



# Southwestern College Curriculum Handbook

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## The Southwestern College Curriculum Handbook

The Southwestern College Curriculum Handbook was created by the SWC Curriculum Committee and approved by the Academic Senate. This handbook provides the college community with information regarding the standards for curriculum development and approval at Southwestern based on state and federal legislation and regulation. This handbook is reviewed and revised on a regular basis and serves as evidence for compliance with accreditation standards. This handbook and other curriculum development resources are available at the Southwestern College Curriculum Committee website.

This handbook was approved by the Academic Senate on April 28, 2020

## Legal Basis for the Curriculum Committee

Education Code section 70902(b)(7) states, “The governing board of each district shall establish procedures to ensure . . . the right of academic senates to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum and academic standards.” The basis for establishing a Curriculum Committee of the Academic Senate lies in title 5 section 55002(a)(1) which states a college and/or district curriculum committee “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.” Additional details of the responsibilities and duties of the Curriculum Committee as granted to it by the Academic Senate are available in the Academic Senate by-laws.

## Mission of the Curriculum Committee

The purpose of the Curriculum Committee is to review and approve new and revised curriculum and academic policies to ensure compliance with the Academic Senate 10+1, title 5 and California Education Code prior to submission to the District Governing Board for final approval. In addition, the Southwestern College Curriculum Committee provides guidance and oversight to ensure that all curriculum is sound, comprehensive and responsive to the evolving needs of our students as well as the academic, business, and local communities and helps the college to fulfill its mission.

## Southwestern College Mission

Southwestern Community College District is the premier public institution of higher education in Southern San Diego County that serves a diverse community of students by providing quality academic programs, comprehensive student support services that ensure equitable access, and clear pathways to student success.

Southwestern Community College District promotes learning and success to prepare students to become critical thinkers and engaged life-long learners/global citizens. The District is committed to continuous improvements through the use of data-informed planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Southwestern Community College District utilizes a variety of instructional modalities to provide educational and career opportunities in the following areas: Associate degree and certificate programs, transfer, professional, technical and career advancement, foundational skills, personal enrichment, and continuing education. ([GB Adopted: March 10, 2020](#))

### Mission of California Community Colleges

Commitment to Southwestern College's mission enables the College to accomplish the state-mandated mission for all California community colleges, which requires the institution to offer a variety of programs and services. According to California Education Code, 66010.1-66010.8, the California Community Colleges shall, as a primary mission, "offer academic and vocational instruction at the lower division level for both younger and older students, including those persons returning to school. Public community colleges shall offer instruction through but not beyond the second year of college. These institutions may grant the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degree."

In addition to the primary mission of academic and vocational instruction, the community colleges shall offer instruction and courses based on the following principles:

- A. The provision of developmental instruction such as basic skills, precollegiate, and English as a second language courses are reaffirmed and supported as essential and important functions of the community colleges. Instruction in adult noncredit curriculum and support services which help students succeed at the postsecondary level are instrumental to the mission of the college.
- B. The provision of adult noncredit education curricula in areas defined as being in the state's interest is an essential and important function of the community colleges.
- C. The provision of community services courses and programs is an authorized function of the community colleges so long as their provision is compatible with an institution's ability to meet its obligations in its primary missions.
- D. A primary mission of the California Community Colleges is to advance California's economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services that contribute to continuous workforce improvement.

- E. To the extent that state funding is provided, the community colleges may conduct institutional research concerning student learning and retention when needed to facilitate their educational missions.
- F. Southwestern College faculty are charged by title 5 §55002(g)3 with the primary responsibility for making recommendations within the scope of the 10 +1 agreement between the district and the Academic Senate.

### Course and Program Areas

Per the Southwestern Community College mission statement, the college serves students in the following areas: associate degree and certificate programs; transfer; professional, technical, and career advancement; basic skills; personal enrichment and continuing education. A description of these areas is included below:

- A. Associate degree and certificate programs provide students with relevant coursework and experience to support workforce entry and/or preparation to continue to further their educational pursuits at an appropriate institute based on their educational goals.
- B. Transfer Education provides lower division general education and major preparation courses leading to an associate degree and/or to transfer to a four-year college/university.
- C. Professional, technical, and career advancement are supported by career technical education courses and programs that provide education and training in selected occupational fields leading to job entry, advancement, retraining and certification, and to associate degrees.
- D. Basic Skills Education provides transitional education programs and courses for students needing preparation to succeed in college-level work.
- E. Personal enrichment and continuing education (including noncredit) offer courses and programs responsive to the professional, cultural, and developmental needs and interests of the community.

### Chancellor's Office and Criteria for Approval of Credit and Noncredit Programs and Courses

All curriculum that needs approval by the state goes to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office for approval. The most recent edition of the Chancellor's Office curriculum handbook is entitled [\*The Program and Course Approval Handbook 7th ed.\*](#) (PCAH) and can be found on the Academic Affairs Division website for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Faculty are strongly encouraged to review the requirements set forth in the PCAH when creating or revising curriculum.

According to the PCAH, there are five development criteria that the Chancellor's Office reviews to approve credit and noncredit programs and courses. They were derived from statute, regulations, intersegmental agreements, guidelines provided by transfer institutions and industry, recommendations from accrediting institutions, and the

standards of good practice established in the field of curriculum design. Criteria for approval are the following:

- A. Appropriateness to Mission (of the college and community)
- B. Need (supported by data and documentation)
- C. Curriculum Standards (as stated in the PCAH and the SWC Curriculum Handbook)
- D. Adequate Resources (financial backing and/or facilities)
- E. Compliance (with Ed. Code and title 5 regulations)

Please consult current PCAH for more detailed information about any of the criteria.

### The Academic Senate

Title 5 Section §53200 states: "The District shall consult 'collegially' with the Academic Senate, using the method described in Section 53200(d) of title 5 which states that the District Governing Board, or such representatives as it may designate, and the representatives of the academic senate shall have the obligation to reach mutual agreement by written resolution, regulation, or policy of the governing board effectuating such recommendations."

### The Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee is a standing subcommittee of the Academic Senate. The Committee reviews and approves new courses and programs, modifications, and inactivations, as well as recommends policy related to curriculum.

One of the primary goals of the Curriculum Committee is to promote and provide for a comprehensive curriculum and excellence in instruction. Southwestern College shall offer instruction in accordance with the mission of the California Community Colleges. The instruction may include, but shall not be limited to, courses and programs in one or more of the following categories:

- A. Collegiate-level courses for transfer to higher institutions
- B. Career technical education courses and programs in fields leading to employment or skills building
- C. Counseling or guidance courses aimed at improving student success
- D. Basic skills, pre-collegiate, and English as a Second Language courses leading to enrollment and success in academic and vocational courses

### Curriculum Committee Meeting Schedule

Typically, the Curriculum Committee meets twice a month, on the first and third Thursday, to act on new and modified course and program proposals, (providing that a quorum is present. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.

## Quorum for Committee Meetings

The Curriculum Committee requires that a quorum of 50% +1 of the voting members at be present in order to convene and take action on curriculum. If a quorum is not present, a voting member may make a motion to permit one or more a non-voting faculty resource members to serve as a voting member until the conclusion of the meeting.

## Curriculum Committee Voting Process

- A. As required by the Brown Act, voting is confined to voting committee members in open session, unless the committee agrees to allow a nonvoting member to vote to make quorum.
- B. Meetings and voting will follow *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition*.
- C. Faculty co-chair votes only in the event of a tie.
- D. Administrative co-chair does not vote.
- E. A committee member who has presented a course proposal may vote for their proposal.

## Duties of the Committee

- A. Supports the development of curriculum and educational programs according to the mission, strategic plan, policies, and objectives of the College and the District
- B. Establishes, adopts, reviews and recommends necessary modifications as needed to the Curriculum Calendar prior to final approval by the District Governing Board
- C. Approves all credit programs, credit and noncredit courses, and program and course modifications or inactivations which meet the standards set forth by the California Education Code, title 5, and SWC requirements, prior to final approval by the District Governing Board
- D. Approves graduation requirements and general education requirements for the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees, prior to final approval by the District Governing Board
- E. Approves transfer-level courses for submission to university systems such as the University of California and California State University for inclusion on the list of courses which satisfy the general education requirements, prior to final approval by the District Governing Board
- F. Supports the development and inclusion of new curricula within the general framework of Academic Program Review for a School/Discipline
- G. Forwards its recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who forwards these recommendations to the Superintendent/President for inclusion on the District Governing Board agenda for approval of all curriculum

## Committee Composition

The Curriculum Committee membership shall consist of the following:

Co-Chairs:

- A. Faculty Curriculum Co-Chair (votes only in case of a tie)
- B. Vice President for Academic Affairs (non-voting member)

School/Faculty Representatives: Appointed Voting Members

- A. Arts, Communication, and Social Sciences Representative
- B. Instructional Support and Continuing Education Representative
- C. Counseling and Student Support Programs Representative
- D. Wellness, Exercise Science, and Athletics Representative
- E. Language, Literature, and Humanities Representative
- F. Mathematics, Science, and Engineering Representative
- G. Business and Technology Representative
- H. HEC San Ysidro, HEC National City, and HEC Otay Representative

School/Faculty Representatives: Ex Officio Voting Members

- A. Articulation Officer
- B. Library Representative
- C. Assessment and Prerequisite Faculty Coordinator

Faculty Resource Members: Ex Officio Non-voting Members (except as needed for quorum)

- A. Distance Education Coordinator
- B. Academic Senate President-Elect
- C. Financial Aid Representative

Other Resource Members: Non-voting Members

- A. Associated Student Organization (ASO) Representative
- B. Curriculum Secretary
- C. Dean of Instructional Support Services
- D. Instructional Support Services Supervisor
- E. Instructional Support Services Specialists (2)

A current Curriculum Committee roster is located online at the Curriculum website.

### Selection and Expectations of Representatives

School Representatives are faculty nominated by their respective Schools to serve a three-year term and are appointed by the academic senate president. The three Centers (National City, San Ysidro, and Otay Mesa) must nominate only one (1) faculty member to represent all of the centers at the curriculum meetings. Ex Officio members and non-voting resource members may serve indefinitely based on their term in office or in their job capacity.

Each School or Center representative is expected to attend regularly and actively participate on the Curriculum Committee. In the event that a school representative must miss a committee meeting, the representative may designate a substitute. If a member

misses two or more meetings in a semester, regardless if they send a substitute, the committee chair will consider that member no longer on the committee and will request the academic senate president appoint a new school representative. In the event a school is missing representation on the Committee, the approval of curriculum proposals from the school may be delayed by the Committee. The representative's roles on the Committee include supporting the School in the approval process of their curriculum and ensuring information is disseminated to all disciplines that are within the School. In addition, representatives work with the faculty originator, department chairs, and/or dean to answer curriculum related questions or concerns from the Committee.

All voting members must be tenured faculty unless there is not an available tenured faculty and the school or center would be unrepresented otherwise.

## Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members

### Co-Chairs:

- A. Provide training and updates consistent with statewide changes that impact curriculum and in compliance with title 5
- B. Facilitate Curriculum Committee meetings
- C. Create and maintain Curriculum Committee documents
- D. Assist in identifying key issues and coordinating activities related to the development of new policies and procedures
- E. Establish subcommittees and task forces as needed
- F. Attend curriculum team meetings to establish agendas and review other related documents
- G. Review agenda and minutes to finalize content before publication
- H. Provide assistance to Committee members and other faculty in matters relating to the curriculum process
- I. Review the Curriculum Committee website to ensure access to historical and current documents

### School/Faculty Representatives:

- A. Inform their School/Discipline regarding curriculum changes and procedural issues on an on-going basis
- B. Review any curriculum originating from their School/Discipline, recommend curriculum changes to the faculty originator, and sign off in the curriculum management system as part of the approval process
- C. Maintain the quality, rigor, and integrity of curriculum by preparing for and participating in meetings
- D. Review curriculum prior to the Curriculum Committee meeting. If, while reviewing curriculum, any concerns regarding content matter arise, contact the faculty originator and the appropriate dean, if necessary, and the relevant Instructional Support Services technician in a timely manner
- E. Provide the Committee with background data to support curriculum revisions, if necessary, in collaboration with discipline faculty

- F. Provide feedback and information from their School to the Committee regarding curriculum issues, such as distance education, cultural diversity, student learning outcomes, information competency, articulation and accreditation
- G. Receive up to 20 hours of flex credit for curriculum related activities outside of regular work hours
- H. Participate on subcommittees and task forces under the purview of the Curriculum Committee as necessary

The Articulation Officer:

- A. Serves as an ex officio voting member of the Curriculum Committee
- B. Reviews four-year college, university, and Southwestern College catalogs to compare individual courses for possible four-year acceptance
- C. Prepares regular reports on current progress and issues for the Curriculum Committee
- D. Reviews all new courses proposed for the possibility of transfer.
- E. Works closely with statewide UC, CSU, IGETC (Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum), and community college articulation officers to keep Southwestern College current on curriculum matters, general education agreements, and course articulation
- F. Submits courses to C-ID and maintains correspondence with the Chancellor's office regarding the process of C-ID course approval

Library Representative

- A. Serves as an ex officio voting member of the Curriculum Committee.
- B. Examines all new and modified courses to ensure the library is adequately prepared for the new courses/programs in terms of collections needed to support all academic programs

The Assessment and Prerequisites Coordinator:

- A. Serves as an ex officio voting member of the Curriculum Committee
- B. Scrutinizes all new and modified courses and programs and inactivations during the Prerequisite/Corequisite/Advisory review in the Curriculum Approval Process
- C. Ensures proper selection and use of requisites (prerequisites, one-way and two-way corequisites, limitations on enrollment) and/or advisories (recommended preparation, recommended concurrent enrollment), as per title 5 Regulations, in course outlines
- D. Ensures requisite and advisory listings used in course outlines meet title 5 regulations and SWC-approved requisite and advisory language, and ensures that this language is translatable to proper enforcement of the requisites through COLLEAGUE
- E. Recommends college-level recommended reading preparation for all college-level courses that require college-level reading material (intended to inform students about the reading level they should have to better ensure their success in the courses)

#### Financial Aid Representative

- A. Serves as a non-voting member of the committee
- B. Acts as a liaison with the Office of Financial Aid

