

Course Review Cycle

Goal

The goal of the Course Review Cycle is to assure official course outlines of record are current and reflect how courses are currently taught. For this purpose, a current course outline is an outline that is not more than 6 years old.

Because it is unknown as to how many of our courses are more than 6 years old the curriculum committee recommends that the college implement a complete and comprehensive course review cycle for all courses contained in the official COS catalogue of courses, within 3 years to insure that all courses are updated or archived.

Implementation of the Process

The general oversight of this process is the responsibility of the Chair of the Curriculum Committee and the Dean of Student Learning

Description of the Process

The curriculum committee has determined that a program by program approach is necessary to achieve a thoughtful and systematic approach to the review of the COS inventory of courses. To this end, a list has been created that outlines, through years 2014-2016, which programs the curriculum committee recommends should be reviewed.

Step 1 Course List for update will be distributed by end of current semester

- The Dean of Student Learning and the Curriculum Committee Chair will provide a list of courses which should be updated within the next academic year to all full-time and part time instructors by the end of the current semester.

Step 2 Updating of Courses begin at start of semester

- The Dean of Student Learning is responsible for updating courses that are not being currently taught by full-time instructors; however, the curriculum committee suggests that workshops, for training purposes, are offered to part-time instructors at the beginning of each semester.
- All materials, and other information, needed for updates and creation of new COR's will be provided online on the curriculum committee website.
- Instructors will be given wide latitude as to the order in which the courses will be reviewed, but all CORs should be completed by the timelines given.
- No update is required for this cycle for courses updated within the past 2 years, providing that all information contained within the COR is correct.

Step 3 Progress report at end of semester.

- The Dean of Student Learning and the Curriculum Committee Chair will provide an update of the current progress of the Course Review Cycle to all instructors.

Rationale

Neither Title 5 nor Education Code specifies an exact review cycle for all courses. The fourth edition of the Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH) states, “Colleges are required to periodically review curriculum in a process called ‘program review’ during which the faculty and administrators review the program requirements and course content in consultation with advisory groups” (page 18). The PCAH continues to say, “At present there is no standard model(s) officially recommended for conducting program review in the California Community Colleges system. There is an imperative, however, that every college must conduct an effective review of its instructional programs on a regular basis” (page 28). However, several separate requirements from Title 5, the Accreditation Standards, and other sources help to establish the most reasonable periodic course review cycle.

Title 5 section 55003 states that “at least once each six years all prerequisites and corequisites established by the district shall be reviewed, except that prerequisites and corequisites for vocational courses or programs shall be reviewed every two years.” This statement applies only to the review of prerequisites, not to the entire course or course outline. However, because prerequisite review is most likely to be a feature of the overall review of the course, many colleges apply this six-year maximum review rule not only to prerequisites but also to course review in general.

Standard IIA.2(e) of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges states, “The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.” This language does not specify a length for the on-going review cycle. However, because the cycle for the overall accreditation process is six years, and one can safely assume that a college that had not reviewed its curriculum between accreditation processes would not be seen as compliant, a curriculum review cycle of six years or less would be necessary to meet Accreditation Standard IIA.2(e).

The review cycle can also impact the transferability and articulation of courses. The University of California’s “Policy on Course Transferability, Directions for Revising the UC Transferable Course Agreements and Special Regulations for Courses in Specific Subject Areas” states that for UC transferable course agreements, “Outlines should be current (not more than seven years old).” The CSU system also demands currency of course outlines in order to articulate the courses.

Finally, the C-ID (Course Identification Numbering System) requires that course outlines submitted for C-ID designation be no more than five years old. Outlines that have not been reviewed within five years therefore cannot be assigned a C-ID designator.

For all of these reasons, even though Title 5 does not specify a specific length for the overall curriculum review cycle, a periodic review process of not more than six years and preferably of five years seems most advisable. The final determination of the curriculum review cycle is a local decision made primarily by the Curriculum Committee, but relevant administrators and curriculum support staff should also be consulted in making this decision.

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