process and/or articulation issues:

- Articulation Officer
- Transfer Center Officer
- Catalog & Schedule Coordinator
- SLO Facilitator
- Librarian
- Faculty Senate President
- Curriculum Chair
- Curriculum Office staff

The Chief Instructional Officer or designee will also serve on the Curriculum Committee, as well as a second Dean.

The primary responsibility of the Curriculum Committee is assuring academic excellence in curriculum matters by ensuring that curriculum is academically sound, comprehensive, and responsive to the evolving needs of the institution and the community through review and approval of:

- New and modified course proposals for Title 5 compliance
- Courses as they relate to programs of study
- Appropriate requisites
- CSU and UC general education proposals in collaboration with the articulation officer
- Policy changes pertaining to curricula issues
- Implementation of state regulations and guidelines pertaining to the curriculum development process
- Proposed programs of study
- Student Learning Outcomes

An ongoing review of courses and programs is conducted to maintain compliance with internal and external policies. Courses are reviewed on a six-year rotational cycle and updated as needed. CTE curriculum is updated on a two-year cycle.

Curriculum proposals shall be accepted year round. Proposals and catalog changes meeting Curriculum Office deadlines shall be reflected in the following academic year's college catalog. The initiator shall check with her/his school for internal timelines and technical review deadlines.

Proposals approved by the Curriculum Committee shall be forwarded to the Governing Board for approval throughout the year. Applicable proposals shall then be forwarded to the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges, for approval. The College Catalog is a collaborative publication reflecting these approvals.

Complete curriculum records are maintained through the curriculum management system.

For purposes of federal financial aid eligibility, a “credit hour” shall not be less than:

One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

At least an equivalent amount of work as required in the paragraph above of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Also see AP 4021 titled Program Discontinuance and AP 4022 titled Course Approval.

**References:** Title 5 Sections 51021, 55000 et seq., and 55100 et seq.; WASC/ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A; U.S. Department of Education regulations on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; California Community Colleges Program and Course Approval Handbook; The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Good Practices for Course Approval Processes and The Curriculum Committee: Role, Structure, Duties, and Standards of Good Practice; 34 Code of Federal Regulations Sections 600.2, 602.24, 603.24, and 668.8

Approved: 3/8/13

*(Replaces former Administrative Procedure 4.2)*

## **BP 4020 PROGRAM, CURRICULUM, AND COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

The programs and curricula of the District shall be of high quality, relevant to community and student needs, and evaluated regularly to ensure quality and currency. To that end, the Superintendent/President shall establish procedures for the development and review of all curricular offerings, including their establishment, modification or discontinuance.

Furthermore, these procedures shall include:

- definitions, standards, and categories for programs and courses;
- appropriate involvement of the faculty and Faculty Senate in all processes;
- regular review and justification of programs and course descriptions;
- opportunities for training for persons involved in aspects of curriculum development;
- consideration of job market and other related information for career technical programs.

All new programs and program deletions shall be approved by the Governing Board.

All new programs shall be submitted to the Office of the Chancellor for the California Community Colleges for approval as required.

Individual degree-applicable credit courses offered as part of a permitted educational program shall be approved by the Governing Board. Non-degree-applicable credit and degree-applicable courses that are not part of an existing approved program must satisfy the conditions authorized by Title 5 regulations and shall be approved by the Governing Board.

Consistent with federal regulations applicable to federal financial aid eligibility, the District shall assess and designate each of its programs as either a “credit hour” program or a “clock hour” program.

The Superintendent/President will establish procedures which prescribe the definition of “credit hour” consistent with applicable federal regulations, as they apply to community college districts.

The Superintendent/President shall establish procedures to assure that curriculum at the District comply with the definition of “credit hour” or “clock hour,” where applicable. The Superintendent/President shall also establish procedure for using a clock-to-credit hour conversion formula to determine whether a credit hour program is eligible for federal financial aid. The conversion formula is used to determine whether such a credit-hour program has an appropriate minimum number of clock hours of instruction for each credit hour it claims.

