

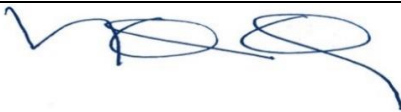




# The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges

PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

DATE: January 17-18, 2017

SUBJECT: Streamlining the Curriculum Development and Approval Processes		Item Number: 3.4	
		Attachment: No	
CATEGORY:	Academic Affairs, Workforce & Economic Development	TYPE OF BOARD CONSIDERATION:	
Recommended By:	 Pamela D. Walker, Vice Chancellor	Consent/Routine	
	 Van Ton-Quinlivan, Vice Chancellor	First Reading	
Approved for Consideration:	 Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Chancellor	Action	
		Information	X

**ISSUE:** This informational item updates the Board of Governors on progress in streamlining processes for approval of programs and courses.

**BACKGROUND:** In recent years, there has been considerable discussion at the state and local levels about the need to streamline program and course approval processes in order to ensure that our colleges are nimble and effective in responding to changing curricular and workforce needs. As the pace of innovation in the economy and industry has accelerated, backlogs in program and course approvals have become more problematic. The need for improvement has been noted by a broad range of stakeholders from both inside and outside the community college system. This topic was raised during deliberations of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy (also known as the Strong Workforce Task Force). In that venue, educators and business leaders agreed on the need to make progress on this front. *(Background cont.)*

**RECOMMENDATION:** This item is presented to the Board of Governors for informational purposes.

***(Background cont.)***

Strong Workforce Task Force

In November of 2014, the California Community College Board of Governors commissioned the Strong Workforce Task Force. The task force was asked to recommend policies and practices to improve and expand community college programs in order to meet California's anticipated shortage of one million industry-valued, middle-skill credentials.

At its November 2015 meeting, the Board of Governors adopted all 25 recommendations of the Strong Workforce Task Force. These recommendations covered seven areas: Student Success; Career Pathways; Workforce Data & Outcomes; Curriculum; Career Technical Education Faculty Regional Coordination; and Funding.

Recommendation 8 dealt directly with improving the program and course approval process:

*8. Evaluate, revise, and resource the local, regional, and statewide CTE curriculum approval process to ensure timely, responsive, and streamlined curriculum approval.*

*a. Provide state-level coordination to ensure a streamlined curriculum approval process at the Chancellor's Office.*

*b. Provide sufficient staffing and resources in the Chancellor's Office to accelerate the state-level curriculum approval process.*

*c. Identify and disseminate effective practices in local curricula adoption and revision processes and provide technical assistance for faculty and colleges.*

More details on these recommendations and implementation activities can be found at:

[doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/StrongWorkforce/ProjectPlan.aspx](http://doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/StrongWorkforce/ProjectPlan.aspx).

To advance the Strong Workforce Task Force recommendations, the Governor and Legislature created the Strong Workforce Program and appropriated \$200 million in on-going funds for this purpose. The statutory language establishing the program provided direction related to improvements in the program and course approval processes:

*(10) (A) Notwithstanding the June, 30, 2017, implementation date specified in this subdivision, develop and implement a plan to streamline the course and curriculum approval process, both at the state and local levels. The plan shall reflect an expedited state approval process for career technical education courses, programs, and certificates, and may include the elimination of an existing state course and program approval process. The plan shall reflect one of the following two options:*

*(i) A process of course and curriculum approval that enables community college districts to develop a course or program within one academic year and to offer that course or program the subsequent academic year.*

*(ii) A process of course and curriculum approval that enables community college districts to develop a course or program within one academic semester and to offer that course or program the subsequent academic semester.*

## **ANALYSIS:**

Given the complexity of the task at hand, the Chancellor's Office partnered with the statewide Academic Senate and the Chief Instructional Officers Executive Committee to pursue a multi-pronged process to advance the policy goals. Working with our partners, we developed the following action plan:

1. Delegate approval of stand-alone courses
2. Pilot a streamlined curriculum development and approval process
3. Finalize California Community College Curriculum Committee (5C) recommendations
4. Roll out of related efforts

### Delegation of Stand-Alone Course Approval

Through a change to title 5 regulations, the Board of Governors streamlined stand-alone course approval, effective September 1, 2016. Under the new framework, local college districts may now approve and offer a single course that is not part of an approved program. Districts must still comply with all relevant curricular requirements, but the Chancellor's Office no longer reviews and approves these stand-alone courses. Instead, the Chancellor's Office will rely on audits to ensure that districts are complying with relevant regulations. This new approach reduces workload and delays at both the state and local level. Importantly, it allows colleges to be nimble and timely as they respond to changing curricular and workforce needs.

