

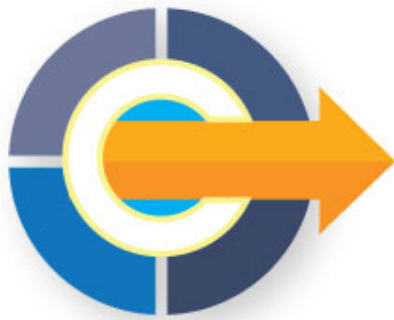
Background Paper:

Essential Elements for Strong Programs: Curriculum Development and Instructors

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CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Task Force on
WORKFORCE

JOB CREATION AND A STRONG ECONOMY

Discussion Category:

- 1. Workforce Data & Outcomes
- 2. Curriculum & Instructors
- 3. Structured Career Pathways & Student Support
- 4. Funding
- 5. Regional Coordination

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR STRONG PROGRAMS: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND INSTRUCTORS

For Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and the Economy

PART ONE: CURRICULUM

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The term “curriculum” in the California Community Colleges indicates more than just the content of a course. Curriculum includes definition of student skills and performance outcomes, materials to be used in the course, instructional delivery methods, methods of assessing student learning, assignment types, prerequisites, transferability, and other details that help to define the what and how of the instructional program. All of these elements of a course are captured in a Course Outline of Record, commonly referred to as a COR, in order that they may be clearly defined, approved, and shared.

Curriculum development and refinement are among the most essential functions in the California Community Colleges. Curriculum approval processes reflect the collective will of the entire college as an accredited institution, encompassing all the rigor, privileges, and obligations that come with being fully accredited. The primary responsibility for curriculum rests in the hands of faculty at the local level. Processes differ to some degree among colleges and districts, but the basic aspects of the system are largely consistent. Career Technical Education (CTE) curriculum development, revision, and approval are not separate processes but follow the same general structure and are subject to the same regulations as outlined in Title 5, with a few additional features, as other curriculum processes.

ROLE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

The development of curriculum at California community colleges is a faculty responsibility in law and regulation, and faculty are represented in these processes by their local academic senates. The authority of the academic senate for recommendations regarding curriculum comes from both law (Education Code) and regulation (Title 5).

Education Code

Education Code §70902(b)(7) reads as follows: “Establish procedures that are consistent with minimum standards established by the board of governors to ensure faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to express their opinions at the campus level, to ensure that these opinions are given every reasonable consideration, to ensure the right to participate effectively in district and college governance, and to ensure **the right of academic senates to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum and academic standards**” (emphasis added). An important phrase in this section of education code is “primary responsibility.” Because the faculty must deliver the curriculum to the students and

because faculty work most closely and directly with students on a day-to-day basis, the faculty voice, through the academic senate, is expected to carry significantly greater weight in curricular discussions than any other. However, faculty are aware that “primary” is not the same as “sole responsibility.” Other voices always have a right to be heard on curricular matters, and, as in all other matters, final authority for approval rests with the local board of trustees.

Title 5 Regulations

Title 5 regulations, which detail the implementation of California Education Code, state the faculty authority for curriculum through section 53200. An academic senate is defined as “an organization whose primary function is to make recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters.” Academic and professional matters are defined in the same Title 5 section and include the following (emphasis added to highlight curricular elements):

- 1. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines.**
- 2. Degree and certificate requirements.**
- 3. Grading policies.**
- 4. Educational program development.**
- 5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success.**
6. College governance structures, as related to faculty roles.
7. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports.
8. Policies for faculty professional development activities.
9. Processes for program review.
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development, and
11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon between the governing board and the academic senate.

This regulatory language further develops and clarifies but is consistent with Education Code §70902(b)(7). Local board policies may also assign further responsibilities to the academic senate related to curriculum.

Participatory Decision-Making

The logic behind delegating primary responsibility for recommendations regarding curricular decisions emanates from a fundamental value in the California Community colleges: participatory decision-making. As noted in Education Code §70902(b)(7) (quoted above), all voices in the college community should be respected and given due consideration. This system, when exercised consistently, leads to greater levels of trust, commitment, and understanding among all constituencies in the institution. However, another important principle and basis for participatory decision-making is that it can employ the expertise and analytical skills of those most qualified to make decisions on any given topic. Faculty are the experts in curriculum development and delivery, as they work directly with students on a daily basis and are best able to see both positive and negative impacts of any decision on students. Faculty are also trained in their subject matter and can make use of their discipline expertise in curricular discussions.

For these reasons, the primary role of faculty is based not only in law and regulation but also in simple effective practice that works to the advantage of the entire community college system.

CURRICULUM PROCESSES: LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE LEVELS

Local Curriculum Processes

Per Education Code §70902(b)(7), recommendations regarding curriculum are the responsibility of the local academic senate. However, academic senates may delegate some or all responsibility for curricular matters to a curriculum committee per Title 5 §55002(a)(1):

“Curriculum Committee: The college and /or district curriculum committee recommending the course shall be established by the mutual agreement of the college and/or district administration and the academic senate. The committee shall be either a committee of the academic senate or a committee that includes faculty and is otherwise comprised in a way that is mutually agreeable to the college and/or district administration and the academic senate.”

