INTRODUCTION 4

HOW TO USE THIS PAPER 5

PLANNING THE COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD 6

Initial Considerations 6

Writing an Integrated Course Outline 8

Resources for the Developer 8

Outcomes, Accreditation, and the Course Outline 9

COMPONENTS OF A COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD 10

ELEMENTS THAT APPLY TO CREDIT AND NONCREDIT COURSES 10

Need/Justification/Goals 10

Mission 10

The Role of a Course 10

Differentiating Courses 11

Purpose and Description 11

External Research Requirements 12

CHANCELLOR’S OFFICE DATA ELEMENTS 12

Stand Alone Courses 12

Title 12

Currency 12

Course Identification Numbers and Chaptering 12

TITLE 5—STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL 13

Degree-Applicable Courses 14

Nondegree-Applicable Courses 14

Standard of Approval for Noncredit 14

Required Elements of a COR per §55002 14

DISCIPLINE ASSIGNMENT 15

Assigning Courses to a Discipline 15

Minimum Qualifications 15

Minimum Qualifications for Noncredit Courses 15

ELEMENTS THAT APPLY TO CREDIT COURSES 15

UNIT VALUE AND CONTACT HOURS 15

Units, Credit Hours and Learning 16

Variable Credit Hours 16

Standard Formula for Credit Hour Calculation 16

Contact Hours 17

Fractional Unit Awards and Minimum Thresholds 19

Cooperative Work Experience 19

Clock Hour Courses / Programs 19

Local Policy 19

PREREQUISITE SKILLS AND LIMITATIONS ON ENROLLMENT 20

PRE/CO-REQUISITES/ADVISORIES AND OTHER LIMITATIONS ON ENROLLMENT 20

Demonstrating and Documenting Need 20

Content Review 20

Content Review, Statistical Validation, and Communication/Computation Requisites 20

Requisites and Articulation 21

Other Limitations on Enrollment 21

CATALOG/COURSE DESCRIPTION 21

Units, Hours Credit Status 22

Requisites and Transferabiity 22

Field Trips, Required Materials, and Other Expenses 23

College Catalog Course Description Checklist 24

Course Schedule 24

OBJECTIVES 24

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes 24

Writing Objectives and the COR 25

Critical Thinking in the Course Objectives 26

Regulatory Requirements Reflected in your Objectives 26

CONTENT 27

Major Headings and Sub Headings 28

Repeatability and Core Content 28

Course Families 28

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION 29

METHODS OF EVALUATION AND COURSE GRADING POLICIES 31

Using Multiple Methods of Evaluation 31

Methods of Evaluation and Critical Thinking 32

Attendance and Evaluation 33

ASSIGNMENTS 33

Assignments: It’s in the Way That You Write It 33

Other Considerations for Assignments 34

REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS 35

Materials other than Books 36

Required Materials and Articulation 36

Materials for Courses Officered via Distance Education 36

DETERMINING LEVELS BELOW GRADUATION/TRANSFER AND CB 21 RUBRICS, 36

Basic Skills and Title 5 36

Pre-transfer Courses and Degree Applicability 37

Aligning Basic Skills Curriculum with the CB 21 Rubrics 37

Determining College Level Coursework 38

ELEMENTS THAT APPLY TO NONCREDIT COURSES 38

General Notes 38

CONTACT HOURS 39

CATALOG DESCRIPTION 39

Important Course Content and Educational Planning 39

Schedule Flexibility in the Description 40

Course Expenses and Required Materials 40

Examples of Noncredit Course Descriptions 40

Requisites 42

College Catalog Course Description checklist for Noncredit 42

OBJECTIVES 43

CONTENT 43

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION 44

METHODS OF EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE 46

ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR OTHER ACTIVITIES 48

RELEVENT ADDITIONAL COURSE OUTLINE ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS 50

MODALITY OF INSTRUCTION DISTANCE EDUCATION 50

COURSE CALENDAR AND MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE ENROLLMENTS 50

OTHER LOCAL ELEMENTS 52

GENERAL CURRICULUM CONSIDERATIONS 52

CHANGES WHICH TRIGGER COURSE OUTLINE REVIEW 53

CALIFORNIA’S EDUCATION SEGMENTS, ROLES AND STUDENTS 55

CSU/GE Breadth and IGETC 56

Contract Education and Community Service Offerings 56

# INTRODUCTION

The heart of the California Community Colleges curricular processes is the course outline of record. The course outline of record (COR) has evolved considerably from its origins as a list of topics covered in a course. Today, the course outline of record is a document with defined legal standing that plays a central and critical role in the curriculum of the California community colleges. The course outline has both internal and external influences that impact all aspects of a COR, from outcomes to teaching methodology, which, by extension, impact program development and program evaluation.

Standards for the course outline of record COR appear in Title 5 Regulations (see Appendix xx), in the Chancellor’s Office *Program and Course Approval Handbook* (PCAH), and in the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) accreditation standards. System-wide intersegmental general education agreements with the California State University and the University of California (CSU-GE and IGETC respectively) may also place requirements upon the course outline, such as requiring specific content or requisites, or currency of learning materials to satisfy articulation agreements.

