

Saddleback College Policy and Process for New Program Approval

Background and Philosophy

Title 5, Article 2, Section 53203 authorizes local community college boards “to adopt policies for appropriate delegation of authority and responsibilities to its college and/or district academic senate.” More specifically, local senates are granted primary responsibility for developing recommendations concerning academic and professional matters which include, but are not limited to, “educational program development.” (Sec. 53200). The South Orange County Community College District’s Board Policy 2100.1 delegates such authority to the Academic Senates.

The Saddleback College Academic Senate has established a New Program Approval Process in accordance with Title 5, Sections 53200 and 53203, and in consideration of the recommendations and guidelines of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

PROCESS

I. Definitions

A. Program: An organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, certificate, diploma, license, or transfer to another institution of higher education (CCR Title 5, Section 55000). (e.g. completing a program of study leading to a certificate in Computer Maintenance Technology, an AS degree in Business, or transfer).

B. Committee: When a formal discussion is initiated the academic senate will form a **New Program Approval Committee** whose membership will include the Curriculum Chair, Vice President of Instruction, Division Dean and concerned faculty.

II. Initiating a Discussion on New Programs

It is expected that in most cases an individual faculty member will initiate the discussion on developing a new program. However, a discussion on new programs can also be initiated in college governance forums including the Planning and Budget Council, Deans Cabinet, and the Academic Senate, as well as the individual divisions and/or departments, the Office of the President, Vice President of Instruction and/or Vice President of Student Services.

Regardless of where the discussion begins, pursuant to BP 2100.1, whereby the Board of Trustees relies primarily on the advice of the Academic Senate in academic and professional matters, the Academic Senate shall have a fundamental and integral role in any discussion of new programs.

III. Formation and Charge of the New Program Committee

When a formal discussion is initiated, the Academic Senate will form the New Program Committee. The Committee will be charged with:

1. Electing a chair from its prescribed membership.
2. Exercising discretion to expand its membership to include concerned support staff and student services representatives.
3. Gathering all qualitative and quantitative evidence into a written report.
4. Participating in all public meetings and discussions.
5. Recommending to the Academic Senate one of the two potential outcomes of the new program approval process.

IV. Evaluation Criteria

Both qualitative evidence and quantitative evidence as indicated below shall be evaluated within the discussion concerning new programs:

A. Qualitative Evidence

The committee shall gather qualitative evidence to assess the proposed program's alignment with the mission, values, and goals of the institution, and access and equity for students. Factors to be considered may include, but are not limited to:

1. The balance of college curriculum.
2. The improvement of student access to educational opportunities.
3. The potential impact on diversity.
4. The replication of programs in the surrounding area.
5. The ability of programs to meet standards of outside accrediting agencies, licensing boards and governing bodies.
6. The goals and strategies of the College as outlined in the most recent Strategic Plan.

B. Quantitative Evidence

The quantitative evidence may include, but is not limited to:

1. The projected demand for the program.
2. Employment trends.
3. The availability of resources (including facilities and staff).
4. The budget impact.

C. Discussion Guidelines

1. Discussion of new programs shall include faculty, staff, administrators and all parties potentially affected by the decision. These parties may also include students, the employing business/industry, and the community.
2. Discussion of new programs will be conducted by the Academic Senate in public, open meetings. The dates, times and locations of these meetings will be published using all reasonable means of college communications.
3. Discussions will include both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Sources of data for all evidence will be referenced and cited.
4. A written record of all discussions and recommendations will be kept at the academic senate office for review by the public.

V. Possible Recommendations of the New Program Committee

There are two possible recommendations the New Program Committee can make. A program may be recommended for approval or not. The recommendation shall be based upon the aforementioned qualitative and quantitative criteria and will be documented in writing by the Committee and maintained by the Academic Senate.

VI. Conclusion of the Process

The Committee's recommendation shall be forwarded to the Academic Senate for action. The Academic Senate's recommendation will then be forwarded to the College President for action, who may consult with the Planning and Budget Council. Pursuant to Title 5 Section 53203(d) (1), "the recommendation of the Senate will normally be accepted, and only in exceptional circumstances and for compelling reasons will the recommendation not be accepted. If a recommendation is not accepted, [the President] shall promptly communicate [his or her] reasons in writing to the academic senate."

Approved by the Academic Senate on April 12, 2006

Revised & Approved by the Planning and Budget Council on May 2, 2006