References: Education Code Sections 70901(b), 70902(b), and 78016; Title 5 Sections 51000, 51022, 55100, 55130 and 55150;

U.S. Department of Education regulations on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended;

34 Code of Federal Regulations Sections 600.2, 602.24, 603.24, and 668.8

Policy Category: Executive Expectations

Adopted: 02/27/14

## **AP 4020 PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

### **REFERENCES:**

Title 5 Sections 55000 et seq., and 55100 et seq.; Accreditation Standard II.A

The College defines a program as an approved sequence of courses leading to a certificate or degree. The Program and Course Approval Handbook for the California Community Colleges (September 2013) as well as the Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide (Spring 2008) is the reference used for curriculum and program development at the College.

- Curriculum Review

The curriculum review process shall, at a minimum, be in accordance with the following:

- The College will have an established Educational Design Committee, and its membership structure will be mutually agreed upon by the College administration and the Academic Senate.
- The Academic Senate assigns the task of course and program review to the Educational Design Committee. The Educational Design Committee shall forward its recommendations to the Curriculum and Instruction Council for review. All new and modified course and program recommendations of the Curriculum and Instruction Council shall be sent to the Board of Trustees for final approval. The Curriculum and Instruction Council report must include all approved courses and programs and continue to be reported to the Senate Executive Board and the full Academic Senate at every meeting.
- Educational Design Committee and Curriculum and Instruction Council agendas will be emailed to the campus at least 72 hours before the meeting takes place. Faculty members desiring to pull items from the Educational Design Committee or Curriculum and Instruction Council agenda will notify the Curriculum Liaison, Assistant Curriculum Liaison, Curriculum Specialist, division representative, or committee or council member. Rationale must be provided for pulling items from an agenda.
- The Educational Design Committee also reviews course prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories in a manner that meets each of the requirements under Title 5 Section 55003 and those specified in the College's curriculum review process.
- Publication of Changes and Maintenance of Records

After Board and Chancellor's Office approval, all new courses and programs or changes to existing courses and programs commence with the next academic year and must be published in the College Catalog or in the online Catalog addendum. All changes to course numbers or prefixes must be reflected in the next year's College Catalog and class schedules showing both the old and new number to provide students with a clear path of transition.

- Maintenance of Courses and Programs

It is the intention of the College to maintain a current and functional Catalog and to offer the courses and programs therein. To support this endeavor:

- Each department shall develop a course rotation plan so that each course under the control of the department is included in a two-year scheduling cycle;
- Each department shall propose new courses, new programs, course or program modifications, and course or program inactivations as necessary to maintain a functional and relevant curriculum; and
- Each department shall comply with program and course review standards as recommended by the Educational Design Committee or the Curriculum and Instruction Council, and approved by the Academic Senate.

The Educational Design Committee or Curriculum and Instruction Council may propose inactivation of a course required for a degree or certificate should any of the following apply:

- The department controlling the course requests the inactivation;
- The course has not been submitted for course review within the past four years; or
- The course has not completed an outcomes cycle within the past four years.

The Educational Design Committee or Curriculum and Instruction Council may propose inactivation of a program should any of the following apply:

- The department controlling the program requests the inactivation; or
- The program has not completed an outcomes cycle within the past four years.

On an annual basis by October 1 of each year, the Instruction Office shall provide a list of programs with completion data, near-completers, and denied completers as well as a breakdown of courses used to complete the program to each department. In addition, the Instruction Office shall publish a list of courses and programs which are subject to inactivation under the guidelines noted above. Departments should report and provide rationale to the Instruction Office within 90 days of the distribution of the list so as to indicate which courses and programs should remain in the curriculum inventory. If departments do not report back within 90 days, the Instruction Office will inform the Educational Design Committee that may then choose to recommend inactivation of the courses or programs through the Curriculum and Instruction Council followed by approval by the Academic Senate.

Courses and programs that are requested by departments to remain in the curriculum system will be retained for one additional year. If the course or program is on the next year's list of courses and programs which are subject to inactivation, then the courses will automatically be submitted to the Educational Design Committee for inactivation.

