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Educational

Curriculum Development and Approval

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Appendix 1: Curriculum Guidelines

Purpose

Authority for curriculum development and approval is conferred on Education Council by the College and Institute Act (1996), sections 23-25. This policy provides a rational and consistent framework for the creation, deletion and revision of the curricular and pedagogical substance of courses and assists in the completion and approval of documents entitled *Curriculum Guidelines* which provide a summary of the curriculum for any credit course offered by the College. Further, this document delineates the application of these provisions in the form of the *Instructor's Course Outline*.

Curriculum development or revision may be required for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- changing academic, industry, and/or community needs;
- changes in pedagogy or instructional methodology;
- changing needs of students;
- changing national, provincial and professional association standards;
- new directions and initiatives from government.

Policy Statement

Curriculum development and review is undertaken by faculty members through their respective Departments or Programs, under the authority of Faculty Education Committees, Deans/Directors and Education Council. Courses will be developed by faculty or, where external expertise is required, by non-faculty practitioners or academic specialists hired by a faculty selection committee and working under the authority of faculty. All course development and implementation will follow the approval process stipulated in this policy and will be tracked by the *Course Control Sheet*.

Curriculum Guidelines must be completed for every credit course offered by the College. All *Curriculum Guidelines* must be reviewed regularly (not less than every five years) by Departments or Programs to ensure that they are educationally current. This review will be indicated by a change to the date on the *Curriculum Guidelines* document.

Definitions

Course Control Sheet: an NCR form available from the College print shop which documents signatures required in the development, consultation, and approval of *Curriculum Guidelines* and provides course status information for the Registrar's Office.

Curriculum Committee: a standing committee of Education Council charged with ensuring that College curriculum development and review are consistent with approved processes and undertaken in full compliance with educational policies. The Committee receives and reviews *Curriculum Guidelines* and *Course Control Sheets* for all new credit courses and for major revisions to or deletions of existing credit courses. Upon the recommendation of this committee, Education Council may grant final, formal approval of College curriculum.

Curriculum Guidelines: a document which must be completed for every credit course offered by the College, specifying the basic information about a course. It is written in clear, concise, jargon-free language that can be understood by non-specialists and others outside the subject area (see Appendix 1: *Curriculum Guidelines*). *Curriculum Guidelines* facilitate:

- the course approval process;
- analysis of the course by other educational institutions;
- the provision of information for use both by the College community and by the external community;
- the publishing of course information in the College Calendar (print and web versions).

Major revisions: revisions to all sections except A-D, N and/or P of the *Curriculum Guidelines* document (see Appendix 1: *Curriculum Guidelines*).

Minor revisions: revisions to sections A-D, N and/or P of the *Curriculum Guidelines* document (see Appendix 1: *Curriculum Guidelines*).

Curriculum Development and Approval Process

A. New Courses, Major Revisions and Course Deletions

I. Development and Consultation Process

The Department offering the course will access any course proposal or course changes according to the following criteria:

- a. an adequate rationale for providing, withdrawing or changing the course is available;
- b. an adequately large course clientele for any new course exists;
- c. the course is consistent with the College Mission, Values and Strategic Directions;
- d. the place and priority of the course within the Department/Program, Faculty, and Division, and the frequency of its being offered have been determined.

The course designer will ensure that required consultations have taken place:

- among Departments/Programs and Faculties to resolve possible issues of curriculum "ownership" which may result in cases of course duplication or overlap (Note: in cases where inter-Faculty or interdepartmental disputes concerning jurisdiction over curricula go unresolved, Education Council will have the final authority to resolve such disputes);
- with appropriate Department/Program advisory committees, where applicable;
- with the Library about new or revised course curriculum or course deletions in all Departments/Programs to ensure that appropriate materials to support the curriculum are in place;
- with Systems and Computing, Distributed Learning Services, and Physical Plant to specify required resources (e.g. computers, room availability, etc.)
- with appropriate internal areas, and where applicable, with external agencies/institutions regarding transferability and accreditation.

The course designer will record signatures reflecting these consultations on the *Course Control Sheet*.

II. Approval Process

All new courses, major revisions to and deletions of existing courses must be approved according to the steps outlined below.