Since the COR is also used as the basis for articulation agreements, colleges pay great attention to providing a document with which to determine how a student’s community college courses will be counted upon transfer to four-year baccalaureate granting institutions. Course outlines of record are also now used in the process of identifying courses that meet the requirements of the Course Identification Numbering System (C-ID) that are used to create Transfer Model Curricula (TMC) for Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs) required by AB 1440 and SB 440. Additionally, course outlines are regularly reviewed as part of a college’s Program Review process, a process of central importance to accrediting agencies, as well as to local planning and resource purposes. For colleges to maintain their delegated authority to review and approve new and revised courses, they must certify that their local approval standards meet the comprehensive guidelines produced by the Chancellor’s Office. The quality described in a COR is evidence of meeting these guidelines.

The COR plays a particularly important role in the California community colleges because it clearly lays out the expected content, objectives, and learning outcomes for a course for use by any faculty member who teaches the course. Course outlines provide a type of quality control since it is common for community college courses to be taught by several, and sometimes dozens, of multiple full and part-time faculty members. In order to To ensure that core components are covered in all sections of a course, the California Community College System relies on the COR to specify those elements that will be covered by all faculty members who teach the course.

One of the most significant portions of the update is the inclusion of student learning outcomes (SLOs). Student learning outcomes (SLOs) SLOs are a key driver of many, if not all, elements of a course outline of record. The abilities and skills that students can are able to demonstrate, and faculty must assess, should be in place prior to the decision of what content, objectives, assignments, and assessment tools would be most useful to help students achieve those outcomes which faculty then assess. In addition to the pedagogical elements associated with the SLOs of a course, the current accrediting commission that accredits the majority of California’s community colleges mandates that institutions maintain “officially approved and current course outlines of record that include student learning outcomes” (ACCJC Standard IIA3). Due to this standard, there is disagreement in the field regarding the appropriate physical location of outcomes on a course outline of record, and some colleges have opted to include course student learning outcomes on an addendum to a COR while others place the SLOs on the COR next to the objectives. Colleges are encouraged to work with their accrediting body to ensure appropriate compliance. A finer distinction between student learning outcomes and course objectives is provided in other sections of this paper.

While the state and local standards for a COR have been updated many times and are subject to ongoing revision, numerous resolutions have directed the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) to provide guidance in the development of course outlines. This update to the original paper *The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide* (2008), requested by resolution 9.06 (S14), is part of the effort to provide that guidance so that faculty might have direction and reasonable assurance that the internal and external course outline of record requirements for the college are met. This updated paper has incorporated the relevant portions of the original document as well as several Academic Senate papers, including *Stylistic Considerations in Writing Course Outlines of Record* (1998), *Good Practices for Course Approvals* (1998), and *Noncredit Challenges and Opportunities* (2009).

We also recommend that this paper be used in the context of other documents, including ASCCC papers *on The Curriculum Committee: Role, Structure, Duties, and Standards of Good Practice* (1996) and [*Ensuring Effective Curriculum Approval Processes: A Guide for Local Senates*](http://www.asccc.org/papers/ensuring-effective-curriculum-approval-processes-guide-local-senates) (2016). In addition, the current edition of the Chancellor’s Office *Program and Course Approval Handbook* (2016), along with ancillaries to that document, will be relevant for portions of the paper. Finally, the *Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College’s Accreditation Standards* (2014) should be examined in the context of standards relevant to teaching and learning at the course, program, and institutional level. The purpose of these documents is to support the development of a course outline of record in light of the role of local curriculum committees and governing boards in approving them, and the role of the Chancellor’s Office in approving certificates and programs to ensure compliance.

While this paper offers a model for the course outline of record, this paper is NOT intended to force standardization of curriculum. Instead, the paper should serve as a guide to assist faculty in presenting their courses in a format that will accurately reflect the quality of instruction being providing. While the course outline of record is a blueprint of what instructional elements must be included, teaching should always be a dynamic and adaptive process, constantly adjusting to accommodate the ever-changing, diverse learning needs of students in the California community colleges. The model presented is intended to clearly demonstrate that the course will stand up to the rigor established by Education Code and Title 5 regulations, transfer institutions, accrediting bodies, and other external entities.

# HOW TO USE THIS PAPER

This paper is intended to serve the needs of both the new and experienced curriculum developer in writing a course outline of record. Credit and noncredit course outlines are treated separately, not because the differences between the two are significant, but because in all likelihood the writer of a noncredit course outline needs ready access to other sections related to noncredit courses more than related information for to credit course outlines.

It is important to note that this paper is not focused on the development of programs leading to degrees and certificates. While the context of program development and evaluation is important in the development of course outlines of record and is reflected in the discussion of the elements of the course outline of record, for specific information about the requirements for submitting programs for approval to the Chancellor’s Office, one should refer to the *Program and Course Approval Handbook*, as well as the ASCCC paper on Course and Program Development (forthcoming).