Curriculum committees on local campuses should fall under the purview of local or district academic senates and in most cases will be comprised primarily of representative faculty. The size and composition of the curriculum committee is a local decision, but, in addition to faculty, curriculum committees often include representation from curriculum specialists, administrators, articulation officers, counselors, students, and other college constituent groups.

As of Fall 2015, the California Community College System will include 113 colleges in 72 districts throughout the state. Each local curriculum process is slightly different, but, from a macro-view, minimum requirements for each Course Outline of Record and for certificate and degree programs are consistent across the system. Local processes are not designed to hinder or slow course development but rather to promote academic integrity and quality and to ensure that efforts meet statewide guidelines, serve students’ educational goals, and fit into the mission of the community college. When these processes are designed efficiently, they are very capable of being responsive while still performing the important function of ensuring quality and academic integrity.

Course development and revision at the local level should begin with discipline faculty. For Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, advisory boards composed of community and related industry members must also be included to assure the course meets needs that are current and relevant to the career and employment goals of students.

Some CTE programs are also subject to discipline specific external requirements. Programs leading to specialized certification processes, either industry recognized or mandated by regulation, often have specific requirements which must be reflected in course and program design. Such requirements must be considered when CTE curriculum is developed or revised, but if the local curriculum process has been designed efficiently they need not unduly slow or impede that process.

Steps in the Curriculum Development and Approval Process

The curriculum development process, at both the course and program level, generally begins with faculty in the specific discipline. The faculty may become aware of new trends in various ways, including interaction with their program advisory committees in their profession, or new industry needs or requirements may be called to their attention. Because faculty are the experts regarding instruction in their discipline, and because they will ultimately be charged with delivering the curriculum and ensuring student learning, they must be the initiators and drivers of curriculum development and change.

However, in CTE programs, faculty work with advisory committees composed of local community, business, and industry leaders relevant to their program. These advisory committees may be the voice that calls faculty attention to new industry needs, and they advise faculty in order to help ensure that the program curriculum is current and effective. Thus, while discipline faculty retain the responsibility for initiating curriculum change and development, coordination with advisory committees is essential even in the early stages of the process.

Discipline faculty also work with various on-campus bodies or individuals to ensure that their curriculum proposals are clear and complete and that they meet all relevant federal, state, and local requirements. These sources of assistance may include the curriculum committee or its sub-committees, the college articulation officer, counseling faculty, and others.

Once the proposal is ready, it is sent to the college curriculum committee, whose role is not only to ensure compliance with all relevant requirements but also to ensure the necessity of the program or course and to scrutinize the place of the program or course within the overall educational program of the institution. Whereas discipline faculty tend, as is their role, to consider the needs of their own program, the curriculum committee is charged with monitoring the overall benefit to students and the college.

At some colleges, the local academic senate, which is given primary authority in Education Code over recommendations involving curriculum, may require that curricular proposals pass for approval from the curriculum committee through the senate. However, many academic senates delegate authority for curriculum matters to the curriculum committee and receive curricular proposals at most as information items.

In CTE disciplines, program proposals must also be reviewed and approved by the regional consortium in order for the program to gain Chancellor's Office approval. The regional consortia do not modify the proposals on their own but rather must endorse the proposal that has been developed and submitted through the local curriculum process or may help to establish the need for the program before it is developed in detail through the curricular process.

From the curriculum committee, and from the academic senate if necessary, curricular proposals are sent to the local governing board. The board has final approval over all district decisions but will in most cases rely on the recommendations of the curriculum committee or the academic senate.

After approval by the local board, curriculum proposals are sent to the CCC Chancellor's Office. Chancellor's Office staff reviews the proposals for completeness and compliance a final time before assigning a control number for collecting apportionment and placement into Management Information Systems data elements.

The Role of Employers and Advisory Committees in Curriculum Development and Revision

Employers and industry representatives within a community play an important role in developing CTE curriculum and keeping it up to date. Title 5 §55601 states, "The governing board of each community college district participating in a vocational education program shall appoint a vocational education advisory committee to develop recommendations on the program and to provide liaison between the district and potential employers." This communication with job providers is an essential aspect of CTE program development. For this reason, credit programs in the CTE areas require regional consortia approval to ensure that unnecessary duplication of effort does not occur, and the Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH) published by the CCC Chancellor's Office requires that a newly proposed CTE program must have a recommendation for approval from its local CTE advisory committee. Labor Market Analyses that are a required aspect of new CTE program proposals must also include minutes of local industry advisory committee meetings. Any proposal that includes program requirements which differ from advisory committee recommendations necessitates additional justification and documentation from the proposing college.