1. The course designer completes the *Curriculum Guidelines* document and signs it, certifying that the course has been developed and assessed according to the criteria listed in section A.I. above, and that the guidelines are free from error. The course designer then submits the *Curriculum Guidelines*, along with the

completed *Course Control Sheet* documenting applicable consultations, to the Department Chair/Program Co-ordinator for approval by the Department/Program.

2. Once approved by the Department/Program, the Department Chair/Program Co-ordinator forwards the *Curriculum Guidelines* and the accompanying *Course Control Sheet* to the Faculty Education Committee(s).
3. The Faculty Education Committee(s) examines the *Curriculum Guidelines* and associated materials to ensure that the course meets the College's standards and policies. The Faculty Education Committee(s) then makes one of the following decisions regarding approval:
 - a. approval is granted;
 - b. conditional approval is granted, stating the conditions that must be met, with the final decision for approval to be made by the appropriate Dean/Director;
 - c. approval is deferred, stating the conditions under which the Committee(s) will approve the course, when re-submitted;
 - d. approval is denied, stating specific reasons.

If approval is granted, the Faculty Education Committee Chair(s) then documents the decision on the *Course Control Sheet*.

4. Where course prerequisites must be satisfied outside the institution, the Faculty Education Committee Chair forwards the *Curriculum Guidelines* to the Standing Committee on Admissions and Language Competency for review and recommendation to Education Council. (Informal consultations with the Standing Committee Chair are invited earlier in the process. Should the Standing Committee propose changes to course prerequisites, the *Curriculum Guidelines* may require reconsideration and reapproval by the Faculty Education Committee(s) before going forward.)
5. The approved *Curriculum Guidelines* and *Course Control Sheet* are forwarded to the appropriate Dean/Director. The signature of the Dean/Director certifies that
 - o course curriculum materials have been examined and approved by the appropriate Faculty Education Committee(s);
 - o course curriculum materials meet the criteria listed in section A.I. (above);
 - o appropriate consultations have taken place (see section A.I. (above));
 - o policies and procedures are adhered to;
 - o resources required to offer and support the course have been assessed.

If the Dean/Director does not sign the *Curriculum Guidelines* and *Course Control Sheet*, he or she will define and describe in writing to the Department/Program

and Faculty Education Committee(s) the nature of any concern(s). If the concern is based on educational grounds, the Faculty Education Committee(s) has the right to appeal the decision of the Dean/Director to the Education Council.

6. The Dean/Director ensures that the *Curriculum Guidelines* are put on the appropriate network drive and updated as necessary throughout the approval process.
7. The Dean/Director forwards the signed *Curriculum Guidelines* and the completed *Course Control Sheet* to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee of Education Council. Where revision to an existing course is proposed, the revised *Curriculum Guidelines* must be submitted with a copy of the original course outline or *Curriculum Guidelines* and a brief memo explaining the rationale for major changes. (Please be aware of publication deadlines and the dates of Education Council and Curriculum Committee meetings, available from the Education Council secretary.)
8. The Curriculum Committee Chair brings the Curriculum Committee's recommendation to Education Council for final approval. The signature of the Curriculum Committee Chair on the *Course Control Sheet* documents Education Council approval and certifies that
 - o all steps in the development and approval of new courses, as well as in the deletion of or major revisions to existing courses, have been followed;
 - o all necessary consultations have taken place;
 - o the *Curriculum Guidelines* are consistent with all College educational policies.
9. The Curriculum Committee Chair forwards the approved *Curriculum Guidelines* and *Course Control Sheet* to the Registrar.
10. The Registrar signs the Course Control Sheet denoting receipt and initiates subsequent processes:
 - . notifies the Department Chair/Program Coordinator of Education Council approval;
 - a. initiates transfer and/or articulation arrangements when requested;
 - b. retains the original *Curriculum Guidelines* in the Registrar's Office. (Only *Curriculum Guidelines* on deposit in the Registrar's Office will be referred to in the case of a student appeal, faculty evaluation, counselling, public information and institutional transfer arrangements.)
 - c. maintains and updates (in conjunction with Distributed Learning Services) the *Curriculum Guidelines* on the College website.