#### The Dean of Instructional Support Services (ISS):

- A. Serves as liaison to the Deans' Council
- B. Assumes responsibility for, supervises, reviews, and monitors the work of ISS staff responsible for the production of the College class schedule and catalog
- C. Maintains current knowledge of title 5 as well as Educational Code regulations and changes
- D. Coordinates and implements the upgrading of computerized systems regarding curriculum processing in collaboration with the ISS Supervisor
- E. Assumes responsibility for the accuracy of the catalog and class schedule as well as compliance with title 5 in approved curriculum offerings and procedures of the District and the Chancellor's Office

#### The Instructional Support Services (ISS) Supervisor:

- A. Provides technical support to the Schools, Departments, and Curriculum Committee for the curriculum approval process
- B. Manages and implements multiple systems (e.g.: the curriculum management system, Colleague, WebAdvisor) to maintain curriculum information, both current and historical, as well as to ensure interfacing between the systems
- C. Develops and implements training activities for faculty, administrators, and support staff in the Schools, Centers, and other Departments on campus
- D. Supervises the accuracy of the catalog and class schedule as well as compliance with title 5 in approved curriculum offerings and procedures of the College District and the Chancellor's Office
- E. Serves as liaison and resource person to the Curriculum Committee in the process of curriculum approval
- F. Ensures the implementation of California Education Code and title 5 Regulations
- G. Serves as liaison to the Chancellor's Office regarding instructional and curricular inquiries
- H. Attends curriculum team meetings to review agendas and other documents
- I. Collaborates with Co-Chairs and the Curriculum Secretary in the development of the Curriculum Committee agenda
- J. Oversees and recommends improvements to the curriculum management system (CMS) and acts as a liaison with the vendor of the CMS

#### The Instructional Support Services (ISS) Technicians:

- A. Maintain the online course management system (CMS) and provide technical support for the CMS
- B. Identify areas in the course outline which require editing (i.e., conversion of lecture/lab hours and unit credit granted, discipline names)
- C. Assist faculty members in completing curriculum forms and review for accuracy before sign off

- D. Help reduce technical errors in course outlines submitted to the Curriculum Committee
- E. Receive, archive, and provide copies to the ISS Supervisor of all correspondence and information on curricular issues from the Chancellor's Office
- F. Attend curriculum team meetings as needed to review agendas and other documents

The Curriculum Committee Secretary:

- A. The Curriculum Committee Secretary is assigned by the VPAA in agreement with the Academic Senate. The position reports to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and should be at least an Administrative Secretary II for the purpose of keeping minutes and other necessary related duties
- B. Prepares and distributes the meeting agenda and minutes in collaboration with the Instructional Support Services Supervisor and the curriculum co-chairs.
- C. Maintains accurate attendance records of all Committee meetings
- D. Records the meeting proceedings and maintains the official records of the Committee's agendas and minutes in consultation with the curriculum co-chairs

## **CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROCESS**

### Overview

Under California Education Code and title 5, development and modification of curricula are a primary responsibility of college faculty. Full-time discipline faculty serve as originators or co-contributors to formal curriculum proposals. Proposals for new or modified curriculum must be made in consultation with full-time discipline faculty. Community groups and advisory committees may recommend new courses or modifications of existing curricula to School Deans or full-time discipline faculty.

The content of curriculum proposals must satisfy criteria established by Departments, and Schools, the College District, and the state. Title 5 standards require greater specificity in the preparation of course outlines for associate degree courses, including an emphasis on the articulation of courses. Copies of these standards must be carefully reviewed before beginning the development of any proposal.

For new or modified curriculum to be scheduled or offered for the fall semester, the curriculum must:

- A. be approved by the Curriculum Committee;
- B. be approved by the Governing Board;
- C. be certified and chaptered or approved by the Chancellor's Office
- D. Be published in the college catalog and/or addendum (with the exception of 295 courses)

All proposals should follow published timelines established by the Curriculum Committee. Disregard for curriculum timelines and procedures may cause curriculum approval and implementation to be delayed.

## Accreditation and Substantive Change Process for New and Modified Programs

Program creation and modification may sometimes result in the need to have our accrediting agency review changes in order that we comply with what's known as the substantive change process. The following excerpt appears in the ACCJC's "[Substantive Change Manual](#)" January 2019 edition"

"Defined by federal regulations, an institutional change that significantly affects quality, mission, scope, or control is considered substantive. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) regulations require that accrediting agencies have policies and procedures that ensure that any substantive changes to the institution, its educational mission, or programs do not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. Federal law mandates that accrediting agencies require institutions to obtain accreditor approval of a substantive change before it is included in the scope of the accreditation granted to the institution (34 CFR §602.22)."

Substantive changes may require submission of a substantive change report to ACCJC along with a fee. Substantive changes include all of the following:

- A. Change in mission, scope, or name of the institution
  - a. A change in the purpose or character of the institution
  - b. A change in the degree level from that which was previously offered by the institution
  - c. Any change in the official name of the institution
- B. Change in the nature of the constituency served
  - a. A change in the intended student population
  - b. The closure of an institution
- C. Change in the location or geographical area served
  - a. Offering courses or programs outside the geographic region currently served
  - b. Establishing an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program
  - c. Closing a location geographically apart from the main campus at which students were able to complete at least 50% of an educational program.
- D. Change in the control of the institution

- a. Any change in the legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution. The ACCJC requires a visit within six months of the change of status, form of control or ownership
  - b. Merging with another institution
  - c. Contracting for the delivery of courses or programs in the name of the institution with a non-regionally accredited organization
  - d. A change by a parent institution of one of its off-campus sites into a separate institution
- E. Change in courses or programs or their mode of delivery that represents a significant departure from current practice
- a. Addition of a program or courses that represent a significant departure from an institution's current programs or curriculum
  - b. Addition of a new degree or vocational certificate program that represents a significant departure from an institution's current programs
  - c. Addition of courses that constitute 51% or more of a program available to be offered through a mode of distance or electronic delivery
- F. Change in credit awarded
- a. An increase of 50% or more in the number of credit hours awarded for the successful completion of a program
  - b. A change from clock hours to credit hours
- G. Any other significant change

The ACCJC reserves the right to request reports and visits to assess the effects of any change it deems to be a significant departure. These changes, because they may affect the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the total institution, are subject to review prior to as well as subsequent to implementation. Institutions have reported loss of federal financial aid when substantive changes were not approved by regional accrediting bodies.

For more information on Substantive Changes see the ACCJC website:  
<https://accjc.org/publications/>

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL**

Academic Programs are defined in the *Program and Course Approval Handbook* and in title 5, section 55000(m) as "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." Southwestern College meets its mission by offering credit associate degrees and certificate programs as well as noncredit programs to serve the many needs of the South Bay community. SWC creates all programs in compliance with title 5 regulations and California Education Code.

The college offers the following types of credit programs:

- Associate in Arts (AA) and Associates in Science (AS)
- Associate Degrees for Transfer in Arts (AA-T) and Associate Degrees for Transfer in Science (AS-T)
- Certificates of Achievement (COA), consisting of 16 or more semester units
- CCCCO-approved Certificates of Achievement, consisting of 8 to less than 16 units (semester)
- Certificates of Proficiency (CP) consisting of less than 8 units, CCCOO approval is optional but not required

The college offers the following types of noncredit programs:

- Certificate of Completion (CDCP)
- Certificate of Competency (CDCP)
- Noncredit Apprenticeship Program

### Credit and Noncredit Program Development

All credit and noncredit program development begins with a review of relevant data regarding student need and the appropriateness of the proposed program to support the mission of the college. Faculty use data to consult with their students, departments, cognizant administrators, advisory committees and external agencies in the case of CTE programs, and other interested stakeholders to validate students will benefit greatly in their employment or transfer goals from completing the program. Program student learning outcomes are the foundation for determining the core courses to include in the program and determining if a new program is needed or if a modification to an existing program is more appropriate.

During program development, Career Technical Education programs also take the additional step of consulting with an established Advisory Committee to determine appropriate coursework and program learning outcomes that will support students in their employment goals. Individual schools support faculty when working with advisory committees and producing documentation of those meetings. The Dean of the School of Continuing Education and Workforce Development also collects all advisory committee documentation. CTE programs also require a recommendation from the Region 10 regional consortium to deter proliferation of overlapping programs among the region's colleges. Noncredit program development is based on criteria for Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) status as defined by the Chancellor's Office Program and Course Approval Handbook.

All proposed programs are reviewed to ensure that adequate resources are available to support the new program and that the curriculum is in compliance with education code, regulation, and curriculum standards. All new programs require validation using data that the proposed program will be beneficial for students in their pursuit of their academic and employment goals. Programs must explain the needs being met with the program and use labor market data to show the program will fulfill a workforce of

student academic need. It is important for overall student success that the college only offer programs that are vital for students and not proliferate programs which can be confusing for students. A department should do a review of its existing programs for viability prior to creating new programs and consolidate programs when possible. Sequential programs in a discipline, often referred to as “stackable” degrees and certificates should represent concrete employment credentials or educational goal milestones and be able to stand alone as beneficial programs to students.

## Program Definitions and Requirements for Approval

Associate degrees represent a focused study in a specific discipline or course of study and generally prepare students for a specific employment field or for transfer to another institution for further study. Associate degrees must consist of at least 18 semester units in a major or in an area of emphasis, at least 18 semester units of general education classes from the local GE pattern, CSU GE Breadth pattern, or the IGETC pattern, and at least 60 total semester units. Currently, associate degrees with a “local” goal are not approved by the Chancellor’s Office but are instead chaptered, while new and modified Associate Degrees for Transfer and CTE degrees must be approved by the Chancellor’s Office.

Certificates of achievement provide a student with a general education experience or with marketable, clearly-identifiable employment credentials in a specific industry. Certificates of achievement generally culminate in job readiness for a job in a specific industry. A certificate of achievement must consist of at least 16 semester units and must be approved by the Chancellor’s Office to appear on a student’s transcript. A certificate of achievement of 8-16 units can be created, but will not appear on a student’s transcript *unless* approved by the Chancellor’s Office. Certificates of achievement do not require completion of general education requirements.

A certificate of proficiency provides very focused training for students wishing to build their skills to advance in their current employment or as an entry step into a certificate of achievement or an associates degree. Certificates of proficiency are not approved by the Chancellor's Office and do not appear on a student's transcript.

Noncredit CDCP programs prepare students for employment or to be successful in college-level credit coursework.

## Credit and Noncredit Program Approval Process

The program approval process for credit and noncredit degrees and certificates begins when all relevant faculty and administrators have agreed, based on data and evidence, that students clearly need the program, the proposed program will provide students with a meaningful and relevant learning experience that supports their academic and employment goals, and the district is willing and able to resource the program to support

student success. Entering the proposed program into the curriculum management system should be the *last* step in the approval process after faculty have discussed the data and circumstances in support of the program and the administration has been consulted regarding resources available to support the program. Time limits apply for some steps in the approval process.

Faculty follow the steps below when proposing a new or modified program:

1. Full-time faculty, in collaboration with part-time faculty, discuss relevant data and circumstances that prompt the need for a new program or a modification to an existing program with other faculty and determine what curriculum changes should be proposed (new courses, modified courses, new programs, etc.). If a program does not have any full-time faculty, part-time faculty may lead the discussion in consultation with the department chair overseeing the discipline.
2. Faculty complete the “Budget Impact Consultation Form” after discussing the proposed curriculum change with relevant administrators which may include their school dean, the dean of the School of Continuing Education and Workforce Development, Instructional Support Services, or other program directors. The discussion should include identifying needed resources and ongoing funding if necessary to support the degree or certificate. This form is signed, scanned, and included with the program in the course management system.
3. FOR CTE PROGRAMS: Faculty request required paperwork from ISS for obtaining a recommendation from the California Regional CTE Consortia and submit that paperwork to the appropriate region.
4. Faculty enter the degree or certificate in the course management system, including a narrative and labor market data that validate the need for the program when proposing a new degree or certificate.
5. Faculty monitor the progress of the proposal through the curriculum management system and respond in a timely way to requests of information and revisions.
6. Faculty attend the curriculum committee meeting to represent the curriculum and answer questions prior to approval of the proposal.

## **COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL**

### **Credit and Noncredit Course Approval Process**

Prior to the input of curriculum into the course management system, the curriculum approval process begins with the discipline faculty member proposing new or modified curriculum to the department or discipline, which should include a review of important elements of the course outline of record and budget impacts relevant to the department and school. Time limits apply for some steps in the approval process. Once approved by the department or discipline, the faculty originator then contacts the Office of Instructional Support Services in order to proceed with the following established curriculum approval process:

A. Budget Impact, Course/Program Impact:

The faculty originator creates a new course or program or creates an electronic copy of an existing course in the course management system. Faculty originators and deans are expected to describe the financial impact, if any, of a curricular change to the department and to generate a course/program impact report. Discussion of the budget and course/program impact should be completed prior to submission of the proposal.

B. Prelaunch:

The faculty originator prelaunches the proposed curriculum in the course management system.

C. Curriculum Representative Approval:

The Curriculum Representative reviews any curriculum originating from their school, recommends curriculum changes to the faculty originator, and indicates their approval by signing off in the course management system.

D. School Dean & Department Chair approval:

The School Dean and Department Chair review the proposal and indicate their approval by signing off in the course management system. The Dean looks in particular at the budget impact of the proposal, and indicates whether any funds are necessary and available in order to implement the curricular change.

E. Instructional Support Services (ISS) Review:

ISS technicians review and suggest technical or format changes to the faculty originator.

F. Library, Articulation, & Prerequisites Review:

Library, Articulation, and Assessment faculty review and recommend curriculum changes to the faculty originator. The system defaults to the next step if the review has not occurred by the end of 10 days.

G. Originator Response Time/Launch:

The faculty originator receives e-mail notification from ISS of recommended changes to the proposed curriculum. The faculty originator is then responsible for reviewing and/or discussing the recommended changes with ISS within 7 days. Proposed curriculum will be removed from the queue if the recommended changes have not been addressed within 7 days of email notification.

H. School Dean and Department Chair:

After a proposal has been launched the dean and department chair provide an additional approval to give an opportunity for revisions to be considered.

