



Curriculum Handbook

Chapter 1. Authority

Curriculum committees in the California Community College system derive their legal authority from both state and district regulations. Education Code §70902(b)(7) gives local academic senates the right “to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the area of curriculum and academic standards.” California Code of Regulations title 5 §53200 identifies curriculum as an academic and professional matter under the purview of academic senates, while title 5 §55002 requires colleges and/or districts to establish a committee of the local senate or as a separate committee established by mutual agreement between the administration and the local senate. At Napa Valley College, the Curriculum Committee has been established as a subcommittee of the Academic Senate.

As defined in Board Policy 2510, the Napa Valley College Board of Trustees agrees to rely primarily on the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate for all policies and procedures related to curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines, as well as degree and certificate requirements.¹

Board Policy 4020 further directs the college President/Superintendent to “rely primarily on the Academic Senate to establish procedures for the development and review of all curricular offerings, including their establishment, modification, and discontinuance.” Through its by-laws, the Academic Senate has delegated this work to the Curriculum Committee as outlined below; however, the Academic Senate remains the exclusive voice of the faculty for all academic and professional (“10 + 1”) matters.

1.1. Curriculum Handbook

This handbook describes the standing rules, processes, and review criteria of the Curriculum Committee, which are incorporated into the Napa Valley Community College District’s Administrative Procedures by reference, according to Administrative Procedure 4020. This handbook shall be maintained by the Faculty Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee and updated annually. Any revisions to it are subject to approval by the Academic Senate.

¹ “Rely primarily” means that the recommendations of the Academic Senate will normally be accepted, and only in exceptional circumstances or for compelling reasons will the recommendations not be accepted, as defined in California Code of Regulations title 5 §53203(d)(1).

1.2. Role and Mission of the Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee exists to evaluate and make recommendations primarily on matters related to credit and noncredit curriculum. Through careful study and open discussion, the committee acts to ensure that the college's curriculum has consistent quality, rigor, and compliance with state regulations and standards, as well as district policies and procedures.

As described by Administrative Procedure 4020, the Curriculum Committee is charged with establishing processes for the review of new and revised courses and programs, including:

- timelines and limits for these processes
- roles and responsibilities of those reviewing and approving curriculum
- publication of changes and maintenance of records
- and use of a range of delivery systems and modes of instruction

Course and program additions, deletions, or significant changes in program requirements or in course outlines must be acted upon by this committee. According to the Academic Senate by-laws, the Curriculum Committee shall:

1. Develop written procedures for new course and program submission and approval. The Senate is to approve processes and procedures.
2. Act as a resource to the Student Success Standards Committee on issues related to curriculum, such as changes in graduation or general education requirements.
3. Review and make recommendations on proposed new courses and new programs and on course and program revisions. Recommend additions, deletions, and/or changes in course outlines for new and established courses.
4. Classify courses into appropriate disciplines and indicate which are transferable. The committee will determine if a course is classified as General Education and into which category it should be placed.
5. Review and make recommendations on proposed course deletions and inactive status.
6. Make recommendations concerning course and program changes to the Academic Senate and to the NVC Board of Trustees for approval. Minutes and agendas of all meetings shall be sent to the campus staff.

The Curriculum Committee may also be assigned to draft, revise, or review curriculum-related policies and can make recommendations on curriculum matters to the Academic Senate or other campus bodies (as directed by the Academic Senate President).

1.3. Curriculum Review and Development

Curriculum Committee members are expected to read all course, certificate, and degree proposals assigned to them, focusing on the following:

- The overall academic integrity of the proposals and their function within the college

- Appropriateness to the mission statement of the California Community Colleges system
- Consistency with the college’s mission and values statements
- Congruence with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office development criteria, as listed in the *Program and Course Approval Handbook*

Moreover, they are to ensure consistency of course content, learning objectives, methods of evaluation, instruction, assessment, standards of reading and writing, and other elements discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

The committee is also responsible for being familiar with and applying the rules and regulations governing curriculum from the following authorities:

- California Education Code
- California Code of Regulations, title 5
- Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)
- Napa Valley College Board Policies and Administrative Procedures

1.4. References and Resources

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, [*Ensuring Effective Curriculum Approval Processes: A Guide for Local Senates*](#) (2016).

California Code of Regulations, [title 5 §55002](#) Standards and Criteria for Courses.

California Code of Regulations, [title 5 §§53200-53207](#) Academic Senates.

California Education Code [§66010.4](#) Comprehensive Mission Statement.

California Education Code [§70902](#) The California Community Colleges.

Napa Valley College, [Administrative Procedure 4020](#) Program, Curriculum, and Course Development.

Napa Valley College, [Board Policy 1200](#) Mission and Values.

Napa Valley College, [Board Policy 2510](#) Participation in Local Decision-Making.

Napa Valley College, [Board Policy 4020](#) Program, Curriculum, and Course Development.

Napa Valley College [Academic Senate By-Laws](#) (revised December 2020).

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