



**February 2026**

# **California Community Colleges Flexible Calendar Program Guidelines**

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office | Sonya Christian, Chancellor



# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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Prepared By

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# 1. WHAT IS THE FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM

## Flex Days Are for Everyone

## Professional Development is for Everyone



**FACULTY**



**ADMINISTRATORS**



**CLASSIFIED**

## **FLEXIBLE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CALENDAR AS A DRIVER OF INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH**

The pace of change in education has increased dramatically as the need for an educated workforce drives California’s economic position to a greater degree than ever before. As such, the need for professional learning across all employee groups of our colleges is greater than ever before as innovative practices to better serve students and our communities with both equity and quality drive continuous quality improvement. As such, the Flexible Calendar program provides colleges up to 15 days of their 175-day calendar requirement to devote to the professional learning of their employees. The college is compensated as if classes were in session so that the attention of the college can be devoted to the professional learning needs of all employees: including full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators.

Colleges should utilize their governance processes to identify professional learning goals aligned to their strategic plan, mission, and the goals set for the system by the Chancellor’s Office and legislature. Some of that time may be best used for larger group meetings of the college community while some of that time may be tailored to benefit individual employee professional development needs aligned to the college’s professional learning needs.

## LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Update of this guide was prompted by issues and concerns about the flexible calendar program specifically regarding how to best provide colleges/districts with the best guidance in order to use Flex Calendar Time the most effectively and efficiently.

### Issue:

- Professional learning should evolve based on routine evaluation/assessment, Support structures, Equitable distribution of funding.
- Professional learning for **all campus staff** to support growth, innovation, and the students/community served from a future-thinking and equity-framed perspective.
- Activities that were collaborative and diverse in offering.
- Activities that go beyond comprehension to application and implementation of learnings (from theory to practice), as well as providing institutional incentives.
- The use of all available professional development funding and its use equally for all campus staff
- Flex Calendar Time should support college mission and master plan and Chancellor's Office goals.

## SUMMARY OF CURRENT FLEX CALENDAR PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

According to data (2024-25) from the Chancellor's Office, there are 112 colleges utilizing flexible calendar programs ranging from one to fifteen flexible calendar days. Currently, the statewide average number of flexible calendar days is six.

Many colleges have moved away from the single month, mandatory flex activity requirement. These colleges now have systems in place to accommodate the development needs of faculty on an individual basis and at various times of the academic year.

Update to this guide was prompted by concerns about how to optimize the Flexible Calendar Program to provide colleges and districts with clearer guidance for effective use of Flex Calendar Time. The new title 5 language and updated Flex Calendar Guide, promotes and supports excellence in teaching and learning, technological advancement, institutional effectiveness, student success, and the development of innovative academic and professional programs.

Key areas of focus include:

- Professional learning should evolve based on regular evaluation and assessment.
- Professional learning should be accessible and available to all employees supported by equitable distribution of funding.
- Professional learning for **all campus employees, including full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employees, and administrators.**

- Support growth, innovation, and an equity-centered approach to better serve students and the community.
- Flex Calendar activities should be diverse and collaborative, moving beyond comprehension to practical application and implementation. Activities should go beyond comprehension to application and implementation of learnings (from theory to practice), as well as providing institutional incentives.
- All available professional development funding should be used equally for all campus staff.
- Flex Calendar Time should align with the college’s mission, master plan, institutional priorities, and the goals of the Chancellor’s Office.

## 2025 FLEXIBLE CALENDAR REVISIONS TO TITLE 5 CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS

Section	Summary
§ 55720. Operating Under Flexible Calendar; Accountability of Employees	Additional language to include all campus staff: full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators.
§ 55724. Request for Approval.	Additional language to include all campus staff: full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators.  Language included to specifically address professional learning
§ 55726. Activities During Designated Days.	Additional language to include all campus staff: full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators. Language included to specifically address professional learning  Language regarding activities to focus on student success
§ 55728. Flexible Calendar Attendance Reporting.	Additional language to include all campus staff: full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators.  Removed language of instructional improvement and replaced with professional learning.

Section	Summary
§ 55729. Full-Time Equivalent Student (FTES) Units; Adjustments to Reflect Activities; Computation by Multiplier Factor.	Removed language of instructional improvement and replaced with professional learning

## 2. FISCAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the flexible calendar program is to provide time for all employees to participate in professional development (title 5, section 55720). The flexible calendar program is a component of the employee professional development program for all employees, including full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employees, and administrators to engage in professional learning. In order to provide professional learning to support growth, innovation, and the students/community served from a future-thinking and equity-framed perspective, which includes the following goals:

- Professional learning should evolve based on evaluation.
- Focus on De-siloing the workplace to build collaboration and remove.
- hierarchies.
- Continuous improvement.
- Student-centered, community serving, accessible, inclusive, culturally. diverse, and encourage a sense of belonging.

All activities should be linked to the comprehensive plan for staff development and to the goals and objectives of the flexible calendar program. In addition, **the staff development plan and the flexible calendar program should be linked to the college, mission and Master Plan of the college.** Institutionally planned activities should be made available to other college staff as well (title 5, section 55724 (a)(5)).

