



VICTOR VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT,  
MERGER/DISSOLUTION, AND DISCONTINUANCE

## BACKGROUND

It is the intent of this policy to ensure that all departmental development, merger, dissolution, and discontinuance follow a set of guidelines to ensure that student requirements, community needs, and the Mission Statement of the College are met. This document creates the EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

Current standards, regulations, and statutes mandate that each community college district have such procedures in place.

- References:
1. Chancellor's Office Curriculum Standards Handbook
  2. Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective. Academic Senate for California Community Colleges
  3. Review Of Programs: Termination. Education Code, 78016
  4. Title 5, Sections 51022 & 55130

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

Due to the various uses of the following terms, for the purposes of this document, the following definitions are established.

- A. **Educational Resources Committee:** A voluntary committee composed of faculty, staff, administration, community professionals, and students responsible for reviewing and recommending program discipline or departmental change(s). This is not a standing committee and does not have assigned members nor a designated number of participants.
- B. **Advisory Committee:** Any designated group of professionals with expertise in the area under review.
- C. **At Risk:** Any discipline, program, or department with classes not meeting the VVC/CTA Agreement, Article 12(A)(5) for class size.
- D. **Discipline:** An individual area of study within a program.
- E. **Program:** Any organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, degree, certificate, diploma, license or transfer to another institution of higher education.
- F. **Department:** A collection of related disciplines and programs.

## SECTION I. GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM INITIATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROVAL

### Purpose:

The College recognizes that the scope and offerings of programs and classes must reflect the changing demands of its students and community. As those needs change, the content and organization of educational offerings must undergo regular review for appropriateness and efficiency. Most new course-based programs are subject to the guidelines and requirements set out in the Chancellor's Office Curriculum Standards Handbook.

When a new program is proposed, an Advisory Committee shall be formed. This group has the responsibility to review the pro's and con's of the proposal which include:

1. Researching for possible conflicts dealing with the curriculum;
2. Financial constraints;
3. Availability of facilities;
4. Staffing;
5. Potential enrollment and transfer/job placement;
6. Benefits to the community and College.

### Procedure:

Requests involving new programs which do not fit within an existing program framework shall be accompanied by a division area review and/or planning document which includes, but is not limited to, the above.

Once the document is submitted to the Academic Senate, it is the responsibility of the Senate President to convene the EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE. This committee is empowered to formulate recommendation to the Administration of the College.

For program development, the ERC shall consist of: One (1) faculty Senate member; one (1) CTA member; one (1) CSEA member; one (1) member representing administration; one (1) member for the ASB; and two (2) members from the advisory committee recommending the proposal. The committee shall elect is on chairperson.

Based upon a document review, the ERC will formalized the assessment and forward a report to the Academic Senate for approval.

The ERC will meet in a timely fashion to:

1. Develop a program proposal, which should contain the results of the needs assessment; program goals and objectives; topic outlines for the course(s); and feasibility study.
2. Forward the proposal to the appropriate area's Dean.

3. Upon the Dean's approval, submit the proposal to the curriculum committee with:
  - a. New course outlines & objectives.
  - b. Prerequisites
  - c. General Education requirements
  - d. Course sequence
  - e. Methodology
  - f. Field (clinical) experience requirements
4. Write and submit a report giving:
  - a. New course proposals
  - b. Conclusions of the Dean
  - c. Conclusions of the curriculum committee
  - d. Timelines for initial implementation
  - e. Evaluation plan and tools

## SECTION II. GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENTAL MERGER OR DISOLUTION

### Purpose:

The College recognizes that similar departments and functions often can be grouped together to maximize efficiency, prevent/minimize duplication, and better meet student needs. It is also recognized that at certain intervals said reorganization may be unsuccessful.

### Procedure:

To meet the stated intent, all departments considering either a merger or dissolution must complete the following:

1. When the above decision has been proposed, the EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE shall be convened to study the feasibility of the action. For the purpose of reviewing departmental mergers or departmental dissolutions, the ERC shall consist of:
  - a. A minimum of 50% of the faculty from each department involved
  - b. A maximum of one (1) administrative/management member for each discipline involved.
  - c. One (1) advisory committee member from each department or discipline involved. In the event that no advisory committee exists, the department initiating the action may develop an ad hoc advisory committee and place one (1) member of the ad hoc committee on the ERC.
2. The ERC shall evaluate the merits or de-merits of the proposed activity based on the following criteria:
  - a. Does the activity fulfill the Mission Statement of the College?
  - b. Does the activity meet the needs of the students and community served?

- c. Is there a demonstrated significant difference or overlap in course offerings and/or career development?
3. The ERC must review all documentation submitted and have a consensus vote from all member represented in each affected department. Consensus vote is defined as the majority (50% + 1) of the ERC.

### SECTION III. PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE

#### Purpose:

Institutions are required to critically review all departments on a six-year review cycle. However, periodically, a need may arise for a separate process to address specific “at risk” situations.

The EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE in this instance shall consist of: one (1) member representing the Faculty Senate; one (1) member representing the CTA; one (1) member representing the CSEA; one (1) member representing Administration; one (1) member from the “at risk” discipline, program or department; one (1) student member from the “at risk” discipline, program, or department; and one (1) member-at-large from the community representing the discipline under review. The Committee shall elect its own chairperson.

The ERC shall meet only when an “at risk” situation is identified. The Committee shall have no regular members. A call for volunteers shall be initiated by the Academic Senate when necessary.