I. Curriculum Committee Review and Action:

The proposal is agendaized and the Curriculum Committee meets to review the curriculum.

- a. A discipline faculty member or their designee, Department Chair, and/or the School Dean needs to be present at the Committee meeting in order to provide background and justification for the proposed curriculum or to answer unforeseen questions by the Committee. If no one is present to speak to the curriculum, the item may be postponed until a time when someone can be present.
- b. The Committee may request or require revisions to the proposed curriculum. If there are questions or concerns that require further research by the discipline faculty member, the proposal may be postponed and rescheduled for a later date.
- c. After review and discussion, the Committee will vote to approve, deny, or table the proposed curriculum.

J. Co-Chair Sign Off:

Co-Chairs electronically sign off approved curriculum in the course management system.

K. Governing Board Action:

The ISS Office creates a monthly Curriculum Summary for the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This summary is then taken by the VPAA to the Superintendent/President's Office for inclusion in the next available Governing Board agenda for final action. The Governing Board reviews the Curriculum Summary and takes action to approve, deny, or table it.

L. ISS Final Sign Off:

The ISS Office follows up on curriculum to ensure proper submittal to regional deans, if required, and to the Chancellor's Office.

### Major and Minor Changes Requiring Curriculum Committee Review

A major curriculum modification is called a "major change" and must adhere to statutory or regulatory curriculum standards. A course outline modification deemed "major" must be reviewed by the full Curriculum Committee to determine that standards are not negatively affected by the course modifications. Major changes are placed on the Curriculum Committee agenda for review and action. Examples of major changes include:

- A. Change in course designator (discipline and/or number and/or alpha character)
- B. Change in "same as" courses (formerly known as dual designator)
- C. Add/drop from an associate degree or certificate program (must continue to be of two year or less duration)

- D. Modifications to curriculum that affect the course description or core content
- E. Change in mode of delivery (F2F, hybrid, or online)
- F. Change in prerequisites, corequisites, or limitations on enrollment
- G. Change in recommended preparation or recommended concurrent enrollment
- H. Addition or revision of a distance education component

A “minor change” cannot be substantive and must adhere to statutory or regulatory curriculum standards. Elements of the course outline deemed to be minor changes are determined by the Committee. Minor changes can be placed on the consent agenda for full Committee vote and may follow a separate approval path in the curriculum management system. The item may be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion. Otherwise, no comment is needed prior to a full committee vote. Examples of minor changes include:

- A. Changes in the textbook, instructional materials, or assignments
- B. Technical corrections that do not require Committee review as determined by the Curriculum Committee co-chairs (see below).
- C. TOP Code changes for programs that move from an Academic TOP Code to a Vocational TOP Code.

## Technical Change Approval Process

The process for curriculum technical changes is as follows:

1. Curriculum co-chairs and/or ISS staff, working with faculty, determine that a change to a Course Outline of Record (COR) or Program Outline (PO) needs to be made and qualifies as a technical change. Technical changes include the following:
  - a. Grammar or formatting changes noticed after launch or committee and board approval
  - b. The addition of a CSU,UC transferability or C-ID designator to the course description and after articulation occurs (Proof of articulation required)
  - c. Other errors in a COR or PO due to oversight or human error for which verification is available
2. Chairs and staff present any technical changes at the next available Curriculum Team Meeting
3. The ISS Supervisor will take responsibility to update the curriculum management system with the necessary change and establish a deadline for that change to be made.
4. The ISS Supervisor will ensure all technical changes appear on the next available Curriculum Committee meeting agenda as an information item.

5. A technical change that requires a course or program modification will be included on the next available Curriculum Summary Report to the Governing Board.

### Expedited Curriculum Approval Process

Expedited curriculum approval shall be considered a process of last resort and shall not be used to circumvent the regular curriculum approval process. The reason for the expedited approval must be included in the rationale on the cover sheet of the proposal. Expedited proposals will be rigorously scrutinized and will be granted only to proposals that can identify and support valid reasons in one or more of the following areas:

- Title 5 mandates
- Accreditation standards
- Licensure and/or Certificate requirements
- Significant errors in an active Course Outline of Record (COR), or a Program Outline of Record requiring immediate modifications beyond clerical or technical changes
- Grant funding requiring rapid creation or modification of courses or programs
- Immediate or urgent community need as demonstrated by valid qualitative or quantitative data unique to the situation

The process for expedited-curriculum approvals is as follows:

1. The full-time discipline faculty member contacts the Faculty Curriculum Co-Chair to provide a valid rationale for expediting review. This rationale must be included in the rationale on the cover sheet of the proposal.
2. The Faculty Curriculum Co-Chair discusses the curriculum situation with the full-time discipline faculty member. The Co-Chair may require consultation with the School Dean as well as departmental approval. In addition, the Co-Chair may ask for any data and may require a meeting to discuss the request with other discipline faculty, School Dean(s), cognizant Vice Presidents and/or other college personnel (e.g.: Articulation Officer, Assessment Officer, and/or ISS).
3. Faculty Curriculum Co-Chair confers with Vice President for Academic Affairs in order to take action (approve or deny) on the request. The Faculty Curriculum Co-Chair may also confer with the Academic Senate President. If approved, both Co-Chairs sign off on the proposal without the review of the entire Curriculum Committee.
4. The Faculty Curriculum Co-Chair notifies the involved discipline faculty in writing of the action taken on the curriculum and explains the action. If approval is granted, the item is added to the Informational Items on the next Curriculum Committee agenda along with date of approval.
5. If approved, the Vice President for Academic Affairs includes curriculum in the Curriculum Summary report and forwards this document to the

Superintendent/President's Office for inclusion on the next Governing Board agenda for final approval.

6. Governing Board reviews and takes action (to approve, deny, or table) on the curriculum. The course may not be offered without Governing Board approval.
7. Once approved by the Governing Board, ISS follows up on the curriculum to ensure proper submittal to the Chancellor's Office, if required.

## **CREDIT COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD (COR)**

### Legal Definition

According to title 5, Section 55002 (a) (3): "The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the unit value, the expected number of contact hours for the course as a whole, the prerequisites, corequisites or advisories or recommended preparation (if any) for the course, the catalog description, objectives, and content in terms of a specific body of knowledge. The course outline shall also specify types or provide examples of required reading and writing assignments, other outside-of-class assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students."

### Purpose of Course Outline

The course outline is the official document of record, and all instructors teaching the course must create their syllabi in accordance with the COR.

### Authorship of the Course Outline

Full-time discipline faculty are responsible for curriculum in their department. Thus, at least one full-time discipline faculty member will participate in course outline development.

#### A. Faculty Originator

The Faculty Originator may be either a full-time or part-time discipline faculty member. If the Faculty Originator is a part-time discipline faculty member, then the committee requires a full-time discipline faculty co-contributor. The Department Chair may request the assistance of the School Dean to identify full-time discipline faculty members who will assist in the development or modification of course outlines when necessary.

In disciplines where there are no full-time faculty, the Department Chair may request the assistance of the School Dean to identify a part-time discipline faculty member who will collaborate with and assist the Department Chair in the development or modification of course outlines.

### B. Co-Contributors

The Co-Contributor may be either a full-time or part-time discipline faculty member. The committee requires a full-time discipline faculty co-contributor if the Faculty Originator is a part-time discipline faculty member. Deans or directors may be co-contributors at the discretion of the Faculty Originator on the proposal.

### C. Interdisciplinary Consultation

Curriculum proposals that include content from other disciplines or will impact any other disciplines are required to provide written evidence of consultation with full-time discipline experts from all disciplines involved. In addition, proof of consultation will be evident by the inclusion of an interdisciplinary full-time faculty member as co-contributor on the proposed curriculum.

## Relationship of the Course Outline to Each Instructor's Syllabus

The COR is a general framework which sets the standard for how the course shall be taught. The course outline states:

- A. the number of units a student receives when successfully completing the course
- B. the course description, course objectives, and the scope of the course
- C. types and/or examples of course materials, texts, and evaluations
- D. examples of course materials, texts, assignments, and evaluations
- E. the course student learning outcomes (included as an addendum to the course outline)

In contrast to the course outline, the syllabus presents instructors' individual detailed plans for the course section they teach. For specific syllabus requirements and information, please refer to the Tenure Review and Faculty Evaluation Manual.

## Specificity and Prescription

A course outline must be specific enough to guide instructors in the development of their courses as well as to guide those who evaluate and assess these courses. However, it must be general enough to provide each instructor with the freedom to create variations regarding methods and course materials which reflect their own teaching styles and subject expertise, as well as meet special student learning needs and student learning outcomes.

This freedom to create variations may be restricted only when one or more of the following conditions apply:

- A. Existing licensing or accrediting bodies have mandated such restrictions

- B. Subsequent courses, for which the course in question is a prerequisite, require a specific knowledge base and/or skill level
- C. Articulation agreements for the transfer of credits for the course in question require such restrictions
- D. Inclusion in the SWC Honors Program
- E. Through general consensus, the faculty in a department or school establish restrictions that best serve the academic program

### Dissemination of Course Outline

The course outline must be made available to all instructors teaching a section of the course. The School Dean or designee will advise new part-time instructors to make their syllabi compliant with the course outline.

### Documentation File

Each school will establish and maintain a documentation file for every course. This file must be updated at the beginning of each semester with the syllabi and other materials used by all instructors teaching the course. Official course outlines will be available in the course management system.

### Conducting a Course

All sections of the course are to be taught by instructors who meet title 5 minimum qualifications for the discipline.

### Types of Courses

**General Education** courses fulfill general education requirements and must:

- A. require postsecondary level skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking.
- B. be an introductory or survey course.
- C. improve students' abilities to perform one or more of following:
  - a. communicate oral and written ideas effectively
  - b. define problems, design solutions, and/or critically analyze results
  - c. work independently
  - d. work effectively and cooperatively with others
  - e. develop and question personal and societal values, make informed choices, and accept responsibility for one's decisions
  - f. acquire the curiosity and skills essential for lifelong learning
  - g. function as active, responsible, ethical citizens
- D. impart an analysis and working knowledge of one or more of the following:
  - a. our shared scientific, technological, historical, and artistic heritage, including the contributions of women, ethnic minorities, and members of non-Western cultures
  - b. the earth's ecosystems, including the processes that formed them and the strategies that are necessary for their maintenance

- c. the interconnections between human social, political, and economic institutions and behavior
- d. the psychological, social, and physiological dimensions of men and women as individuals and as members of society

For a complete description of the College and District's policies on general education, including information on programs, degrees, and transfer, please refer to the College catalog. The appendix of this handbook includes a form faculty must use when requesting that a course fulfill a general education area for an SWC associates degree.

- B. **Basic Skills** courses are courses in reading, writing, computation, and English as a Second Language which are designated by the community college district as nondegree-applicable credit courses (title 5, section 55002(b)).
- C. **Career Technical Education (CTE) and Work Experience** courses are courses intended primarily for employment preparation. For both credit and noncredit career technical education (CTE) courses and programs are those that respond to economic development interests.

## **PREREQUISITES, OTHER REQUISITES, AND ADVISORIES**

### Overview

Title 5 regulations (Sections §55000, §55002, §55003 and §58106) govern the establishment and enforcement of requisites and advisories in the community colleges. Each college must implement a process for establishing requisites and advisories consistent with laws and regulations.

### Requisites

**Requisites** are college-enforced requirements students must meet *prior* to enrollment in a course. There are three types of requisites:

- A. **Prerequisite:** A prerequisite is a course or other condition of enrollment that must be satisfactorily completed before a student may register for another course. A minimum grade of "C" or "Pass" must be earned in the prerequisite course. The purpose of a prerequisite is to establish a baseline of skills for a given course so that a student who does not possess those skills would be highly unlikely to succeed in that course.
- B. **Corequisite:** A corequisite is a course that must be taken at the same time as another course. The purpose of a corequisite is to identify specific skills in a given course that would simultaneously enable a student to succeed in/meet the expected outcomes of a second course.

C. **Limitations on enrollment:** A limitation on enrollment may be any of the following:

- a. A tryout or audition required prior to enrollment in a course that includes public performance or intercollegiate competition (including, but not limited to, band, orchestra, theater, competitive speech, chorus, journalism, dance, and intercollegiate athletics

However, for any certificate or associate degree requirement which can be met by taking such a performance course, there must be one or more other courses which satisfy the same requirement(s).

- b. Enrollment in an honors course or an honors section

However, for any certificate or associate degree requirement which can be met by taking such an honors course, there must be one or more other courses which satisfy the same requirement(s).

- c. Blocks of courses or blocks of course sections for which enrollment is limited to create a cohort of students

However, for any certificate or associate degree requirement which can be met by taking blocks of courses or course sections, there must be one or more other course sections or courses which satisfy the same requirement(s).

- d. A limitation that restricts enrollment because of statutory, regulatory, or contractual requirements

The college must cite the statute, regulation, or contractual requirement in the catalog and class schedule.

## Advisories

**Advisories** are non-enforced recommendations that students are encouraged (advised), but not required, to follow to improve their chances of success in a course. Enrollment may not be denied to any student who does not meet one of these non-enforced recommendations. The two types of advisories are:

- A. Recommended preparation: This advisory refers to previous training or coursework that helps a student successfully complete a subsequent course.

- B. Recommended concurrent enrollment: This advisory refers to a course that a student has been recommended to complete—but is not required to complete—while enrolled in another course.

## Establishment and Enforcement of Prerequisites and Corequisites at Southwestern College

Within their own disciplines, full-time faculty establish course prerequisites and corequisites.

The process to establish requisites and advisories, including levels of scrutiny, is outlined in Southwestern Community College District Policy and Procedure No. 4260. At a minimum, all prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories must be based on the content review process described in District Procedure 4260.

In general, the college must ensure all of the following:

- A. Each prerequisite and corequisite is proven to be “necessary and appropriate” by undergoing a review at least every six years, except that:
  - a. prerequisites and corequisites for career technical education (vocational) courses or programs must be reviewed every two years.
  - b. prerequisites and corequisites are not subject to this periodic review if they are:
    - i. required by statute or regulation;
    - ii. part of a closely-related lecture-laboratory course pairing within a discipline; or
    - iii. required by four-year institutions.
- B. Each course having any prerequisite(s) and/or corequisite(s) is taught in accordance with the course outline of record.
- C. Students have the right to challenge any requisite through the process established by the College.
- D. Prerequisites, corequisites, limitations on enrollment, and advisories are listed in the College’s publications and in official course outlines.