For a full copy of the title 5 change, visit:

[http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/Legal/Regs/Credit\\_Course\\_Approval.pdf](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/Legal/Regs/Credit_Course_Approval.pdf).

### North Far North Pilot to Streamline Curricular Process

With support from the Chancellor's Office, 10 colleges within the North Far North region developed and piloted a streamlined curriculum development and approval process. They used a Lean Six Sigma methodology—an analytic framework for removing inefficiency and waste—to overhaul their local and regional curricular processes.

A comprehensive set of stakeholders worked collaboratively on the project. Membership included: a chief executive officer, a chief instructional officer, statewide Academic Senate representatives, local curriculum committee chairs, career technical education regional consortia chair, labor market researchers, a career technical education dean, and a sector navigator.

The redesigned local and regional curriculum process employed a number of new features: the use of common templates; the re-sequencing and the redesign of numerous processes; and improved

coordination. The streamlined process was able to reduce the time for curriculum approval from the historical average of 6.6 months to as little as 3.2 months.

The North Far North Pilot yielded redesigned processes and strategies that will help inform improvements at the statewide level.

#### California Community College Curriculum Committee (5C)

The California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee, also known as 5C, under the leadership of the Chancellor's Office Academic Affairs Division, commissioned a workgroup to look at a broad array of intersections of the curriculum approval process with other policy/practice areas. The workgroup was comprised of chief executive officers, a chief instructional officer, deans, statewide Academic Senate representatives, local curriculum committee chairs, curriculum specialists, and Chancellor's Office staff from both the Academic Affairs and Workforce and Economic Development divisions. The work group included participants from the North Far North pilot.

Following its deliberations, the committee recommended that the curriculum approval process be revised as follows:

- 1) Local Approval: To streamline the curriculum process, additional approval authority should will be delegated to local community college districts, specifically designating the Chief Instructional Officers (CIOs) to certify approval. This would build upon the regulatory model adopted for stand-alone courses. Additionally, it is recommended curriculum approval be agendaized at every local trustee meeting or no less than a monthly basis to prevent unnecessary delays.
- 2) Regional Recommendation: Career-technical education curriculum has the added step of regional review to protect against over-saturation of workforce training programs. Currently, this regional labor market review occurs after the proposed curriculum is fully developed. In order to shorten the timeline, it is recommended that the process be changed so that the review is conducted earlier, while the proposed curriculum is still in development.
- 3) State Chaptering: As additional curricular approval is shifted to community college districts, the role of Academic Affairs within the Chancellor's Office will also change. An important role will be to assign a unique control number to each course and program for the purpose of assigning appropriate values for the student record through MIS data elements. In addition, capacity will be freed up which should be invested in high value activities such as providing technical assistance and policy leadership to the system.

These recommendations provide a strong framework for additional improvements in the curriculum approval process.

## ROLL OUT

The activities described above reflect the significant amount of work undertaken to streamline the curriculum development and approval process. While additional work remains to be done, we have made substantial progress toward improving the related processes and meeting the statutory directives of the Strong Workforce Program. Below is an overview of some of the related work that lies ahead:

Further Policy Development: The Chancellor's Office is currently developing changes to regulation, policy, and practice based on input from 5C and the experience of the North Far North Pilot.

Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI): For the past year, the Academic Affairs Division has been developing a more efficient technology to house the massive curriculum inventory for all 113 colleges. This work is occurring in collaboration with the Academic Senate, Chief Instructional Officers, and the Butte Technology Center. Implementation of COCI is planned for the summer of 2017. This new technology will support additional efficiencies in tracking approved curriculum.

Training: Training on streamlined curriculum development and approval processes for colleges and districts will be developed in partnership with the statewide Academic Senate and delivered through the Chancellor's Office Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative.

Audit: The Chancellor's Office Finance and Facilities Division will ensure that the annual audit process conducted per the Contracted District Audit Manual will include verification that all courses offered receive appropriate local approval.