This communication between college CTE programs and business and industry through advisory committees is an indispensable source of input for curriculum development. Advisory committees can help to ensure that the needs of the community are being met and that students who complete the program will have the skills and knowledge necessary for employment. The final recommendation on all curricular decisions remains the purview of the local college faculty and curriculum committee, with the final determination resting with the local board of trustees. However, effective collaboration between faculty and advisory committees helps to ensure that programs remain viable, that the needs of business and industry are served, and that both immediate and long-term employment opportunities exist for students.

Types of Community College Courses

Courses and programs offered at the community colleges exist in three categories: credit, noncredit, and community service or not-for-credit.

- **Credit Courses**

Credit courses are usually placed into degrees and certificates that are collectively called programs. Credit courses and programs have the following characteristics:

- They generate apportionment for the college
- Students pay fees set by the Legislature to take the courses
- Students receive transcribed units for successful completion
- Course may not be repeated after successful completion except under specific circumstances depending on the individual student.

Credit courses can be labeled degree applicable or non-degree applicable. Non-degree applicable courses are developmental and basic skills courses and usually involve curriculum at a precollegiate level. Credit courses require approval from the local curriculum committee, in some cases from the academic senate depending on the local process, the local board of trustees, and the Chancellor's Office.

- **Noncredit Courses**

Noncredit courses are often placed into certificates of completion and certificates of competency. These courses are limited to 10 categories:

- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Immigrant Education (including Citizenship)
- Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills (including diplomas and GED)
- Health and Safety
- Substantial Disabilities
- Parenting
- Courses for Older Adults
- Home Economics
- Short-term Vocational
- Workforce Preparation, including apprenticeships.

Like credit courses and programs, noncredit courses and programs generate apportionment for the college. However, two levels of funding for these courses currently exist, noncredit and enhanced noncredit. Enhanced non-credit funding is available for Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) courses and programs, including ESL, Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills, Short-term Vocational, and Workforce Preparation. In the 2015-16 California state budget, CDCP noncredit is expected to receive funding that is equal to that of credit courses. To receive CDCP funding, courses must be tied to a local board and Chancellor's Office approved certificate as follows (Title 5 §55151):

- Completion: noncredit course sequence (minimum of 2) leads to improved employability and should correspond to programs in Short Term Vocational or Workforce Preparation areas.
- Competency: noncredit course sequence (minimum of 2) in a recognized field transitioning to credit, a degree, or a baccalaureate institution and should correspond to programs in ESL or elementary or secondary education (basic skills).

Students are not charged fees for noncredit courses, and students do not receive unit credit for successful completion. Noncredit courses are also typically offered without the regular weekly attendance constraints of credit courses and may allow students to enter, attend, and complete the course at various times. Students can therefore receive additional instruction as needed

and restrictions on course repetition do not apply. Like credit courses, noncredit courses require approval from the local curriculum committee, the academic senate depending on the local process, the local board, and the Chancellor's Office.

- **Community Service, Not-for-credit, or Fee-based offerings**

Courses that are designated as community service or not-for-credit are not really college courses in the usual sense; some colleges refer to these offerings as fee-based. Not-for-credit curriculum does not earn apportionment and cannot be supported by public funds, and therefore fees are charged to make the offerings self-supporting, though the fees cannot be used to make a profit. Such offerings are subject to the approval of the local governing board but may not be subject to curriculum committee approval depending on local processes and do not require Chancellor's Office approval. These courses do not appear on students' official transcripts, and students do not receive unit credit.

Contract Education

"Contract education" is education or training paid for by a business or organization with enrollment restricted to individuals approved by the paying client. Enrollment fees do not apply to contract education programs because the full cost of instruction is paid by a public or private agency. However, these courses do not earn apportionment. Credit, noncredit, and community service offerings may be offered as contractual education.

Course Outlines of Record

The course outline of record (COR) is a legal document required for all credit and noncredit courses. The COR must contain certain required elements that are outlined in §55002 of Title 5. The COR serves as a legal contract between the faculty, the student, the college, and the Chancellor's Office. All CORs must be approved by the local curriculum committee and the local governing board. The local academic senate may also approve CORs, though this duty is in many cases delegated to the local curriculum committee.

The COR serves a variety of important purposes in the local curriculum process:

- Establishes the content and rigor of a course and ensures consistency for students across all section offerings.
- Distinguishes a course from other courses
- Ensures instructional integrity and quality and consistency of course delivery for faculty
- Serves as the basis for articulation agreements and statewide course identification number (C-ID) approval.
- Establishes CSU-General Education and Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) status and applicability to local general education patterns.
- Informs program review process
- Assists accrediting agency review
- Provides evidence of meeting Chancellor's Office and Title 5 requirements
- Provides data for Management Information Systems (MIS) and apportionment

Course Repetition and Repeatable Courses

Beginning in mid-2011, the CCC Board of Governors approved a series of Title 5 changes regarding course repetition. Prior to 2011, students were given great freedom to enroll in and complete courses for credit multiple times, and this practice was widely employed in some CTE disciplines. The 2011 changes defined the circumstances under which students could repeat courses much more narrowly. These changes remain controversial until the present day, with some voices claiming that the changes to course repetition inhibit students' ability to achieve their goals or complete their programs.