For the new writer of a course outline writer, or for those who need a refresher, the first section of the paper, “Planning the Course Outline of Record,” discusses planning considerations for developing a course outline of record, including the need to consider how the course outline integrates with numerous curriculum processes, the course learning outcomes, and the resources that should be collected as one embarks on the writing or revision of a course outline of record.

The second section of the paper, “Components of a Course Outline of Record,” details each element required for a course outline of record. The elements are presented in the order typically found in many course outlines of record, which is similar to the order found in Title 5 §55002, Standards and Criteria for Courses.

The final section of the paper, “General Curriculum Considerations,” contains further background and detailed information about curriculum requirements outlined within Title 5 that go beyond the course outline of record.

The appendices include a glossary of the terms commonly used in curriculum development, a list of references organized by curriculum topic, references to Title 5 regulatory language, and examples of course outlines of record.

# PLANNING THE COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

## Initial Considerations

Where does one start? What comes first? The development of curriculum is something that should be undertaken by faculty – while administrators or others might have ideas about courses or programs, the primary responsibility must always reside with the faculty. In most cases, the faculty member or members will initiate this effort based upon the question: “What do we need students to be able to do, and what do they need to know to be able to do it?” The idea for courses also grows may also originate from some identified need or idea, such as a course needed to improve job readiness for a new or revised program being developed or revised or one that is needed for transfer into for a particular major. Regardless of the motivation, the course developer should begin with a holistic vision of the course to be proposed which, at its core, is aware of the skills or abilities that a student should be able to complete demonstrate as a result of successfully completing the course. Upon determining that there is a need and a rationale for a course, the next consideration will be is to determine what the course’s role(s) will be. Is the course intended to be degree applicable? Will it transfer? Is it appropriate as a general education course? What articulation should be sought? These are just a few of the many questions to consider prior to beginning the development of the any course outline of record.

While each required course element must be written discretely, each element should also be developed in light of the take into account other elements to assure the final course outline is constructed in an integrated way, in other words, integrated. For example, there is an interwoven relationship between the discrete skills and content students should learn (course objectives), how proficiency in those objectives is will going to be evaluated (methods of evaluation), and the measurable skills and abilities that students can are able to demonstrate subsequent to completing the upon course completion (student learning outcomes). Furthermore the objectives and outcomes must have a clear relationship to the subject or content. The course outline of record should reflect a quality in the course sufficient to attain the objectives and the resulting outcomes.

Central to the regulatory intent of collegial consultation is the faculty’s primacy in their role of ensuring quality instruction through the development of integrated course outlines of record. The outline must contain all the elements specified in Title 5 §§55002(a), (b), or (c): unit value, contact hours, requisites, catalog description, objectives, and content. The outline must also include types or examples of assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation. The course outline must be rigorous and effective in integrating the required components of critical thinking, essay writing/problem solving, college- level skills, and vocabulary throughout, if such skills are appropriate for the type of course being developed. In addition, the course must comply with any other applicable laws such as those related to access for students with disabilities. A COR also must address any requirements based in accreditation standards such as the inclusion of student learning outcomes.

There are also stylistic concerns. Research on curriculum and instructional design suggest that the COR developer be very specific when articulating what the student will be able to accomplish by the end of the course and defining how one will evaluate the student’s progress. The use of a taxonomy of learning, such as Bloom’s Taxonomy, is recommended for consistency of language and rigor. After this development, the content items, learning materials, class enrollment maximums (if not a contractual issue), the units and contact hours, etc et al. can all be fleshed out with a specific focus on integrating each of these areas so that they validate the need for each component in multiple ways. Style issues also matter in the articulation process. Faculty developing transferable courses should be mindful of the language in course syllabi or outlines at the receiving institutions to ensure articulation agreements are reached smoothly.

Irrespective of how the course outline is structured and written, the developer will generally produce a more robust product not by starting at one end and working towards the other, but by being creative where it is most easy or enjoyable to do so. Then he/she can build upon that on these initial areas to develop the other elements, or fill-in unanticipated gaps, as they become apparent. For many developers, the initial drafting might be in the content areas. From there, a developer can expand into the writing of learning objectives, textbook selection, and the number of course hours needed to cover the material. In short, there is a constant and necessary interplay in the development of the elements of the course outline once the desired learning outcomes, as the primary driver of the COR, have been established.

## Writing an Integrated Course Outline

A course outline of record needs to be integrated, as each element of the course outline of record should reinforce the purpose of the other elements in the course outline. There should be an obvious relationship between the objectives of the course, the methods of instruction, assignments, and methods of evaluation used to promote and evaluate student mastery of those objectives and outcomes.

