Southeast
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COLLEGE POLICY

C-13a   PROCEDURE   Academic Program Development

Academic Program Development refers to development of an array of instructional programs, including, but not limited to, those programs that lead to a certificate, diploma, or associate degree or substantial modifications to existing programs. In the context of ever-evolving needs of SCC students and campuses, the Program Development process is meant to foster increased efficiency and agility in meeting academic transfer and existing and emerging workforce and societal needs, while also ensuring the quality of SCC's academic program offerings and services for student success. The procedures toward investigating and determining whether to develop and launch a new program varies with the program type, and the process may vary based on number of credit hours, offering financial aid, etc. The following procedures outline the process and, where necessary, compliance with state and federal expectations.

Step 1: Concept/idea development

Ideas or concepts for new/modified instructional programs begin with general discussion, such as external data sources, industry/community outreach, emerging technology, program faculty or the division or organizational unit, to organize the concept and to begin to assess viability and document the need for the program. New and modified program examples include, but are not limited to:

- creating a new instructional program.
- creating stackable credentials or new awards within an existing program.
- making a substantial change to the philosophy or purpose of a current program.
- accessing new resources that present new opportunities for expansion of the awards within the program.
- proposing a new organizational unit or division.
- facing a loss of resources or change in workforce demand that requires downscaling or extensive reduction in demand for program graduates.

- If the idea or concept aligns with the above, data will be collected to inform the next steps of the process.

Step 2 – Program Needs Analysis

All new instructional programs require further idea development and consideration through a program needs analysis that provides an overview, description of need, program requirements, and program administration. Additionally, a deeper dive into market research; fiscal impacts; review of revenue and expenses; space planning reviews; startup cost assessments; alignment with fiscal, strategic and academic plans; and potential impact to other programs and divisions are to be completed collaboratively with internal and external groups as needed.

If the program needs analysis indicates further action and development of the new or modified instructional program, the development of the program progresses to the next step.

Step 3 – Internal Reviews

There are three levels of internal reviews to ensure the new or modified program complies with Board policy and aligns with the College's strategic plan to further the mission of the College. Internal reviews also include participatory governance perspectives and consideration of recommendations from:

1. Program Development Advisory Team

2. Curriculum Committee
3. Administrative Team

4. After internal reviews and revisions are completed, the process continues to the next step.

Step 4 – Approvals

There are four levels of approvals necessary before a new or modified program is considered final. The approvals must proceed in the following order but may not apply to every new or modified program, dependent upon determinations from the approvals through the process.

1. **SCC Board of Governors:** Required for all new and revised program recommendations.
2. **Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education:** Approvals from the Board are submitted to CCPE, and if the submission is considered a moderate or logical extension of a current program, approval is granted. If the submission is considered a new program, a program statement is required and scheduled for review by the commissioners, which could take two to three months.
3. **Higher Learning Commission**: All new and modified program approvals granted by CCPE must be submitted to HLC for review and approval. This process may take up to six months.
4. **Department of Education:** Approval is needed only for those programs that are considered aid eligible. This approval process can take between six and nine months.

5. When the appropriate approvals are received, the process continues to the final step.

Step 5 – Implementation & Review

Some interim steps can be taken in preparation to launch the new or modified program. For aid-eligible programs, approval by the HLC is required before full implementation can begin. Implementation of a new or modified program requires communication with a number of departments and divisions so they can initiate implementation tasks as needed. In addition to implementation, follow-up is required to review the process, implementation, and outcomes of the new program. The groups to be notified may include, but are not limited to:

- Instructional Division/Program Dean and Chair
- Financial Aid
- Admissions/Recruiting
- Marketing/Publications
- Registration
- Advising
- Business Office/Fiscal Services
- Bookstore
- Human Resources
- Campus/Facility
- Veterans Services
- Accreditation, Planning, & Assessment
- IT and IR

ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

The Vice President for Program Development, in collaboration with the Vice President for Instruction and other College Administrators or their designee(s) is responsible for implementing, monitoring, tracking, and proposing academic and nonacademic program planning and development from concept to launch. Any proposed revisions to these procedures will be presented to the Area Administrative Team for consideration and approval.

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