CURRICULUM COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Curriculum Committee Approved: October 6, 2014

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Curriculum Committee is to encourage faculty leadership and student participation in curriculum decision-making at Ohlone College. The committee examines proposals submitted for adding, expanding, deleting or modifying programs and courses; evaluates the college’s courses and programs in terms of their general education, transfer, and occupational purposes; and makes recommendations to the Vice President, Office of Academic Affairs on proposals submitted.

Curriculum Committee History/Background Information

The Curriculum Committee became a subcommittee of the overall college’s Committee on Curriculum and Instruction in 1976 and was originally composed of one administrator, eight faculty, four students, and four student alternates. With the passage of AB 1725 in 1988, the Curriculum Committee became a subcommittee of the academic senate, “the right of academic senates to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum,” (Education Code Section 70901(b)(1)(E).

Additionally, faculty involvement in curriculum-related issues and activities has a basis in the following:

II A.2 (a) The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measureable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general education and vocational education, and degrees.

(e) The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans. (Accreditation Reference Handbook, Standard II, Student Learning programs and Services, p.11, June 2013 edition, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges).

Function of the Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee will:

1. Examine proposals submitted for adding or expanding, deleting or modifying programs and courses offered at Ohlone College.
2. Examine on its’ own initiative the existing curricular offerings, and propose needed additions and deletions.
3. Evaluate the college’s courses and programs in terms of their general education, transfer, and vocational purposes.
4. Make appropriate recommendations to the Vice President, Academic Affairs on proposals submitted.
Pursuant to recommendations adopted by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges (October 28, 1983) particular attention will be given to:

1. academic rigor
2. analysis of local needs
3. analysis of job market needs
4. advances in technology
5. demographic changes
6. the need to maintain balanced, comprehensive educational programs in each community college in all course and program approval procedures.

Composition of the Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee, a standing subcommittee of the Faculty Senate, reviews and makes recommendations on proposals for adding, expanding, deleting, or modifying programs and courses offered by the College. Faculty have two-year appointments, which are staggered to provide for continuity from year to year. The chairperson is an elected faculty member who served on the committee the previous year.

Membership of the Curriculum Committee is composed of three groups of individuals:

1. Faculty members (voting members)
2. Student members (voting members)
3. Administrators (ex-officio non-voting members: the Vice President, Academic Affairs; Vice President, Student Services; Executive Dean, Academic Affairs; Division Deans; Director of Curriculum and Scheduling and the Articulation Officer.)

Selection of Faculty Members

It is highly desirable, in that work of the committee revolves around curricular issues central to the translation of a diverse set of institutional and learner goals into implemental learning experiences, to have the broadest possible representation of the college faculty on this committee. Therefore, faculty membership on this committee should not be an arbitrary one, but rather attempt to adhere to the following specific guidelines.

1. Although specific “academic” and “vocational-technical” areas and the teaching responsibilities of faculty representing these areas often overlap, faculty from any department, discipline, or area should not be over-represented on the committee in any year.
2. To insure that faculty representatives on the committee have the ability to soundly address issues and concerns related to a multitude of curricular issues, the Chairperson of the Committee on Committees of the Faculty Senate should endeavor to fill committee positions on the Curriculum Committee based on representation from the current division structure. Each division should have at least one member, based on diversity of disciplines in the divisions.
Faculty by Division:

- Arts and Social Sciences       2
- Business, Technology, and Learning Resources          2
- Counseling                                         2
- Deaf Studies                                       1
- Health Sciences and Environmental Studies           1
- Kinesiology and Athletics                          1
- Language and Communication                          2
- Science, Engineering, and Mathematics               2
- Adjunct member                                     2
- Students                                          2

Total     17

Note: If insufficient numbers of faculty members have formally indicated a willingness to serve on the Curriculum Committee for the following year, then the Chairperson of Committee on Committees shall attempt to find one qualified individual to represent each area with 15 faculty and two qualified individuals to represent areas with more than 15 faculty.