At the onset, every course should be developed with a purpose or goal in mind. The course must have sufficient and appropriate learning objectives that create a framework for students to develop their knowledge and abilities to be able to demonstrate the overarching student learning outcomes and the intended purpose of the course. The course content items then define the elements of information, behavior, or capabilities for each objective to be mastered. Each content item and objective is then reflected in comprehensive assignments or lessons, which are taught using appropriate and effective methods. Finally, in the integrated course outline of record, the methods for evaluation of student performance validate the acquisition and mastery of each content item and the attainment of each objective. These methods of assessment may also serve to measure student achievement of the defined student learning outcomes, or additional methods may be useful. Also, note that content is the only subject-based element; the others specifically focus on what the student will be doing and will be able to demonstrate by successfully completing the course.

SAMPLE HERE

## Resources for the Developer

While all course outline development must comply with Title 5 §55002 (see Appendix xx), many colleges have developed a template for the course outline that includes the required elements as well as many local elements. A college may use a curriculum management system for tracking its curriculum approval process and as its repository for course outlines, as well as for submitting that information to the Chancellor’s Office. An effective template will help the developer pull all the required information together before prior to submission. It is also important to note that the responsibility for completing every outline element may not fall upon the developer. For example, numerical course identifiers or transferability may be addressed much later in the approval process. However, in the “transferability” example, local practice may provide for the developer to indicate their intent for the course to eventually to be transferable.

The following are a few Some useful documents for the course developer to have at hand are: the college catalog; some recently approved course outlines to serve as examples; any supplemental addenda/forms dictated by the instructional modality (e.g. a separate distance education form or content review form); standards established by the discipline or external regulators; and any special district policies that may apply. Often local curriculum committees have created their own curriculum development handbooks that contain much of this information.

Making use of human resources is also important. Consulting with the faculty in the discipline is essential. It is also highly recommended that the developer identify other faculty members who are familiar with the local process to assist. The curriculum committee chair may be available to provide guidance, as well as members of the curriculum committee, curriculum specialists or technicians, and administrators involved in curricular practices such as a dean or chief instructional officer.

The final and equally critical tools are those references relevant to the subject matterbeing taught. From a planning perspective, the developer should acquire these resources first and then examine what are the most effective and reliable methods to promote learning within the intended learning environments available for the delivery of this subject. For example, planning for allied health courses must take into consideration equipment needs and safety concerns to promote effective learning, as well as the pedagogy of the discipline.

With resources at hand, we now turn to the heart of the process, an examination of the elements of the course outline of record.

## Outcomes, Accreditation, and the Course Outline

For California’s community colleges, several accreditation standards regarding student learning outcomes touch on the COR. Standard II.A.3 states, “The institution has officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes.” This statement has been interpreted in different ways with most colleges choosing to include SLOs as addenda to their CORs housed within their course outline management systems. While there has not been an indication from the field that this interpretation is incorrect or leads to recommendations from visiting teams, colleges should continue to work with their accrediting agency to ensure compliance. In addition to outcomes appearing on the COR, Standard I.C. Institutional Integrity lists many areas where colleges must ensuring that accurate information is provided for students in many areas including learning outcomes and educational programs. Colleges would be wise to maintain their CORs as accurately as possible to fulfill the spirit of this standard, even if CORs are not named specifically.

As stated earlier in this paper, SLOs should act as a key driver for many elements of both credit and noncredit courses. Per the standards, the assessment data collected by faculty on outcomes must then be reviewed and used to create action plans intended to improve teaching practices and student success at the course and program level. Many colleges use a data mapping process that links course student learning outcomes (CSLOs) found on the COR to program student learning outcomes (PSLOs) in order that the data collected at the CSLO level provides data for PSLO assessment. Given the importance of these links between the CLSOs and the PSLOs, it’s imperative that faculty begin course development and review of objectives and other elements of the COR with an analysis of how the CSLOs support student attainment of the PSLOs for those programs that include the course being reviewed. This ensures that students taking the courses and performing the SLOs of those courses will also be able to perform the PSLOs for their programs.

A similar situation exists for Institutional Student Learning Outcomes and General Education Learning Outcomes. All courses should support either the ISLOs of the college or the GELOs for students enrolled in programs that include a GE component. Standard II.A.12 states, “The institution, relying on faculty expertise, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum, based upon student learning outcomes and competencies appropriate to the degree level.” Similar mappings between CSLOs and ISLOs and/or GELOs are often the source for data reports used for annual accreditation reporting and for institution-wide discussion on student success. Given the potential widespread reach of ISLO and GELO data, faculty should discuss CSLOs with these implications in mind.

# COMPONENTS OF A COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

# ELEMENTS THAT APPLY TO CREDIT AND NONCREDIT COURSES

The following elements of a course outline of record are items that reflect requirements from Title 5 §55002, “Standards and Criteria for Courses”, other sections of Title 5, Chancellor’s Office guidelines, and/or accreditation standards. However, some of these elements may not apply to all types of courses.

## Need/Justification/Goals

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance for developers to meet the criteria spelled out in the *Program and Course Approval Handbook* (PCAH) regarding documenting what student need the course is intended to meet. According to the handbook PCAH, “The proposal must demonstrate a need for a program or course that meets the stated goals and objectives in the region the college proposes to serve with the program” (8).