In addition to providing time to conduct these activities, the flexible calendar program also allows institutions some flexibility in scheduling configurations (e.g., offering an intersession with two 16-week semesters) (title 5, section 55722).

### PARTICIPANTS

Flexible calendar program participants are full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators. However, other college personnel should be involved in flexible calendar development activities. For the purposes of this section, “all college personnel” shall include any district employee specified by the district in its approved plan to participate in such activities; and title 5, section 55724 (5).

## FISCAL PARAMETERS



## DETERMINING FLEXIBLE CALENDAR ACCOUNTABLE HOURS

### Title 5, section 55720

(a) Subject to the approval of the Chancellor pursuant to Section 55724, a community college district may designate an amount of time in each fiscal year for all employees, including full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators, to engage in professional learning activities. These activities may occur at any time during the fiscal year. The time designated for these activities shall be known as “flexible time.”

(b) A district with an approved flexible calendar may designate as flexible time for full-time faculty not more than 8.57 percent of that employee’s contractual obligation for hours of service which are eligible for state apportionments in that academic year, exclusive of any intersessions.

(c) Under no circumstances may a district operate a flexible calendar program which results in an academic calendar which would be inconsistent with the requirements of subdivision (b) of Section 55701.

### Title 5, section 55726(a) further states that,

(a) For each full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified, student employee, or administrative employee specified by the district to participate in professional learning activities, the district shall enter into an agreement with such employees specifying the following:

- (1) the professional learning activities the employees will perform in lieu of normal job duties during the designated days;
- (2) the number of hours of normal job duties being substituted with the professional learning activities; and
- (3) the number of hours the employee is required to spend on the professional learning

activities, which must be at least equal to the number of total work hours from which the employee is released.

(b) For each employee specified by the district to participate in professional learning activities during the designated days, the district shall also maintain records on the type and number of activities assigned, and the number of such employees participating in those activities.

The term “**day**” mentioned in the preceding paragraph means the number of hours for which an individual instructor is accountable in any one academic work day. There has been a great deal of confusion as to the definition of a day, resulting in inconsistent application from college to college. Normal business practice does not equate a day to a 24-hour working period. Rather, a work day is a period of time for which an employee is accountable to the employer during any given calendar day. Therefore, all references to a day should be related to what constitutes a work day for each individual employee regardless of how many hours the college is open on any one day. This is usually defined in bargaining unit contracts.

## FULL-TIME FACULTY

The specific number of hours that equals one academic work day should be determined through the local collective bargaining and shared governance processes. Current practice reflects an average of six hours to one academic work day.

### EXAMPLE

If three flexible calendar days have been designated at a six-hour equivalency, the faculty member’s obligation would total eighteen hours.

3 academic days x 6 hours = 18 academic work day hours

These eighteen hours could be divided into segments that fulfill the needs of the individual faculty member.

In determining an equivalency formula, the required hours in lieu of instructional activities should at least be equal to the sum of the classroom hours from which the instructor is released plus related out-of-classroom hours of responsibility that are not performed as a result of being released from classroom instruction (title 5, section 55728).

## § 55728. FLEXIBLE CALENDAR ATTENDANCE REPORTING.

(a) On forms provided by the Chancellor, districts with approved flexible calendar operations shall report at least the following:

(1) the total hours of classroom assignments (instructional time) that full-time faculty and part-time faculty specified in the district’s approved plan were required to provide instruction;

(2) of the total in subsection (a)(1), the total faculty contact hours of instruction for which improvement professional learning activities are being substituted. This total of faculty contact hours shall further be reported in terms of credit and noncredit faculty contact hours of instruction; and

(3) the number of faculty contact hours of instruction for which instruction during the designated days is being substituted. Such instruction during the designated days meeting the attendance accounting standards may be claimed for apportionment; and the faculty contact hours shall not be eligible for adjustment pursuant to Section 55729.

(b) Districts with approved flexible calendar operations shall also report such additional data as deemed necessary by the Chancellor, including any data necessary to compute the FTES adjustment specified in Section 55729.

## **PART-TIME (ADJUNCT) FACULTY**

Some part-time faculty and full-time faculty with overloads also enter into a short-term contract with the district for teaching specific full-term courses that have been reduced due to the flexible calendar.

It is important to distinguish between full-term courses and courses not subject to flex requirements. A full-term course is a course that begins within one week of the first day of instruction of each semester, as designated in the official academic calendar, and ends within one week of the scheduled last day of instruction of each semester. Thus, by definition, summer school, short-term, some positive attendance courses, or courses with mandated hours when the hours are not reduced because of the flexible calendar are not full-term courses. A course for which the total number of instructional hours remains the same regardless of the flexible schedule is not subject to the flexible calendar requirements. Instructors of these exempted courses should be encouraged to participate in flex activities but do not have to be remunerated for attending.

Each district is reimbursed through a formula for the full number of hours for a course (instruction and flex). Therefore, each district is obligated to pay part-time instructors affected by flex for flex hours. In order to determine which part-time faculty are affected by the flexible calendar, it is first necessary for each district to determine which days of the week have been designated as “in-lieu-of-instruction days.” This is done to determine which full-term courses are being taught by part-time instructors and by full-time faculty members teaching overloads have been shortened. This does not mean that all faculty have to perform activities on these specific days.