However, the majority of these concerns regarding course repetition are based upon misunderstanding of the Title 5 changes. The Chancellor's Office and the Academic Senate have urged colleges to separate their curriculum into more discreet units, either through a series of leveled courses or through more distinct topics, which would still allow students to study the curriculum for multiple semesters. In addition, Title 5 §55040 allows a student to retake a class he or she has successfully completed if such repetition is legally mandated or if a significant change in industry or licensure standards makes such repetition necessary for the student to gain or to continue employment, and colleges are given wide latitude in verifying the need for course repetition in these instances. Title 5 regulations also still allow repetition of work experience courses. Finally, noncredit curriculum is not subject to the restrictions on course repeatability.

One concern raised in the discussion of course repetition policy is that students may need more than a semester to master specific competencies. A possible alternative for addressing this need is a change in Education Code language regarding the auditing of courses, which sets the current fee for auditing at \$15 per unit. This fee is less than one-third of the cost of credit tuition, creating a disincentive for colleges to offer this option to students. However, if auditing options were expanded, students would be allowed to gain additional experience and knowledge if they need more time in their programs without acquiring more units or causing additional expense

Given these various avenues for students to achieve their goals under existing Title 5 regulations, and with the possibility of a change to Education Code language on auditing, CTE programs that feel they have been impacted by course repetition policy should be able to resolve any issues at the local level.

Awards

Community colleges offer both Chancellor's Office approved certificates and degrees and local awards that are not approved by the Chancellor's Office for both credit and noncredit programs. Requirements for all awards that are subject to Chancellor's Office approval are outlined in the Program and Course Approval Handbook, which is published by the Chancellor's Office in consultation with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and is approved by the Board of Governors. Local awards that involve fewer than 18 units do not require Chancellor's Office approval but also are not noted on student transcripts.

The following types of awards exist for credit program awards:

- Associate degrees
 - Minimum of 60 semester units
 - At least 18 semester units in a major or area of emphasis
 - Completion of a general education pattern of at least 18 semester units as defined in Title 5 §55063
 - Chancellor's Office approval required
- Associate Degrees for Transfer
 - Minimum of 60 semester units
 - Must be possible to complete in no more than 60 semester units
 - At least 18 semester units in a major or area of emphasis
 - Completion of either the CSU Breadth or IGETC general education patterns
 - Chancellor's Office approval required
- Certificates of Achievement
 - From 12-17.5 units, Chancellor's Office approval optional
 - If 18 or more related units, Chancellor's Office approval required
 - Regional Consortia approval is required for Chancellor's Office approval
 - Can only be indicated on student transcripts if Chancellor's Office approved and must be called a certificate of achievement
 - Certificates below 12 units may be awarded but cannot be Chancellor's Office approved and cannot be called a certificate of achievement, competency, or completion

All noncredit courses and programs that receive state funding must be submitted to the Chancellor's Office for approval. These programs include course sequences in Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) that lead to the following awards:

- Certificate of Competency—a document confirming that a student enrolled in a noncredit educational program of noncredit courses has demonstrated achievement in a set of competencies that prepares him or her to progress in a career path or to undertake degree-applicable or non degree-applicable credit courses. The certificate of competency must include the name of the certificate and the date awarded, be identified by a program code number and program discipline, and list the relevant competencies achieved by the student.
- Certificates of Completion—a document confirming that a student has completed a noncredit educational program of noncredit courses that prepares him or her to progress in a career path or to take degree-applicable credit courses. The certificate of completion must include the name of the certificate and the date awarded, be identified by a program code number and program discipline, identify the goal of the program, and list the courses completed by the student.
- Adult High School Diploma

New programs must also be submitted for approval by the accrediting commission, as must programs being substantially modified.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Development and Approval Processes

When considering CTE Program Development, faculty must always ask whether regional employment needs warrant additional programs. This question is important whether the proposed program involves credit or noncredit programs, community service, or contract training.

Different types of programs require different levels of approval. Noncredit CTE programs require local curriculum committee approval, local governing board approval, and Chancellor's Office approval, and may require local academic senate approval depending on local policy. Credit CTE Programs require the same process as well as regional consortium approval.

Community service or fee-based offerings require only local governing board approval under Title 5 but may require local curriculum committee or academic senate approval based on local processes. Specific approval requirements for courses offered through contract education do not exist in Education Code or Title 5. However, community service and contract education programs should always be developed with careful consideration through college consultation processes. Not only are contracts legally binding on the institution, but adding in the extra workload and other demands on personnel and facilities from community service or contract education offerings without involving all stakeholders can lead to a variety of complications. For this reason, districts may have locally required processes for developing and approving contract education.

