

**Academic Senate Philosophy of Course Duplication and Overlap  
and  
Consultation and Mediation Process  
Approved by Academic Senate: October 10, 2013**

**Philosophy Statement**

- Curriculum recommendations should be made from a holistic student-centered perspective.
- Overlap in content is acceptable if mastery of fundamental skills is enhanced by application of varying disciplines.
- Department members are content experts and collegial consultation is the primary method for evaluating overlap across disciplines.
- Each discipline has its own perspectives and attributes. Overlap in some course content taught by different disciplines may broaden students' perspectives.
- It is reasonable and expected that within a discipline course content may overlap.
- It is reasonable and expected that course content may overlap across disciplines. (e.g., psychology, sociology, child development, biology)
- Articulation and transfer flexibility should be a consideration when considering duplication and overlap in content.

**Overlap Consultation Process**

Faculty are responsible for assessing overlap for all new courses before submission to the Educational Design Committee (EDC). The official Course Outline of Record (COR) is the only document used in determining content overlap. Faculty proposing a course with possible content overlap must contact departments three months before submission of a course proposal. Departments have 60 days to discuss overlap and either agree or disagree with the originator's overlap assessment.

Departments that agree with the originator's overlap assessment must specify agreement, in writing, to the originating department within 60 days of the originator's request.

Departments that do not agree with the originator's overlap assessment must specify disagreement, in writing, to the originating department AND must include their own assessment of overlap within 60 days of the originator's request. Departments that do not follow-up within 60 days of the originator's request lose the right to argue against the new course proposal. It is not appropriate to "stall" to prevent courses from moving forward.

Written and signed documentation of collegial consultation, which includes consultation dates, involved persons, and outcomes must be submitted with the course proposal. Once the course is submitted through WebCMS, the course proposal will be announced on the Academic Senate portal during the summer intersession to allow the opportunity for any interested faculty to contact the originator. New courses will only be reviewed during fall semester.

The overlap documentation questions will be revised to read:

Does the course content overlap with any other course content? When a course modification is submitted, only the possible overlap due to the proposed modifications should be considered.

Provide a matrix of the courses and answer the following:

- 1) Specifically, what unique topics are taught in the proposed course?
- 2) Are these topics taught in different ways or to different student populations or at different skill levels? Explain why the proposed course requires the overlapping content.
- 3) What, specifically, is stated in the course descriptions to ensure that students know which course is appropriate for them given the overlapping content?

### **Mediation Process**

When consensus cannot be reached, the Curriculum and Program Planning Committee will assess course overlap to determine whether the overlap in the proposed course is appropriate. In order to make this determination, members of the committee will follow the process outlined below:

1. Committee members will review answers to the three questions regarding overlap provided by both departments as well as the Course Outline of Record for each course in question.
2. The committee will allow a representative from each department to address the taskforce and answer questions that might arise for members of the task force.
3. The committee will submit its recommendation regarding the overlap to the Educational Design Committee. EDC will review the proposed new course for Title 5 compliance and follow the standard course review process.
4. EDC will forward the recommendation of the committee to the Curriculum and Instruction Council (C&I), and C&I will review the recommendation.
5. The Vice President of Instruction may veto a course that violates Title 5 regulations or for reasons of fiscal constraint.
6. Once the mediation process has been followed, C&I will forward its recommendation to the Academic Senate.

Overlap will generally be considered appropriate if some or all of the following conditions are met:

- The skill set(s) taught in the overlapping courses is necessary for success in each course.
- The overlapping content is presented in different contexts or fills a different student need.
- The proposed course significantly varies in unit value, transfer status, or degree applicability.
- The proposed course is designed to meet the needs of different student populations so that the proposed course is unlikely to offer destructive competition to the existing course.