# Curriculum Proposals Should be the Result of Careful Planning

When curriculum is not carefully planned out, a number of problems may arise. For example, courses and programs might not sufficiently prepare students for transfer, or for jobs, because those courses and programs were not designed thoughtfully enough with those end goals in mind; students might not be able to complete degrees or certificates because we didn’t truly verify first that all required courses in those programs would be offered consistently; students might be prevented from enrolling in courses that they should be able to enroll in because requisites were added to them hastily and unwisely; and so on.

Thus, the curriculum proposals that a department puts forward should be the result of a careful planning process that includes a thorough review of existing curriculum [PCAH 8th edition pg.25]. The policies set forth below are meant to put this principle into practice.

# Creating the To-Do List

Each semester, there will be some departments whose turn it is to do curriculum planning. Their goal will be to plan out all the curriculum proposals that they would like to go into effect before it is their turn to plan again in two years time.

With limited exceptions, outlined below, departments will not be allowed to put forward curriculum proposals unless they are planned for in this way. So, if a department wants to do any substantial curriculum work, they will have to engage in the planning process as described here.

For each department up for planning in a given semester, the ultimate concrete result of the planning process will be a curriculum to-do list for that department. This to-do list will consist of:

* A list of all curriculum proposals that the department plans to put into effect before the next time that the department is scheduled to go through the planning process in two years time.
* For each proposal on the list, a specific semester by which the department plans for that proposal to go into effect. This effective date shall be sometime before the department is up for planning again.
* For each proposal on the list, the deadline by which that proposal must be approved by the BCC Curriculum Committee in order to go into effect by the selected date.

Here is how the to-do list will be generated.

## Deactivations

For each program or course that the department wants to deactivate, the department shall add a deactivation proposal for that program or course to its to-do list.

The curriculum committee will provide the department with a list of all courses within that department that, by the end of the semester, will not have been offered in any of the last six semesters (including summer).

If the department does not wish to deactivate a course on this list, then it shall, in time to make the agenda for the last committee meeting of the semester, provide to the curriculum committee a rationale for non-deactivation of that course. If the committee judges the rationale adequate, then the course will stay active.

If the committee either does not judge the rational adequate, or does not receive a rationale by the deadline specified above, then the committee will add a deactivation proposal for the course to its *own* to do-list [PCAH 8th edition pg. 27; ACCJC II.A.6].

When a course is deactivated, other courses and programs may be impacted. For each course deactivation on the department’s to-do list, the committee will help the department determine what other courses and programs, if any, will be impacted by that deactivation. For any impacted course or program, the department shall add a proposal to update that course or program to its to-do list (unless the impacted course or program is itself going to be deactivated).

For each course deactivation on the committee’s own to-do list, the committee will determine what other courses or programs would be impacted by that deactivation, and will add update proposals as required to its own to-do list. These updates shall be the minimum required to accommodate the course deactivation. The committee shall have the responsibility, and the authority, to launch and approve the proposals on its own to-do list.

## Updates

The department shall add an update proposal to its to-do list for each course and program that it plans to update.

The curriculum committee will provide the department with a list of each program and course within the department that *requires updating*.

A department’s course or program requires updating if it would be *past due* for an update, supposing no update for it were to go into effect by the start of that department’s next round of curriculum planning.

* A CTE program is considered past due for an update if no update for it has gone into effect in any of the previous four semesters (excluding summer) [Ed Code § 78016]
* A non-CTE program is considered past due for an update if no update for it has gone into effect any of the previous six semesters (excluding summer) [PCAH 8th edition pg.25; ACCJC II.A.2, II.A.3, II.A.16; Peralta BP 4020; Peralta AP 4020 I.F.].
* A CTE course with a pre or co-requisite is considered past due for an update if no update for it has gone into effect in any of the previous four semesters (excluding summer) [Title 5 55003(b); Peralta AP 4260 II.C.4.].
* Any other course is considered past due for an update if no update for it has gone into effect any of the previous six semesters (excluding summer) [PCAH 8th edition pg.25; ACCJC II.A.2, II.A.3, II.A.16; Peralta BP 4020; Peralta AP 4020 I.F.].

The department must add an update proposal to its to-do list for each course and program within the department that requires updating (unless that course or program is set to be deactivated).

The department does not have to actually make changes to each course and program that requires updating, since in some cases it might be that no changes are called for. But the department has to at least put an update proposal for each such course and program through the approval process, so that all such courses and programs are at least reviewed by the department and the curriculum committee. If no changes are called for, that should be determined after a careful review by both the department and the committee.

As explained below, when completing its to-do list, the department must prioritize any required updates.

## New Courses and Programs

The department shall add a new course and new program proposal to its to-do list for each new course and program that it wants to create. Before adding a new course or new program proposal to its to-do list, the department must get approval from their Dean.

## Curricunet Clean Up

The department shall review all proposals within the department that:

* Have In Review status in Curricunet, and are at the originator or department chair level; or
* Have Draft status in Curricunet.

The curriculum committee will provide the department with this list of proposals.

For each such proposal, if completing it is not on the department’s to-do list, then the curriculum committee will delete the proposal from Curricunet. If completing it is on the department’s to-do list, then the curriculum committee will not delete it.

# Next Steps

Each department up for planning in a given semester shall present its proposed to-do list to the curriculum committee by the end of that semester. The committee shall vote to either approve the proposed to-do list as is, approve it with certain specific changes, or reject it.

## If the To-Do List is Approved

If the proposed to-do list is approved (either as-is or with changes), then the department may proceed to completing their to-do list. When completing it, the department should prioritize any required updates. The curriculum committee will not approve any new courses or new programs that the department has planned until all required updates have been approved.