## Mission

The mission of the college should drive all curriculum development and as well as potential revision when the mission of the college is changed or expanded. Local curriculum processes should include questions that prompt faculty to consider the mission when making new course proposals, revising existing courses, or adding new courses to programs. This is also an accreditation issue for many accrediting agencies with standards focused on the role of the college mission in institutional planning.

## The Role of a Course

For transfer programs and courses, this need is more easily established by determining both student demand and transfer applicability for existing university majors. For career technical programs and courses, this need can be more challenging to establish and must rely on things as labor market data, potential employer needs, advisory committee input, and job advertising information, to name a few. Additionally, some districts have research capabilities that can assist with this research and know where to access the data.

Once the need has been determined and documented, this statement should establish the role of the course in the major programs or general education areas for in which it is designed to serve. If it is a stand-alone course, which is – a course which is not part of a program—then its role in the college’s curriculum should be explained as part of a proposal. In particular, this rationale should point out the reason that explain how existing courses do not meet this identified need and clearly to distinguishes clearly the role of the proposed course from that of similar courses.

Examples of need statements:

* Medical Terminology I provides a basic introduction to students in all allied health majors. By combining portions of existing courses in those majors, this course will allows those programs to provide more emphasis on content. An added advantage will be more flexibility in section offerings as well as emphasizing medical terminology across all specialties.
* This course has been proposed to meet a new requirement expected for students pursuing employment in the hazardous materials technology industry, which is now required for certification in fire science.
* This course in Jazz and Blues Music grew out of increasing student demand, as demonstrated by wait list data and student surveys, for more on this subject than is currently being covered in our Popular American Music course. This new course will be part of the restricted elective list for those majoring in music.

## Differentiating Courses

Course outlines of record should be created with other courses in mind when there are similarities between them. When a course is part of a sequence of courses, great care should be taken in the development process to show the progression of rigor in a sequence of courses or the different objectives, content, or outcomes that make the course different from others and an essential part of a program. For non-sequential, but similar, courses, similar steps should be taken to ensure non-duplication of coursework that may confuse students and dilute student demand. Areas on a COR which provide opportunity for a clear distinction to be made between courses include the description, the objectives, core, content, examples of assignments, and student learning outcomes.

## Purpose and Description

When any course is developed, the course purpose of description sets the stage for all subsequent elements on of the COR. Embedded within a course’s description are the reason why the course exists and a holistic overview of objectives, content, and outcomes. Without this defining statement, instructors teaching sections of a course may be unclear on the scope of the course, how content should be taught, or how discrete objectives or the overarching student learning outcomes statements should be assessed. A course without a description and purpose that is clearly distinct from another course should not exist, and all courses should include defined student learning outcomes relevant to and supported by the course objectives.

## External Research Requirements

Some fields of study stay similar through the ages over time, while whereas others fields change and evolve rapidly comparatively quickly. For every course, there should be a periodic considerations of outside influences, and. When external research requirements are mandated necessitated, faculty should consider these triggers as requiring a prelude to the development of or revision of a COR. External accreditation bodies, career technical education advisory committees, local college-business partnerships, and agreements between the community college and any baccalaureate-granting institutions with agreements are all examples of such requirements external agencies which may necessitate development or revision.

# CHANCELLOR’S OFFICE DATA ELEMENTS

## Stand Alone Courses

The Chancellor’s Office refers to courses that are not part of a program leading to an award as stand-alone courses. Stand-alone courses that can be approved and offered locally without Chancellor’s Office review. Stand-alone courses often meet a specific local need. This term also refers to credit courses required for a certificate of less fewer than 18 semester units or 27 quarter units that has not been approved by the Chancellor’s Office. Like other courses, a stand-alone course must have a control number prior to being offered and claimed for apportionment, contain all required elements, and meet all standards of approval as determined in required by Title 5. Additional guidance for creating stand-alone courses is available at the Chancellor’s Office’s website.

## Title

All courses must have titles which should be considered from the perspective of students as well as potential employers and transfer institutions. While overly specific titles can be cumbersome, the title of the course should provide enough information that prospective students will easily identify the general purpose of the course. Course titles take on extra significance when reviewed by articulating institutions, C-ID reviewers, and potential employers who use college transcripts when considering students for employment.

## Currency

Curriculum must be current to be relevant. While Title 5 requires review for credit courses with pre- and corequisites, all accreditation and articulation processes also have currency requirements, as do many grants and other external agencies. Typically, the course outline of record will have some method for tracking revision dates to meet these needs. As part of that currency requirement, the ACCJC requires that all courses must be reviewed every 6 years, but for and all career technical education courses which must be reviewed every 2 years.

## Course Identification Numbers and Chaptering

Courses are submitted electronically to the Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI). Credit course proposals are certified by the Chief Instructional Officer and the curriculum chair at a college, and are then submitted to the Chancellor’s Office for chaptering prior to being offered at the community college. The Chancellor’s Office provides a unique control number for every course to ensure data accuracy that are which is critical to measuring student success indicators. The unique identifier should be included on the course outline of record for easy reference and will likely be assigned as a part of the approval process.

