

BP 4021 Program Viability – Initiation, Modification and Discontinuance

Reference:

Education Code Section 78015(a)(1), 78016(a); Title 5, Section(s) 51022, 53203(d)(1), 55130; ASCCC “Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective”; ACCJC Standard II.A.6.b.

Pursuant to Title 5, Section 51022(a), the governing board shall adopt and carry out its policies for the initiation, modification, or discontinuance of courses or programs. Santa Clarita Community College District is committed to supporting programs that fulfill its Mission and Institutional Learning Outcomes for students. Because program initiation, modification and discontinuance is a curricular, student success and educational issue, it must follow a careful and extensive review of the program’s status in relation to the overall educational mission of the District.

4021.01 A program is defined as an organized sequence of courses, or a single course, 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). For purposes of this policy “Program” shall also be understood to mean any academic department as well as any thematic cluster of courses within the purview of the Office of Instruction that support a common set of outcomes.

4021.02 Program Initiation – is the institution or adoption of a new program as defined by this policy.

4021.03 Program Modification – Program modifications shall be categorized in the following two manners:

(a) Substantial Modification - is an alteration to an existing program that substantially modifies the program in terms of current faculty workload; academic outcomes and process; student outcomes; new curriculum or current curriculum; articulated coursework required for certificate, degree or transfer; or students’ ability to achieve their educational goals in a reasonable amount of time. A “Substantial Modification” must be proposed and meet the procedural requirements found in Administrative Procedure 4021.

(1) Merging/Splitting Departments and Programs – all modifications that propose to merge or split existing departments or existing programs shall be governed by Administrative Procedure 7410 and not this Board policy or Administrative Procedure 4021.

(b) Nominal Modifications – are non-substantial modifications determined to be normal customary revisions, scheduled or otherwise, that exist and are managed via the existing curriculum review process administered by the Curriculum Committee, a sub-committee of the Academic Senate. Such revisions are generally for the purpose of maintaining currency and, or legally mandated changes. This category of program modification shall be determined “nominal” in its effect and institutional impact and thus fall outside the purview and requirement of Administrative Procedure 4021. The Curriculum Committee may elect to deny a review of proposed modifications it deems “substantial” and refer proposing party to Administrative Procedure 4021 for action.

- 4021.04 Program Viability Review – is the process of determining the appropriateness of a Program Initiation, Program Adjustment or Program Discontinuance.
- 4021.05 Program Discontinuance – is the termination of an existing program, discipline, or department.
- 4021.06 Program discontinuance shall not be driven merely by budgetary considerations. Low or declining enrollment or other degenerating measurements that are due primarily to budgetary reasons will not by itself justify program discontinuance.
- 4021.07 Special attention must be given to the impact of program discontinuance upon those students who are currently enrolled in the program. Specifically, ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A.6.b states: “When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution [should make] appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.”
- 4021.08 Program discontinuance is an issue of both academic and professional concern for the Academic Senate. It is also a matter of collective bargaining in so far as the policy impacts employment or other negotiated work conditions. Above all, it affects students’ ability to achieve their educational goals. Therefore, program discontinuance requires participation of members from all segments of the educational community of the District, including students in particular. It must be supported by a thoughtful process of vital academic considerations and a careful analysis of a range of data about the program in question and the impact on the educational mission of the District.
- 4021.09 A recommendation to discontinue is mandated if so ordered by an external regulatory, governing or licensing body to which the program is subject. The process for program, discontinuance mandated or otherwise, is set forth in Administrative Procedure 4021. If discontinuance of a program or course is

determined, implementation of the discontinuance must occur in a timely manner, per Administrative Procedure 4021.

4021.10 College districts are also required by regulation and statute to develop a process for program discontinuance and minimum criteria for the discontinuance of occupational programs. Additionally, Education Code §78015(a)(1) and 78016(a) stipulates that every vocational and occupational program shall meet certain labor market requirements prior to initiation and every two years thereafter to ensure its necessity. Any job market study of a particular labor market must meet professional industry standards by utilizing accepted methodology of data gathering and analysis.

See Administrative Procedure AP 4021

Board Approved ##/##/##

This Policy and the accompanying procedure AP 4021 were previously identified as BP and AP 4400 and were originally approved 04/11/12