A prerequisite or corequisite may be established for a course or program for one or more of the following purposes only:

- A. The prerequisite or corequisite is expressly required or authorized by statute or regulation.
- B. The prerequisite or corequisite will assure that a student has the skills, concepts, and/or information needed to receive a satisfactory grade in the course (or at least one course in the program for which the requisite has been established).

- C. The prerequisite or corequisite is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student and/or other students.
- D. The prerequisite or corequisite is required by four-year institutions.
- E. The corequisite is intended as additional support for students enrolling in transfer-level English or mathematics/quantitative reasoning courses, has been determined to increase student likelihood of passing the transfer-level course, and is recommended by the College District through placement guidelines.

Southwestern Community College District Policy No. 4260 calls for “caution and careful scrutiny” in establishing prerequisites “in order to foster the appropriate balance between student rights and academic integrity.”

Properly established prerequisites benefit everyone.

- A. Students know what is expected of them without being denied access.
- B. Instructors can work with students who are fully prepared to handle the standards of the course.
- C. The College has efficient and effective educational programs.
- D. Academic standards and student success are enhanced.

Once established, prerequisites and corequisites must be implemented and enforced consistently and must not be left to the classroom instructor’s discretion. Proper enforcement of prerequisites and corequisites means that:

- A. Once a requisite has been legally established and adopted for a course or program, all students wishing to enroll in that course or program must meet the requisite.
- B. Prerequisites are enforced both at the time a student registers for courses and when adding a course after the semester/term begins.
- C. The determination of whether a student meets a prerequisite shall be made prior to his or her enrollment in the course requiring the prerequisite. The determination of whether a student meets a prerequisite is not up to the discretion of faculty.
- D. The determination of whether a student meets a prerequisite shall be based on successful completion of a course or, as appropriate, an assessment using multiple measures.
- E. Prerequisites may be met by satisfactory completion of equivalent coursework or assessment results from another college or university. If prerequisites were completed at another college or university, students must submit the necessary prerequisite evaluation request form to the Assessment Center along with copies of appropriate transcripts and/or assessment results.
- F. Instructional and counseling faculty and/or other staff cannot waive course prerequisites or corequisites.

- G. No exit test may be required to satisfy a prerequisite or corequisite unless it is incorporated into the grading for the requisite course.
- H. Whenever a corequisite is established, sufficient sections shall be offered to accommodate all students required to take the corequisite. A corequisite shall be waived if space is not made available.
- I. Students may challenge any course prerequisite, corequisite, and limitation on enrollment when they can provide evidence of comparable knowledge or skills demonstrated through alternate coursework, portfolios of work completed, or work experience.

Other grounds by which students may also challenge any requisite:

- A. If the requisite has been established in violation of title 5 regulations and/or the college's process for establishing requisites
- B. If the requisite is discriminatory or is being applied in a discriminatory manner
- C. If the student will be subject to undue delay in attaining the goals of his/his educational plan because the prerequisite or corequisite course has not been offered for two consecutive semesters, or the prerequisite/corequisite is necessary for transfer or attainment of a degree or certificate but is unavailable due to the limited number of course sections offered

Students must be provided with procedures for challenging prerequisites and corequisites. Discipline faculty are encouraged to work with the Assessment and Prerequisites office to assure that challenge procedures are within regulations and are being consistently and equitably applied to students seeking to challenge a requisite. Requisite Challenge Forms and procedures are available in the Assessment Center.

### Establishment of Communication or Computational Prerequisites and Corequisites at Southwestern College

Prerequisites establishing communication or computational skill requirements may not be established across the entire curriculum unless they have been established on a course-by-course basis.

Communication (English, ESL, reading) or computational (mathematics) skills courses may be established as prerequisites or corequisites in other disciplines only if, in addition to conducting a content review, the District uses sound research practices to gather data that shows a student is highly unlikely to succeed in the course without meeting the prerequisite or corequisite. For example, if the Business discipline wants to establish an English 115 prerequisite for one of its courses, then sound data analysis must be used to validate the course as a prerequisite in addition to the Business Department's content review. This statistical validation is not required when either

- A. baccalaureate institutions will not grant credit for a course unless it has a designated communication or computational skill prerequisite, or
- B. the prerequisite or corequisite is required for enrollment in a program that is subject to a state agency other than the Chancellor's Office, and further conditions as spelled out in Southwestern Community College District Procedure No. 4260 are satisfied.

## **GUIDELINES FOR WRITING CREDIT COURSE CURRICULUM PROPOSALS**

All recommendations for new courses, modifications of curriculum, transfer of courses from one School to another, or any other modifications of curriculum shall be presented to the Curriculum Committee. Faculty are required to use the curriculum management system to develop new courses/programs or make modifications to existing courses/programs.

Courses may be grade only, pass/no pass, or grade or pass/no pass option available, and must meet the requirements and standards as established by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. Proposed courses shall these requirements and standards if they:

- A. respond to or reflect community or student needs.
- B. are compatible with philosophy and objectives of the College.
- C. reflect cost considerations.
- D. do not duplicate existing courses, except for dual designations.
- E. are limited to lower-division.

### **Rationale**

Modified curriculum must contain a rationale statement for major and minor changes. This statement is necessary for many reasons, including, but not limited to, the justification for articulation, historical recordkeeping (e.g., change in designator) and defense of rigor. New courses also require a rationale. An example of a course modification rationale is provided below:

#### **ENGL 115 Modification Rationale**

"The prerequisites are being updated to better reflect necessary entry skills. The implementation date corresponds to the new AA/AS requirements. In order to update the course overall and increase student success, course objectives, core content, assignments, and textbooks have also been revised and made more rigorous. As a result, the course is being changed from 3 lecture/1 lab hour to 4 lecture hours. The most recent ENGL program review supports these changes which will more closely align the program with San Diego State University's RWS 100 class."

## Course Outline of Record (COR)

Course outlines must be free of grammatical and spelling errors. A thorough technical review must be accomplished during the pre-launch phase of the approval process in the course management system.

## Review

All course outlines submitted to the Curriculum Committee are subject to thorough review. Outlines containing five (5) or more significant errors concerns at a Curriculum Committee meeting will may be postponed or tabled. The faculty originator(s) must address recommended changes, corrections, and/or omissions before the curriculum is acted upon by the Committee again.

## Credit Hour

Title 5 §55002.5 requires a minimum of 48 hours of lecture or laboratory for one unit of credit. For each hour of lecture, the course should require two hours of outside class study (homework) and/or assigned out of class activity. For example, a one unit class includes:

$$\begin{array}{r} 16 \text{ hours of classroom time} \\ + 32 \text{ hours of homework} \\ \hline = 48 \text{ hours total student learning} \\ \text{time} \end{array}$$

For laboratory classes one unit equals three hours in class per week. Laboratory or activity classes, however, may require minimal study/work outside of class meetings. Additional information regarding the credit hour is available in [Administrative Procedure 4020 Educational Programs](#) and Curriculum and the California Community Colleges [Program and Course Approval Handbook 7th Ed.](#)

<b>Units to Hours Conversion Table</b>				
<b>Units</b>	<b>Lecture Hours</b>	<b>Laboratory hours</b>	<b>Lec/Lab Hours Total</b>	<b>Minimum Hours</b>
.5	.5	1.5	1.5	24
1	0	3	3	48
1	1	0	1	16
2	0	6	6	96
2	1	3	4	64
2	2	0	2	32
3	0	9	9	144
3	1	6	7	112
3	2	3	5	80
3	3	0	3	48

4	0	12	12	192
4	1	9	10	160
4	2	6	8	128
4	3	3	6	96
4	4	0	4	64
5	0	15	15	240
5	1	12	13	208
5	2	9	11	176
5	3	6	9	144
5	4	3	7	112
5	5	0	5	80
6	0	18	18	288
6	1	15	16	256
6	2	12	14	224
6	3	9	12	192
6	4	6	10	160
6	5	3	8	128
6	6	0	6	96
12	12	0	12	192

### Teaching Lab Status (TLS)

Laboratory courses that require extensive preparation and student evaluation may qualify for Teaching Lab Status (TLS) Lecture Hour Equivalent (LHE). The load values for TLS courses are based on one LHE per hour of class time scheduled. To obtain TLS status, the course must clearly comply with the criteria set out for lecture courses. To modify a course to qualify for TLS status, change lab hours to lecture hours and include a valid justification based on specific teaching methodology. When creating new courses, provide as part of the new course rationale valid justification for TLS status based on specific teaching methodology.

### Discipline Designators

Discipline designators must be written in capital letters (i.e., ACCT, DANC, or ENGL).

### Course Designators

Course designators, or numbers, are provided by your assigned ISS technician. Changes to assigned course designators may occur only as a result of collaboration between discipline faculty and the school dean. The course title must clearly identify the course. Title changes may occur only as a result of collaboration between discipline faculty and the school dean.

### Acronyms

Acronyms may be used throughout the document after they have been spelled out the first time they are used. For example, Local Area Network (LAN).

## Discipline Terms

Explanation of discipline terms (such as proficiency levels or titles of professional organizations, such as ACTFL) must be included in the course description.

## Articulation

Faculty must refer to the following Web site: Articulation Systems Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer (ASSIST) ([www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)) to determine what courses are being offered by other two- and four-year colleges and universities in California. New courses intended for transfer should include a comparable course from a university or college in the Articulation Information area of the Cover Sheet course proposal page in the curriculum management system.

## Guidelines for Certifying Transferable Courses to CSU System

A course may be certified as baccalaureate-level if it meets the following criteria:

- A. It is a course that is either:
  - a. equivalent in scope and content to any existing baccalaureate-level course which is part of a degree program at a Western Association of Schools and Colleges accredited four-year institution in California, or
  - b. not equivalent to an existing baccalaureate-level course, but it is designed and recommended by a Western Association of Schools and Colleges accredited California Community College as having scope and content appropriate for a baccalaureate degree.
- B. It requires either:
  - a. functional communication and/or computational skills if it is not primarily a performance course, or
  - b. appropriate entrance-level motor skills if it is primarily a performance course (e.g., art, music, dance).
- C. The course enhances the understanding of intellectual, scientific, and cultural traditions.
- D. The course enhances the understanding of occupational and professional fields generally requiring experience in higher education as prerequisite to employment in such fields.
- E. The course provides instruction in occupational fields not generally requiring experience in higher education as a prerequisite to such fields may be considered baccalaureate-level if its emphasis is on providing a general introduction to the field, focusing on appreciation of and orientation to the field rather than only immediate employment.

## Critical Thinking

The coursework must require critical thinking and analysis of concepts at the appropriate college level.

### Rigor

The course must require rigor in learning skills and include vocabulary deemed appropriate for a college-level course.

### Course Description Format

Course descriptions must contain no more than 50 words and be written in sentence fragments. A course description must begin with predicate verbs, but not subjects.

## Sample Course Description

### HIST 101—American Civilization II

Covers American history from Reconstruction to the present day with an emphasis on the emergence of the United States as a world power. Includes a study of the Constitution of California and the interactions between the state and local governments. (Partially fulfills American Institutions requirement at CSU.) [D; CSU; UC]

## Changing Course Designators

When course designators are modified, faculty must add “(Formerly [Course Designator and Number])”.

## Sample Course Designator Change

Focuses on critical thinking and the analytical interpretation of college reading selections: narration (fiction and nonfiction), argumentation, persuasion, exposition and poetry. Structured to integrate the reading of college-level material with writing and critical thinking assignments. (Formerly ENGL 158.)

## Distance Education (DE)

Credit/noncredit courses must meet standards set forth by California Education Code, title 5 regulations, and local College District policies pertaining to noncredit Distance Education.

## Course Objectives

Course objectives articulate the knowledge and skills you want students to acquire by the end of the course and the concepts and activities a student must be exposed to or experience in order to develop proficiency in the stated student learning outcomes of a course. Objectives must be written in complete sentences using language that is discipline specific and demonstrates the highest level of rigor appropriate for the class. Typically, there should be one sentence or phrase per objective and, typically, each objective should contain two action verbs. Bloom’s taxonomy or other accepted andragogical or national standards descriptors may be used as references.

A few examples are below:

For a Renaissance Art History course:

[Student will] Explore and develop knowledge of the role of sponsors and patrons in the proliferation of art and aesthetics in the Renaissance period.

For a Swimming course:

[Student will] Discuss and analyze his/her own cardiovascular fitness, at an introductory level, and how the various aspects of cardiovascular fitness are supported in an aquatic environment.

For a Spanish class:

[Student will] Memorize and apply contextualized vocabulary and grammatical structures in content-specific topics to express and exchange basic information regarding their personal environment.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

“The difference between course objectives and learning outcomes—and the reason these terms are so often conflated with each other—is the former describes an intended state (what you hope your students will learn), whereas the latter expresses a present or observed state (what your students actually learned).”<sup>1</sup> In short, objectives are what instructors think students should do, and outcomes are what students should be able to do if they complete the objectives. Objectives are the means; outcomes are the ends.

Since course SLOs are the abilities and knowledge students can demonstrate and an instructor can assess after a student has completed a portion or the entirety of a course, SLOs must be measurable and written as actions that a student will perform, where objectives may focus on content matter to be covered or discrete actions that are essential for a student to complete in order to learn the skills necessary to perform a larger skill: a course SLO. A few examples are below along with their corresponding objectives:

For a Renaissance Art History course:

Objective:

[Student will] Explore and develop knowledge of the role of sponsors and patrons in the proliferation of art and aesthetics in the Renaissance period.

SLO:

[Student will be able to] Write a sustained argument of two-three pages for or against the importance of the role of sponsors and patrons in the proliferation of art and aesthetics in the Renaissance period.

For a Swimming course:

Objective:

[Student will] Discuss and analyze his/her own cardiovascular fitness, at an introductory level, and how the various aspects of cardiovascular fitness are supported in an aquatic environment.

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<sup>1</sup> DePaul University Teaching Commons, “Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes.”  
<http://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching-guides/course-design/Pages/course-objectives-learning-outcomes.aspx>

SLO:

[Student will be able to] Provide an analysis in written or oral form on the effectiveness of aquatic activities on cardiovascular fitness.