### **EXAMPLE**

District A: Designates five days a year for flex

Fall semester: Monday and Tuesday

Spring semester: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Those full-term academic courses taught by part-time faculty and full-time faculty teaching overloads on Mondays and Tuesdays in the fall are the courses shortened by the college flexible calendar program. The flex obligation of those affected faculty would be equal to the number of hours that each teaches on those particular days.

## EXAMPLE

### Fall Semester

#### Teacher X

Teaches 3 hours on Monday-flex obligation is 3 hours.

#### Teacher Y

Teaches 2 hours on Monday and 3 hours on Tuesday-- flex obligation is 5 hours

#### Teacher Z

Teaches 3 hours on Wednesday and 6 hours on Friday-- flex obligation is 0 hours

### Spring Semester

#### Teacher X

Teaches 3 hours on Monday--flex obligation is 0 hours.

#### Teacher Z

Teaches 3 hours on Wednesday and 6 hours on Friday-- flex obligation is 9 hours.

#### Teacher XX

Teaches 4 hours on Thursday--flex obligation is 4 hours.

### Rationale

There has been a great deal of confusion as to the definition of a day, resulting in inconsistent application from college to college. Normal business practice does not equate a day to a 24-hour working period. Rather, a workday is a period of time for which an employee is accountable to the employer during

any given calendar day. Therefore, all references to a day should be related to what constitutes an academic work day for each individual instructor regardless of how many hours the college offers classes on any one day.

The actual number of classroom hours plus out-of-classroom hours of responsibilities for full-time faculty varies from instructor to instructor and from semester to semester. Therefore, there must be some method of accounting that allows for consistency and ease of administration based on the average amount of hours being released.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM

#### WHEN FLEXIBLE CALENDAR HOURS MAY BE PERFORMED

Flexible calendar hours can be utilized anytime during the fiscal year, July 1 through June 30 (title 5, section 55720 (a)).

Subject to the approval of the Chancellor pursuant to section 55724, a community college district may designate an amount of time in each fiscal year for all employees, including full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employee, and administrators, to conduct engage in professional learning activities. These activities may occur at any time during the fiscal year. The time designated for these activities shall be known as “flexible time.”

Flexible calendar activities may range from individually planned activities to take place at any time outside the individual faculty member’s accountable hours to district or campus-wide instruction- free days for the purpose of large-scale, in- service activities agreed upon by local shared governance processes.

Ideally, flexible calendar programs should allow for freedom of choice by individual staff members. Activity days requiring attendance should only be done by agreement of all parties through a local shared governance process.

#### Rationale

The intent of the legislation is that the flexible calendar program be optimally flexible. This is accomplished by allowing campus participants to design a program that meets the individual needs of students, staff, and the institution. These needs are determined through an assessment process which is required by title 5, section 55730(a) and (b). § 55730. Ongoing Responsibilities of Districts.

A district conducting an approved flexible calendar shall do all of the following to ensure effective use of resources during the designated flexible calendar days (flex days):

- (a) every year, conduct and update a survey of the most critical professional learning needs in the district;
- (b) develop and carry out a plan of activities to address the critical needs;

College’s will submit their survey to the Chancellor’s Office **every three years**. The scheduling of activities at any time during the fiscal year and any time outside the accountable hours also facilitates the intent of the law. Flexible scheduling enables faculty and campus staff to participate in workshops when the opportunity arises rather than on arbitrarily scheduled days. Flexible scheduling would facilitate campus staff participation in development activities during the summer or throughout the academic year. These activities could include:

- Mental health/wellness
- Job shadowing
- Self-reflection & introspection

- Servant/service-oriented leadership training
- Discipline-specific training
- Civic inclusion (ex. campus climate) training
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
- Regional trainings
- Speaker trainings
- Mentoring + continued orientation
- Program & curriculum development (ex. educational material design + review)
- Participation in college-wide planning

There can be two focuses to the flexible calendar—to benefit of the individual staff member and/or for the institution as a whole. Adequate time should be permitted for all individuals to perform activities which will best suit their needs. However, time may be needed for interaction among staff for the purposes of communication or coordination of effort.

The validation and evaluation of change are more meaningful through the use of individual contracts with measurable objectives and a plan for change in classroom instruction. In addition, large-scale programs that attempt to target the improvement of faculty in one or two-day activity sessions are less meaningful to participants and are more difficult to validate.

## HOURLY CREDIT FOR ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

### Employees Who Are Learners

Learners should receive one hour credit for each hour of participation in an approved flexible calendar activity.

### Employees Who Are Presenters

Staff who present flexible calendar activities should receive additional hours to accommodate their preparation time. A presentation is one where the individual is involved in the planning and delivery of an activity meant to disseminate factual knowledge or to facilitate specific skill development and/or competencies. Delivery formats could include but are not limited to workshops, seminars, and panel presentations.

The specific amount of additional time allotted to presenters should be determined by the campus flex committee.

#### EXAMPLE

Three hours of flex credit per one hour of an initial campus presentation.  
 3 credit x 2-hour presentation session = 6 flex credit hours

## Repeat Presentations

Two hours of flex credit for every one hour of a campus presentation.  
2 hours credit x 2-hour presentation session = 4 flex credit hours

### Rationale

The intent is to create an accounting process to facilitate consistency in administration. The allocation of additional hours of credit for a presentation is meant to acknowledge the time those individuals provide in preparation. Also, the additional hours of credit may serve as an incentive for staff to share their expertise with colleagues.

