Overview

In accordance with California Education Code and the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, the Redwoods Community College District (CR) delegates to the Curriculum Committee (CC) the primary responsibility of conducting "ongoing reviews of courses and programs to maintain compliance with internal and external policies and sustain academic excellence by ensuring that curricula are academically sound, comprehensive, and responsive the needs of the institution and the community," as stated in AP 4020: Program, Curriculum and Course Development. AP 4020 specifies that

> Curriculum development and course development are closely related and are the primary responsibility of the Curriculum Committee and the Academic Senate. As a standing committee of the Academic Senate, the Curriculum Committee follows the procedures set forth in the current California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Program and Course Approval Handbook.

There is not enough space here to itemize the various procedural dictates and approval criteria, not to mention the details regarding the legal and regulatory context, set forth in the *Program and Course Approval Handbook* (PCAH), so those seeking a more complete picture are encouraged to consult with the various documents linked to this handbook webpage.

At the risk of stating the obvious, the faculty content expert is in practice the one who "sustain[s] academic excellence" in the curriculum and the Curriculum Committee's purpose is essentially to enable and support faculty in doing that critical work. Additionally, it is worth noting from the outset that while California community college faculty are the primary drivers of curriculum and program development, this work is fundamentally collaborative across faculty, staff, and administrative domains. As the 2016 ASCCC paper *Ensuring Effective Curriculum Approval Processes* puts it:

> While no legal requirement exists for administrative approvals of new courses and programs, instructional deans and CIOs should be involved in curriculum approval processes. In fact, curriculum approval should be a collegial and collaborative process involving all college constituencies; everyone has a stake in ensuring that the college offers curriculum that best serves the needs of its students" (4).

In short, the Curriculum Committee supports the ongoing pursuit of curricular excellence and regulatory compliance through processes that facilitate creative and collaborative work among faculty, staff, and administrators, and its fundamental jobs are essentially to provide constructive feedback and support to faculty doing this work and ultimately recommend (or not) that proposals be forwarded by the Academic Senate for adoption by the Board of Trustees.

This Curriculum Handbook serves as the hub for the various tools and resources used in curriculum work at College of the Redwoods. Those who are new to curriculum work or would benefit from a review are encouraged to read the Curriculum Approval Primer below.