Local curriculum approval processes may provide some of these data elements outside of the developer’s normal role. But local process development must reflect faculty primacy in all matters pertaining to the course outline of record.

The Chancellor’s Office reviews credit and noncredit course submissions to ensure that the associated data elements for each course are correct and compliant with regulations. These course data elements will be reported to the Management Information System (MIS). While there is no regulatory requirement that these are listed in the course outline of record, good practice suggests that MIS elements should be included as part of the local curriculum review and submission process either within the COR or as attachments. Criteria for Data Elements include:

|  |
| --- |
| DED NO DATA ELEMENT NAME |
| CB01 Course Department and Number |
| CB02 Course Title |
| CB03 Course TOP Code |
| CB04 Course Credit Status |
| CB05 Course Transfer Status |
| CB06 Units of Credit – Maximum |
| CB07 Units of Credit – Minimum |
| CB08 Course Basic Skills Status |
| CB09 Course SAM Priority Code |
| CB10 Course Cooperative Work Experience Education Status |
| CB11 Course Classification Status |
| CB13 Educational Assistance Class Instruction (Approved Special Class) |
| CB21 Course Prior to Transfer Level |
| CB23 Funding Agency Category |
| CB24 Course Program Status |

# TITLE 5—STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL

There are seven standards for approval that apply to degree-applicable credit courses, four of which four apply to nondegree-applicable credit courses. *Grading policy, units, intensity*, and *prerequisites* and *corequisites* apply to all credit courses. *Basic skills requirements*, *difficulty* and *level* apply to degree-applicable credit courses only. These standards are the criteria by which the developer’s intention to ensure quality will be assessed for college or pre-college level instruction.

*Intensity*, *difficulty*, and *level* are not reflected as discrete elements in the course outline of record but rather are met within the totality of the course outline.

## Degree-Applicable Courses

For degree-applicable courses, *difficulty* calls for critical thinking, understanding and application of concepts at the college level and *intensity* sets a requirement that most students will need to study independently, possibly for periods beyond that of the total course time defined by the unit(s). The outline should build the case that students will be required to study independently outside of the class time (*intensity*). Reading, writing and other outside assignments qualify to fulfill both “study” time as defined in the credit hour and the “independent study” required to demonstrate *intensity*. The course developer who creates a course based solely upon laboratory/activity or lecture time with no designated outside study time (e.g. students are in the class all 48 hours per unit) will still need to demonstrate a depth and breadth of student learning that requires student effort beyond class time. The *level* standard requires college level learning skills and vocabulary.

## Nondegree-Applicable Courses

For nondegree-applicable credit courses, the *intensity* standard requires instruction in critical thinking and refers to the preparation of students for the independent work they will do in degree-applicable courses, including the development of self-direction and self-motivation. The *level* standard is not required for nondegree-applicable courses, but factors such as the *units* standard should reflect course workload variations appropriate to the developmental level of the students. And nothing prohibits a nondegree-applicable course from having elements that meet these two standards.

## Standard of Approval for Noncredit

There is one standard for approval for noncredit courses, which is a broader standard that places the burden upon the curriculum committee for determining that the level, rigor and quality is appropriate for the enrolled students. Where appropriate these “Standards for Approval” are included in each element under the sub-heading “Regulatory Requirements—Title 5.”

## Required Elements of a COR per §55002

The Chancellor’s Office review process requires the submission of a course outline of record that meets the standards for courses established in §55002 of Title 5 and contains, at minimum, the following elements:

1. Unit Value

2. The expected required number of contact hours

3. Requisites

4. Catalog description

5. Objectives

6. Content

7. Required reading and writing assignments

8. Other outside–of-class assignments

9. Instructional methodology

10. Methods of evaluation

# DISCIPLINE ASSIGNMENT

## Assigning Courses to a Discipline

Each course must be assigned by the curriculum committee to the appropriate discipline(s). This assignment helps describe the course by classifying it in a discipline and also indicates what academic and occupational (if it is for a discipline that does not require a master’s degree as a minimum qualification) preparation is needed to teach the course.

## Minimum Qualifications

These assignable disciplines are those that appear in Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges, also known as the “Disciplines List.” Generally, a course is assigned to a single discipline. However, some courses are cross-listed, i.e. placed in two or more disciplines. For example, a course on the Sociology of Aging may be appropriately assigned to both the disciplines of sociology and psychology, meaning a faculty member meeting the minimum qualifications of either discipline would be able to teach the course. Some courses can also be listed in the interdisciplinary discipline, which is the combination of two or more disciplines–the faculty member must meet the minimum qualifications of one of the disciplines listed for that interdisciplinary discipline and have upper division or graduate courses in at least one of the other disciplines listed for the interdisciplinary discipline.

## Minimum Qualifications for Noncredit Courses

Noncredit minimum qualifications are also discussed in the *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in the California Community Colleges*. However, the noncredit instructional areas are defined in Title 5 rather than in this list of disciplines, and are sometimes referred to as Noncredit Instructional Areas. The assignment of noncredit courses to these areas should be approved by the curriculum committee just as it is done in credit instruction. Again, this is to ensure that faculty with the appropriate expertise will teach the course.