Length of term

The minimum term should be two years. Membership should provide for preservation of continuity by staggering terms. It is desirable that no more than sixty percent of the committee be replaced in any single year.

Chairperson

The committee chair will be open to any tenured faculty member who has served on the committee the previous year. The Curriculum and Scheduling Office will be responsible for support services. If no current members wish to serve as the chair, a nominating Committee will be appointed to recommend one or more candidates to serve as chairperson, and the Chairperson will be elected by the full committee at the final spring meeting.
Procedures

Section 1. Guidelines

The Curriculum Committee may write/amend its own guidelines and operating Procedures as part of its regular work.

(“Each community college district should study and strengthen, where necessary, its local course and program approval procedures to guard against the inclusion of marginal courses in the credit and noncredit instructional programs.” Administration Recommendation of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, October 28, 1983)

Section 2. Meeting Time/Day/Location

Frequency: The committee will meet on the first Monday of the month to review and take action on revisions to existing curriculum and additions to the college’s curriculum. Screening meetings will occur once per month or will be assigned to individual faculty.

Time: 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The meeting room will be designated at the beginning of the fall semester.

Section 3. Orientation

By virtue of the nature of the work handled by the Curriculum Committee, it is important that Curriculum Committee members be sufficiently familiar with the course and program approval process at Ohlone College. Therefore, a significant amount of time at the first regular business meeting of the committee will be devoted to discussing the process, role of the members, etc. Both the Curriculum Committee chairperson and the Vice President, Office of Academic Affairs or designee will lead the process. Items to be reviewed during this orientation session include:

1. Guidelines for New Courses
2. Guidelines for Course Revisions
3. Guidelines for CurricUNET
4. Guidelines for Curriculum Committee Course Screeners
5. Guidelines for Selected Topics
6. Additional current information (meeting dates, membership, etc.)
7. Academic Lists
8. Approval for Stand Alone Courses

Section 4. Agenda Items

1. Deadlines for New and Revised Course Approval and for New and Revised Degree and Certificate Approvals will be published well in advance by the Curriculum and Scheduling Office.
2. Other agenda items must be received as indicated in the Curriculum Committee Meeting Schedule.
3. Agendas and attachments, along with previous meeting Minutes, will be distributed via email to the committee and to the college at large approximately one week prior to the meeting.
   a. Once the agenda has been posted no additional items may be added to the agenda.

Section 5. Rules of Order

The conduct and proceedings of the meetings will follow Roberts Rules of Order Revised. The Curriculum Committee may meet but will not act without a quorum consisting of a simple majority of the voting members.

Section 6. Order of Business

The written agenda will reflect the general order in which items are to be presented and discussed.

Section 7. Conduct of Business

It is highly desirable that the Curriculum Committee membership, comprised primarily of college faculty, have the opportunity to pose questions and exchange views on the curricular issues at hand with fellow faculty members, openly and freely. It is felt that the burden of proof of a proposal’s merit lies with the presenter, and that faculty and student Curriculum Committee members often raise issues fundamentally different from those in administrative positions. Moreover, the process is best served when the dean/administrator is not charged with the responsibility of presenting or advocating for the proposal.

It is recognized, however, that in the case of certain agenda items, where the college community at large will be affected (i.e. new program proposal, initiated from outside the college) that the dean/administrator may be the only knowledgeable person, and in such an instance, present the issue to Curriculum Committee. As a rule, however, the role of the ex-officio members as far as proposals are concerned, should be limited to addressing any administrative concerns related to the issue that faculty may not be able to adequately address. Furthermore, if a member of the Curriculum Committee is proposing a course, he or she will temporarily yield his or her seat, and not vote on that agenda item.

Once the item is presented, Curriculum Committee members will have the opportunity to question the presenter and raise issues related to the proposal. Following this, a motion to accept/reject, accept with qualifications, or table the proposal will be brought to the floor. The chairperson will call for the vote, and the action will be recorded in the minutes.