#### Procedure

The College is committed to support its students in meeting their educational goals. When an “at risk” situation is identified, it is important that:

1. Budget constraints not be the primary consideration.
2. Primary consideration in any decision should be given to the service the program, discipline, or department provides to the College and community.
3. A statistically significant decline in class enrollment throughout the program in four consecutive admitting semesters be identified..
4. A consistently low enrollment of 50% below the maximum seat load capacity over four admitting semesters be recorded.
5. A record of retention, at the end of the program representing less than 50% for four semesters in which graduation occurs, be identified..
6. A statistically significant decline in, or consistently low rate of, student success be documented.

In keeping with the spirit of good intentions and future enrollment management and planning, the ERC should consider: (a) the needs of the community; (b) currency of the Program Review; (3) local labor market information; (4) reputation of the program faculty and staff; (5) FTES generated by the program; (6) outside funding sources such as grants, industrial support, etc.; and

(7) special integration or cross discipline projects in which the program, discipline, or department is involved.

### Identification

When an “at-risk” instructional situation is identified, the Academic Senate shall convene the ERC. The ERC shall review the program in question and determine if the following criteria are met:

Primary Criteria (any two present)	Secondary Criteria (any three plus one primary)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Declining market/industry demand</li> <li>- Advisory committee recommendation</li> <li>- Low or decreasing FTES</li> <li>- Poor rate for student achievement of program goals</li> <li>- Decline in importance of service to related disciplines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Declining university transfer trends</li> <li>- Insufficient frequency of course offerings to assure reasonable opportunity for completion of a program</li> <li>- Lack of available resources</li> <li>- Poor retention within a course</li> <li>- Unavailability of a transfer major</li> </ul>

### Review

Should the ERC determine that a full review is warranted, the review is conducted solely by the Committee. Data used should be based upon trends over time and should relate to the program mission statement, program goals, and VVC mission statement. The criteria examined should include uniform measures that can be applied to all programs throughout the College. They shall include, but not limited, to:

<u>Qualitative</u>	<u>Quantitative</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Balance of program curriculum</li> <li>- Match of program with VVC vision &amp; mission statement</li> <li>- Student satisfaction</li> <li>- Previous steps taken to strengthen the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enrollment</li> <li>- Retention (successful course completion)</li> <li>- Attrition within major ( semester-to-semester persistence)</li> <li>- Number of degree and/or certificates awarded</li> </ul>

- Duplication/uniqueness of the program
- Employer satisfaction
- Advisory committee recommendation
- Professional obsolescence
- Transfer program availability
- Enrollment constraints
- Regional needs
- Impact of program on underrepresented and female students
- Scheduling trends
- Placements post graduation due to labor demands
- Number of transfers (UC, CSU, private)
- Number of transfer ready students
- Enrollment as a percent of available seats
- Industry/market demand

### Recommendation(s)

The ERC will issue a written recommendation to the Executive Vice-President/Associate Superintendent based upon the analysis of the data. It will include one of three (3) options. They are: (a) accept the program, discipline, or department in its current state; (b) recommend to continue the program, discipline, or department with qualifications; or (c) discontinue the program, discipline, or department. Resources shall be allocated by Administration in order to implement any of the above three options.

#### Option 1: Acceptance In Current State

A program, discipline, or department recommended to accept “as is” will do so when after full and open consideration it is decided that it is in the best interest of the College, its students, and the community to do so. The conclusion resulting in this recommendation will be documented in writing, maintained by the Academic Senate, and forwarded to the Executive Vice-President/Associate Superintendent. No further action is required.

#### Option 2: Recommend To Continue With Qualifications

A program, discipline, or department recommended to continue with qualifications will include specific interventions designed to improve its viability. A specific timeline will be provided during which these interventions will occur and expected outcomes will be determined in advance. All qualifications and timelines will be published in writing, maintained by the Academic Senate, and forwarded to the Executive Vice-President/Associate Superintendent. After the specified period is completed, the Committee will re-convene to review the program, discipline, or department a second time. At that time, the Committee may recommend only Option 1 or Option 3.

#### Option 3: Discontinuance

The recommendation to discontinue a program, discipline, or department will occur when, after a full and open discussion, it is concluded that the situation falls

outside of the College's values and mission and/or goals and objectives. Any recommendation for discontinuance will include the following:

1. The criteria used to arrive at the recommendation.
2. A detailed plan and timeline for phasing out the program, discipline, or department with the least impact to students, faculty, staff, and the community.
3. A plan for the implementation of all requirements of collective bargaining for faculty and staff.

This recommendation and discontinuance plan will be documented in writing, signed by the Executive Vice-President/Associate Superintendent, President, Dean, Division Chair, and Academic Senate President. The final recommendation will be maintained by the Academic Senate and presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

#### Action(s)

Should a recommendation be made for discontinuance, and the recommendation is accepted by the Board of Trustees, provisions will be made for adequate notification of affected faculty and retraining or transfer of faculty to another area.

At no time shall a program which grants a "certificate" be discontinued until the current student enrollment has graduated; however, it may be necessary to stop future enrollment. Existing students will be allowed to finish the program or have the option to transfer to a related program.

#### Procedure Review

The discontinuance process will be reviewed by the Academic Senate and administration during odd numbered years in order to keep the process current.

#### Two Year Moratorium

During the first two (2) years after this process has been adopted, no program can be recommend for discontinuance without first having the opportunity for review and improvement.