B. Minor Revisions

A minor revision is defined as a change to Sections A-D, N, and/or P of the *Curriculum Guidelines* form and includes the following:

- change in course name or number;
- change in textbook or materials;
- addition or revision to course content that does not affect stated course objectives or learning outcomes;
- receipt of variance approval under Appendix 2: subsection C(4) of this policy (please note that this variance approval must also be forwarded to Education Council for information).

After consideration by the Department/Program, *Curriculum Guidelines* with minor revisions require the approval of the appropriate Department Chair/Program Coordinator and Dean/Director. They are then forwarded by the Chair/Coordinator, with accompanying *Course Control Sheet*, to the Faculty Education Committee and the Registrar for information. At the discretion of the Registrar, revisions designated "minor" may still be sent to universities or other agencies for information or re-evaluation.

C. Approval Policy Variance

Where a proposed curriculum has not completed the appropriate review or approval process, and postponing implementation is judged to be detrimental to students' progress, the Department Chair/Program Coordinator may ask the Faculty Education Committee, in writing and with supporting rationale, for a temporary variance from the usual approval process. The following procedures then apply:

1. The Faculty Education Committee will review the process to date, the proposed *Curriculum Guidelines*, and rationale for the variance, and make a decision. In a situation involving two Faculty jurisdictions, endorsement of the variance by both Faculty Education Committees is required;
2. If the Faculty Education Committee(s) endorses offering the proposed course(s) prior to the completion of the entire process stipulated in this policy, the Committee Chair(s) will forward a notice to this effect, including accompanying rationale, in writing to the appropriate Dean/Director who will bring the request to Education Council for approval;
3. If the variance is approved by Education Council, the Education Council Chair will advise the Registrar of this decision. The Registrar will publish the proposed course(s) in relevant College publications for the academic year in question only;

4. The full approval process for the proposed *Curriculum Guidelines* will continue. If approval has not been obtained by the end of the academic year for which a variance has been granted, the course(s) must be withdrawn, or a second variance obtained.

APPENDIX 1: CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

(Note: The *Curriculum Guidelines* template is available under the title "course.frm" on L drive of the College's computer network. The "course.frm" folder has a "read me" file and a Word and a WordPerfect version of the template. Should you wish to review existing *Curriculum Guidelines* from your own or other Departments/Programs, please note that these are available on the web.)

Breakdown of *Curriculum Guidelines* by Section (Alphabetic letters correspond to the appropriate sections of the *Curriculum Guidelines* template.)

A/B. Division, Department and/or Program area

Write the official name of the Division, Department and/or Program under whose authority the *Curriculum Guidelines* fall. Indicate also the review date and the effective date, whether the course is new or revised, and if revised the date of the previous *Curriculum Guidelines*.

C. Subject and Course Number

Write the official course subject and number (e.g. CRIM 100); these are assigned by the Department in consultation with Registrar's policies and printed on each page of the Guidelines (except for page 1).

D. Descriptive Title

Write the name of the course (maximum 35 characters), using a descriptive title which identifies its main focus or purpose and gives readers a sense of course content. This title is reproduced in the Douglas College Calendar and printed on each page of the *Curriculum Guidelines* (except for page 1).

E. Semester Credits

Indicate the number of course credits. These are assigned by the course designer(s), in consultation with the Dean/Director, according to past practice and Registrar's procedures.

F. Calendar Description

Write the calendar description here, providing a brief overview of the course content in language appropriate for readers who may not be familiar with the subject, such as prospective students, admissions officers, counsellors and advisors. The calendar description may contain selected information about the scope and nature of the materials covered; methodological approaches; relation to other courses; authors, topics, and major types of instruction. It should be concisely worded, in complete sentences, using the active voice.

G. Allocation of Contact Hours to Types of Instruction/Learning Settings

Describe primary methods of instructional delivery and/or learning settings (possible descriptors include classroom-related, practicum or clinical placement, laboratory, preceptorship, distributed learning, student-directed learning); specify the number of contact hours per week or per semester for each descriptor; and specify the number of semester weeks if other than regular semester length.