It is not a Title 5 requirement that the discipline assignment designations be contained within the course outline of record, but these assignments do need to be monitored somewhere and the course outline of record is a convenient location that will provide appropriate direction to those who would assign faculty to teach the course. The ASCCC has taken the position that discipline designation should be an element of the course outline of record: “For clarity and as a convenient reference, discipline designations should appear on course outlines of record.” as stated in the *Qualifications For Faculty Service In The California Community Colleges: Minimum Qualifications, Placement Of Courses Within Disciplines, And Faculty Service Areas* (ASCCC, 2004).

# ELEMENTS THAT APPLY TO CREDIT COURSES

# UNIT VALUE AND CONTACT HOURS

Unit Value and Contact Hours

## Units, Credit Hours and Learning

A course outline of record that is well integrated will have built a solid case for the number of units granted for the learning achieved by the successful student. The definition of a Credit Hour requires 48 hours of lecture, laboratory/activity, study time, or any combination thereof. Developers of courses designed for transfer and some highly regulated career technical fields need to refer to applicable standards as they may require specific ratios of lecture, lab and study time

## Variable Credit Hours

The regulations also provide for variable unit courses. Such courses include work experience, activity courses where the number of units can vary from semester to semester, and skill courses where a student registers for the number of units he/she anticipates completing. Title 5 requires colleges to award units of credit in .5 unit increments at a minimum. Calculations for each increment of credit awarded by the college represent the minimum threshold for awarding that increment of credit. Students are awarded the next increment of credit only when they pass the next minimum threshold.

Because of the unique nature of these courses, there are different approaches for how variable unit calculations are implemented locally. The developer who is unfamiliar with variable-unit courses should seek guidance from his/her curriculum committee chair, or other appropriate college personnel, especially when calculating variable hours for courses that are repeatable.

## Standard Formula for Credit Hour Calculation

Standards for credit hour calculations are contained in title 5 §§55002.5, 55002(a)(2)(B), and 55002(b)(2)(B). Courses not classified as cooperative work experience, clock hour, or open entry/open exit use the following method for calculating units of credit.

Divide the total of all student learning hours (lecture, lab, activity, clinical, TBA, other + outside-of-class hours) by the hours-per-unit divisor, round down to the nearest increment of credit awarded by the college. Expressed as an equation:

Divide the total of all student learning hours (lecture, lab, activity, clinical, TBA, other + outside-of-class hours) by the hours-per-unit divisor, round down to the nearest increment of credit awarded by the college. Expressed as an equation:

= Units of

Credit

[Total Contact Hours + Outside-of-class Hours]

Hours-per-unit Divisor

The result of this calculation is then rounded down to the nearest .5 increment or to the nearest fractional unit award used by the district, if smaller than .5. This formula applies to both semester and quarter credit calculations. While this formula can yield a value below the lowest increment of credit awarded by the college, zero-unit courses are not permissible. The following definitions are used in the application of this formula:

## Contact Hours

* Total Contact Hours: The total time per term that a student is under the direct supervision of an instructor or other qualified employee as defined in §§58050 - 58051. This number is the sum of all contact hours for the course in all calculations categories, including lecture, recitation, discussion, seminar, laboratory, clinical, studio, practica, activity, to-be-arranged, etc. Contact hours for courses may include hours assigned to more than one instructional category, e.g. lecture and laboratory, lecture and activity, lecture and clinical.
* Outside-of-class Hours: Hours students are expected to engage in course work outside of the classroom. Federal and state regulations for credit hour calculations are based on the total time a student spends on learning, including outside-of-class hours. As a matter of standard practice in higher education, lecture and related course formats require two hours of student work outside of class for every hour in-class. All other academic work, including laboratory, activity, studio, clinical, practica, TBA, etc. must provide an equivalent total number of student learning hours as typically required for lecture, with the ratio of in-class to outside-of-class work prorated appropriately for the instructional category.

Typically, these ratios are expressed as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Instructional Category | In-class Hours | Outside-of-class Hours |
| Lecture (Lecture, Discussion, Seminar and Related Work) | 1 | 2 |
| Activity (Activity, Lab w/ Homework, Studio, and Similar) | 2 | 1 |
| Laboratory(Traditional Lab, Natural Science Lab, Clinical, and Similar) | 3 | 0 |

Variations or ratios for inside- to outside-of-class hours are possible, but should fall within the parameters for one unit of credit as described above. Standard expectations in higher education for credit hour calculations generally align with the in-class to outside-of-class ratios as described in this table. Deviations from these widely accepted standards, while permitted, can negatively affect course transferability and articulation and should be used with caution. Since TBA hours are required to be listed separately on the COR, any outside-of-class hours expected of students in relationship to TBA contact hours must be included in the total student learning hours for the calculation.