Courses and programs that are inactivated shall be removed from the College Catalog.

- Review of Courses Approved for General Education Courses that fulfill general education requirements must:
- Require post-secondary level skills in reading, writing, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking.
- Improve students' abilities to:
- communicate ideas effectively orally and in writing;
- define problems, design solutions, and critically analyze results;
- use available media to access, research, and retrieve reliable and authoritative information;
- work effectively, both cooperatively and independently;
- develop and question personal and societal values, make informed choices, and accept responsibility for their decisions;
- function as active, responsible, and ethical citizens; and
- acquire curiosity and skills essential for lifelong learning.
- Impart understanding, knowledge, and appreciation of:
- our shared scientific, technological, historical, and artistic heritage including the contributions of women, ethnic minorities, and non-western cultures;
- the earth's ecosystem including the processes that formed it and the strategies that are necessary for its maintenance;
- human social, political, and economic institutions and behavior including their interrelationships; and
- the psychological, social, and physiological dimensions of men and women as individuals and as members of society.



The Educational Design Committee will annually review proposals for additions and deletions to the General Education course list, maintaining consistency with the CSU area designation approval. The Committee will recommend to the Academic Senate any changes in the General Education course list. The General Education course list will be published each year in the College Catalog and schedule of classes.

- Stand-Alone Courses Approval Process

The Educational Design Committee shall review proposals of stand-alone courses in a manner that meets each of the requirements under Title 5 Section 55100 and those specified in the College's curriculum review process.

Approved: October 2012

Revised: August 28, 2013

Reviewed: December 16, 2014

Reviewed: June 9, 2015

Revised: September 28, 2016

BP 4020 Program, Curriculum, and Course Development

## REFERENCES:

Education Code Section 70902(b), and 78016; Title 5, Section 51022 and 55130,  
BP 3255

The programs and curricula of the College shall be of high quality, relevant to community and student needs, and evaluated regularly to ensure quality, currency, and transferability when appropriate. To that end, the College President/CEO in consultation with the Chief Instructional Officer and the Academic Senate shall establish procedures for the development and review of all curricular offerings, including their establishment, modification or discontinuance.

Furthermore, these procedures shall include:

- appropriate involvement of the Academic Senate;
- regular review and justification of programs and course descriptions; and
- opportunities for training for persons involved in aspects of curriculum development.
- consideration of job market and other related information for career and technical programs.

All new programs and program deletions shall be approved by the Board.

New courses that are not part of an existing approved program and all new programs shall be submitted to the Office of the Chancellor for the California Community Colleges for approval as required.

Approved: May 26, 2004

Revised: January 26, 2005

Revised: January 24, 2007

Reviewed: May 14, 2013

Reviewed: December 16, 2014

Reviewed: June 9, 2015

Reviewed: May 10, 2016

## **Appendix C: Sample Educational Program Development Policy For Grant Funded Programs**

### **DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH EXTERNAL FUNDING OR GRANT FUNDING**

REFERENCES: Education Code 70902(b)(7); Title 5 §55002(a)(1)

The chief executive officer of a college shall establish procedures in consultation with the academic senate to assure timely application and processing of grants or outside funding that directly support the development of an educational program. Faculty will be responsible for developing curriculum to support educational programs funded through grants or outside sources in consultation with administrative and external partners. In addition, processes for applying for external funding that are not related to a specific degree or certificate program, but supports student success, will include faculty consultation.

# Appendix D: Sample Educational Program Development Procedures For Grant Funded Programs

## DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH EXTERNAL FUNDING OR GRANT FUNDING

**References:** Education Code 70902(b)97); Title 5 §55002(a)(1); §55070 INTRODUCTION

To meet community needs, especially those needs of local industry and workforce needs, community colleges may often partner with external agencies or seek local, state, or federal funding sources. These funds are dedicated to the creation and/or support of a specific educational program and to support student success. Typically these funds may only be used for a specific purpose and reporting is required. All grants should identify and provide specific benefits to the college which are in alignment with a college's mission. This model procedure will explain elements that may be included in a college's processes and procedures for the development of courses and programs using grants or external funding provided by a source other than the college's base allocation.

