

# Curriculum Document Process Overview

## Background

Authority to oversee curriculum activity rests with the [Board of Governors for the California Community Colleges](#); however, they have delegated that responsibility to the [Chancellor's Office](#), which has, in turn, licensed part of that authority to local districts. Besides approval of new credit courses that are part of an approved program, under specific conditions, Long Beach City College is permitted the following curriculum authority:

1. Approve new *credit* courses which **are not** a part of an approved program (Stand-Alone Courses) in the following categories only:
    - a. Courses in non-vocational [T.O.P.](#) (taxonomy of program) codes, which are accepted for major requirements or General Education requirements at any CFSU or UC campus.
    - b. Courses in vocational T.O.P. codes, when the college has fewer than 12 semester units of Stand-Alone coursework in the same T.O.P. code.
    - c. Cooperative Work Experience courses (both occupational and general work experience).
    - d. Experimental Courses, Special Topics Courses, and Special Study Courses.
    - e. Mandated Public Safety Training Courses offered specifically to satisfy certification requirements.
  2. Determine that a given course meets the conditions of repeatability.
  3. Approve graduation requirements that apply to all students seeking the associate degree.
  4. Recommend patterns of courses to students for transfer or to meet other student goals.
- Modify existing programs, as needed, to increase effectiveness or maintain currency in relation to the original program goals and objectives.

### ***The college must demonstrate that:***

1. All faculty involved in curriculum review will know the state standards, as well as general standards of good practice in curriculum and instructional design.
2. The procedures used in curriculum development and approval assure that the standards can be responsibly applied.
3. Credit courses locally approved under this license meet relevant state standards.

If a course does not fall into one of the above-mentioned blanket approval categories, or if it is part of a program that has been disapproved by the Chancellor's Office, the course must be submitted individually to the Chancellor's Office for approval before being offered for instruction.

Certain aspects of curriculum work, such as approval of new programs and noncredit courses, were not licensed by the Chancellor's Office and must be approved in Sacramento.

To discharge the district's responsibilities for curriculum activity, the Committee on Curriculum and Instruction has been established by mutual agreement between the local academic senate and district administration. [Long Beach City College Policy 4005](#) details the composition of the Committee and its basic responsibilities. Within the Curriculum Committee, the Course Evaluation Subcommittee is charged with the responsibility for all curriculum activity, which pertains to the design and technical aspects of individual courses.

The Academic Services Office is the repository for all course documents. The Curriculum Technician in the Academic Services Office provides clerical support to the Course Evaluation Subcommittee. That individual maintains all official documentation for each course, prepares the master version of each curriculum form, and periodically issues a copy of the Master Course File which provides extensive details about each course the college offers. You can look up [curriculum information](#) at <http://oas.lbcc.edu/curriculum/RefBook/> and download [curriculum forms](#) at <http://oas.lbcc.edu/curriculum/forms/>. The [Curriculum Technician](#) in Academic Services ([curriculum-desk@lbcc.edu](mailto:curriculum-desk@lbcc.edu)) is another helpful resource.

The roles and responsibilities detailed below extend the contents of LBCC Policy 4005 by listing the tasks of participants both before and after the curriculum proposal reaches the Committee. The roles and responsibilities are listed in sequence of activities, which is normally followed as a curriculum proposal flows through the

review process—from the inception of the idea by the faculty to the final approval by the Board of Trustees.

## **Roles and Responsibilities in the LBCC Curriculum Development and Review Process**

### **1. Faculty member:**

- a. Researches and coordinates the development of all information and drafts all documentation.
- b. Discusses course change(s) with appropriate faculty.
- c. Submits documentation to Department Chair for approval.
- d. Attends appropriate Curriculum Committee meetings if requested by Department Chair or School Dean.
- e. Plans document submissions in a timely manner according to published deadline schedules.
- f. Makes appropriate contact with support personnel (i.e. Articulation Officer, Work Experience Coordinator, Director of Distance Learning, etc.) who can assist with the development of the documents required.

### **2. Department Head:**

- a. Reviews all documentation for completeness and content. Conducts/requires further investigation and coordination as necessary (texts, requisites, other departments, library, etc.).
- b. Obtains departmental approval of the proposed changes.
- c. Submits all required documentation to the appropriate dean for approval.
- d. Represents initiator if unavailable at the appropriate committee meetings.
- e. Applies Education Code, CCR (Title 5) and local standards of good practice.
- f. Submits the curriculum materials in a timely manner to the School Dean.
- g. Informs faculty members of all their responsibilities.
- h. Coordinates and plans all document submissions in a timely manner in accordance with published deadline schedules.
- i. Utilizes appropriate support personnel to assist with document development.

### **3. School Dean:**

- a. Reviews all documentation for completeness and content. Conducts/requires further investigation as necessary.
- b. Checks for compliance with Education Code, CCR (Title 5) and local standards of good practice.
- c. Ensures that the Department has completed all required coordination or articulation.
- d. Submits curriculum proposals to the Academic Services Office.
- e. Confirms with the Department Chair that reviewed courses have been submitted in a timely manner and in accordance with published deadline schedules.
- f. The school dean is the administration's representative in course-level matters. Therefore, the school dean's signature on any curriculum form communicates to the Course Evaluation Subcommittee that the school dean has made the necessary contact with any outside agency relevant to the department/program in question and the submitted curriculum documentation is valid and acceptable.