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## **FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

### **ACTIVITY FORMATS**

Activity planning should accommodate full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employees, and administrator's schedules

Professional development activities intended for instructional improvement can be delivered in many formats including:

- A. in-service training
- B. workshops
- C. conferences
- D. seminars
- E. individual or small group planned projects
- F. institutionally planned activities

### **KINDS OF ACTIVITIES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The following list of development and instructional improvement activities are intended as a guide and not intended to be limited to these activities. It should be noted that some activities can address more than one category. Activities should accommodate and engage diverse bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all individuals.

### **EMPLOYEE IMPROVEMENT**

- Developing, enhancing or growing new programs and new courses (e.g., a workshop on designing curriculum/ programs)
- Full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employees, and administrators' meetings to address areas of concern (e.g., academic advising, prerequisites, referring students for services)
- Full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employees, and administrators' (e.g., tutors, lab assistants) meetings to improve learning resource support services for students
- Workshops on how to mentor students or how to mentor faculty
- Orientation/education (e.g., new faculty; role of the academic senates; training students, staff, and faculty to serve on committees; changing role of technology in education)
- Student, faculty, and staff diversity (e.g., sexual harassment workshops, affirmative action conferences, cultural diversity seminars, multicultural activities)

- Meetings designed to improve a cohesive working relationship among members of the group (e.g., departments, divisions, committees, mixture of college constituencies)
- Workshops on how to write grants
- Workshops or individually designed activities to improve or enhance a person’s skills or knowledge in his/her own discipline
- Wellness activities that assist individuals to be physically and mentally better able to perform their jobs (e.g., humor in the workplace, stress reduction, self-defense, nutrition, exercise, weight reduction)
- Learning a second language to better communicate with the diverse student population
- Disaster preparedness (e.g., district procedures, first aid, review of facilities to determine areas of need)
- Improving or learning how to deal with computers and technology (e.g., Artificial Intelligence “AI”)

## STUDENT IMPROVEMENT

- Developing a new program to meet changing student needs
- Full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified staff, student employees, and administrators (e.g., tutors, lab assistants) meetings to improve services for students
- Review of learning resource materials to eliminate outdated items and make recommendations for additions
- Creating self-study modules and/or computer-assisted instruction
- Student advising (e.g., academic advising of students by part-time and full-time faculty)
- Mentoring of students
- Full-time and part-time faculty participation in student orientation programs
- Matriculation services (e.g., special orientation for ESL students, workshops in specific disciplines for students with undecided majors)
- Meetings (department/division/college-wide) specifically to discuss strategies for improving service to students
- Institutional research focused on meeting the needs of the students (e.g., job market surveys, transfer ratios, ethnicity data on students, gender equity, campus climate)

- Writing grants aimed to improve services to students
- Articulation to improve transfer processes
- Outreach for special projects (e.g., Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement [MESA] program)
- Conducting special workshops for students (e.g., understanding the college schedule, transfer requirements, setting academic goals)

## INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

- Attending workshops on teaching methods or techniques (e.g., classroom-based research training; Instructional Skills Workshops (ISW); local, regional, national Great Teachers Seminars)
- Development or revision of programs, course curriculum, learning resources and evaluation.
- Developing a new course
- Modifying an existing course to comply with changing institutional or discipline requirements (e.g., changing theories in a discipline, articulation with transfer institutions, critical thinking, multiculturalism, writing across the curriculum)
- Significant modification of a course to address the learning needs of diverse students (e.g., creating self-paced learning modules)
- Developing student readiness programs specific to course disciplines
- Faculty and counselor meetings to address areas of curriculum
- Review of learning resource materials to eliminate outdated items and recommend additions
- Creating self-study modules and computer-assisted instruction modules
- Student, faculty, and staff diversity (e.g., sexual harassment workshops, affirmative action conferences, cultural diversity seminars, multicultural activities)
- Departmental or division meetings to discuss overall curriculum and program review
- Institutional research (e.g., job skill requirements, research on transfer ratios, ethnicity data on students and staff, gender equity, campus climate)
- Grant writing to secure funds for improvement of instruction

## FUNDING FOR FLEXIBLE CALENDAR ACTIVITIES



Staff development funds (Education Code section 87150 et seq.), as well as any other funding designated for professional development or without restrictions on use, may be applied to cover appropriate flexible calendar activities (Example Open Educational Resources).

### Rationale

The Community College Faculty and Staff Development Fund is provided to support locally developed and implemented faculty and staff development programs. Since flexible calendar program activities are part of a campus faculty and staff development program, use of these funds is appropriate. For further information on the use of these funds, contact the Chancellor's Office.

## ARTICLE 5 – COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUND

This article details the staff development fund. While the flexible calendar program is not specifically addressed in this article, flexible calendar activities are part of a staff development program. Consequently, this fund can be used to support faculty development activities administered under a flexible calendar program.

### Section EDC § 87150. Creation And Purpose of Fund

There is hereby established the Community College Professional Development Program, to be administered by the board of governors, the purpose of which is to provide state general funds to community colleges for supporting locally developed and implemented faculty and staff development programs.