For a Spanish course:

Objective:

[Student will] Memorize and apply contextualized vocabulary and grammatical structures in content-specific topics to express and exchange basic information regarding their personal environment.

SLO:

[Student will be able to] Hold a conversation with the instructor or other students where they must communicate using vocabulary associated with a specific topic provided by the instructor.

### Core Content

Core content is a list of major topics to be covered by an instructor in the course that support successful student completion of the course objectives. Each Core Content topic must directly support at least one course objective. Each core content topic must contain at least two bulleted subtopics and be written in phrases. The total of percentages of core content must add up to 100%. In addition, the number of core content topics should align with the number of objectives and may not exceed the number of course objectives by three topics.

### Example of Core Content

8. Approximately 10% of course
- A study of the Constitution of California
- The jurisdictions of the federal and state Constitutions
  - The legislative, executive, and judicial branches
  - The interactions between the state and local governments
  - The rights and responsibilities of state citizenship

### Student Learning Outcomes

SLOs shall accompany the COR as an addendum. At a minimum, courses should have at least one SLO. The SWC Student Outcomes and Assessment Review Committee recommends that all courses have between two and four student learning outcomes.

### Methods of Evaluation

The faculty originator must check each method of evaluation that may possibly be used in the course when assessing student progress learning and outcomes. Refer to the definitions and examples below.

- A. Exams: Check this box if the course requires subjective or objective exams.
- B. Essays: Check this box if the course requires written assignments organized in well-developed paragraphs.
- C. Problem solving: Check this box if the course examines and/or addresses problems and asks students to find viable solutions to the problem(s) presented.
- D. Skill demonstration: Check this box if students apply skills taught in the course to a task or a performance. This would include, for example, a journalism student writing an article for the college newspaper, a math student solving an algebra problem, or a dance student demonstrating a new dance routine. All of these examples include students learning a process and then applying it.
- E. Class activity: Check this box if the course includes activities, other than listening to lecture, performed within a class meeting either as individuals or in groups.
- F. Lab activity: Check this box if the course includes a lab component.
- G. Quizzes: Check this box if the course requires short subjective or objective quizzes.
- H. Written assignments: Check this box if the course includes formal or informal writing other than essays.
- I. Oral assignments: Check this box if the course includes oral examinations or presentations.
- J. Objective tests: Check this box if the course includes short answer testing such as multiple-choice, true/false, or matching test items.

### Assignments

Per title 5, a COR must specify types or provide examples of required reading and writing assignments, and those assignments must reflect the intended rigor of the course and appropriate assessment methods. Every COR at Southwestern College must provide an example of a reading assignment, a writing assignment, and a critical thinking assignment. Faculty also have the option to add an example of a group activity assignment as well as an example of an assignment unique to the course in the “Other” category. A COR must have reading, writing, and critical thinking assignments to be approved by the Curriculum Committee.

### Examples of Assignments

Although title 5 indicates that a COR may include types or examples of assignments, the SWC Curriculum Committee has determined that all CORs must include examples of assignments and not types of assignments.

While requiring examples of assignments written as prompts for students exceeds title 5 requirements, the practice supports the following efforts:

- A. To standardize COR to the extent possible
- B. To provide students reviewing a COR a clear expectation of rigor in the assignments
- C. To support the articulation process so that receiving institutions clearly understand the rigor being required of students

- D. To provide present and future instructors a clearer understanding of the intended rigor and expectations instructors should have for their assignments when teaching the course or modifying the curriculum

Examples of assignments must be written in at least one or more complete sentences, and they must be worded in the terms of an actual assignment prompt. The intended rigor of the course should be evident in the sample assignments. When writing is required in an assignment, instructors need to indicate (1) the mode or type of writing and (2) the length of the assignment (see samples below).

## Samples of Examples of Assignments

### A. Reading

Read the chapter on bionics in the assigned textbook and summarize it in one typed page.

Read the handout “Types of Injuries and Basic Treatment/First Aid.” Identify what a high risk exercise is and be prepared to discuss in class.

### B. Writing

Research paper prompt: Using five to ten sources, explain, in a ten-page typed research paper using MLA format, whether you agree or disagree with Howard Zinn’s assessment of the Vietnam War which is developed in Chapter 18 of his book, *A People’s History of the United States*.

### C. Critical Thinking

In a two-page typed essay, identify the political bias which pervades Howard Zinn’s argumentation in Chapter 18 of his book, *A People’s History of the United States* and explain its influence on his assessment of the Vietnam War.

Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of two different styles of hitting and explain in a five-minute oral presentation.

### D. Group Activity (Optional)

Working with a small group of classmates, create a rhetorical precis of 150-250 words. Given an essay to read and discuss, identify the author’s purpose, main arguments, and intended audience as well as the types of evidence used or provided in the essay. Prepare to present your precis to the class.

### E. Other Assignments (Optional)

Using the interview questions developed previously in class and the research conducted at earlier stages on the subject, conduct at least a .5 hour audio and/or video-recorded

oral history interview using the principles and practices observed and discussed in class.

### Instructional Methodology

The faculty originator must check each method that may possibly be used when teaching course materials. Refer to the definitions and examples below.

- A. Lecture: Check this box if lessons are presented in this format.
- B. Audiovisual: Check this box if videos, movies, TV programming, or any other type of audiovisual technology is used.
- C. Demonstration: Check this box if an instructor demonstrates a skill for the students. This would include a communications instructor presenting a speech, a dance instructor demonstrating a new dance routine, or a coach demonstrating a new exercise to his/her students.
- D. Individual assistance: Check this box if an instructor meets with each student in their classes on an individual basis to teach course materials.
- E. Discussion: Check this box if group discussions are assigned.
- F. Group activity: Check this box if students are required to work on projects collaboratively.
- G. Computer assisted instruction: Check this box if computer technology is used in place of the teacher to present class lessons.

### Educational Materials, including Textbooks

Faculty should include on the COR educational materials that are current in the discipline and are appropriate given the level and rigor of the course. For courses that are available for distance education instruction, educational materials appropriate for that teaching modality should also be included on the official COR as options for instructors.

To fulfill the College's articulation agreements with colleges/universities each required textbook should be current and have been published within the last five years. Classic texts (texts that are generally considered universal and timeless to the discipline) are excepted). The inclusion of a "classic text" needs a strong rationale in the cover letter and must be identified as a "classic" text in the educational materials section of the course outline of record. Older books should be included if they're considered classics in the field and clearly identified as classics in the course outline using the phrase "classic text" or "discipline classic"). In addition, science courses with lab components must have a lab manual as a required text for articulation purposes. Homegrown lab manuals created by faculty are also accepted. Required and optional readings, including textbooks and software, must be listed in MLA Format. If the textbook is a first edition, it does not have to be designated as such. All other editions must be appropriately designated (i.e., 2nd, 3rd, or 4th ed.). Some departments list several similar textbooks or supplies to give instructors a choice of which materials to use in the class. For example, faculty originators may want to list three different introductory texts, thereby giving each instructor the ability to choose one of the three options.

Faculty teaching in both face-to-face courses and distance education courses may choose to use accessible digital and print materials that are available at no or low cost to students, often referred to as Open Education Resources (OER). OER are freely accessible, openly licensed documents and media that are useful for teaching, learning, and assessing as well as for research purposes. OER materials to be included on a course outline are not collections of instructor-provided documents, collections of hyperlinks, or a collection of links to lecture notes or other web pages, but rather these are stable and publicly available as accessible published materials in digital and/or print formats.

OER materials should be vetted by faculty in the discipline prior to adoption. The Curriculum Committee will approve OER materials on a course outline of record using the following criteria:

- OER materials are peer-reviewed Sources are professionally verified
- OER materials are edited and organized by content experts
- OER materials meet all accessibility requirements and are ADA compliant
- OER materials carry a Creative Commons license rather than a publisher's license and are available on OER sites such as OER Commons, Merlot, OpenStax, COOL4Ed, etc

OER materials should appear on the COR in the following format:

1. Author (e.g., OpenStax)
2. Name (e.g., Biology)
3. Publisher (e.g., OpenStax CNX)
4. Publication Date
5. Link/course ID
6. Licensed by/under

For example:

OpenStax, *Biology*. OpenStax CNX. Oct 21, 2016  
<http://cnx.org/contents/185cbf87-c72e-48f5-b51e-f14f21b5eabd@10.61>. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0.

The UC and CSU welcome the use of online texts and other Open Educational Resources, so long as the resource is a stable, bone fide textbook, and not just a collection of links to lecture notes or other web pages.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Guiding Notes for General Education Course Reviewers*,  
<http://calstate.edu/App/GEAC/documents/GE-Reviewers-Guiding-Notes.pdf>

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN CURRICULUM**

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) clearly state what students will be able to do outside the classroom as a result of what they have learned by completing the course objectives. SLOs are written using measurable action verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy. For a discussion of the difference between objectives and outcomes, please see the section of this handbook on Course Objectives.

When developing and assessing SLOs, faculty should identify the skills, knowledge, or behavior students will be able to use or perform when they complete a course, program, certificate, and/or degree. Faculty should develop assessment activities to measure a student's use or performance of those skills, knowledge, or behavior. Ideally, course and program SLOs are developed first, and the objectives and assignments of a course are developed to support a student's ability to perform the outcomes.

SLOs are part of an addendum to the course outline of record. Therefore, SLOs can be easily revised at any time by discipline faculty, with support from their Curriculum Committee representatives, SLO Liaisons and Co-Coordinators, and other college district employees, to maintain current discipline standards. In addition, SLOs and the results of SLO assessment are an important part of the Academic Program Review process and are used to support course and program innovation. SLO data is also often used in program review as support for resource requests .

While SLOS are primarily a curriculum matter, some aspects of the collection and use of outcomes assessment data are subject to negotiation between the College District and the Southwestern College Education Association (SCEA). Please refer to the most recent bargaining agreement between SCEA and the District for additional information on faculty responsibility for outcomes assessment.

# NONCREDIT CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROCESS

## What Is Noncredit Instruction?

Noncredit instruction is one of several educational options offered within the California Community College System. It offers students access to a variety of low- and no-cost courses that can assist them in reaching their personal and professional goals.

Noncredit courses are intended to provide students with lifelong learning and college transition and career preparation opportunities. Although students may not need or desire unit credit, noncredit often serves as a first point of entry for many underserved students as well as a transition point to credit instruction. Noncredit curriculum can also serve to align credit and noncredit programs.

All noncredit proposals should follow published timelines established by the Curriculum Committee. Repeated disregard for curriculum timelines and procedures will cause delay in the process and will be automatically reviewed by the Committee, jeopardizing future approvals.

## Noncredit Curriculum Proposal Options

Noncredit courses are classified into ten legislated instructional areas. The placement of a course in a given instructional area is driven by the course objectives and the target population to be served.

California law and regulations (Ed Code Section 84757(a) and 84760.5, and title 5 section 58160) authorizes the following ten eligible areas for apportionment:

- A. elementary and secondary basic skills and other courses and classes such as remedial academic courses or classes in reading, mathematics, and language arts
- B. courses in English as a second language
- C. short-term CTE programs and programs with high employment potential
- D. workforce preparation classes in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making and problem solving skills and other classes required for preparation to participate in job-specific technical training
- E. courses in citizenship for immigrants eligible for educational services
- F. parenting, including parent cooperative preschools, classes in child growth and development and parent-child relationships
- G. courses and programs for persons with substantial disabilities
- H. courses and programs for older adults
- I. courses and programs in home economics (known as Family and Consumer Sciences)
- J. courses and programs in health and safety education

Noncredit courses offered in the four district categories (instructional domains) of English as a Second Language (ESL), Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills, Short-term Vocational, and Workforce Preparation are eligible for "enhanced funding" when sequenced to lead to a Chancellor's Office approved certificate of completion, or certificate of competency, in accordance with the provisions of the California Education code governing Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) programs. See the section of this handbook on CDCP programs.

For detailed information on curriculum specifically designed for students with disabilities or for Learning Assistance classes or tutoring, please refer to the *Noncredit at A Glance* publication. (Taken from *Noncredit at A Glance*, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, September 21, 2006)

### Noncredit Course/Program Approval Process

The noncredit curriculum approval process begins with the discipline faculty member proposing new or modified curriculum to the department or discipline and should include a review of the course impact report for modifications. This process should include conversations with the Director of Continuing Education or designee. Once approved by the department or discipline, the faculty originator then contacts the Office of Instructional Support Services in order to receive an NC course number. Noncredit courses use an NC designator to align with college enrollment reporting to the Chancellor's Office. ISS staff assist with identifying available numbers for sequenced courses and other types of noncredit courses. Once the course is ready, faculty follow established curriculum approval process:

A. Prelaunch: (no time limit)

The faculty originator prelaunches the proposed curriculum in the curriculum management system under a noncredit designator.

B. Dean of School of Continuing Education or designee, School Dean & Department Chair approval: (no time limit)

The School Dean and Department Chair review the proposal and indicate their approval by signing off on the curriculum management system.

C. Instructional Support Services (ISS) Review: (no time limit)

ISS technicians review and suggest technical or format changes to faculty originator.

D. Library & Prerequisites Review: (10 days)

Library and Assessment faculty review and recommend curriculum changes to the faculty originator. The system defaults to the next step if the review has not occurred by the end of 10 days.

E. Originator Response Time/Launch: (7 days)

The faculty originator receives e-mail notification from ISS of recommended changes to the proposed curriculum. The faculty originator is then responsible for reviewing and/or discussing the recommended changes with ISS within 7 days. Proposed noncredit curriculum will be removed from the queue if the recommended changes have not been addressed within 7 days of email notification.

F. Final Technical Review: (5 days)

Final review by ISS Technicians, faculty originators, School Dean and Department Chair. If the Dean and Department Chair agree with the changes, the system defaults to the next step.

G. Agenda:

Noncredit curriculum is scheduled on a Curriculum Committee agenda for committee action.