When requesting approval from the Chancellor's Office for a program, colleges submit documentation such as program applications through the web-based Curriculum Inventory. With the development of the Curriculum Inventory system, submission of program applications became web-enabled. Locally, colleges may still have a paper process to route a program through the college and district level approvals. The Chancellor's Office Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCH) gives explicit instructions regarding the information and supporting documentation that is required for program approval. However, all courses included in the proposal must be up-to-date and will be selected from the Curriculum Inventory as part of the program application.

All newly developed program proposals in the California Community College system must include the following elements:

- Program goals and objectives
- Catalog description
- Program requirements and course sequence
- Enrollment and completer projections
- Place in college or district master planning
- Place of program in the institution's curriculum and relationship to similar programs
- Similar programs at other colleges

However, CTE programs have additional required approval criteria:

- Labor Market Information data and analysis

- Advisory committee recommendation
- Regional consortium endorsement
- Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) Approval - for apprenticeship program only

Labor market information is always a required part of CTE program approval processes. CTE faculty should be familiar with the following sources for labor market information documentation:

- Statistical projections of growth in specific jobs by county for the next five years
- Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information system data
- Centers of Excellence Environmental Scans and studies
- Recent employer surveys
- Sector Navigator and Deputy Sector Navigator feedback
- Minutes of industry advisory committee meetings
- Letters from employers
- Industry studies
- Job advertisements for positions ("Real time data")
- Regional economic studies
- Studies or data from licensing agencies and associations

Federal funding and Title 5 §55003 require CTE programs and courses to undergo review and to validate prerequisites every two years, as compared to every six years in non-CTE disciplines. The normal cycle for overall course review is five or six years, though neither Title 5 nor Education Code indicates a specific required length for the full curricular review cycle.

Regional Curriculum Processes

Regional processes vary significantly from region to region. Like curriculum committees, regional consortia often require several types of scrutiny, such as a lesser review for modifications and a more thorough examination and possibly multiple reviews for new submissions. These processes give appropriate levels of time for vetting with the participating stakeholders across the region, mandating that colleges do not over-supply the employment market with duplicated effort. However, regional consortia also provide a rich opportunity for collaboration in both program development and implementation.

In addition, Title 5 regulations provide for colleges to develop conjoint programs where two or more colleges offer the required courses in a coordinated manner. If the supply of students is either too high or too low, colleges can have difficulty managing course delivery in a fiscally responsible manner. By sharing enrollment conjointly, colleges serve students in a more coordinated and efficient manner, thereby reducing the chances of canceling critical classes. Regional Consortia are a key venue for developing these types of partnerships. To this point, few colleges or areas have exercised the option to create such conjoint programs. Further discussion and promotion of this possibility would be explored through the joint efforts of the Academic Senate and the Chancellor's Office.

Recent trends in funding have also incentivized regional planning where such planning may be beneficial, and this task for CTE has been taken up by the regional consortia.

Chancellor's Office Curriculum Processes

Community college program and course proposals require review and approval by the Chancellor's Office prior to being offered at the community college. Because colleges receive state apportionment for the delivery of courses and programs, the Chancellor's Office must ensure that each instance of a course offering across 72 districts and 113 colleges is done in compliance with a large variety of requirements. Such review for compliance must be done based upon clear parameters. Because funding comes with many differing requirements, the Course Outline of Record must include all information required to meet these compliance standards and demonstrate how they will be met and upheld. Chancellor's Office approval is therefore more than acknowledging that a course or program is a sound and reasonable package that is likely to serve students well; it is the basis by which the Chancellor's Office assures the taxpayers that resources are used appropriately and the basis by which enforcement actions might need to be taken.

Each program has three to four forms that require not only curricular and instructional detail but also information such as college catalog description and number of potential completers. Additionally, colleges must document how a student can complete a program in two years. The web-based curriculum submission process helps to reduce missing elements and information through forms and control fields. Formal notifications of program and course approvals are sent by email to the campus's Chief Instructional Officer, with a copy to the campus contact person and any other appropriate campus representatives. However, if the Chancellor's Office review indicates that the content of the COR requires revision, the submission will be routed back to the college and then returned back into the process.

Recent legislative demands such as transfer degree development (SB 1440, Padilla, 2010 and SB 440, Padilla, 2013) have placed a significant additional workload on the Academic Affairs Division of the Chancellor's Office. Statutory and regulatory changes have mandated a revision of much of the curriculum at colleges across the state, all to be completed by deadlines that have been difficult to meet. These required revisions and submissions have significantly increased the workload of the Academic Affairs Division at a time when the economic recession also led to a reduction in staff. Additional staff added to the Academic Affairs division, either through additional hiring or through transfers from areas that are more fully staffed, would help to address this the workload issues in this area and reduce delays in curriculum approvals.

MAJOR TOPICS AT THE REGIONAL COLLEGE CONVERSATIONS: CURRICULUM

The CCC Chancellor's Office sponsored a series of eleven regional college conversations at a variety of locations around the state between November 2014 and February 2015. Certain topics arose at these meetings with some degree of consistency and misinformation, and therefore merit clarification and reflection.

