

# Course Outline Review Process and Procedures

## Background

In 1985, [Long Beach City College](#) began a program to routinely review one-fifth of the course outline documents each year. The program was created at the urging of the accreditation visiting team with the following purposes:

1. Assess the relevance of our curriculum to our college mission and educational program student learning outcomes.
2. Provide a reasonably up-to-date outline of course attributes, which can be given to faculty newly assigned to teach the course, used for articulation, or provided to outside requesters.
3. Promote accuracy in the data we maintain about our curriculum, and subsequently report to the state on an annual basis.
4. Meet accreditation standards.

In October, 2001, the Curriculum Committee passed a resolution requiring that all existing courses be translated onto the updated and integrated Course Outline Document and that this process would follow the locally established Course Review cycle. This process continued until the college's entire curriculum was presented in an integrated course outline format by the end of spring 2010. These Course Outline Documents can be found at the [Course Outline Website](#).

The Course Outline of Record is a legal document, which establishes liability for the College. The College has established a 6-year Course Review cycle that all adopted courses must follow. This list, which was established by Department Heads and other faculty, can be accessed at the [Curriculum Review website](#). During the month of December, the [Office of Academic Services](#) publishes this list of courses to be reviewed during the upcoming school year and distributes that list to Curriculum Committee Representatives, Department Heads, and School Deans. In turn, Department Heads involve faculty in the review process and provide leadership in this effort.

## What to Look For

The materials in the balance of this chapter will assist you as you participate in this review process. Additional material is found in the [Faculty Curriculum Reference Book](#) and additional information can be obtained by using the Help Button currently located on each page of a Draft Course Outline. The following suggestions are made for the benefit of those doing a Course Review for credit curriculum; however, the general principles are the same for noncredit courses.

1. Has the course been offered within the last four semesters? If not, should the course be inactivated?
2. Is the course consistent with the college mission and is the current course number appropriate for the college numbering system? Courses in the 100 and 300 band need special attention. Please consult the college catalog for specific information on the course numbering system.
3. Does the Course Title accurately reflect the course description or content?
4. Is the current Catalog Description accurate and reflective of course content and theory? Is it written using complete sentences?
5. In the case of multi-semester courses (CHEM 1A-B), does the Catalog Description and Course Outline reflect the scope and distinction of each term's instruction?
6. Is the materials fee current and correct with an updated Materials Fee Justification Memo on file in the Office of Academic Services?
7. Do the listed prerequisites accurately describe those courses a student must have taken in order to successfully complete the course requirements? Has a Requisite Review been completed within the past six years? (The Requisite Scrutiny Form can be viewed on the Course Outline Web Site by searching for the identified course and clicking on the Requisite button.) Does the scrutiny form identify the prerequisite

course's relevant SLOs and/or objectives correctly and completely?

8. Do the listed corequisites accurately describe the course in which a student must be concurrently enrolled in order to successfully complete the course requirements? Has a Requisite Review been completed within the last six years? (The Requisite Scrutiny Form can be viewed on the Course Outline Web Site by searching for the identified course and clicking on the Requisite button.) Does the scrutiny form identify the corequisite course's relevant SLOs and/or objectives correctly and completely?

9. If a recommended preparation statement is associated with the course, has a Requisite Review been completed within the last six years? (The Requisite Scrutiny Form can be viewed on the Course Outline Web Site by searching for the identified course and clicking on the Requisite button.) Does the scrutiny form identify the recommended preparation course's relevant SLOs and/or objectives correctly and completely?

10. Is there a minimum of two (2) [one (1) for 0-1 unit courses] student learning outcomes described? Are these SLOs reflective of college-level critical thinking for all credit courses that apply to the Associate Degree (courses numbered 1-599)? Are the SLOs expressed in observable and/or measurable terms?

11. Are there approximately ten learning objectives to support and align with the identified SLOs? Do these reflect the nature and scope of the course content?