### FACULTY PRIMACY

Per Education Code 70902(b)(7) local academic senates and faculty are the primary constituent group responsible for curriculum and academic standards. Given that primacy, the development or maintenance of educational programs, even those established through external funding, should be led first and foremost by faculty in consultation with administrative partners. Additionally, non-educational programs that support students also benefit from faculty consultation when pursuing funds intended to support equity and achievement for all students. Faculty and administration should mutually agree on processes for applying for external funding sources and the dispensation and reporting around those funds as part of its budget process.

### CONSULTATION AND GRANT SUBMITTAL

Faculty, working with administrative and external partners such as advisory groups, should determine the need for an academic program prior to the submission of an application for a grant or other funding source, and curriculum changes, if needed, should be in place prior to pursuing a grant. Additionally, during the decision-making process faculty and administrators should consider future institutionalization of a program's funding after the completion of the grant if it is decided to maintain the program in the future.

The following recommended steps should take place when determining the need for a program or other support service for students.

- All faculty members in a discipline discuss the need for a new educational program (degree or certificate) or student support program based on their knowledge of the field and their experience working with industry partners or advisory committees and with transfer institutions. Faculty consultation should be documented (e.g. program review documents, department meeting minutes, advisory committee minutes).

Proposals for new programs by administrators should be reviewed by faculty and the viability of that program established by faculty in accordance with local policies.

- If there is a potential curricular impact (e.g., a grant that can serve as a foundation for a new academic program, a change to delivery methods of existing programs [e.g., Guided Pathways], the expansion of current disciplines, or the implementation of off-campus delivery methods, then the grant proposal should be submitted to and vetted by the Academic Senate and/or the Curriculum Committee. Academic Senate review is required under Title 5, §53200 of the California Education Code regarding faculty representation in all academic and professional matters (“10+1”). Specifically, the items affected by and affecting grants include #4, “Educational and program development” and #10, “Processes for institutional planning and budget development.”
- Faculty consult with administration regarding the creation of a new educational program (degree or certificate) or student support program using external funds and determine if a need exists and can be met by pursuing those funds. In addition, these discussions should establish what new curriculum, facilities, human resources, technology resources, matching funds, and other expenses will be needed to make the funding application successful and the program viable for students.
- Faculty and administrators establish the program assessment processes, such as the local program review process, that will be used to determine whether to institutionalize the future sustainability and funding for the program after the completion of the grant.
- Faculty develop or revise curriculum as needed and all new or revised curriculum is approved through the college’s curriculum approval process . This step should occur prior to grant submission.
- Upon receiving new funds for the development of an educational program (degree or certificate) or student support program, faculty and administrative partners should begin implementing the necessary steps that must be taken to determine whether to institutionalize the program in the future.

#### SUSTAINABILITY AND INTEGRITY

An effective procedure for an educational program (degree or certificate) or student support program that relies on grant funding or external funding should include mechanisms to evaluate the feasibility of institutionalizing the program immediately upon receiving external funds, when possible.

In addition, accepting grant funds and implementing a grant should be a transparent activity with faculty consultation and involvement to avoid using funds in ways not originally intended or allowed by the grant. Grant applications should as accurately as possible reflect the scope of the needs defined by faculty for the development and support of an educational program or student support service and avoid excessive inflation of funds requested to support the scope of the proposal.

#### EMERGENCY PROCESS FOR APPROVING GRANTS OR EXTERNAL FUNDS

A local procedure for pursuing and implementing externally-funded programs should include a process for reacting quickly when new information about funding opportunities arises. However, faculty consultation should not be sacrificed in order to expedite an application for a funding source. Colleges should consider establishing approval processes, such as consulting with a smaller senate group or the local senate’s executive committee, that support nimble decision-making and can be applied when a last-minute funding opportunity is discovered.