### Section EDC § 87151 Allocation of Funds; Affidavit Requirements

The board of governors shall annually allocate funds, when appropriated for purposes of this article, only to a community college district whose chief executive officer has submitted to the chancellor an affidavit that includes all of the following:

(a) A statement that each campus within the community college district has an advisory committee, composed of administrators, faculty, and staff representatives, which has assisted in the assessment of the faculty and staff development needs and in the design of the plan to meet those needs.

(b) A campus human development resources plan has been completed for the current and subsequent fiscal years.

(c) A report of the actual expenditures for faculty and staff development for the preceding year.

### **Section EDC § 87152. Initial Allocation**

(a) Any funding appropriated for purposes of this article shall be allocated to the community college districts that provide professional development opportunities to both faculty and staff. Funding shall be disbursed in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the board of governors.

(b) Community college districts that receive funding pursuant to this section shall include the employee's time used participating in the Community College Professional Development Program in the employee's contractually obligated hours.

### **Section EDC § 87153. Authorized Uses of Funds**

The authorized uses of funds allocated under this article shall include all of the following:

(a) Improvement of teaching.

(b) Maintenance of current academic and technical knowledge and skills.

(c) In-service training for vocational education and employment preparation programs.

(d) Retraining to meet changing institutional needs.

(e) Intersegmental exchange programs.

(f) Development of innovations in instructional and administrative techniques and program effectiveness.

(g) Computer and technological proficiency programs.

(h) Courses and training implementing affirmative action and upward mobility programs.

(i) Other activities determined to be related to educational and professional development pursuant to criteria established by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, including, but not necessarily limited to, programs designed to develop self-esteem.

### **Section EDC § 87154. Operation Of Article**

This article shall be operative during any fiscal year only if funds are provided therefore in the annual Budget Act for that fiscal year or other legislation.

## 4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES



### COORDINATOR FOR THE FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM

#### Accountability

There should be a coordinator for the flexible calendar program for each college. This individual should be a faculty member. The selection of the coordinator should be handled through the shared governance mechanism.

#### Duties

The coordinator should report directly to the academic senate and be responsible for the overall planning and implementation of the flex calendar. The duties would include record keeping and chairing of the next calendar advisory committee.

#### Term of Office

The coordinator's term of office should be sufficient for development of the knowledge and abilities necessary for the job and provide for continuity in leadership. There should be a process for developing specific job criteria, review, and reappointment which is implemented through local shared governance structures. These processes should include orientation and training of incoming coordinators.

### INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The coordinator should receive sufficient reassigned time to handle the responsibilities of the job. Also, there should be adequate clerical support, equipment, and supplies to accomplish the necessary requirements of the program.

#### Rationale

The flexible calendar program represents time removed from the classroom for the purpose of instructional improvement and professional growth. It should be recognized that the

flexible calendar program is an academic and professional matter that falls under title 5, section 53200 (b), which states that the governing boards rely primarily upon the academic senate. The coordinator for flexible calendar activities—as opposed to the overall staff development program of which flex is a component—should maintain a direct link with the faculty. This can best be accomplished if the coordinator is a member of the faculty. This individual should be a part of the staff development structure and accountable to the academic senate for the development of programs that serve the faculty.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM

An advisory committee for the flexible calendar program, composed of faculty, students, classified, administrators and other interested persons, is a district responsibility (title 5, section 55730(e)). Appoint and hold regular meetings of an advisory committee composed primarily of faculty, with adequate representation from other employee groups and other interested persons to make recommendations on professional learning activities to the College President/CEO.

The recommendations should be based upon a comprehensive planning process that includes needs assessment and evaluation. The comprehensive planning process should be determined by the local shared governance mechanism. The advisory committee may assist the flexible calendar coordinator in the tasks necessary for implementation of the flexible calendar program.

### Rationale

The advisory committee is called for in title 5 and is a critical link in the development of activities which meet the faculty's needs. The responsibilities of the committee will vary in each district, depending upon the district's size and staff development organization.

The flexible calendar program is meant to allow campus staff the time to improve instruction and pursue those activities which constitute professional growth. Through the use of an organizational structure which supports assessment, planning, record keeping and evaluation (title 5, section 55730 (a through e)). An appropriate level of institutional support to the committee and its coordinator is critical to effective use of this time. The amount of support should be decided locally, based upon the size of the district/college and the extent of its flexible calendar program. The committee should consider/review:

- Support structures
- Need investment in resources, personnel, and funding.
- Limiting/unclear language
- Expanding professional learning to intentionally include classified staff, students, and the community;
- Clarify the distinction between Flex Program and Professional Learning.
- Flex days should accommodate **all** employee schedules

- Engagement
- Increasing engagement through research-informed strategies and incentives.
- Accountability
- The creation of an evaluation tool
- Regular evaluations and assessments of activities.

## Individual Faculty Contracts

The validation and evaluation of change are more meaningful through the use of individual contracts with measurable objectives and a plan for change in classroom instruction.

Each employee is responsible for the development of his or her individual plan for professional and/or personal growth for the purpose of instructional improvement (title 5, section 55726(a)). This individual plan may encompass any combination of individually designed activities, institutionally planned workshops, conferences, and/or academic courses. These activities must be appropriate within the regulations that govern the flexible calendar program (title 5, section 55724 (a)(4) (A through G)).

