

PROGRAM AND COURSE APPROVAL HANDBOOK, 3RD EDITION

3.1

ACTION

Presentation: Carole Bogue-Feinour, Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

Issue

This item proposes the *Program and Course Approval Handbook, 3rd Edition*, for review and approval by the Board of Governors. Title 5 section 55000.5 requires that the Chancellor provide a handbook on course and program approval for use by community college districts and incorporates by reference into title 5 the *Program and Course Approval Handbook* issued March 2003, including all revisions and addenda made thereafter. The *Program and Course Approval Handbook, 3rd Edition*, covers changes made to the title 5 regulations approved by the Board of Governors in July 2007 and May 2008.

Background

The *Curriculum Standards Handbook* was first published in May 1985. In July 1987 and then again in September 2001, it was significantly revised and re-titled. The *Program and Course Approval Handbook, 2nd Edition*, March 2003, incorporated clarifications, corrections, and some improved forms. The *Program and Course Approval Handbook, 3rd Edition* is a major revision, incorporating revisions to title 5 made in 2007-08 and guidelines and recommendations from the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum.

Some examples of changes are as follows:

- Reorganized format designed to be more user-friendly.
- Modular format to incorporate credit and noncredit curriculum issues such that users can easily find instructions for applications and processes specific to each type of approval.
- Revised credit program forms to simplify credit program approval processes and to maintain consistency in requirements for new programs and substantial changes to approved programs.

- Inclusion of guidelines for local development and approval of credit stand-alone courses and for reporting new credit courses to the System Office MIS to obtain course control numbers.
- Inclusion of requirement for 18 or more semester units in a major or area of emphasis, in addition to general education, for the associate degree.
- Option for colleges to seek approval of certificates of 12 or more but fewer than 18 semester units as Certificates of Achievement.

This handbook is intended to assist California community college administrators, faculty and staff, who are responsible for designing new programs or courses, with submission of programs or courses for approval. The handbook is primarily oriented toward System Office program approval requirements, but it contains also information relevant to local curriculum committees and Career Technical Education Regional Consortia.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the representatives of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, Chief Instructional Officers of the California Community Colleges, and the California Community Colleges Association for Occupational Education who provided valuable consultation in the preparation of this handbook.

Analysis

In 2004, the Review of the System Office for California Community Colleges made recommendations for strengthening the work done through the System Office. Consistent with one recommendation to “*Establish a standing Curricular Issues Advisory Committee,*” the System Office established the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum (SACC). Revision of the *Program and Course Approval Handbook, 2nd Edition (March 2003)* has been ongoing in SACC since 2005.

The organization of the *Program and Course Approval Handbook, 3rd Edition* is designed to assist curriculum developers at colleges and districts to:

- Explain System Office procedures for monitoring the development of courses/programs and approving programs on a statewide basis;
- Provide a framework for consistent documentation of the content and objectives of programs and courses;
- Determine the correct process to follow in order to expedite the course and program approval process; and

- Foster the use of best practices in curriculum development as established in the field of curriculum design and instructional technology and as recommended by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

The handbook is organized into Modules:

- **Module 1: Introduction** includes a history of program and course approval, curriculum development criteria, general information about approval procedures for both credit and noncredit programs and courses, and other general curriculum topics.
- **Module 2: Credit Curriculum** describes the standards and criteria for credit course development, approval procedures for credit programs and courses, and instructions for completing applications for approval by the System Office.
- **Module 3: Noncredit Curriculum** (under development) will describe the standards and criteria for the development of noncredit programs and courses, including procedures and instructions for completing applications for approval by the System Office.

The third module is under development due to recent changes to Title 5 on noncredit curriculum that require new System Office procedures and appropriate applications.

The Handbook was reviewed by Consultation Council on February 19, 2009 and the consensus was to forward it to the Board of Governors.

Conclusion

The Board of Governors is asked to review the *Program and Course Approval Handbook, 3rd Edition* and approve the handbook. The Board of Governors should accept testimony at the public hearing.

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