### **4. Course Evaluation Subcommittee Chair:**

- a. Reviews all documentation prior to each Curriculum Committee meeting for completeness, content, and conformance with Education Code, CCR (Title 5) and local standards of good practice.
- b. Coordinates with appropriate Faculty Author, Department Head, and/or School Dean for required follow-up actions.
- c. Prepares recommendations on course initiatives and recommendations on new courses to the Curriculum Committee.
- d. Provides resource assistance to faculty and departments in regard to course documentation and development.

### **5. Dean of Academic Services:**

- a. Reviews all documentation prior to each Curriculum Committee meeting for completeness, content, and conformance to [Education Code, CCR \(Title 5\)](#) and local standards of good practice.
- b. Provides resource assistance to faculty and departments in regard to course documentation and development.

#### 6. **Curriculum Technician:**

- a. Supplies faculty members with curriculum forms and instruction.
- b. Provides secretarial support for the Course Evaluation Subcommittee.
- c. Processes all curriculum documents.
- d. Prepares appropriate curriculum documents.

#### 7. **Curriculum Committee:**

- a. Ensure college, district, and state guidelines and standards are being followed.
- b. Recommend new courses, deletions, and changes to the Academic Senate.
- c. Require further action and coordination as necessary.

#### 8. **Academic Senate:**

- a. Presents recommendations on new courses for the Board of Trustees' approval.

#### 9. **District Board:**

- a. Reviews and approves all new courses.

### **What goes to the Curriculum Committee?**

The Committee on Curriculum and Instruction is the primary recommending body on curriculum and instruction.

As detailed above, curriculum changes and new courses are reviewed by the Course Evaluation Subcommittee and the Committee on Curriculum and Instruction. The deadlines to submit documents for curriculum initiatives are announced to the Curriculum Committee representatives, Department Heads, and School Deans by the Academic Services Office. The agenda for each Course Evaluation Subcommittee meeting is circulated to the Department Heads and deans in advance of each meeting.

The following kinds of curriculum actions are sent through the Course Evaluation Subcommittee to the full Committee on Curriculum and Instruction:

1. Outlines and related forms and support materials for new courses.
2. Requests to delete a course.
3. Requests to make changes in existing courses to these fields:
  - a. Descriptive Title
  - b. Requisites (prerequisites, corequisites, recommended preparation, or limitations on enrollment)
  - c. Units of Credit to the student
  - d. Class Size Maximum
  - e. Lecture/lab hours and corresponding Teaching Units
  - f. Materials Fee
  - g. Grade Code
  - h. Substantial and/or significant changes to the Catalog Description.
  - i. Inactivating or reactivating a course.

### **What is handled administratively?**

Not every curriculum action is sent to the Course Evaluation Subcommittee. The following kinds of curriculum actions are handled by the Academic Services Office upon request by the Department Head, with the approval of the School Dean, and are not brought before the Curriculum Committee for action:

1. Changes in:
  - a. Realignment of curriculum if the realignment is approved in advance by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
  - b. Method of instruction, [taxonomy of program \(T.O.P.\)](#), student accountability, transferability, method of grading, or course classification codes.
2. Minor grammatical and/or syntactic revision of outlines, including Catalog Description.
3. Revision of the schedule description for a course.
4. Routine review of course outlines without significant or substantial changes or requisites.

The following kinds of administrative curriculum actions are handled by the Course Evaluation Subcommittee.

1. Request for a grade code adjustment
2. Request for a department change
3. Request for a subject change
4. Request for a materials fee elimination
5. Request for a descriptive title change

### **What does the Course Evaluation Subcommittee look for in general?**

In very general terms, there are five (5) criteria which the Subcommittee uses in evaluating new course proposals. These criteria have been formulated by the Chancellor's Office staff and derived from statute, regulation, intersegmental agreements, guidelines from transfer institutions and industry, and standards of good practice in the field of curriculum design. Courses, whose documentation does not demonstrate that all of these criteria are met, can be approved by the Chancellor's Office and should not be approved by the Long Beach City College Curriculum Committee.

#### **1. Appropriateness to the Mission**

- a. The stated purposes and objectives defined in the official course outline of record must be consistent with the mission of the community colleges as formulated in law, as well as consistent with the master plan of the college.
- b. Courses fall within the mission when they are designed to be taught to lower division students for credit towards the degree and/or for purposes of transfer, occupational preparation, career supplementation, or upgrade rather than a vocational use.
- c. Courses that develop the ability of students to succeed in college level curricula and adult noncredit instruction also fall within the mission.
- d. Courses must not be designed primarily to provide group activities or services, but rather must provide systematic instruction in a body of content or skills whose mastery forms the basis of the student grade.
- e. A vocational, community service and contract courses do not qualify for state funding, but do fall within the mission if they are self-supporting.

#### **2. Need**

There must be a demonstrable need for a course in the region the college proposes to serve with the program to which the course belongs.