The plan should include;

- Measurable objective(s) that the faculty member anticipates accomplishing during the time period.
- A statement that relates the objectives to the intent of the flexible calendar program (staff, student, and/or instructional improvement).
- A list of activities to carry out the stated objectives.
- The number of flexible calendar program hours needed to complete individual activities.

The approval of individual faculty plans should be accomplished by a peer review process as determined by each college through its shared governance process.

Plans for each academic year should allow for faculty to complete activities at any time during the fiscal year including times that they are not scheduled to work. However, individual faculty plans should be completed within the fiscal year in which they are proposed. Faculty members should be able to modify their plans in the event of schedule changes.

Employees should not be subject to attendance mandatory activities or days unless agreed to by a shared governance process. Such days may be useful for governance and housekeeping purposes, but they are of little value to the development needs of individual faculty. Therefore, they must be used sparingly or they become counterproductive.

## Rationale

Title 5 (section 55726) mandates the development of an agreement between the local district

and any employee designated to participate in staff, student, and instructional improvement activities; in lieu of classroom instruction; or other normal faculty activities. The format and provisions for this agreement should be developed collegially and locally. While these local agreements will vary from college to college, there are two provisions which should universally prevail.

(a) For each full-time faculty, part-time faculty, classified, student employee, or administrative employee specified by the district to participate in professional learning activities, the district shall enter into an agreement with such employees specifying the following:

(1) the professional learning activities the employees will perform in lieu of normal job duties during the designated days;

(2) the number of hours of normal job duties being substituted with the professional learning activities; and

(3) the number of hours the employee is required to spend on the professional learning activities, which must be at least equal to the number of total work hours from which the employee is released.

(b) For each employee specified by the district to participate in professional learning activities during the designated days, the district shall also maintain records on the type and number of activities assigned, and the number of such employees participating in those activities.

## 5. CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE REQUIREMENTS

### CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

The Superintendent/President/Chancellor of each community college is responsible for meeting all of the Flexible Calendar conditions of the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, sections 55726, 55728, and 55730. Including the following:

- Agreements and records are maintained for each employee who performs flex activities in-lieu-of classroom instruction. The number of hours of flex activities is at least equal to the classroom hours from which the employee is released, plus associated hours of out-of-classroom responsibilities (55726).
- Attendance accounting data as requested, for purposes of calculating the flex adjustment, are reported to the Chancellor's Office Fiscal Services Unit (55728).
- An assessment of needs and a plan of activities are developed annually (55730).
- Records of participation are maintained, and evaluation is conducted annually (730).
- A flex advisory committee including faculty, students, administrators, and other interested persons meets regularly to make recommendations (55730).

### New Program

A community college district may, with the approval of the Chancellor, designate up to 8.57 percent (15 out of 175 days) of flexible time per year (title 5, section 55720(b)). The number of days are determined locally but should be determined by a shared governance process.

The request for approval should contain:

- A complete description of the calendar configuration.
- The days of instruction and evaluation, which will meet the requirements of the 175-Day Rule.
- The number of days during which instructional staff will participate in staff, student, and instructional improvement in lieu of regular classroom instruction. Mandatory days must be negotiated and agreed upon through the local bargaining process.
- The kinds of activities which college personnel will be engaged in during their designated staff, student, and instructional improvement days.
- A certification that all College personnel," as defined in an approved plan, will be involved in at least one of the authorized activities." (title 5, section 55724(a)(5))  
Note that the inclusion of specific College personnel designated to participate in flex activities should be determined by shared governance process.

- A certification that the district will carry out its on-going responsibilities under title 5, sections 55730 and 55724 (a).

## Ongoing Program

Once a district has established a flexible calendar program, the following is required to ensure effective use of resources.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### FLEXIBLE CALANDER PROGRAM REQUIRED EVALUATION

A comprehensive evaluation of flexible calendar program activities should occur (title 5, section 55730(d)) on a consistent basis as determined through shared governance mechanisms. A comprehensive evaluation process incorporates four different levels, ranging from basic to advanced. The following chart lists the four levels, type of evaluation, and a description of each level.

Levels	Descriptions
Reaction	Determines what participants think about the program or activity.
Achievement	Measures participants' achievement. Determines whether facts, skills or knowledge were attained.
Behavior	Determines if participants have modified their on-the-job behavior and are using the information obtained through the program or activities.
Impact	Measures of whether training has had a positive impact on the organization including student outcomes, improved morale, etc.

Each college should determine, through its own collegial processes, its own configuration of individuals responsible for conducting the evaluation of flexible calendar program activities.

However, a college decides to conduct its comprehensive evaluation of flexible calendar program activities, it must include faculty involvement in each step of the evaluation.

To assure appropriate quality, participating faculty must obtain a working knowledge of “formal” evaluation procedures. Appropriate training is offered by a number of state and national development organizations. Lack of such training should not be a deterrent to the initial appointment of a coordinator.

