

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 4021 Program Discontinuance/Consolidation

## I. Background and Philosophy

- A. In accordance with Title 5, Section 51022, College districts are required by current regulation and statute to develop a process for the modification, continuance or discontinuance of courses or programs and minimum criteria for the discontinuance of occupational programs.
- B. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) recommended (Spring, 1998) that local senates create a process for program appraisal/discontinuance that takes into account the following issues:
  - 1. Impact on student learning, goals, and needs;
  - 2. effect on the balance of the college curriculum;
  - 3. impact on educational and budget planning;
  - 4. regional economic and training issues;
  - 5. changes in regional economic and training conditions; and
  - 6. collective bargaining issues.
- C. In its Spring, 1998 paper, "Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective," the ASCCC outlines issues and criteria to consider in creating this process. In addition, it states, "The development of a program discontinuance process should be considered within the context of the college mission statement and should be linked with the college educational master plan and the department's goals and objectives." In formulating this process, all recommendations of the ASCCC have been considered. Fundamentally, the spirit of access and equity for students as well as the interest and concerns of faculty must be considered throughout.
- D. Program Discontinuance/Consolidation will be conducted annually. Conducting this procedure annually is an important aspect of assessing program viability and alignment with the college mission and objectives.
- E. During times of budget reductions or comparable reasons which necessitate the reduction in (cutting) class sections and reduction in faculty, it is possible that a college may not have sufficient course offerings to maintain a program or a major at the college. In such instances, as best as possible, consideration should be given to consolidation of class sections from two or more colleges at one college in order to preserve the program or major in order to meet student needs.
- F. The Program Review process, annual unit plans, and other strategic planning activities should be referenced and considered among sources of data and direction in this process, but it is important to emphasize that their primary purpose and use is not to target programs for discontinuance. It is also important to note that program discontinuance or consolidation should occur only after serious deliberation and after recommended intervention strategies have been implemented but still result in a program that falls outside the college's mission or master plan or the division's or department's goals and objectives.
- G. It is imperative to state that the purpose of a program appraisal/consolidation/discontinuance process is to have criteria in place to guide a discussion in the event that the process is needed. The presence of a process should not be construed as an inducement to look for programs to discontinue or as a reason to avoid honest participation in an academic process such as Program Review.
- H. This procedure shall be evaluated for effectiveness within one year after the conclusion of the first program appraisal/discontinuance process and periodically reevaluated by the Academic Senate in a

shared governance environment.

- I. This process document shall be filed, if required, with the Office of the Chancellor of California Community Colleges. (Title 5, §51022)

## Program Discontinuance/Consolidation Evaluation Process

### A. Initial Considerations

This procedure will be used to review the continuance, modification, or discontinuance of programs.

1. **Definition of Program.** For purposes of this document, a *Program* is defined as an organized sequence or grouping of courses or other educational activities leading to a defined objective such as a major, degree, certificate, career certificate, job career goal, license, the acquisition of selected knowledge or skills, or transfer to another institution of higher education. The term Program also applies to Library Services, Health Services, and Student Services as defined above. The scope of the program under consideration will be clearly delineated at the outset of this process.
2. **Vocational or occupational programs** shall be reviewed every two years by Management Information Systems data (Cal. Educ. Code § 78016) and every three years by Departments in a formal written review (i.e., Program Review). All other programs shall be reviewed every three years with an annual program update, except when continued with qualification within the program appraisal/discontinuance process.
3. **Role of Curriculum Committee.** The Curriculum Committee, a committee of the Academic Senate, must have a fundamental and integral role in any discussion or appraisal of program continuance consolidation or discontinuance, recognizing the district's policy to rely primarily on the Academic Senate in academic matters as set forth in Title 5 Section 53200(C) and Section 53203.
4. **Conditions for Discontinuance.** The following conditions may cause a program to be recommended to the Curriculum Committee for discontinuance (based on quantitative and qualitative data) or in the case of "e" or "f" below be considered for consolidation:
  - a. Program Review and analysis trends
  - b. Degree and Certificate completion
  - c. Changes in demand in the workforce
  - d. Changes in requirements from transfer institutions
  - e. Availability of human resources
  - f. Budget concerns and lack of sufficient funding.

### B. Initiating a Discussion on Program Discontinuance/Consolidation

5. Program discontinuance/consolidation-discussions can be initiated by administration or the affected divisions and departments.
6. The instructor(s) and the department chair of the program being considered for discontinuance or consolidation should be given the semester in which they are notified to do research and provide documentation related to the reasons and conditions that were provided for consideration of discontinuance or consolidation of their program and what action, if any, should be taken.
7. The Academic Senate in and through the Curriculum Committee, must have a fundamental and integral role in any discussion of program discontinuance or consolidation, recognizing the district's policy to rely primarily on the Academic Senate's advice in academic matters.

8. The instructor(s) and the department chair of the program being considered will have the opportunity to present the program's relevance at the college council level.

C. Discussion Criteria

For each affected Program, both qualitative and quantitative factors shall be discussed in order to have a fair and complete review leading to an eventual decision to continue, continue with qualification, discontinue or consolidate a program.