The curriculum committee representative for the department shall be responsible for reporting back to the committee on the department’s progress with regard to completing its to-do list. The department rep shall report back to the committee at the first committee meeting of each semester, and then as desired by the committee.

The department may still, during the period before it next undergoes planning, put forward a curriculum proposal not on its approved to-do list for that time period. However, the curriculum committee will only approve such a proposal if:

* The proposed action is just a minor course update; or
* The proposed action must be completed urgently in order to prevent substantial harm to students or the college. For example,
  + A course must be updated immediately or else it will lose an important articulation status.
  + A course must be updated immediately or else students will be incorrectly barred from enrolling in the course.
  + A course must be updated immediately or else it will be out of compliance with state law.
* The fact that a course or program is past due for an update (no matter how past due it is) does not mean that an update for it, “must be completed urgently in order to prevent substantial harm to students or the college.” If a course or program is past due for an update, that is a reason to plan for an update for it as part of the next round of curriculum planning.

## If the To-Do List is Not Approved

If a department up for planning in a given semester does not have a to-do list approved by the committee (either as-is or with changes) by the end of that semester (either because they proposed a to-do list and it was rejected, or they did not propose a to-do list at all), then it’s next opportunity to have a to-do list approved by the committee will be during the next semester that it is scheduled for curriculum planning.

The department may still put forward curriculum proposals while it waits for its next opportunity to carry out curriculum planning. However, the curriculum committee will only approve such a proposal if:

* The proposed action is just a minor course update; or
* The proposed action must be completed urgently in order to prevent substantial harm to students or the college. For example,
  + A course must be updated immediately or else it will lose an important articulation status.
  + A course must be updated immediately or else students will be incorrectly barred from enrolling in the course.
  + A course must be updated immediately or else it will be out of compliance with state law.
* The fact that a course or program is past due for an update (no matter how past due it is) does not mean that an update for it, “must be completed urgently in order to prevent substantial harm to students or the college.” If a course or program is past due for an update, that is a reason to plan for an update for it as part of the next round of curriculum planning.

# References

Education Code:

**78016**. “(a) Every vocational or occupational training program offered by a community college district shall be reviewed every two years by the governing board of the district to ensure that each program, as demonstrated by the California Occupational Information System, including the State-Local Cooperative Labor Market Information Program established in Section 10533 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, or if this program is not available in the labor market area, other available sources of labor market information, does all of the following:

(1) Meets a documented labor market demand.

(2) Does not represent unnecessary duplication of other manpower training programs in the area.

(3) Is of demonstrated effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of its students.

(b) Any program that does not meet the requirements of subdivision (a) and the standards promulgated by the governing board shall be terminated within one year.

(c) The review process required by this section shall include the review and comments by the local Private Industry Council … which review and comments shall occur prior to any decision by the appropriate governing body.”

Title 5:

**55003(b)**. “A district governing board choosing to establish prerequisites, corequisites, or advisories on recommended preparation shall…adopt policies for the following…the process…for reviewing prerequisites and corequisites to assure that they remain necessary and appropriate. These processes shall provide that at least once each six years all prerequisites and corequisites established by the district shall be reviewed, except that prerequisites and corequisites for vocational courses or programs shall be reviewed every two years.”

PCAH 8th edition:

**Page 25**: “Colleges are required to periodically review curriculum as part of the program review process. Both new and revised curriculum should reflect the fulfillment of this planning.”

**Page 27**: The section describing the five criteria that the chancellor’s office uses to decide whether to approve a program states, “The college must commit to offering all required courses for the program at least once every two years, unless the program goals and rationale for the particular program justify or support a longer time frame as being in the best interests of students.”

ACCJC Standards:

**II.A.2.** “Faculty, including full time, part time, and adjunct faculty, regularly engage in ensuring that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. In exercising collective ownership over the design and improvement of the learning experience, faculty conduct systematic and inclusive program review, using student achievement data, in order to continuously improve instructional courses and programs, thereby ensuring program currency, improving teaching and learning strategies, and promoting student success.”

**II.A.3.** “The institution identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures. The institution has officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes. In every class section, students receive a course syllabus that includes learning outcomes from the institution’s officially approved course outline.”

**II.A.6** states that courses are supposed to be scheduled such that the student can complete all coursework required for a program “within a period of time consistent with the expectations of higher education.”

**II.A.16.** “The institution regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and community education courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location. The institution systematically strives to improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students.”

Peralta Board Policies:

**BP 4020.** “The programs and curricula of the District shall be of high quality, relevant to the multicultural East Bay community and student needs, reflective of the District's and Colleges' Mission, Vision and Values, and evaluated regularly through Program Review and Annual Unit Plan updates to ensure quality and currency. To that end, the Chancellor shall establish procedures for the development and review of all curricular offerings, including their establishment, modification, or discontinuance.

Furthermore, these procedures shall include:

• appropriate involvement of the faculty and Academic Senate in all processes;

• regular review and justification of programs and course descriptions;

• opportunities for training for persons involved in aspects of curriculum development; and

• Consideration of job market and other related information for vocational and occupational programs, as well as regular review of vocational programs consistent with requirements of Education Code.”

Peralta Administrative Procedures:

**AP 4020 I.F.** “All programs, curriculum, and courses are reviewed on a three-year cycle through Program Review. All programs complete an Annual Program Plan update.”

**AP 4260 II.C.4.** “As a regular part of the program review process or at least every six years, except that the prerequisites and co-requisites for vocational courses or programs shall be reviewed every two years, the college shall review each prerequisite, co-requisite, or advisory to establish that each is still supported by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee and is still in compliance with all other provisions of this policy and with the law. Any prerequisite or co-requisite that is still supported shall be reviewed promptly thereafter to assure that it is in compliance with all other provisions of this policy and with the law.”