Requirement for Periodic Curriculum Review

Neither the California Education Code (EDC) nor Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) specify an exact review cycle for all courses and programs. However, several separate requirements from Ed Code, Title 5 Regulations, the CCCCO's *Program and Course Approval Handbook*, ACCJC's Accreditation Standards, PCCD Board Policy and Administrative Procedure, and other sources help to establish the most reasonable periodic curriculum review cycle.

EDC, § 78016

78016. (a) Every vocational or occupational training program offered by a community college district shall be reviewed every two years by the governing board of the district to ensure that each program, as demonstrated by the California Occupational Information System, including the State-Local Cooperative Labor Market Information Program established in Section 10533 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, or if this program is not available in the labor market area, other available sources of labor market information, does all of the following:

(1) Meets a documented labor market demand.
(2) Does not represent unnecessary duplication of other manpower training programs in the area.
(3) Is of demonstrated effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of its students.

(b) Any program that does not meet the requirements of subdivision (a) and the standards promulgated by the governing board shall be terminated within one year.

(c) The review process required by this section shall include the review and comments by the local Private Industry Council … which review and comments shall occur prior to any decision by the appropriate governing body.

Title 5, CCR, § 55003

(b) A district governing board choosing to establish prerequisites, corequisites, or advisories on recommended preparation shall, in accordance with the provisions of sections 53200-53204, adopt policies for the following:

> *(4) the process, including levels of scrutiny, for reviewing prerequisites and corequisites to assure that they remain necessary and appropriate. These processes shall provide that at least once each six years all prerequisites and corequisites established by the district shall be reviewed, except that prerequisites and corequisites for vocational courses or programs shall be reviewed every two years. These processes shall also provide for the periodic review of advisories on recommended preparation.*

This statement applies only to the review of prerequisites, not to the entire course or course outline. However, because prerequisite review is most likely to be a feature of the overall review of the course, many colleges apply this six-year maximum review rule not only to prerequisites but also to course review in general.

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH), 6ᵗʰ Edition

Colleges are required to periodically review curriculum in a process called program review. Program review is a planning process whereby departments determine the future needs and goals of their educational programs. Both new and revised curriculum should reflect the fulfillment of this planning. (Page 16)

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)
Accreditation Standards, June 2014

Faculty, including full time, part time, and adjunct faculty, ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Faculty and others responsible act to continuously improve instructional courses, programs and directly related services through systematic evaluation to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and promote student success. (Standard II.A.2)

The institution identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures. The institution has officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that includes learning outcomes from the institution's officially approved course outline. (Standard II.A.3)

The institution regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and community education courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location. The institution systematically strives to improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students. (Standard II.A.16)

This language does not specify a length for the on-going review cycle. However, because the cycle for the overall accreditation process is six years, and one can safely assume that a college that had not reviewed its curriculum between accreditation processes would not be seen as compliant, a curriculum review cycle of six years or less would be necessary to meet Accreditation Standard IIA.

Peralta Community College District
Board Policy 4020 Program, Curriculum, and Course Development

The programs and curricula of the District shall be of high quality, relevant to the multicultural East Bay community and student needs, reflective of the District's and Colleges' Mission, Vision and Values, and evaluated regularly through Program Review and Annual Unit Plan updates to ensure quality and currency. To that end, the Chancellor shall establish procedures for the development and review of all curricular offerings, including their establishment, modification, or discontinuance.
Furthermore, these procedures shall include:

- *appropriate involvement of the faculty and Academic Senate in all processes;*
- *regular review and justification of programs and course descriptions;*
- *opportunities for training for persons involved in aspects of curriculum development; and*

- *consideration of job market and other related information for vocational and occupational programs, as well as regular review of vocational programs consistent with requirements of Education Code.*

Administrative Procedure 4020 Program, Curriculum, and Course Development

F. All programs, curriculum, and courses are reviewed on a three-year cycle through Program Review. All programs complete an Annual Program Plan update.

Other Factors

The review cycle can also impact the transferability and articulation of courses. The University of California's "Policy on Course Transferability, Directions for Revising the UC Transferable Course Agreements and Special Regulations for Courses in Specific Subject Areas" states that for UC transferable course agreements, "Outlines should be current (not more than five years old)." The CSU system also demands currency of course outlines in order to articulate the courses.

Finally, the C-ID (Course Identification Numbering System) requires that course outlines submitted for C-ID designation be no more than five years old. Outlines that have not been reviewed within five years therefore cannot be assigned a C-ID designator.

Conclusion

For all of these reasons, even though Title 5 does not specify a specific length for the overall curriculum review cycle, a periodic review process of not more than six years and preferably of five years seems most advisable. The final determination of the curriculum review cycle is a local decision made primarily by the Curriculum Committee, but relevant administrators and curriculum support staff should also be consulted in making this decision.

* Adapted from the California Community Colleges Curriculum Website FAQ and Yosemite Community College District's "Information regarding the requirement for program review in the California Community College system"

Linkages between Program Review and Curriculum Review

Program review can be an excellent reflective process that lends itself as a focal point to provide information for other tasks that must be completed. . . .

One of those [tasks] which form an important foundation for program review and can be incorporated into the program review process is curriculum review. . . .

Unless a college already has an effective system for updating course [and program] outlines, aligning this review process with program review can provide a timetable for insuring that this important work is accomplished. A program review process is almost certainly incomplete if the curriculum has not been reviewed for several years. By creating curriculum review timelines that ensure the entire curriculum is updated prior to program review, the task is simplified and benefits both processes. If one focus of the program review process is the need to introduce new curriculum or enhance and validate the quality of existing curriculum, the coordination of the program review and curriculum processes facilitates a more effective approach to meeting program and student needs.

(ASCCC, *Program Review: Setting a Standard*, Spring 2009, p. 31)