H. Curriculum Committee Meets for Review and Action:

- a. A discipline faculty member, noncredit faculty Curriculum Committee representative, Department Chair, the School Dean and/or the Dean or Director or designee of Continuing Education needs to be present at the Committee meeting in order to provide background and justification for the proposed curriculum or to answer unforeseen questions by the Committee. If no one is present to speak to the curriculum, the item will be postponed until a time when someone can be present.
- b. The Committee may request or require revisions to the proposed curriculum. If there are questions or concerns that require further research by the discipline faculty member, the proposal will be postponed and rescheduled for a later date.
- c. Only curriculum with fewer than five (5) significant changes requested by the Committee during a meeting will be considered for action. Curriculum with more than five (5) changes may be postponed.
- d. After review and discussion, the Committee will vote to approve, deny, or table the proposed curriculum.

I. Co-chair Sign Off: (5 days)

Co-Chairs electronically sign off approved curriculum on the curriculum management system. The ISS Office creates a monthly Curriculum Summary for the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This summary is then taken by the VPAA to the Superintendent/President's Office for inclusion in the next available Governing Board agenda for final action.

J. Governing Board Action:

The Governing Board reviews the Curriculum Summary and takes action to approve, deny, or table it.

K. ISS Final Sign Off:

The ISS Office follows up on curriculum to ensure proper submission to regional deans, if required, and to the Chancellor's Office.

### Special Considerations for Noncredit courses

There are several special considerations when developing noncredit curriculum:

- A. Noncredit curriculum intended for a "same as" designator with a credit course must be identical to the credit course and any modifications of either the credit or noncredit course must occur and be approved simultaneously.
- B. Noncredit course modifications must entail a review of the course impact report in the course management system .
- C. Noncredit courses must be reviewed as part of a discipline's Academic Program Review according to the discipline/department's program review cycle.
- D. Noncredit courses and programs must have measurable Student Learning Outcomes.

## **GUIDELINES FOR WRITING NONCREDIT CURRICULUM PROPOSALS**

### Noncredit Curriculum Approval Process

Under California Education Code and title 5, development and modification of noncredit curricula are a primary responsibility of college faculty. Full-time discipline faculty serve as originators or co-contributors to formal curriculum proposals. Proposals for new or modified noncredit curriculum courses/programs must be made in consultation with full-time discipline faculty, the department chair, and the dean or designee of The School of Instructional Support Services and Continuing Education. Community groups and advisory committees may recommend new courses or modifications of existing curricula to School deans or full-time discipline faculty.

The content of noncredit curriculum/program proposals must satisfy criteria established by the Chancellor's Office for California Community Colleges (CCCCO), the college district, schools, and departments. For new or modified noncredit curriculum/programs to be scheduled or offered in a given semester, the curriculum must:

- A. fall within one of the ten approved noncredit course/program categories;
- B. be approved by the Curriculum Committee per title 5 §55002(c)(1)&(2);
- C. follow the curriculum calendar approval deadlines;
- D. be approved by the Southwestern College Governing Board;
- E. be approved by the CCCCCO; and
- F. be published in the college print or online catalog or as an addendum to the catalog.

All recommendations for new noncredit courses, modifications of noncredit curricula, transfer of courses/programs from one School to another, or any other modifications of noncredit curriculum shall be presented to the Curriculum Committee. Faculty are required to use the approved course management system to develop new noncredit courses/programs or make modifications to existing noncredit courses/programs.

Similar to credit curriculum, noncredit courses must:

- A. respond to or reflect community or student needs.
- B. be compatible with the philosophy and objectives of the College District.
- C. reflect cost considerations.
- D. avoid unnecessary duplication of existing courses, except for “same as” courses.

**Rationale:** Modified noncredit curriculum must contain a rationale statement for major and minor changes. This statement is necessary for many reasons, including, but not limited to, the justification of articulation, historical recordkeeping (e.g., change in designator), and defense of rigor. An example is provided below:

**NC 47 Modification Rationale**

This course overlays with credit course ED 100 and the modification is to make all sections parallel between the two courses. This will enable students to receive the tutor training experience without adding unneeded credits to their transcript.

## **NONCREDIT COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD (COR)**

### **Course Outline of Record (COR)**

Course outlines must be free of grammatical errors. A thorough technical review must be accomplished during the pre-launch phase of the approval process in the curriculum management system .

### **Review**

All course outlines submitted to the Curriculum Committee are subject to thorough review. Outlines containing five (5) or more significant concerns at a Curriculum Committee meeting may be postponed or tabled. The faculty originator(s) must address recommended changes, corrections, and/or omissions before the curriculum is acted upon by the Committee again.

### **Student Contact Hours**

The number of hours required for a course shall reflect the amount of time needed to impart the core content of the curriculum effectively. When a noncredit course is overlaid with a credit course, it must carry the identical number of lecture/lab hours as the credit counterpart. The course title must clearly identify the course. Title changes may occur only as a result of collaboration between discipline faculty, the school dean, and the Director or designee of the School of Continuing Education and Workforce

Development. It is highly recommended that all noncredit courses are at least twelve hours in length to demonstrate rigor to the CCCCCO.

### Acronyms

Acronyms may be used throughout the document after they have been spelled out the first time they are used. For example, Local Area Network (LAN).

### Discipline Terms

Explanation of discipline terms (such as proficiency levels or titles of professional organizations, such as ACTFL) must be included in the course description.

### Critical Thinking

The coursework must require critical thinking and analysis of concepts at the appropriate level.

### Rigor

The course must require rigor in learning skills and include vocabulary deemed appropriate for the course.

### Course Description Format

Course descriptions must contain no more than 50 words and be written in sentence fragments. A course description must begin with predicate verbs, but not subjects.

### Sample Course Description

NC 47 Tutor Training: Level I

Course Description & Scope: Introduces effective tutoring principles and strategies. Includes guidelines for tutoring: how to plan, conduct, and evaluate productive tutoring sessions; components of effective intercultural tutoring; and strategies to facilitate student independence in learning. Two on-campus meetings. [ND]

### Grading and Progress Indicators for Noncredit

The grading policy for noncredit courses is defined in title 5, section 55021(c): "The grading policy may provide for award of grades in noncredit courses, including courses which are part of a high school diploma program or may be accepted for high school credit by a high school." Currently, students are not receiving grades or progress indicators in noncredit courses; however, faculty are exploring the option.

### Distance Education (DE)

The DE component of a noncredit course must meet standards set forth by California Education Code, title 5 regulations, and local College District policies pertaining to noncredit Distance Education. Currently, no noncredit courses are offered via distance

education; however, faculty are exploring the option. When it is available, these standards will apply.

### Course Objectives

Course objectives articulate the knowledge and skills you want students to acquire by the end of the course and the concepts and activities a student must be exposed to or experience in order to develop proficiency in the stated student learning outcomes of a course<sup>3</sup>. Objectives must be written in complete sentences, using language that is discipline specific and demonstrates the highest level of rigor appropriate for the class. Typically there should be one sentence or phrase per objective and, typically, each objective should contain two action verbs. Bloom's taxonomy or other accepted andragogical or national standards descriptors may be used as references.

Please see the "Course Objectives" section of the "Guidelines for Writing Credit Curriculum Proposals" for examples of objectives.

### Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

SLOs shall accompany a noncredit COR as an addendum (see section on SLOs in this handbook for further information). Please see the "Course Objectives" section of the "Guidelines for Writing Credit Curriculum Proposals" for an explanation of student learning outcomes including the difference between outcomes and objectives. Like credit courses, the number of SLOs expected for each noncredit course is dependent on the number of objectives the course intends to cover and the scope of those objectives. At a minimum, a noncredit course should have at least one SLO. The SWC Student Outcomes and Assessment Review Committee recommends that all courses have between two and four student learning outcomes.

### Core Content

Core content is a list of major topics to be covered by an instructor in the course that support successful student completion of the course objectives. Core content must directly relate to at least one course objective and each objective should include several core content topics. Each core content topic must contain at least two bulleted subtopics and be written in phrases. The total of percentages of core content must add up to 100%. In addition, the number of core content topics should align with the number of objectives and may not exceed the number of course objectives by three topics.

### Methods of Evaluation

The faculty originator must check each method of evaluation that may possibly be used in the course when assessing student progress learning and outcomes. Refer to the definitions and examples below.

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<sup>3</sup> Carnegie Mellon University Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation, "Articulating Your Learning Objectives."

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/learningobjectives.html>

- A. Exams: Check this box if the course requires subjective or objective exams.
- B. Essays: Check this box if the course requires written assignments organized in well-developed paragraphs.
- C. Problem solving: Check this box if the course examines and/or addresses problems and asks students to find viable solutions to the problem(s) presented.
- D. Skill demonstration: Check this box if students apply skills taught in the course to a task or a performance. This would include, for example, a journalism student writing an article for the college newspaper, a math student solving an algebra problem, or a dance student demonstrating a new dance routine. All of these examples include students learning a process and then applying it.
- E. Class activity: Check this box if the course includes activities, other than listening to lecture, performed within a class meeting either as individuals or in groups.
- F. Lab activity: Check this box if the course includes a lab component.
- G. Quizzes: Check this box if the course requires short subjective or objective quizzes.
- H. Written assignments: Check this box if the course includes formal or informal writing other than essays.
- I. Oral assignments: Check this box if the course includes oral examinations or presentations.
- J. Objective tests: Check this box if the course includes short answer testing such as multiple-choice, true/false, or matching test items.

### Assignments

Per title 5, a COR must specify types or provide examples of required reading and writing assignments, and those assignments should reflect the intended rigor of the course and appropriate assessment methods. Every COR at Southwestern College must provide an example of a reading assignment, a writing assignment, and a critical thinking assignment. Faculty also have the option to add an example of a group activity assignment as well as an example of an assignment unique to the course in the "Other" category. A COR must have reading, writing, and critical thinking assignments to be approved by the Curriculum Committee. Typically, a noncredit course does not include an expectation of outside of class work in the same way as credit courses. Please see the "Assignments" section of the "Guidelines for Writing Credit Curriculum Proposals" for examples of assignments.

### Instructional Methodology

The faculty originator must indicate each method that may possibly be used when teaching course materials. Available Instructional Methodology include the following:

- A. Lecture: an educational talk to an audience.
- B. Audiovisual: videos, movies, TV programming, or any other type of audiovisual technology is used.

- C. Demonstration: an instructor performs a skill for the students. This would include a communications instructor presenting a speech, a dance instructor demonstrating a new dance routine, or a coach demonstrating a new exercise to his/her students.
- D. Individual assistance: an instructor meets with each student in their classes on an individual basis to teach course materials.
- E. Discussion: group discussions are assigned.
- F. Group activity: students are required to work on projects collaboratively.
- G. Computer assisted instruction: computer technology is used in place of the teacher to present class lessons.
- H. Distance Education: instruction delivered to students who are separated from the instructor and support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously.
- I. Individual Computer Assistance: computer technology is used along with the teacher to present class lessons on a one-on-one basis
- J. Instructional aide: instructors are supported with an in-class assistant
- K. Lab: objectives, core content, and instructional methods require a laboratory space or non-traditional space for instruction outside of a classroom and that pedagogy is reflected in the lecture/lab unit calculation
- L. Web enhanced: instruction includes elements of instruction using the CMS or the internet
- M. Workshop: instruction includes collaborative opportunities for students to create and learn together
- N. Independent study: students perform tasks based on the course objectives and/or student learning outcomes at their own pace. Instructor assesses those tasks against established metrics of performance or a rubric.

### Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Textbook or instructional materials choices are listed on the noncredit COR, though most courses do not require the purchase of instructional materials. Materials and readings, including textbooks and software, must be listed in MLA Format (<http://www.swccd.edu/~library/Pdfs/MLA6thEd.pdf>). If the textbook is a first edition, it does not have to be designated as such. All other editions must be appropriately designated (i.e., 2nd, 3rd, or 4th ed.). Some departments list several similar textbooks or supplies to give instructors a choice of which materials to use in the class. For example, faculty originators may want to list three different introductory texts, thereby giving each instructor the ability to choose one of the three options.

### Career Development & College Preparation (CDCP) Noncredit Course/Program Designation

The CDCP designation allows colleges to receive apportionment funding equalized to the credit funding level for approved courses/programs. These requirements are

established in Ed. Code §84760.5. CDCP “prepares students for employment or to be successful in college-level credit coursework.”

CDCP courses must be sequenced (two or more courses) and lead to CCCCO-approved Certificates of Completion (Title 5 §55151(h)) or Certificates of Competency (Title 5 §55151(i)). Certificates of Completion lead to improved employability and/or job opportunities. Certificates of Competency prepare students to take non-degree-applicable credit coursework, including basic skills and English as a second language, or to take degree-applicable credit coursework leading to completion of a credit certificate, an associate of arts degree, or transfer.

CDCP courses and programs must follow the same curriculum approval process as other noncredit courses/programs. There are four categories for which courses/programs can receive CDCP equalized funding:

- A. English as a Second Language
- B. Math and English Basic Skills
- C. Short-term CTE (Short-term vocational programs must be determined by the CCCCO, in consultation with the Employment Development Department [EDD], to have high employment potential)
- D. Workforce Preparation (speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making, and problem solving skills that are necessary to participate in job-specific technical training)

## **COURSE ENROLLMENT MAXIMUMS**

### Class Enrollment Maximums: Guiding Principles and Responsibilities

The Southwestern College Curriculum Committee includes as part of the regular curriculum review cycle the approval of course enrollment maximums for new courses. The enrollment maximum is established when a faculty originator puts forth a new course and, after consultation with discipline faculty and the dean of the school, determines a maximum based on pedagogical/androgological and health and safety factors. While instructional integrity and health and safety factors determined by faculty are the primary factors for establishing a class’s enrollment maximum, the dean is responsible for ensuring that class maximums take into account facility and economic considerations to in order to balance the educational needs of students with the fiscal stability of the district.

