AP 4020 Program and Curriculum Development

College of the Redwoods is committed to the vitality and integrity of its educational offerings. Following a transparent process and using appropriate data is central to this endeavor. This procedure outlines the processes that will be used to initiate a new instructional program and develop curriculum.

Instructional Program Initiation

An instructional program is defined as a discipline and/or as an organized sequence or groupings of courses leading to a defined objective such as a major (area of emphasis), degree, or certificate.

In order to create and maintain a viable curriculum compatible with the Education Master Plan, the Superintendent/President or designee shall be responsible for recommending to the Board for approval all new credit and noncredit programs in accordance with the Education Code. New instructional programs are mutually agreed upon by the Board or its representative and the Academic Senate.

The following process incorporates the criteria used to evaluate an instructional program for discontinuance. Program initiation requires significant commitment of resources and should only occur after serious deliberation.

The following indicators are indicators that are to be considered:

- Alignment with the Chancellor’s Office priorities, the College’s mission, and accreditation standards
- Alignment with state and federal requirements
- Requirements from transfer institutions
- Availability of fulltime and associate faculty
- Budget concerns and sufficient funding
- Demand in the workforce
- Adequate facilities and equipment

Instructional Program Initiation Process

Step One: New Instructional Program Request

A new instructional program request can be initiated by the administration, faculty, or the Academic Senate by submitting a New Instructional Program Request (See Appendix A) to the President/Superintendent. Recommendations from individual departments, faculty or advisory committees will be brought to the appropriate division dean to bring forward to the Chief Instructional officer/Chief Student Services Officer (CIO/CSSO). The CIO/CSSO will consult with the Academic Senate Co-Presidents on the recommendations moving forward.
Step Two: Appointment of the Task Force

If a new instructional program request is approved by the President/Superintendent, he or she will, with consultation with Expanded Cabinet, appoint a Task Force to analyze viability of the new program. The Task Force shall be composed of the following:

- 2 Deans or Directors one of which will not be directly connected to the new program (and one will be co-Chair, with one of the faculty members described below)
- Academic Senate Co-President or member of the Executive Committee
- 2 faculty members who may or may not be a member of the division responsible for the new instructional program, appointed by the Academic Senate
- 1 representative appointed by the President

The Task Force will be co-chaired by a faculty member to be selected from and by the membership of the Task Force. The responsibilities of the co-chairs of the Task Force include, but are not limited to the following:

- Consultation with the Office of Institutional Research and other resources to validate information being used in determining recommendations
- Maintenance of objectivity and integrity during the entire process
- Written summary recorded for each meeting
- Production of a Task Force Recommendation Report

Step Three: New Instructional Program Viability and Sustainability Analysis

The first task is to draw up a matrix of criteria by which viability and sustainability may be assessed.

- Best practices of other colleges
- Job Market analysis
- Develop a Matrix for or Set targets for the success rate with a timeline for assessment of the program
- Perhaps combine 3 and 4?

Step Four: Task Force New Program Recommendation Report

Subsequent to review of all the relevant information, the Task Force will present its finding including a recommendation on a course of action. Three possible recommendations are approval, no approval, or look for alternatives such as modifying existing programs to fill the need/purpose.

If the recommendation is to initiate a new program a corresponding commitment should be made to include a full time faculty member, and to rank this high in the faculty prioritization process.

The Task Force’s written report will consist of 1) a summary of the data, 2) an analysis of the data, 3) the recommendation, 4) the factors used to make the recommendation, and 5) a detailed assessment of the impact of the recommendations on the college’s overall educational program and budget, as well as its impact on students, faculty, and staff involved.
Step Five: Decision

The President/Superintendent has full responsibility and authority to implement the decision as designee of the Board of Trustees. If the President/Superintendent decides to implement the recommendation for initiation of the new program the President/Superintendent will task the appropriate administrators to work with faculty and staff to develop the new instructional program. If the President/Superintendent decides not to implement the recommendation for initiation of the new program, then he or she shall communicate the reasons in writing to the Expanded Cabinet and to the Academic Senate.

Curriculum and Course Development

The primary responsibility for the establishment, development, modification, and inactivation of curriculum resides with the faculty and the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate.

When teaching a course, faculty members shall follow the course outline of record as the framework for the course. Within this framework, each instructor shall use the outline in a manner best designed to meet the needs and capabilities of students and to best suit the instructional methods of the faculty member. This flexibility in use of the outline shall be limited by the instructor’s ability to meet stated objectives and outcomes as determined by the approved evaluative criteria.

Curriculum shall be systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated learning outcomes in accordance with Curriculum Committee processes and timelines.

Curriculum Committee and Curriculum Processes

Curriculum processes are performed and overseen by the Curriculum Committee. The membership of the Curriculum Committee can be found in the Curriculum Committee By-Laws. As a standing committee of the Academic Senate, the Curriculum Committee is responsible for the review and endorsement of curriculum in accordance with procedures set forth in the current California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Program and Course Approval Handbook. The Curriculum Committee is also responsible for establishing and maintaining College of the Redwoods curricular processes. Documentation of these processes is available on the Curriculum Committee website.

Upon Curriculum Committee and Academic Senate approval, the Academic Senate recommendations are forwarded to the Chief Instructional Officer (CIO) and then to the Board of Trustees (BOT) at least once during each fall and spring term for approval.

The BOT recommendation(s) shall be submitted to all required regulatory bodies for approval. New programs and courses shall be offered only after such approval has been obtained. Under the direction of the CIO, the district shall keep program and course lists updated and publicly available. Chancellor’s Office approved course information is published in the college’s catalog and in schedules.

The CIO, in mutual agreement with the Academic Senate, shall set timelines for regular review of existing courses or programs as well as catalog cutoff dates. The Curriculum Committee shall publish its calendar of meetings for the year and disseminate it to all departments and offices involved in the curricular process.

Definition of a Credit Hour
AGENDA ITEM 3.2

(1) An amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.

(2) For other academic work leading to award of credit hours (such as internships, practica, studio work) the award of credit hours will be based on an amount of work implied by the paragraph before.

(3) For asynchronous online courses, where no classroom instruction takes place per se, the assignment of credit hour will be based on the equivalent amount of work as represented by the definition above. An existing face to face course may be taught in an online format for the same credit hours provided the amount of work expected remains the same.

The Chief Instructional Officer (CIO) and the curriculum committee are charged with the responsibility to ensure that the curriculum adheres to this requirement. The CIO and the curriculum committee must make a reasonable determination that proposed assignment of credit hours for new courses conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

Reference: Title 5 Sections 51021, 55000 et seq., and 55100 et seq.; Accreditation Standard II.A; California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Student Attendance Accounting Manual – Chapter 3; 34 CFR 600.2

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