H//J. Prerequisites and Co-requisites

A pre-requisite is a course grade, test score or other criteria required for entry into a specific course. A co-requisite is a course that must be taken concurrently with another course. Designate pre- and co-requisites applicable to this course by course letters and number, indicate minimum grade requirement and effective date*, and use AND/OR (not punctuation) between course numbers. Pre- and co-requisites should be realistic and should not present a barrier to students; their purpose is to prevent those circumstances in which students who lack the basic knowledge and skills either withdraw from or fail the course. (Please note that where course prerequisites must be satisfied outside the institution, the *Curriculum Guidelines* must be forwarded to the Standing Committee on Admissions and Language Competency for review and recommendation of the pre-requisite to Education Council (see step 4 of the Approval Process).

*New or revised course prerequisites will be published in the on-line College Calendar twelve months before they come into effect in order to provide adequate lead time for

prospective students to fulfill the requirements without delaying their educational progress. Where, upon the advice of the relevant Faculty Education Committee, the new or revised prerequisite is less restrictive than the original requirement, or where the name and/or number of a course prerequisite is changed without a corresponding change to the course content/outcomes, the notification period is not required.

K. Maximum Class Size

Specify maximum number of students per type/mode of instruction.

L. College Credit Non-Transfer, Transfer, or Non-Credit

Specify the appropriate category.

Credit can be classified in two ways:

- a. College credit, non-transfer: college-level or college-preparatory courses for which no transfer credit has been sought by Douglas College.
- b. College credit, transfer: college-level courses which articulate to universities or other institutions. Faculty are responsible for initiating informal discussions on transfer arrangements; the Registrar is responsible for formal application for transfer credit.

Credit can be transferred in three ways:

- a. From one course alone, or one course in conjunction with other courses which together are equivalent to one or more courses at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, the University of Victoria, the University of Northern British Columbia, or other B.C. post-secondary institutions;
- b. As unassigned credit in a Department or Faculty, so that the course may serve as an elective or may meet a requirement of a major, minor or honours program;
- c. As a component of a block-transfer arrangement.

M. Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes are statements of knowledge, skills, abilities, practices or profiles that students are expected to develop in order to meet the goals set out by the course, phrased as "At the end of the course, the successful student should be able to..." and written in language that is clear, specific and understandable to all

stakeholders. Stipulated learning objectives and anticipated outcomes should be realistic within the course duration, as well as for the subject matter and the specific student body, and objective criteria for student evaluation should be specified. Such statements should reflect both internal (e.g. Departmental) and external (e.g. accrediting/licensing bodies, advisory committees, etc.) requirements.

N. Course Content

Describe in detail the material to be covered, through which the learning objectives/outcomes are to be met.

O. Methods of Instruction

Specify methods of instruction or learning activities used in a typical week (possible descriptors include lecture, seminar, distance learning, group discussion, role-playing, workshop, independent study of specified topics).

P. Textbooks and Materials to be Purchased by Students (use bibliographical format)

List examples of possible texts and materials, required and optional, or indicate that "a list of recommended textbooks and materials is provided on the *Instructor's Course Outline*, (contained in the *Evaluation Policy* http://www.douglas.bc.ca/_shared/assets/Evaluation_Policy_-_PDF58109.pdf) which is available to students at the beginning of each semester." (Texts should be used in more than one course whenever possible and costs of texts should be considered in the decision to make them required or optional).

Q. Means of Assessment

List kinds of evaluation/assessment typical to the course and congruent with its objectives/outcomes. (See *Evaluation Policy Instructor's Course Outline* http://www.douglas.bc.ca/_shared/assets/Evaluation_Policy_-_PDF58109.pdf or policies governing evaluation and assessment. (Standing variances approved under subsection C4 must also be indicated here. Please note their rationale and procedural requirements.)

R. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

State whether the course is or is not open for prior learning assessment and recognition. Qualifying comments, if any, must be added to a `yes' answer: a brief rationale should be available for a `no' answer. Assessments must comply with the British Columbia Guidelines for the Implementation of Prior Learning Assessment in Public Post-Secondary Education Institutions (source: British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfers), and with College educational policy Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition. (Please note that transfer credit is governed by articulation agreements and therefore is not included under this section.)

This policy was last revised in May, 2009.