12. Is the course content, as described in the official Course Outline of Record, an accurate reflection of current classroom concepts and topics? Are the topics/concepts presented in a heading/subheading format? Does each major topic indicate the approximate amount of time devoted to it?

13. Is the course content taught in accordance with a core of student learning outcomes that are common to all sections of the course and listed in the outline?

14. Is the scope of appropriate instructional presentation methods identified and described? Are descriptions expressed in complete sentences?

15. Are there at least three (3) course-specific assignments described so as to reflect the opportunity for students to achieve the course's student learning outcomes and content? Are explanations written in complete sentences?

16. Does the course treat the subject matter with intensity (outside of class preparation and pace of instruction) at a level that stimulates intellectual growth? Do assignments require two hours of out-of-class preparation for each hour of lecture time in class?

17. All courses with lecture contact hours demand assignments of written work. Courses that teach problem solving, such as mathematics, should provide modified written work rather than expository writing. Skill building courses (laboratory contact hours only), such as music or physical education, need not require written assignments; all other courses must.

18. Are evaluation methodologies described as they align with the course's assignments, content, and student learning outcomes? Do these descriptions provide standards and criteria (general departmental expectations)? Are descriptions expressed in complete sentences?

19. If texts are appropriate, are two (2) representative, college-level textbooks listed? Is complete information included (author, title, publisher, year)? Are these textbooks current (published edition within the past 5 years)?

20. If technical manuals, periodicals, and/or web sites are used as supplements, are appropriate references provided on the textbook page under the "Recommended" prompt?

21. If supplemental learning hours are established do they still reflect the current need of the course? Is this information reflected on all required pages of the course outline document?

22. Does the honors page respond to the prompts in complete and comprehensive manner reflective of the more intensive educational experience for the course?

## Process

The Course Review Process consists of cooperative engagement between members within a department, school dean, and the assigned Course Review Work Group member, who is a trained colleague designated to assist department faculty with curriculum standards and procedures. Based upon the annual Course Review list, the department head assigns a faculty member to manage a particular course review. The deadline for submission, but not necessarily completion, of all course reviews is November 30. The deadline for **completion** of all course reviews is April 30.

The Course Review Process begins with the assigned faculty author studying the currently adopted course outline of record. Based on that document, the requirements noted above, and consultation with colleagues, a decision whether to make revisions to this course outline is made.

- If no updates are deemed necessary, and after consultation with the department, department head and dean, the faculty author will contact the department's peer reviewer with this information.
- If revisions/updates are necessary, the faculty author will follow the College's standard protocol to create a draft course outline. This includes updating the pages as necessary, obtaining department head and school dean signatures, and informing the department's peer reviewer with this information.

The peer reviewer's job is to critique the work based on the College's curriculum standards and assist faculty authors in strengthening this documentation. It is the responsibility of the faculty author to alert the peer reviewer that the outline is ready for review. Once the course outline is determined to be finalized then the peer reviewer will conclude this process by communicating with the Office of Academic Services.