9. Qualitative factors are based on the mission, values, and goals of the institution and access and equity for students. These factors include but are not limited to:
  - a. Quality of the program and how it is perceived by students, faculty, articulating universities, local business and industry, and the community;
  - b. Ability of students to complete their educational goals of obtaining a certificate or degree, or transferring;
  - c. Balance of college curriculum (for example, ensuring the non-elimination of all of one type of program, such as all foreign languages);
  - d. Effect on students of modifying, discontinuing, or consolidation of the program;
  - e. Uniqueness of the program;
  - f. Replication of programs in the surrounding area and their efficacy;
  - g. Potential for a disproportionate impact on diversity at the college.
  - h. Necessity of the program in order to maintain the mission of the College;
  - i. Source of funding for the program (outside vs. general funds);
  - j. Impact on other programs, including transfer, if the program is modified or closed. If there are any, these must be identified;
  - k. Student Learning Outcomes assessment data;
  - l. Requirements by federal/state/accreditation or other areas (e.g. Title IX) for the program. If there are any, these must be identified; and
  - m. Impact on articulated programs.
  
10. Quantitative factors are based primarily on the Program Review where applicable. Factors that may be considered include but are not limited to:
  - a. Program Review results showing:
  - b. A sustained downward trend in FTES generated, load, enrollment, number and composition of sections offered, productivity, FTES composition, retention, and persistence, or
  - c. Sustained increase in expense or annual cost/FTES
  - d. Changes in demands in the workforce, transfer rates, job-outs, completers and graduates, and non-completers
  - e. Projected demand for the program in the future
  - f. Changes in class offerings
  - g. Frequency of course section offerings
  - h. Availability of human resources
  - i. FTES generated/FTEF
  - j. Enrollment trends
  - k. Operating cost per FTES
  - l. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment data;
  - m. Capital outlay costs/year
  - n. Labor market demand: vocational vs. a vocational
  - o. Data from the PCCD Course Ranking Index tool.

#### D. Discussion Guidelines

11. Discussion of program appraisal/ discontinuance or consolidation shall include all parties potentially affected by the decision. These include faculty, staff, administrators, students, the employing business and industry, and the community (i.e., CTE Community Advisory Committee)
12. Discussion of program appraisal/ discontinuance or consolidation will be conducted in public, open meetings. The dates, times and locations of these meetings will be published using all means of college communications including in print and electronically.
13. Discussions will be conducted using the best practices for meeting facilitation, including agreed upon ground rules, and recording and publishing outcomes of discussions.
14. Discussions will include both qualitative and quantitative indicators. Sources of data for all indicators will be referenced and cited.
15. Deliberations and conclusions shall rely primarily on the advice of the Academic Senate in and through the Curriculum Committee per district policy.

#### II. Possible Outcomes of Program Discontinuance/Consolidation Discussion

There are three potential outcomes of the Program Discontinuance process. A program may be recommended to continue, to continue with qualification, or to discontinue.

##### A. Recommendation to Continue

A program recommended to continue will do so when after full and open consideration it is decided that it is in the best interest of the college, its students, and the larger community to do so. The conclusions resulting in this recommendation will be documented in writing, maintained by the Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee and forwarded to the Vice President of Instruction or Vice President of Student Services as information. No further action is required.

##### B. Recommendation to Continue with Qualifications

A program may be recommended to continue with qualifications. These qualifications may include specific interventions designed to improve the viability and responsiveness of the program. A specific timeline will be provided during which these interventions will occur and expected outcomes will be outlined in advance. All interventions and timelines will be published in writing by an agreed upon party, maintained by the Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee and forwarded to the Vice President of Instruction or Student Services as information. After the specified qualification period is completed the program will be reviewed again.

##### C. Recommendation to Discontinue

A recommendation to discontinue a program will occur when, after a full and open discussion, it is concluded that the program falls outside the college's mission, values, and strategic goals and/or the department's goals and objectives. Any recommendation for program discontinuance will include the following:

1. The criteria used to arrive at the recommendation, verified by an agreed upon neutral party.
2. A plan and timeline for phasing out the program with consideration of the impact to students, faculty, staff, and the community. Due consideration will be given to approaches to allow currently

enrolled students to complete their programs of study. Students' catalog rights will be maintained and accounted for in allowing them to finish the program.

3. A plan for the implementation of all requirements of collective bargaining for faculty and staff, including application of policies for reduction in force and opportunities to retrain.
4. This recommendation and discontinuance plan will be documented in writing by agreed upon parties, which will include the signatures of the College President, Vice President of Instruction or Student Services (dependent on the program and the Academic Senate President. The final recommendation is to be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval as a curriculum action.

#### D. Recommendation for Consolidation

A recommendation for Program Consolidation, provided there has been a full and open discussion, may occur when it has been determined that the program falls within the College's mission, values, and strategic goals, as well as the department's goals and objectives, but because of cuts in class sections and a reduction in faculty, the program is no longer viable at that college. When this occurs, consideration should be given to consolidating class sections from two or more colleges at one college in order to preserve the program or major and in so doing to meet student needs.

#### References:

Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective. ASCCC, adopted Spring 1998 Title 5 Section 55130, Approval of Credit Programs  
Title 5 Section 51022, Program Discontinuance  
Title 5 Section 53200, 53203, Role of the Academic Senate  
Title 5 Section 55000(g), Definition of educational program  
Education Code Section 78016, Review of program:  
Termination CCCC Program and Course Approval Handbook (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A.15

Approved by the Chancellor: January 31, 2012

Revised and approved by the Chancellor: August 13, 2015

Revised and approved by the Chancellor: November 18, 2019