

**Academic Affairs**

**AP 4020 PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

**Reference(s):**

Title 5 Sections 51021, 55253, 55000 et seq., and 55100 et seq.;;  
34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 600.2;  
ACCJC Accreditation Standards 2;  
U.S. Department of Education regulations on the integrity of Federal Student  
Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965,  
amended

The district shall provide annual certification to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office pertaining to the approval of credit courses and credit programs as required under Title 5 Sections 55100 and 55130.

**Curriculum Process**

All new and modified credit and noncredit program and course (curriculum) proposals shall be initiated by the faculty at each college. The faculty, acting through discipline areas with the academic divisions and through each college's Curriculum Committee as a sub-committee of their Academic Senate, shall be responsible for instructional program and course development.

The functions and operating guidelines of the Curriculum Committee are determined by the Academic Senate and applicable sections of the California Code of Regulations (Title 5) and the Education Code. The Curriculum Committee is charged with ensuring that all curricula meet the standards for approval contained within Title 5 and the Chancellor's Office publication: Program and Course Approval Handbook. The Curriculum Committee is responsible for ensuring the quality, currency, and academic soundness of programs and courses.

An ongoing review of curricula is conducted to maintain compliance with internal and external policies. Courses are reviewed on a five-year rotational cycle and updated as needed. CTE courses are reviewed on a two-year cycle through the Program Review process. The Curriculum Committee will publish an annual timeline for submission of new curriculum proposals and modifications. Distance education/hybrid modalities and course requisites are reviewed and approved as a separate action of the Curriculum Committee.

The district shall provide annual certification to the California Community College Chancellor's Office pertaining to the approval of credit courses and credit programs as required under Title 5 Section 55100 and 55130

## **Curriculum Cycle**

- New and modified curriculum proposals are developed by discipline faculty using curriculum development software, which maintains records and history of changes
- With their Dean's approval, discipline faculty forward the proposals to their respective college's Curriculum Committee
- The Curriculum Committee, as a sub-committee of the Academic Senate at each college, shall review and approve appropriate proposals from their respective faculty members
- The Curriculum Committee at each college is supported by their respective Vice President of Academic Services, who shall forward the approved proposals to the Board of Trustees for approval
- The Board of Trustees shall consider curriculum proposals at regular meetings. After Board approval, curricula shall be forwarded to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office for approval and/or charting

Curriculum development is outlined and defined in the current curriculum approval structure at each college in accordance with the District's Functional Map as it relates to the role of the Academic Senate/District in this process.

The following elements should be addressed:

- Develop a proposal for a new program that includes student needs, environmental scan, assessment study, etc.
- Demonstrate program initiation as a result of mission appropriateness, Educational Master Plan, program review, and/or advisory board input, if applicable
- Determination of available resources, levels of support, cost assessment, projected generated FTES, and an implementation schedule
- Dialogue with other affected programs in the District, discipline faculty, advisory boards, community/employer partners, students, and other potentially interested contributors
- Occupational Programs should be forwarded to Career Technical Education Regional Consortium for review

District Chancellor/Board of Trustees approval is the final internal approval step within the District.

As appropriate, the following agencies may need to approve the proposed new program: California Community College Chancellor's Office, California Post-Secondary Education Commission, and Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

## **Credit Hour**

One credit hour of community college work (one unit of credit) shall require a minimum of 48 semester hours of total student work which may include inside and outside-of-class hours. A course requiring 96 hours or more of total student work shall provide at least 2 units of credit.

Work Experience Education courses shall adhere to the formula for credit hour

calculations identified in Title 5 Section 55253. Credit for clock hour designated programs shall be awarded consistent with 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 600.2.

For purposes of federal financial aid eligibility, a “credit hour” shall not be less than:

- One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work for each week of the semester, not less than 15 weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or at least an equivalent amount of work as required in the statement above, of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including lab work, internships, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

### **Standard Term Length**

The standard term length will be 17.5 weeks. Courses meeting in fewer or more weeks will still meet the minimum total hours for credit.

### **Standard Formula (Relationship) for Hours and Units of Credit**

Courses not classified as work experience education use the following formula for calculating units of credit: divide the total of all student learning hours (lecture, laboratory, and/or outside-of-class hours) by 54, then round down to the nearest 0.5 units.

Expressed as an equation:

$$\frac{[\text{Total Contact Hours} + \text{Outside-of-class Hours}]}{54} = \text{Units of Credit}$$

The result of this calculation is then rounded down to the nearest 0.5 increment. For example, if a course contains 180 total student learning hours (36 lecture, 72 lab, and 72 outside-of-class hours), then the unit calculation is as follows:

$$\frac{36 + 72 + 72}{54} = \frac{180}{54} = 3.33, \text{ which is rounded down to 3 units of credit}$$

Definitions for terms used above:

- **Total Contact Hours:** The total time per term that a student is under the direct supervision of an instructor or other qualified employee as defined in §§58050 - 58051. This number is the sum of all contact hours for the course in all calculations categories, including lecture, recitation, discussion, seminar, laboratory, activity, clinical, studio, practica, to-be-arranged, etc. Contact hour for courses may include hours assigned to more than one instructional category, e.g. lecture and laboratory, lecture and activity, lecture and clinical.
- **Outside-of-class Hours:** Hours students are expected to engage in course work outside of the classroom. Federal and state regulations for credit hour calculations are based on the total time a student spends on learning,

including outside-of-class hours. As a matter of standard practice in higher education, lecture and related course formats require two hours of student work outside of class for every hour in-class. All other academic work, including laboratory, activity, clinical, studio, practica, to-be-arranged, etc. must provide an equivalent total number of student learning hours as typically required for lecture, with the ratio of in-class to outside-of-class work prorated appropriately for the instructional category.

Total student learning hours are provided using common ratios of Total Contact Hours to outside-of-class hours. The terms that correspond to these ratios are below:

Instructional Category	In-class Hours	Outside-of-class Hours
Lecture (Lecture, Discussion, Seminar, and Similar)	1	2
Laboratory (Traditional Lab, Natural Science Lab, Clinical, Physical Activity, and Similar)	3	0

### Work Experience Education

Title 5 (§55253) specifies the following relationship between hours of work experience and units of credit: one unit of credit is 54 hours of work experience.

The Code of Federal Regulations Title 34 (§668.8k2iA) defines clock hour programs. Programs that meet this definition are required to use a federal formula for determining appropriate units of credit. This formula is outlined in the Code of Federal Regulation

### Calculation Table for Semester Hours and Units (54 Hours = 1 Unit)

Lecture	0.5 units	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5
Contact Hours	9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
Outside-of-class Hours	18	36	54	72	90	108	126	144	162	180
Total Hours	27	54	81	108	135	162	189	216	243	270

Lab/Work Experience	0.5 units	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5
Contact Hours	27	54	81	108	135	162	189	216	243	270

This policy will be modified in the event of published changes or updates to state and federal regulations regarding changes to credit hour calculations.

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**Approved:** February 18, 2014

**Reference Edits:** June 13, 2024

**Board Reviewed:** March 19, 2024; June 16, 2020