### Rationale

Continued legislative support of the flexible calendar program will depend upon the ability of districts/colleges to document results. Consequently, the impact of flexible calendar program activities can only be known through the implementation of a **comprehensive** evaluation process. The four-level process suggested above is only one form of a comprehensive evaluation process. Colleges may choose to implement an alternative methodology based upon individual college requirements. To coordinate or organize a comprehensive evaluation process, such as the four-level process referred to above, requires that individuals have some knowledge of research methods, descriptive statistics, and quantitative measurement

methods. Individuals who do not possess the knowledge or skills should be provided the opportunity to attend sessions on evaluation offered by organizations such as 4C/SD, FA CCC, Academic Senate, CCLC, NCSPD and NISOD. If possible, evaluation of the flexible calendar program should be conducted as part of the overall staff development program. However, at colleges where the structure of the program does not foster this relationship, then the flexible calendar program could be evaluated separately.

### **THREE-YEAR REPORT REQUIRED BY THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE PROVIDING ANNUAL DISTRICT/COLLEGE ACTIVITIES PLANS AND EVALUATIONS.**

Once a district has established a flexible calendar program, the following is required to ensure effective use of resources.

Per 55730(a) every three years the Community College will provide the following to the Chancellor's Office for each academic year:

- Carry out a plan of activities to address those critical needs.
- Maintain records on the description, type and number of activities scheduled and the number of district employees and students participating in these activities along with the number of those who did not participate.
- Maintain records of participation including the group represented such as faculty, classified, student-worker, administration.
- Evaluate annually the effectiveness of conducted activities and update the plan to reflect needed changes.
  - A record of the evaluation that was required to be conducted annually (55730)
- Hold regular meetings of an advisory committee composed of faculty, students, classified, administrators and other interested persons to make recommendations on kinds of activities.
- Provide documentation of these activities to the Chancellor upon request.

## 6. RESOURCES

### TITLE 5 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS

**Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Subchapter 8:** Academic Calendar, specifically focusing on the 175-day minimum academic year and the regulations governing the “Flexible Calendar” (Flex Cal) program for California Community Colleges.

### CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTION 84890

California Education Code Section 84890 permits community college districts to design an academic calendar that includes “flexible time” for staff, student, and instructional improvement activities in lieu of regular instruction. This program, authorized by the Chancellor, allows up to 8.57% of faculty contractual obligations to be designated as flex time for professional development, while maintaining state apportionment for student attendance

### DEFINITIONS

**4-1-4** - refers to a nontraditional calendar configuration where fall semester classes start in August and end in December. Spring semester starts at the end of January and ends in May. This calendar schedule leaves a large block of time for development activities during the month of January.

**4C/SD** - California Community College Council for Staff Development.

**Academic Work Day** - Number of hours during a day that a faculty member is contractually obligated to complete in performance of duties to a college (e.g., instruction, office hours, other duties).

**Banking** - Refers to the carry-over of time spent on activities appropriate for flexible calendar beyond the number required by the institution for any one year to the next fiscal year.

**Evaluation** - To determine the significance or worth of a program by careful appraisal or study.

**FACCC** - Faculty Association of California Community Colleges.

**Employee Development** - A process that seeks to promote professional and individual growth and development of college personnel directly or indirectly involved with students.

**Flexible Calendar Program Activity** - An activity designated as student, staff, and instructional improvement and is in-lieu-of-instruction for which the college is being reimbursed by the state.

**Flexible Calendar Program Day** - A designated day or hours out of the instructional calendar to conduct student, staff, and instructional improvement activities.

**Flexible Calendar Program** - Allows California Community Colleges to use one to fifteen days of state-mandated 175-day instructional year for faculty development.

**FTES (Full-time equivalent student)** - An alternate unit of funding that specifies a net rate allocation based upon a workload measure as an index to determine the amount of funding a district will receive.

**Instructional Improvement** - any educationally related activity that enhances the ability of instructors to teach and students to learn.

**Instructional Methods** - Strategies for teaching and monitoring the progress of that teaching.

**In-service** - Training going on or continuing while one is fully employed.

**Measurable Objective** - Something toward which effort is directed.

**NCSPOD** - National Council for Staff, Program and Organizational Development.

**NISOD** - National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development

**Needs Assessment** - A three-year survey conducted to gather information from faculty, staff, and students in order to determine the importance and priority of activities.

**Personal Development** - Activities which promote a sense of well-being and enhance one's personal, interpersonal and communication skills and knowledge. In addition, it includes those activities leading to improved working relationships with students and staff both in and out of the classroom. Also relates to those activities which enhance an individual's physical and mental ability to perform his or her job.

**Professional Development** - Activities which add knowledge and skills to an individual's discipline, career, or vocation intended to improve performance on the job. These activities also provide a discipline revitalization of professional direction and focus.

**Professional Learning**- Defined as professional development in **ED code 87153**

**Seminar** - A formal group reaming activity convened for the interchange of knowledge, usually dealing with one specific topic.

**Shared Governance Mechanism Or Process** - Refers to the locally designed process to provide the means through which all membership of the academic community--students, faculty, administration, and classified--can participate effectively

in the orderly growth and development of the college.

**Staff Development** - A process that seeks to promote professional and individual growth and development of college personnel directly or indirectly involved with students.

**TEACHING METHODS** - Strategies for presentation and facilitation of learner interaction.

**Workshop** - A brief intensive instructional program for a relatively small group of people that emphasizes participation in problem solving.