### **Web Standards of Good Practice Regarding Course Outline Documentation**

1. Faculty members who teach multiple sections of a course are expected to collaborate and reach agreement on the Course Outline contents and on the appropriateness of any requisites.
2. The principal Faculty Author leading the work on an outline of record is responsible for consulting collegially with others who teach the course and those in the collaborative circle who help review the document to achieve consensus on the following:
  - a. Course facts (Course Title, contact hours, Catalog Description, requisites)
  - b. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and learning objectives
  - c. Content topics and relative time devoted to each major area
  - d. Representative instructional methods, assignments, means of and criteria for evaluation and textbooks
  - e. Presupposed knowledge and skills where pre/corequisites or recommended preparation is involved
3. The documentation must meet the minimum standards for curriculum documentation established by the Course Evaluation Subcommittee or it will be returned to the originator.
4. Department Faculty Reviewers are to participate in the collaborative circle by providing a constructive critique that applies expectations inherent in Title 5 and locally developed standards of good practice and by consulting collegially with the principal author and those in the signature path.
5. All signatories are expected to contribute to the proofreading process to ensure an accurate, complete and professional product.
  - a. Where substantive changes are requested, the originator will be asked to make them, but if reluctant to do so, additional discussion is required.
  - b. Where procedural, mechanical, technical, and proofing changes are needed, the party making the corrections will inform the originator of the changes.
6. The following procedure will occur after all required signatures have been obtained if a draft course outline has been created.
  - a. The department shall contact the Routine Review Work Group member assigned to that school to "submit" the draft version of the Course Outline.
  - b. The Course Review Work Group member provides a peer review of the draft version of the identified Course Outline. Any suggestions to strengthen the document will be forwarded to the Faculty Author and the Department Head and School Dean will be copied.
  - c. Communication between the department members and the Course Review Work Group member is encouraged.
  - d. When refinements and/or updates have been accomplished, the Faculty Author and/or Department Head should contact the Course Review Work Group member for the final review.
  - e. The Course Review Work Group member will inform the [curriculum technician](#), when the draft version of the identified Course Outline has successfully been completed.
  - f. The Course Review Work Group member will notify the department that the Office of Academic Services has been contacted regarding completion of the Routine Review Process.
  - g. The Office of Academic Services will process the draft version of the Course Outline into its new "adopted" status based on the publication date of the college catalog.

## Addenda to the Course Outline Review

### Distance Learning

A department does not need to create a separate Course Outline for the Distance Learning version of a course. Completion of the appropriate paper addendum form is all that is necessary to fulfill this requirement. The most current version of the Distance Learning Addendum must be on file in the Office of Academic Services. As part of a course review it is the faculty author's responsibility to determine if the Distance Learning Addendum that is on file for a course is current or, if not, then to create an updated document. This portion of the course review will follow the typical process (faculty author, peer reviewer, suggestions, and refinements) but also should include the Director of Distance Learning in document development. Then submit the DL Addendum document electronically according to published protocols (department head, school dean, director of DL). Presently, the [Distance Learning Addendum form](#) can be downloaded from the curriculum forms website. Further, a [Distance Learning Course Guidelines website](#) is available and provides direction and information in this area of curriculum development

### Materials Fee

Education Code section 76365 and Title 5 regulations § 59400-59408 allows the college district to require students to provide various types of instructional materials and enables the district to sell such materials to students who wish to purchase the required materials from the district. If a materials fee is attached to the course due for review the faculty author must create a distinct and current [Materials Fee Justification memo](#) to be reviewed and placed on file in the Office of Academic Services.

### Course Review Cycle Mandate Justification Course Evaluation Subcommittee August 2008

- **Accrediting Commission for Community & Junior Colleges (ACCJC)**

Western Association of Schools & Colleges

Accreditation Standards

Approved, June 2002

Standard II.A.2.e

Standard II.A.2.f

- **California Code of Regulations: Title 5, Division 6, Chapter 6**

§55002 Standards & Criteria for Courses

§55003 Policies on Prerequisites, Corequisites, Advisories on Recommended Preparation

§ 55200 Definition & Application (Distance Education)

§ 55206 Separate Course Approval (Distance Education)

- **California Community College Chancellor's Office**

*Program and Course Approval Handbook*

Second Edition, March 2003

“Distance Education Guidelines”

2008 Omnibus Version

“Prerequisites, Corequisites, Advisories, and Limitations on Enrollment”

Fall 1997

“The Model District Policy on Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation”

Board of Governors

September 1993

- **Academic Senate for California Community Colleges**

“The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide”

Adopted, Spring 2008

“Good Practice for the Implementation of Prerequisites”

Spring 1997

The college's course review cycle, per regulation and standards, will encompass reviews of the Course Outline of Record, Requisites, Student Learning Outcomes, Distance Learning Addendum, and Materials Fee.

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