- Curriculum process for approval of CTE programs at all levels should be evaluated and revised as appropriate in order to optimize responsiveness and efficiency

The length and complexity of the curriculum approval process was a frequent topic raised at the regional conversations and has indeed been a common complaint in the past. In some aspects, this concern is valid: certainly some features of our curriculum processes could be reexamined for expediency and effectiveness. However, some complaints may be based on a misunderstanding of our processes and our curriculum. In order to separate out and address the valid concerns, one must first understand not only how the processes work, as explained in the earlier sections in this paper, but also what curricular options we can offer.

California community colleges can offer a variety of programs and awards, including both degrees and different levels of certificates as well as credit, noncredit, community service, and contact education programs. The approval times for these multiple options can differ significantly. Thus, an employer may request and wait for a credit certificate program when a community education certificate could serve the employer's intent just as well and could be approved far more quickly. In this case, the solution may be not revising the process but rather creating greater awareness of the options the process currently offers.

Some voices have called for processes that allow for multi-college adoption of pre-designed curriculum. However, one of the important challenges of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy is to balance the need to make decisions as a system at the state level and the need to address regional economies with the very important obligation of respecting the autonomy and local control of individual colleges. The California community colleges are part of a fiscal, public system, and for the sake of consistency, unity, and efficiency some decisions should be made at the state level under the leadership of the Chancellor's Office. In a state as vast as California, regional needs, economies, and relationships do indeed differ, and therefore discussion of ways to address those regional issues is always important. Yet, fundamentally, our colleges must be free to serve their communities and their students, and what works well in one community may not serve another as effectively. All districts and colleges are distinct and serve distinctive communities and populations, and thus a practice, process, or curricular model that is effective at one institution may not serve well at another. Colleges know and understand their own situations and service areas best. Certainly changes that can increase efficiency and provide options are welcome, but colleges still must have both the right and the obligation to study and respond to their particular situations rather than simply adopting what may have worked well in another location and context in order to ensure quality instruction for their specific community and student demographics.

Nevertheless, changes to increase responsiveness and efficiency should be explored at all levels. In terms of local processes, while the basic steps required for approval may be necessary, some colleges or districts may have instituted practices that prolong their local processes unnecessarily, such as offering curricular proposals to their local boards less frequently than they could. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, as the voice of the faculty and therefore of curricular recommendations at the state level, is in the best position to conduct a study of such processes and to suggest formal changes or to

disseminate effective practices as appropriate. Indeed, the Academic Senate has worked with the California Community College Association for Occupational Education (CCCAOE) to make improvements in this area, though those efforts are too recent to have borne identifiable results at this time. However, because curricular processes impact not just CTE programs but all academic programs, the Academic Senate might pursue this discussion in a broader venue with curriculum chairs and other faculty leaders.

A review of Chancellor's Office practices might also be beneficial in streamlining curriculum approval. A reconsideration of the degree to which the Chancellor's Office must review all aspects of a Course Outline of Record, for example, might significantly reduce the timeline for approvals. The Chancellor's Office itself might be in the best position to examine these issues, through the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum, with representation from various constituencies, might also be helpful in such a review. However, while streamlining of processes may be beneficial, division and separation of processes and programs in the name of expediency would only create confusion and greater impediments. Since CTE curriculum is subject to the same overall approval processes as non-CTE curriculum at the local level, a similar consistency is necessary at the Chancellor's Office level. Any separate approval or reporting process for CTE curriculum would do more to promote silos and misunderstanding than efficiency. All course approval processes should therefore remain under the authority of the Chancellor's Office Academic Affairs Division.

In addition, greater integration of the Chancellor's Office Academic Affairs Division and regional consortia systems might ease the approval process and reduce duplication of effort. Regional consortia chairs are funded and implement economic development activities through the Economic and Workforce Development Division, and operational coordination between regional consortia and the Academic Affairs Division is not currently required beyond a signature from consortia chairs for curriculum submissions. Increased interaction could improve these curriculum submission processes, reduce errors, and promote greater understanding of both curriculum requirements and possibilities on the part of the consortia.

Many other avenues for improvement are possible but must be weighed and considered carefully. For example, one suggestion has been to reduce the time for the CTE approval process by allowing some of the external and technical aspects of the process, such as labor market studies, to be performed at the state or regional level and applied to multiple colleges rather than requiring each college to conduct its own external research. Such a change might indeed be helpful if it were used to facilitate and expedite local decision-making. However, colleges that exercised this option would also be surrendering their control over the data and would need to have confidence in all information with which they were presented. Thus, some suggestions which might have merit may nonetheless contain unforeseen complexities and therefore would require considerable deliberation.

- Curriculum and student credit should be more portable and consistent both regionally and throughout the state.