#### **3. Quality**

Courses must be designed to effectively meet their objectives, as well as the goals and objectives of the programs for which they are required. Outlines of record for each course must meet the standards outlined in the Chancellor's Office's [Curriculum Standards Handbook](#). This is perhaps the key area of interest to the Course Evaluation Subcommittee. There is further explanation at the tabs, which provide guidance on how to write a credit and noncredit course outline.

#### **4. Feasibility**

The college must have the resources to maintain the course at the level of quality described in the outline of record. Courses which are part of a program should be offered at least once every two years, unless the goals and rationale for the program justify a longer time frame as being in the best interests of the students.

## 5. Compliance

The course complies with all other laws applicable to it, including federal regulations, licensing requirements, and particular legal standards unique to DSP&S, Work Experience, Distance Learning, etc., kinds of curriculum.

Further, the Course Evaluation Subcommittee must apply specific criteria to the peer review process of curriculum approval. The curriculum proposal documents provide the required assistance and documentation for this process.

In an effort to develop and maintain a consistent standard of document preparation throughout the college and to facilitate communication between a department and the Course Evaluation Subcommittee, the following general standards; applied to all documents submitted, and specific standards; for identified documents, are requested:

### General Standards

All documents are to be the most current version, which can be found on the curriculum forms website.

All documents are to be word-processed.

Complete and current signatures on all submitted documents are required.

All required documents must be submitted simultaneously for a proposal to be accepted by the published deadline on the [Curriculum Review Deadline](#) calendar.

### Expedited Course Proposals due to Exigent Circumstances

Occasionally, in spite of the best planning, circumstances may arise which force the need for immediate action on course curriculum review. The course approval process seeks to balance responsiveness to departmental needs with quality course scrutiny assuring state and local standards.

The Course Evaluation Subcommittee typically defines an exigent circumstance or imminent need as an immediate mandate demanded by an outside licensing agency (e.g. Board of Registered Nursing), new emergency state regulation (e.g. SB 361, 2007), or specialized educational curriculum demanded by the state for student success (e.g. CAL Works). In such cases, not immediately responding to the agency's terms would result in the department's inability to insure qualification for the degree, program or certification offered by LBCC.

Imminent need is not valid due to inadequate preparation to meet the established curriculum review schedule.

When an exigent circumstance arises the department is expected to submit a written rationale addressing the circumstances and imminent need criteria along with other relevant course evaluation documents. Those documents will be expedited to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Course Evaluation Subcommittee as a first order of business. In that meeting the Course Evaluation Subcommittee will review and approve or reject the proposal and rationale document. Departmental representative(s) must be present to address any issues regarding curriculum or exigent circumstance rationale raised by the subcommittee.

A proposal accepted for expedited approval must still meet all state and local standards.

If approved, an expedited proposal must follow the established approval process beyond the subcommittee level. The timing of that process is guided by the appropriate entities (e.g. Curriculum Committee Chairperson, Executive Committee/Board of Trustees). The date the course takes effect is determined by collegial consultation (consensus) between the department head, school dean, and Dean of Academic Services.

### a) Course Change Form

All changes are to be completely identified where requested on the document. (Removal of an item will need to be noted accordingly.)

This document must contain a complete and thorough reason, for each of the requested changes, in the identified section.

Any submitted change request will alter an existing course outline, so an updated, “draft” course outline must be created on the [course outline website](#). This draft must reflect all requested changes and have all authorization signatures.

A [materials fee memo](#) is required for the establishment of a new fee or adjustment to an existing fee .

**b) New Course Supplemental Information Form**

A response is necessary for every question. “NA” may be an appropriate response.

An attached Curriculum Guide is required, except for “stand alone” courses, which are not part of any approved program.

The attached Curriculum Guide must identify the new course’s placement within the program.

Vocational classes will require the submission of advisory committee minutes appropriate for the course proposal.

**c) Requisite Page Scrutiny Form (located on Course Outline website)**

An addition, deletion, or change to any requisite requires the corresponding reflection of this exact information on both the draft course outline’s face page and requisite page.

The department must provide the requested 4 to 6 discrete learning outcomes of student skills and knowledge in the requested space.

*For Reference:*

[Course Outline Website](#)

[Curriculum Forms Website](#)

[Curriculum Reference Website](#)

[Distance Learning Guidelines Website](#)

## **New Course Proposal**

1. Course Outline
2. Impact Assessment Form
3. New Course Supplemental Information Worksheet
4. Curriculum Guide (with identified course placement)
5. Materials Fee Memo (as necessary)
6. Vocational Advisory Committee minutes (as necessary)

## **Course Change Request**

1. Course Change Form
2. Course Outline (reflecting requested changes)
3. Materials Fee memo (as necessary)

## **Distance Learning Request**

1. Distance Learning Addendum Form with signature page (for an existing course)
2. For a new class (see New Course Proposal) and include a Distance Learning Addendum with signature page

## **Honors Request**

1. Course Change Form (if for an existing course; if not, see new Course Proposal)
2. Course Outline
3. Honors Addendum (Honors button on draft course outline)