These SWC Curriculum Committee has developed criteria and processes to assist faculty and deans as they collaborate to set enrollment maximums on courses that will promote student success and the health and safety of students as well as the fiscal

sustainability of the district. These principles and criteria are heavily informed by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges' 2012 paper *Setting Course Enrollment Maximums: Process, Roles, and Principles*.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Guiding Principles for the Process

- A. While pedagogical/androgological factors and student success should be the basis for establishing class caps, student safety and compliance with legal codes must always be ensured.
- B. The discussion involved in determining or changing class enrollment maximums should begin at the level of discipline faculty.
- C. The Curriculum Committee is responsible for managing the process for developing course enrollment maximums and for approvals of course enrollment maximums for new courses.
- D. The implementation of course enrollment maximums, once approved by the Curriculum Committee, should involve district and faculty bargaining unit collaboration to ensure that faculty working conditions established in the negotiated agreement are reasonable and maintained and student learning conditions are optimal.
- E. The course enrollment limit should not exceed the greatest number of students to whom the instructor can reasonably offer the attention necessary for their success.
- F. The number of students in the class should be appropriate to the method(s) of presentation used in the class (lecture, lab, online, etc.). Please see "Sample Course Enrollment Maximum Rubric" below for descriptions.
- G. The number of students enrolled in the class should support the use of a variety of effective grading processes appropriate to the content and rigor of the course (take-home writing assignments, essay exams, scantrons, presentations, etc.)
- H. Decisions on the setting of class enrollment maximums should, wherever possible, be supported by current and reliable data, both locally produced and from external statewide and national organizations.
- I. Determinations of enrollment maximums for different disciplines and courses should be rooted in balanced and fair considerations of workload for different disciplines, including factors such methods of evaluation (essays vs. tests), delivery methods (lecture vs. lab), etc.
- J. When a course is approved to be offered via distance education, the maximum enrollment for a section of that course offered online is recommended to be the lesser of either 80% of the class maximum set for the face-to-face course in that discipline or 30 students.
- K. While noncredit courses can serve and support credit students, noncredit courses follow additional guidelines when setting class maximums. In addition to the criteria above, noncredit courses consider access, skills levels, and an

emphasis on introductory-level instruction that may warrant a different class maximum than a similar credit course.

### Responsibilities of the Curriculum Committee Regarding Setting Class Maximums

- A. Ensure that discipline faculty have considered all relevant factors in establishing the class enrollment maximum.
- B. Provide support for faculty as they determine the appropriate enrollment maximum based on pedagogical/androgological and health and safety factors.
- C. Review the data upon which the recommendations of discipline faculty are based to ensure that the data are relevant and have been given proper consideration.
- D. Review claims for special population classes (such as those for honors programs) which may have valid arguments for smaller class sizes.
- E. Approve and published class enrollment maximums in the official Course Outline of Record.

While the responsibility for vetting and approving proposed course enrollment maximums are the purview of the Curriculum Committee, the Academic Senate, the faculty collective bargaining unit (SCEA), and the district also have responsibilities intended to support the successful implementation of a course enrollment maximum to support student success. A detailed explanation of the roles and responsibilities of faculty and administrative leadership have in establishing course enrollment maximums can be found in the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges' 2012 paper [Setting Course Enrollment Maximums: Process, Roles, and Principles](#).<sup>[2]</sup>

### Questions to Ask When Establishing a Course Enrollment Maximum

- A. Are there legal mandates that impact the course enrollment maximum for this course?
- B. What types of assessments will be required in the course that may impact the ability of the students or instructor to be successful in the course if the enrollment maximum is not set at an optimal level?
- C. How do the student learning outcomes of the course impact the number of students that can reasonably be taught in the given term?
- D. If similar courses are offered at other college districts in the region, what are the average class sizes in those courses?
- E. If the course is intended for articulation with CSU or UC, what is the enrollment maximum for the CSU and/or UC course?
- F. Does the use of technology or specialized instructional or lab equipment impact the course enrollment maximum? If so, how?
- G. Does the course serve a purpose in a sequence of courses for which one course is a prerequisite of the next? What is the enrollment maximum for the prerequisite course? How do the exit skills for the prerequisite course and the outcomes and objectives of the new course impact the enrollment maximum?

- H. Are there recommendations for class enrollment maximums for this course from a professional or academic publication or organization?
- I. Is the specific course enrollment maximum number predetermined by an external accrediting agency?
- J. Are the competencies and learning outcomes in the course that require an atypical amount of face-to-face time with students? What teaching methods essential and/or unique to the course justify the class maximum proposed?

## Curriculum Committee's Criteria for Reviewing Proposed Course Enrollment Maximums

When discussing the justification provided for a class enrollment maximum, the following factors and accompanying questions should be considered by the Curriculum Committee along with any accompanying data:

### Health and Safety

- A. Will the maximum number of students enrolled endanger students in case of an emergency?
- B. Will the maximum number of students enrolled violate the existing fire safety codes regarding room occupancy?
- C. Will the maximum number of students enrolled negatively impact the instructor's ability to monitor student activities that involve potentially hazardous materials?
- D. Will the maximum number of students enrolled negatively impact the instructor's ability to monitor student activities that could lead to injury if performed incorrectly (Exercise Science, Athletics, Dance...)?
- E. Will the maximum number of students enrolled negatively impact the instructor's ability to monitor group activities that may lead to conflict between students?

### Facility or other Class Capacity Limitations

- A. What is the availability of seats, desks, or workstations?
- B. What is the availability of necessary equipment or supplies?
- C. What is the availability of required or necessary teaching or lab assistants?

### Course Modality

- A. Is the proposed class enrollment maximum similar to that of courses similar in description, content, outcomes, methods of assessment, and modality?
- B. Is this course a lab course with physical, pedagogical, or health and safety limitations?

### Instructional Delivery

- A. How will the nature of classroom activities required to teach the curriculum be impacted by the class enrollment maximum?
- B. How will the nature of interaction between instructor and students be impacted by the class enrollment maximum?

- C. How will the use of group work or group activities impact the class enrollment maximum?

#### Assessments

- A. Will the maximum class enrollment allow the instructor to provide timely and useful feedback to students when assessing formative and summative assignments?
- B. Do the types and/or amount of individual assignments, projects, and/or papers needed to accurately assess student work impact the class enrollment maximum?
- C. Can the student learning outcomes of the course be assessed effectively given the proposed class enrollment maximum?
- D. Will the instructor have reasonable freedom to use a variety of assessment tools given the proposed class enrollment maximum?

### Proposals to Change a Class Enrollment Maximum

Once a class enrollment maximum has been approved by the Curriculum Committee, faculty who wish to change or temporarily deviate from that maximum should only do so after careful deliberations with other faculty in the discipline and the cognizant administrators. The process for changing a class enrollment maximum that has been approved through the curriculum approval process is established in the collective bargaining agreement between the College District and then Southwestern College Education Association (SCEA). While the process and necessary approvals are dictated by the contract, faculty are urged to consider the principles and criteria agreed upon by the Curriculum Committee when making an argument for the raising or lowering of a class enrollment maximum and to engage as many faculty and administrative voices in the conversation regarding what is most effective for supporting student success and protecting student safety in the classroom.

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[1] [http://www.asccc.org/sites/default/files/ClassCapsS12\\_0.pdf](http://www.asccc.org/sites/default/files/ClassCapsS12_0.pdf)

[2] [http://www.asccc.org/sites/default/files/ClassCapsS12\\_0.pdf](http://www.asccc.org/sites/default/files/ClassCapsS12_0.pdf)

For current information please see the most up to date contract online at:

<https://www.swccd.edu/index.aspx?page=678>

Other concerns considered important in the establishment of a class maximum for a new class may be presented for review by the Curriculum Committee. Changes in class maximums for existing courses as part of a course modification are reviewed by Instructional Support Services and approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Changes in existing class enrollment maximums come to the Curriculum Committee as information.

# **DISTANCE EDUCATION MODE OF DELIVERY: PHILOSOPHY, APPROVAL PROCEDURES, AND CLASS MAXIMUM RECOMMENDATIONS**

## Overview: Philosophy of Distance Education

Distance education provides vital pathways to a college education for the students we serve, putting a college education within reach for the wide variety of students our community college serves. Technology should increase both student access (by solving problems of location or scheduling) and student success (by offering enhanced or alternative learning opportunities and experiences).

Distance education courses or components are expected to meet the same standards as courses using other instructional delivery modes. Therefore, academic standards for distance education courses and programs should be the same as for all other educational experiences delivered by the institution, and students should be able to move easily from the distance education curriculum to other curricula of the college.

The DE component of a noncredit course must meet standards set forth by California Education Code, title 5 regulations, and local College District policies pertaining to noncredit Distance Education. Currently, no noncredit courses are offered via distance education; however, faculty are exploring the option. When it is available, these standards will apply.

## Recommended Faculty Preparation for Distance Education Curriculum Design and Instructional Methodology

Prior to the development of a proposal to offer a course via distance education, faculty originators/instructors for this course in online or hybrid form are strongly encouraged to meet the minimum training requirements as set forth in the Distance Education (DE) Handbook and Southwestern College Education Association (SCEA) contract.

## Separate Review and Approval Procedures for Distance Education

The California Community Colleges' *Distance Education Guidelines* states, "If any portion of the instruction in a proposed or existing course or course section is designed to be provided through distance education in lieu of on-campus interaction between instructor and student, the course shall be separately reviewed and approved according

to the district's adopted course approval procedures."<sup>4</sup> In addition, Southwestern College District Policy No. 4105, article 2, requires that "all courses with a Distance Education component be taught according to the approved course outline of record (COR) . . ." Course approval and curriculum is the responsibility of the Southwestern College Curriculum Committee. Distance Education courses have a separate approval process from traditional courses and are approved using a Distance Education Addendum created and approved by the Curriculum Committee. SWC Procedure No. 4105 explains that any new or modified course that will include a Distance Education component must be reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee and will follow the same approval process as face-to-face course approval.

### Definitions: Course Modes of Delivery

In keeping with title 5 section 55200, the Southwestern Community College District in consultation with the Academic Senate has determined the following definitions for Distance Education (DE) courses, as described in SWC Procedure No. 4015:

- A. Face-to-face Course (F2F):
  - a. 100% of the course is taught in a traditional face-to-face classroom or laboratory environment. This course may also have web-enhanced activities or class information utilizing a course management system (CMS) in which the teacher assigns or posts materials for students to access outside of class.
- B. Hybrid Course:
  - a. A hybrid course is a class that offers instruction both online and face-to-face on campus. Required face-to-face meetings are included in the schedule of classes following a predictable pattern (on the same day[s] of the week and at the same time). Online instruction uses the college-adopted CMS and also follows a predictable pattern. Instructional time follows the Carnegie Unit. This means the faculty must plan an approximate 1:2 ratio of instruction time to homework and study.
- C. Online Course:
  - a. An online course is a class instructed entirely online. The class meets online using the college-adopted CMS, and has no face-to-face instruction. Instructional time follows the Carnegie Unit. This means the faculty must plan an approximate 1:2 ratio of instruction time to homework and study.

Please see the *Distance Education Handbook: A Guide to Teaching Online at SWC*, for complete guidelines.

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<sup>4</sup> CCCCCO *Distance Education Guidelines*,  
[http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/DE/de\\_guidelines\\_081408.pdf](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/DE/de_guidelines_081408.pdf)

## Regular Effective Contact

Prior to the development of a proposal to offer a course via distance education, faculty originators/instructors should consider how an instructor teaching the course will maintain “regular effective contact,” also referred to in accreditation standards as “regular and substantive interaction.” The term “regular effective contact” means that the instructor of record interacts regularly with enrolled students and provides regular opportunities for students to interact with other students. Regular effective contact between instructor and students and among students throughout each week of the course is the responsibility of the instructor, not the student. SWC Policy/Procedure 4115 and the DE Handbook provide further information on the regular effective contact requirement.

As detailed in SWC Policy/Procedure 4115, the regular effective contact requirement can be met in a variety of ways. Instructor-initiated contact is primarily delivered through a combination of weekly announcements, instructor participation in threaded class discussions, and timely feedback on student work; other methods which contribute to regular effective contact include videoconferencing, group or individual meetings, class events, and instructor-initiated contact by email, telephone, and chat. See Procedure 4115 for complete details.

## Accessibility

California community colleges are required by state and federal law to ensure that distance education is accessible to all users. Delivery systems, content, and assignments must be accessible to all users in accordance with the accessibility guidelines found in the California Community Colleges’ *Distance Education Guidelines* and specifically in keeping with the California Community Colleges’ *Distance Education Accessibility Guidelines for Students with Disabilities*. Title 5 § 55206 requires that district curriculum approval procedures include how the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In addition, Southwestern Community College District Policy No. 3415 establishes that the College shall “conform to the principles of Universal Design in Education (UDE)” so that “the design of products and environments [is] useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.”

Accessibility requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 apply to all aspects of course delivery, including images, sound enhancements such as videos and podcasts, text pages, and PDFs. If a course uses web resources, publisher materials, or any other outside content, it must be accessible as well.

## Use of Publisher Materials

Publisher materials provided with textbook adoption are considered to be extensions of the textbook, and if they will be used in the course they must be included on the proposal to offer a course via distance education. Because publisher materials have

not been created by the instructor, they cannot be used to substitute for the instructor of record's delivery of course content. To be approved for use in an online or hybrid course at SWC, publisher materials must do all of the following:

- A. Expand on, not repeat, the primary educational materials of the course (i.e. textbook)
- B. Support student achievement of specific student learning outcomes for the course
- C. Meet Section 508 accessibility requirements.
- D. Include a mechanism(s) for verify individual student identity, such as a unique username and password for each student
- E. Include a mechanism(s) to ensure student privacy. Student grades are considered instructional records and must reside in the College's Course Management System
- F. Meet title 5 §59400(c) requirements that if instructional materials are available to a student temporarily through a license or access fee, the student shall be provided options at the time of purchase to maintain full access to the instructional materials for varying periods of time ranging from the length of the class up to at least two years
- G. Meet title 5 §59400(b) requirements that students cannot be required to pay for access to electronic materials "designed primarily for administrative purposes, class management, course management or supervision"

### Curriculum Committee Recommendation on DE Class Maximums

When a distance education addendum proposal to offer a course via distance education is presented to the Curriculum Committee, faculty must establish the appropriate class maximum for a class section offered via distance education. The Curriculum Committee recommends that the number of students assigned to any new distance education course section shall be the lesser of either:

- A. 80% of the class maximum set for the face-to-face course in that discipline or
- B. 30 students

Note: The Committee's recommendation on DE class maximums is a recommendation and not a negotiated agreement between SCEA and the College District. The process for changing an existing class maximum of a distance education section or of a face-to-face course that has been approved by the Curriculum Committee is determined by negotiated agreement and can be found in the faculty contract.