The mechanisms for addressing this issue currently exist. The C-ID (Course Identifier) system was created for articulation of transfer courses and is currently being adapted for CTE to promote K-12 to college and college-to-college articulation of courses. The primary question is not the creation of such a system, because it already exists, but rather the degree to which the state is willing to fund it and increase its capacity. In addition, E-Transcript is a statewide electronic clearinghouse that allows the transportation of student records easily, efficiently, and securely.

More information on the C-ID system will be provided in the Structured Career Pathways paper, which will be made available to the task force prior to its May meeting.

- Mechanisms for awarding students credit for prior learning and work experience toward CTE pathways should be evaluated and if possible expanded.

Much work has already been done to facilitate student credit for prior learning and for articulation of high school experience through credit by examination. Credit by examination can be offered by any of the colleges in the system, and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has published two papers on this topic in the past two years: *Alternative Methods for the Awarding of College Credit: Credit by Examination for Articulated High School Courses* (2013) and *Awarding Credit Where Credit is Due: Effective Practices for the Implementation of Credit by Exam* (2014). These papers offer guidance for colleges on technical requirements and effective practices regarding credit by exam.

Of course, more opportunities could be explored. The Academic Senate endorses the practice of granting students credit for prior experience given that the credit is appropriate, that it is to the benefit of students, and that academic standards are upheld. Practices being explored in some areas for granting credit without proper examination or verification of learning call into question the integrity of the academic program and diminish any assurance that employers may feel regarding the quality of the education provided. Such systems would not truly serve either students or employers. Still, with careful consideration of consequences and quality, expansion of such practices is certainly worth exploration.

- Mechanisms for fulfilling credential requirements without granting credit.

Colleges can implement a variety of tools to ensure that credential requirements are met. Entry requirements can be fulfilled through such mechanisms as assessments examinations, high school articulation processes, and Advanced Placement examinations. Exit requirements can be met by waiving or substituting one or more courses. In many cases, where an intentional career or educational pathway is being designed, faculty will intentionally structure it to allow students to fulfill requirements without credit where possible.

- Industry and employers may be more concerned with the competencies students achieve than with the credit they earn.

This issue might be addressed in numerous ways. Faculty and industry could collaborate to explicitly define the skills employers are seeking and the courses in which those specific skills are taught. Methods could be explored to more clearly communicate the skills and knowledge

students acquire rather than simply listing course names on a transcript. Exploration of ways to more effectively communicate competencies could yield multiple possibilities that might provide employers with the information and skills they desire.

PART TWO: INSTRUCTORS

INSTRUCTORS OVERVIEW

Faculty are the backbone of the instructional program at any educational institution. In the California Community Colleges, faculty not only develop and deliver curriculum but also participate in college governance, advise students, create extracurricular education activities, and perform numerous other duties. In 1988, Assembly Bill 1725 (Vasconcellos) moved community colleges away from a state-managed credential system similar to the one used for K-12 teachers and created a system of minimum qualifications in order to ensure quality and to professionalize the community college faculty.

BACKGROUND ON MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS, HIRING, AND EQUIVALENCY

Minimum Qualifications

Education Code Section 87357 (a) (1) states, “With regard to minimum qualifications for faculty, the board of governors shall consult with, and rely primarily on the advice and judgment of, the statewide Academic Senate.” In order to formulate this advice and judgment, the Academic Senate engages in a process every two years to review and update the minimum qualifications to teach in any discipline. Through this process, faculty or faculty professional organizations from throughout the state can propose changes to existing disciplines or the creation of new disciplines. These proposals are then vetted through an extensive year-long process and voted upon by delegates to the Academic Senate’s Spring Plenary Session in April of each odd-numbered year. All proposals that are approved through this process are then forwarded as recommendations to the Board of Governors and, after approval, published in the document *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in the California Community Colleges*, which is commonly called *The Disciplines List*.

Equivalency

Individuals who wish to teach in the California community colleges but who do not meet the established minimum qualifications may nevertheless be approved for hire through local equivalency processes. Regarding the creation of equivalency criteria, Education Code §87359 states, “The process, as well as criteria and standards by which the governing board reaches its determinations regarding faculty members, shall be developed and agreed upon jointly by representatives of the governing board and the academic senate, and approved by the governing board.” Each district establishes and implements its own equivalency criteria for each discipline. Local equivalency committees are often sub-committees of the local academic senate but may be joint committees with college administration. Because the minimum level of qualification in most CTE disciplines is an associate degree, any equivalency criteria should include requirements to match a comprehensive education to that level, normally including general education coursework as well as multiple years of training and practice in a discipline.

Assigning Courses to Disciplines

Because the minimum qualification requirement is based upon instruction of courses, each course at a college must be assigned to one or more disciplines. Every course in the system

inventory is locally assigned to one or more of the disciplines listed on the *Disciplines List*. A faculty member who meets those minimum qualifications in a given discipline can teach any course assigned to that discipline within that district. For this reason, minimum qualifications and equivalency processes must be rigorous and thorough.