## HISTORY OF THE FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM

The faculty development movement at the community college comes with the rapid expansion period during the 1960s and early 1970s. Due to the large influx of faculty new to teaching, development programs expanded. Numerous activities were developed to address the professional, personal, and organizational needs of these new community college instructors. The need for a comprehensive faculty development program meant, also, that instructors needed time for participation in those activities. During this time there was also concern with the traditional semester calendar. In California, the 175-day community college instructional calendar is 15 days longer than in many other states. The fall semester traditionally started after Labor Day in September and finished in late January. The spring semester started in February and ended in mid-June. The instructional value of having a holiday break in December before the completion of the fall semester in January was questioned. Also, the short break between the fall semester and start of spring semester was not sufficient to allow faculty time to prepare for spring courses and for student services personnel to counsel students, process grades, and complete other tasks.

In 1972, Cabrillo College initiated a new calendar configuration called the “4-1-4.” The “4-1-4” provided for a fall semester of 75 days ending before the December holidays, 20 days of intersession in January, and 80 days for the spring. This innovative configuration still met the 175-day requirement. During the intersession, three-fourths of the faculty taught short-term, special-interest courses. The remaining faculty were obligated to work on instructional improvement. Faculty rotated their instructional assignments for the intersession so that all members would eventually engage in instructional improvement.

The flexible calendar program was initiated by six California community colleges in 1976 as a pilot project authorized by Assembly Bill 2232 (1975). The six pilot colleges were Cabrillo, Grossmont, Cosumnes, Saddleback, San Jose City, and Evergreen Valley. These six pilot colleges were allowed to reduce the number of required instructional days from 175 to a minimum of 160. The bill provisions allowed the colleges the opportunity to replace up to 15 days of regular instruction with alternative activities such as course and program development and revision, staff development activities, development of new instructional materials, and other instruction-related activities.

Implementation of the flexible calendar program at the pilot colleges involved reforming the instructional calendar to accommodate instruction free days for faculty development activities. The use of flexible calendar days was accomplished through a shifting of the traditional calendar. With the success of the pilot programs, legislation (Assembly Bill 1149) was drafted in 1981 that allowed all colleges the option of adopting a flexible calendar program.

## HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES

The guidelines for the flexible calendar program were developed by a subcommittee of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Faculty Development Committee. The guidelines were written and revised over a period of one and a half years starting in 1991.

Initial interest in developing the guidelines came about because of concerns raised by individuals in the field regarding administration of the flexible calendar at their respective colleges. These concerns were also expressed during workshop sessions on faculty development and the flexible calendar, offered during the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Spring and Fall sessions, and at regional meetings with the California Community College Council for Staff Development (4C/SD).

Discussion regarding the flexible calendar ensued during meetings of the Academic Senate Faculty Development Committee. As a result of the discussions, a subcommittee was established to research and gather further information about the flexible calendar program. The subcommittee found that there were many inconsistencies in the administration of flexible calendar programs, and there were also misunderstandings as to the program's purpose and intent. The subcommittee believed that guideline development would be a method of clarifying legislative intent and facilitating successful development and maintenance of a flexible calendar program.

Following is a list of standards the subcommittee used for development of the flexible calendar guidelines. The guidelines should:

- conform to the flexible calendar legislative purpose and intent.
- correlate with the literature on successful staff development programs.
- provide faculty with choices in determining their development needs.
- allow for faculty governance of the college program.
- allow for individual college mechanisms of governance.
- move toward positive clarification of program intent and purpose.

Once the subcommittee developed an initial set of guidelines, special hearings were held to gather information and reaction to the items. In October 1992, a meeting was held in Oakland at the Peralta Community College District Office. Information about the hearing was made via the staff development officers and faculty senate presidents at each college in the northern region of the state. In December 1992, a similar hearing was held at Orange Coast College in the southern region.

Participants in both meetings were asked to view the twelve recommendations and provide feedback in two ways. One method of soliciting responses was through a

participant “reaction form” which asked for a rating from 1 to 5 of each item in three different ways. The first asked if the language was or was not clear, the second asked if the guideline would or would not support the current operation of flex at their college; and the third asked if the guideline represented a positive or non-positive move toward clarification of the policy. The second method of response was through open discussion of each item. Group recorders noted concerns and suggestions for each guideline. The data from the surveys and open discussions were examined and discussed by the Faculty Development Committee. Subsequently, final guidelines were generated.

## **HISTORY OF FLEXIBLE CALENDAR PROGRAM LEGISLATION**

### **Assembly Bill 2232 (1975)**

Initial legislation authorizing a flexible calendar pilot program.

### **Assembly Bill 1149 (1981)**

Provided the flexible calendar option at all colleges beginning with the 1982-83 academic year.

### **Assembly Bill 1656 (1983)**

Provided a no-loss/no-gain in funding and a conversion of days to hours. This bill also allowed flexible calendar activities to be performed any time during the fiscal year and added matriculation as an approved flexible calendar activity.

### **Assembly Bill 836 (1985)**

Provided technical change to the formula to adjust ADA as a way to further assure a no-loss in funding.

### **Assembly Bill 1725 (1988)**

Created the community colleges faculty and staff development fund.

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