## **SPECIAL TYPES OF COURSES**

### Stand-Alone Courses:

Pursuant to title 5 Section 55100, courses that are not part of an approved program are defined as "stand-alone courses." This includes credit courses that are required for a certificate of fewer than 18 units that has not been approved by the Chancellor's Office as a Certificate of Achievement. Stand-alone courses can be linked together by prerequisites and can be in the same TOP (taxonomy of programs) code; however, if more than 18 units are linked, they must be submitted as a Certificate of Achievement.

On July 18, 2016, the California Community College Board of Governors approved the proposed regulations amendment to the California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55100 Course Approval, authorizing local districts to approve stand-alone credit courses. The purpose of the reinstatement of this regulation was to authorize community college districts to locally approve credit courses that are not part of a degree (commonly known as "stand-alone" courses) without separate approval by the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges."<sup>5</sup>

### Experimental Courses (295 Courses)

Stand-alone courses also include experimental courses, and are given the course number 295. The course may be numbered 295 with a letter of the alphabet if the number 295 is in use. These courses must be entered into the curriculum management system and, once approved by the Curriculum Committee, are included in the Curriculum Summary. The summary is placed on the Governing Board agenda for action. Once approved, an experimental course can be offered twice, before it must be submitted to the college curriculum committee for approval as a regular course. It is strongly recommended that the faculty develop the permanent course in collaboration with the ISS Office within the first semester that the 295 course is offered in order to have the course reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee for the following catalog. Once the permanent course is created, it must be launched in the curriculum management system as a credit course and follow the credit curriculum approval process. The 295 course will be inactivated at the end of the second semester in which the course was offered.

### Special Topics Courses

Stand-alone courses also include courses called "special topics courses," which are courses that employ a consistent framework in the Course Outline of Record but may change focus from term to term. These courses must be entered in the course management system and must follow the credit curriculum approval process and timelines.

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[http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/ExecutiveOffice/Board/2016\\_agendas/May/Item-3.1-Stand-Alone.pdf](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/ExecutiveOffice/Board/2016_agendas/May/Item-3.1-Stand-Alone.pdf)

## Open Entry/Open Exit Courses

Open Entry/Open Exit (OE/OE) method of delivery allows individuals to learn skills at their own pace. This delivery method is for individuals who are motivated and who enjoy working independently with minimal supervision. The term “open entry/open exit courses” refers to courses in which students enroll at various times and complete at various times or at varying paces. Open entry/open exit courses may be conducted as either credit or noncredit courses and may be offered with or without regularly scheduled hours.

Courses should be designed in such a way that most students who are appropriately placed in the course would be able to master the objectives and complete the course successfully in about 48-54 hours per unit of credit. Some students may need more hours to do the same and may need greater assistance from faculty and staff. Some students may need fewer hours to complete the course. Regardless of the number of hours the student needs to complete the course, the number of units earned will be the same.

If a course is specifically created to provide supplemental learning assistance which supports another course or courses by using the open entry/open exit method of delivery, the course outline of record for the open entry/open exit course must identify the other course or courses that it supports, the specific learning objectives, and the educational competencies students are to achieve.

The maximum number of hours a student may be enrolled in an open entry/open exit course shall be determined by the faculty originator, approved by the Curriculum Committee, and will be based on the maximum time reasonably needed to achieve the educational objectives of the course.

An example of a course using the OE/OE method of delivery would be a course that includes required field experiences, such as Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) courses. Students are required to fulfill 10 hours of ride-along time with licensed paramedics, which may require several months or only a few weeks to complete. For noncredit courses, OE/OE students may enter a course at any point, except in circumstances where the total number of hours of the course are needed to fulfill a certificate or certification requirement (e.g., NC 113 and NC 114, Tax Preparation/Income Tax I and Tax Preparation/Income Tax II). A student who wishes to convert from noncredit to credit status in courses that are overlaid with OE/OE credit courses must have enrolled prior to the end of the add/drop period.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code.  
Reference: Section 70901, Education Code.

## Repeatable Courses and Course Repetition

In 2011, California's community colleges faced major changes in course repeatability and course repetition due to legislation. These changes led to decreases in the demand for many classes and has caused consternation for many faculty, especially in arts and exercise science, where student progress is reliant on the ability to repeat an experience in order to progress to advanced levels, such as in musicianship in preparation to audition as part of transferring to a university, or in an athletic activity where practice is required for improvement.

Under title 5 regulations §55040-55046, current as of this handbook, courses may be listed as repeatable for only three reasons: intercollegiate athletics, courses that are required by the CSU or UC to be repeated for a major, and vocational and academic competition courses. In all other cases, courses may not be listed as repeatable, and individual students can be granted the opportunity to retake the course only under specific circumstances.<sup>6</sup>

The term "course repetition" refers to the ability of a student to retake a course due to circumstances associated with the individual student, such as extenuating circumstances, a passage of time since last taking the course, special classes for students with disabilities, cooperative work experience, courses where there have been significant changes in industry standards prompting student retraining, or to alleviate substandard course work. It's important to remember that *course repetition* is tied to the student, while the term *course repeatability* is tied to a course and is very limited.

For these reasons, disciplines may create courses related-in-content; however, this approach is limited to no more than four courses. These courses should be numbered sequentially according to progression of rigor, without letters as was the practice in the past. For example, Creative Writing I,II,III and Advanced, ENGL 117A, 117B, 117C, 117D, becomes ENGL 120, ENGL 121, ENGL 122, and ENGL 130, respectively. In addition, courses related-in-content must show a clear progression of rigor from one course to the next. The most effective sections of the course outline of record for establishing and demonstrating this progression are the course title, course description, prerequisites, core content, examples of assignments, and methods of assessment. Also, course student learning outcomes should demonstrate that the expected skills and abilities students should be able to perform after completing the course are at a higher level than those of the lower level courses in a series of courses related in-content. Student learning outcomes for courses related in content should not be the same.

Repeatability of noncredit courses is determined locally.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://asccc.org/content/concept-credit-courses-another-look-course-repetition-and-repeatability>

For more information, regarding course repeatability (based on course content) and course repetition (based on student circumstance) please consult the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office *Credit Course Repetition Guidelines*.<sup>7</sup>

## Course Numbering

The course numbering system is important to recognize courses in different categories:

- A. Associate degree applicable credit courses
  - B. Basic skills and developmental courses
  - C. Community Services courses
  - D. Cooperative Work Experience courses
  - E. Degree courses
  - F. Independent Study courses
  - G. Laboratory courses (same course number as lecture with an added "L")
  - H. Experimental courses
  - I. Noncredit courses
  - J. Transferable courses
- 
- A. 001–099 Basic skills (non-degree) or degree for local career technical degrees—but not transferable
  - B. 100–299 Transferable; baccalaureate level; meets requirements for associate in science/art degree; or articulate to four-year institutions
  - C. 290–293 Cooperative Work Experience courses
  - D. 295 Experimental courses (Special topics)
  - E. 299 Independent study courses
  - F. CS1–CS1000 Community Services courses (CS)
  - G. NC1–NC3000 Noncredit courses (NC)

## Concurrent Course Scheduling Policy (formerly Course Overlays)

The Southwestern College Curriculum Committee Concurrent Course Scheduling Policy complies with the limitations and constraints stated in title 5 §55041 [Course Repetition Absent Substandard Academic Work] and in title 5 §55042 [Course Repetition in Activity Courses]. Furthermore, the policy below adheres to the standards regarding the Course Outline of Record (COR) stated in title 5 §55002 (3) [Standards and Criteria for Courses]. Concurrent Course Scheduling should not be scheduled as a way of supporting low-enrollment classes.

Concurrent Course Scheduling occurs when two distinct courses are scheduled at the same time in the same room with the same instructor. This practice requires that the concurrent scheduling be academically sound. This practice is allowable under the following circumstances:

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<sup>7</sup><http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/Credit/2013Files/CreditCourseRepetitionGuidelinesFinal.pdf>

- A. Same-as Courses: (formerly known as “dual designator” courses)
  - a. Allowable concurrent course scheduling of Same-as courses includes, for example, Psychology 270/Sociology 270 and History 141/Mexican American Studies 141. Courses in this situation have identical CORs.
- B. Certain Lecture/Lab Courses (within the same discipline and with the same academic goals):
  - a. This includes a concurrent course scheduling in which one instructor teaches two different courses that are in the same discipline and share laboratory/workspace facilities, but in which the academic lecture for both sections takes place separately and distinctly from the other concurrently scheduled course. For example, Chemistry 101 may be scheduled at the same time as Chemistry 102 and arranged so that the lecture for 101 is conducted at a different hour than the lecture for 102 but the lab hours may overlap.
- C. Expertise Courses:
 

Those courses are allowable by title 5 §55042 for expertise in a discipline. Allowable examples would include such areas as:

  - a. Physical Education
  - b. Visual or Performing Arts courses (such as Music 180, 181, 182, 183, Theatre 160, 161, 162, 163, Art 170, 171, 172 or Dance 141, 142, 143, 144)-except courses required as a sequence for transfer
  - c. Career Technical courses where 1) the content differs each time the course is offered, 2) the primary educational activity or skill training remains the same in both courses, 3) the difficulty level changes in each course. For example, BUS 200A Microsoft Word: Beginning and BUS 200B Microsoft Word: Advanced may be concurrently scheduled because students may be working with the same teacher, but the content varies depending on the student’s level of proficiency in the same subject matter, skills, or activity. TOP codes in each course must be the same.
- D. Noncredit Concurrent Course Scheduling with a Credit Course: must fulfill the following: 1) the majority of the students must be enrolled in the Credit Course, and 2) the instructor must adhere to the Credit COR at all times.
- E. Other Concurrent Course Scheduling requests not addressed above must be approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Curriculum Committee Co-chair.

## Materials Fees

According to title 5, Division 6, Chapter 10, SubChapter 7:

- A. Consistent with the provisions of this Subchapter, the Governing Board may require students to provide instructional and other materials needed for a credit or noncredit course, provided that such materials are of continuing value to a student outside of the classroom setting, and provided the materials are not solely or exclusively available from the district.

- B. Except as specifically authorized or required in the Education Code, the Governing Board must not require a student to pay a fee for any instructional and other materials required for a credit or noncredit course.
- C. Noncredit courses may not require materials fees; however, a noncredit course with a credit “same as” designator may require a materials fee.

The following definitions apply:

- A. “Instructional and other materials” means any tangible personal property which is owned or primarily controlled by an individual student.
- B. “Required instructional and other materials” means any materials which a student must procure or possess as a condition of registration, enrollment or entry into a class, or any materials which are necessary to achieve those required objectives of a course which are to be accomplished under the supervision of an instructor during class hours.
- C. “Solely or exclusively available from the district” means the materials are not available except through the district, or the district requires the material be purchased or procured from it. Materials are not considered to be solely or exclusively available from the district if (1) they are provided to the student at the district’s actual cost; (2) the materials are otherwise generally available, but are provided solely or exclusively by the district for health and safety reasons; or (3) the materials are provided in lieu of other generally available but more expensive materials which would otherwise be required.
- D. “Required instructional and other materials which are of continuing value outside of the classroom setting” are materials which can be taken from the classroom setting, and which are not wholly consumed, used up, or rendered valueless after they have been applied in achieving the required objectives of a course supervised by an instructor during class hours.

### Process for Adding/Changing Materials Fees

- A. Faculty originator must submit a course modification according to published curriculum approval deadlines for adding information to the catalog.
- B. The Supervisor of Instructional Support Services will update the materials fees list and process it for Governing Board approval during the May meeting.
- C. Materials Fees changes/additions will be effective the proceeding fall semester.

### Course Deletion Policy

Any course in the Southwestern College Catalog (credit and noncredit) that is not offered and taught in any succeeding six semester period (in the day, evening, summer, or extension program) may be deleted from the catalog and no longer eligible to be offered. Schools must be notified one year in advance before a course is to be dropped from the Catalog. Faculty wishing to reactivate a course after the course has been deleted must submit a new course proposal.

# PROGRAM EVALUATION

## Academic Program Review For Credit And Noncredit Curriculum

Curriculum development and Academic Program Review (APR) are integral to instruction. Faculty are responsible for the development of credit and noncredit curriculum for instruction and use the APR process to review the effectiveness of instructional programs and structure improvements. Currently, APR occurs annually with a formal report written for the college every three years.

The purpose of the APR process is to review, analyze, and assess the content, currency, direction, and quality of all programs in relation to student learning and achievement outcomes. This review of all programs must facilitate program improvement and innovation in a meaningful, efficient, and timely way, and should include credit and noncredit offerings within the program.

The intent of the program review process is to promote student-centered, educational excellence of academic programs through self-examination and self-improvement. The review process is to be broad-based, user-friendly, and easily incorporated into the campus-wide processes of budget, planning, and accreditation.

The information gathered and analyzed in program review, including data such as student learning outcomes data, is used in planning, making budget recommendations, making personnel recommendations, and implementing program improvement and innovation.

Each program's final report should be designed to give insight into three broad questions:

- A. Where has the program been?
- B. Where is it now?
- C. Where should it go from here?

Specifically, program review will:

- A. facilitate the self-study of each academic program's effectiveness as it relates to the college mission.
- B. promote steady and measurable improvement and innovation in the quality and currency of all academic programs.
- C. provide evidence of program effectiveness and improvements in measured program student learning and achievement outcomes.
- D. provide information-based recommendations for the college budget in hiring and purchasing of instructional materials.
- E. note areas of program strength and acknowledge accomplishments.

- F. note areas in need of improvement to alert the program and college to these areas in time for proactive solutions.

### Program Viability and Discontinuance

College districts are required by current statute and regulation to develop a process for program discontinuance and minimum criteria for the discontinuance of occupational programs (Education Code §78016 and Title 5 §51022). Along with this statutory requirement is the responsibility and obligation of the college to offer programs that are relevant and meaningful to student goals of transfer and employment. The passage of time and shifts in employment trends may lead to the need to review a program for its continued viability. SWC BP 4021/AP 4021 Program Discontinuance establishes the principles that underlie the review of a program's viability and the process for discontinuance when a program is determined to be no longer useful for students. It is important that faculty accept their responsibility to periodically review their programs as part of the program review process for continued viability and relevance for students.