Hiring

Specific hiring processes vary from district to district. Education Code §87360 states only that “hiring criteria, policies, and procedures for new faculty members shall be developed and agreed upon jointly by representatives of the governing board, and the academic senate, and approved by the governing board.” Hiring processes within a district for full-time and part-time faculty generally differ to some degree, with a more extensive process involved for full-time hires. However, all faculty hired to teach in the California community colleges, no matter the details of the process, must meet minimum qualifications or local equivalency criteria for their disciplines.

External Requirements

External elements may place additional qualification requirements upon applicants for faculty positions. For example, any FAA certified program requires FAA Airman certification in the areas being taught. Nursing, police, and fire safety programs all similarly place requirements upon instructors. In addition, programs leading to external industry certifications may require similar certifications of their faculty. These external requirements exist in addition to the minimum education and experience requirements included in the *Disciplines List*.

MAJOR TOPICS AT THE REGIONAL COLLEGE CONVERSATIONS: INSTRUCTORS

The CCC Chancellor’s Office sponsored a series of eleven regional college conversations at a variety of locations around the state between November 2014 and February 2015. Certain topics arose at these meetings with some degree of consistency and therefore merit reaction and reflection.

- The pool of eligible faculty to teach in CTE programs is insufficient. Colleges in some areas are not able to hire instructors who meet minimum qualifications to teach their classes.

Given that each district can set its own reasonable criteria for equivalency, one must wonder what the cause of this issue would be. The most likely possibility is that while colleges can find prospective instructors with expertise in their fields, those individuals do not have any formal education that could translate to equivalency to an associate’s degree.

The Academic Senate has strong reasons for holding to its position that equivalency to an associate’s degree must remain an absolute minimum for faculty at the community college level. Teaching is not just a matter of knowing one’s subject matter; it also involves pedagogical techniques and knowledge of an academic environment that one cannot possibly possess if one has never experienced a college classroom. To simply throw an instructor into a classroom with no academic training and nothing but subject matter knowledge would compromise the standards of the instructional program and could underprepare the students to harmful degrees.

However, perhaps the most important factor regarding this issue is the concept of equivalency and what a district might consider to be equivalent to an associate's degree. Some manner of training might be developed that would give prospective instructors the academic or pedagogical background that they are lacking, at least to a degree that a district might declare the individual to have equivalence to an associate degree. No such program is currently in place, but, given appropriate resources, developing a viable one could be explored.

ADDITIONAL POINTS OF SIGNIFICANCE REGARDING INSTRUCTORS

One cannot stress enough the importance of full-time faculty to develop and maintain an educational program. Funding to hire full-time faculty is needed in CTE as much as it is in any discipline, if not more. In many CTE disciplines at many colleges, the full-time faculty number no more than one. In some instances, colleges may rely solely on dedicated part-time faculty to provide the necessary leadership and oversight for CTE programs. These situations inhibit program development, as a single instructor alone cannot meet the demands of maintaining a program, and part-time faculty are not only often not compensated for curricular work but may not have the institutional knowledge and connection necessary to perform it at the required level.

This difficulty may be especially pronounced in districts that wish to make use of noncredit instruction. Short-term Vocational and Workforce Preparation courses are two areas eligible for enhanced noncredit funding, but most districts employ few if any full-time noncredit faculty. One cause of this problem is the Faculty Obligation Number. Each district has a specific obligation for the number of full-time faculty it must employ under Title 5 §50125. This number may fluctuate from year to year based on the district's enrollment. However, noncredit faculty are not counted in either the calculation of the Faculty Obligation Number or computation of a district's total of full-time faculty in attempting to match that number. This situation creates a disincentive to the hiring of noncredit faculty that may impact districts wishing to make use of noncredit instruction in any area, including Short-term Vocational and Workforce Preparation courses.

Even with the greatly needed hiring of more full-time faculty, many colleges and departments will out of necessity continue to rely heavily on part-time faculty. For this reason, part-time faculty must be fully integrated into all college activities, from planning and governance to curriculum development and learning outcomes assessment. Part-time faculty often continue to work in their fields of expertise even while they are teaching, and thus, while they cannot be expected to take full responsibility for processes like curriculum development or accreditation requirements, they can contribute current and valuable experience to these processes. Likewise, part-time faculty must be given the resources and appropriate compensation to hold office hours so that they can serve their students as completely as full-time faculty do. The inclusion of all faculty in college activities, with appropriate funding to make such inclusion possible, is therefore an important aspect of maintaining healthy and productive programs.

Another critical need related to faculty in all disciplines is professional development. All instructors need the opportunity to remain current in their disciplines and to further develop as professionals and teachers; however, the rapidly changing nature of many CTE fields make this need even more profound in such disciplines. Yet the need for professional development is not limited to classroom areas of classroom instruction. In order to make curricular processes as efficient and responsive as possible, curricular chairs, curriculum committee members, and other faculty leaders also require detailed, ongoing training and current information. The community college system has not received dedicated funding for professional development since 2002. Without the necessary resources in this area, both classroom instruction and curricular development and revision processes will suffer.

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