* Hours-per-unit Divisor: The value, or value range, used by the college to define the number of hours required to award each unit of credit. This value must be minimum of 48 and maximum of 54 hours for colleges on the semester system and a minimum of 33 and maximum of 36 for colleges on the quarter system. This number represents the total student learning hours for which the college awards one unit of credit. Colleges may use any divisor within this range, but should maintain consistency between the divisor and the dividend. For example, if a college uses the 51 = 1 unit calculation to determine the hours of lecture and outside of class work in the dividend, they should use 51 as the divisor. Colleges that indicate the minimum and maximum range of 48 – 54 should show that same range for the dividend in the equation and resulting unit calculation.

Colleges must exercise caution in determining the hours-per-unit divisor for credit hour calculations. Because California finance laws assume that primary terms average 17-weeks on the semester system and 11⅔ weeks on the quarter system (the two semesters or three quarters equal the traditional 35-week academic year), and because student attendance and related apportionment state compliance auditing is based on the student contact hours delineated in the official COR, the Chancellor’s Office strongly recommends that colleges use the 18-week semester or 12-week quarter as the basis for the student contact hour calculation used in the COR, even if a college has been approved to use a compressed academic calendar. The 18-week semester or 12-week quarter primary term provides the greatest flexibility in terms of contact hours, and colleges do not risk an audit finding for excessive apportionment claims such as they might experience using a 16-week semester basis for the contact-hour calculation.

Additionally, it is also important to note the flexible calendar program is designed around the 35-week traditional academic calendar, so basing contact hour targets around an 18-week semester assures that instructional hours lost to “flex” activities will not result in the district not providing the minimum number of hours required by Title 5, §55002.5, to award a unit of credit. Colleges using the 48-hour minimum calculation for determining credit hours risk problems with apportionment calculations and audits. Colleges must be specifically authorized by the Chancellor’s Office to use a compressed calendar, which adds further caution to the use of the minimum end of the hour to unit range.

Likewise, the activity or laboratory with homework calculation should be used with caution. In the natural sciences and other disciplines, it is standard practice to base the number of units awarded for laboratory solely on contact hours, even though there may be some expectation of student work or preparation outside of class. Any alteration of this relationship for laboratory courses in the natural sciences and clinical hours in many allied health fields, can jeopardize programmatic accreditation where specific ratios or hours are required for program components or course acceptability in meeting major or general education requirements when transferred to a baccalaureate degree-granting institution. Use of this category should be restricted to only those instructional areas where it is clearly aligned with accepted practices higher education. The term “activity” as used in this context is not intended to limit or define the use of this term locally. Some colleges use this term—and related credit calculations—interchangeably with laboratory.

The Course Outlines of Record for many districts do not specify the outside-of-class hours, relying instead on the assumption of traditional ratios for inside- to outside-of-class hours for lecture, laboratory, or other course formats. In instances where districts only record total contact hours for the course as a whole or in each instructional category on the Course Outline of Record, the course submission must include the expected hours of student work outside of class used to determine total student learning hours for the purposes of credit calculations as described above. The tables on the following pages provide guidance for the expected outside-of-class hours for a wide range of typical credit hour calculations.

## Fractional Unit Awards and Minimum Thresholds

Title 5 requires colleges to award units of credit in .5 unit increments at a minimum. Calculations for each increment of credit awarded by the college represent the minimum threshold for awarding that increment of credit. Students are awarded the next increment of credit only when they pass the next minimum threshold.

For example, if a course is designed to require 180 total student learning hours (36 lecture, 72 lab, and 72 outside-of-class hours), the calculation of units works as follows:

180 / 54 = 3.33

3 units of credit

In this example, the college would not award 3.5 units until the total student learning hours reached the 189-hour minimum threshold for 3.5 units. However, if a college offers credit in .25 increments, this example would yield a 3.25 unit course. Another common example is a course offered for 40 contact hours, with no hours of homework, resulting in 40 total student learning hours. In a district that awards credit in .5 increments, 40 total student learning hours / 54 = .75, which meets the minimum threshold for .5 units of credit, but does not pass the minimum threshold for 1 unit of credit. In this example, 40 total student learning hours (36 contact and 4 outside-of-class) would award .5 units of credit. This is similar to grading systems where, for example, a student earns a “B” for any percentage between 80 and 89. The student is only awarded an “A” when they reach the minimum threshold of 90 percent.

## Cooperative Work Experience

Units for Cooperative Work Experience courses are calculated as follows:

Each 75 hours of paid work equals one semester credit or 50 hours equals one quarter credit.

Each 60 hours of non-paid work equals one semester credit or 40 hours equals one quarter credit.

## Clock Hour Courses / Programs

The definition of a clock hour program and standards for awarding of units of credit for these programs is defined in federal regulations 34 CFR §668.8(k)(2)(i)(A) and 668.8(l), respectively. In this regulation, a program is considered to be a clock-hour program if a program is required to measure student progress in clock hours when:

* Receiving Federal or State approval or licensure to offer the program; or
* Completing clock hours is a requirement for graduates to apply for licensure or the authorization to practice the occupation that the student is intending to pursue.

Programs that meet this definition are required to use a federal formula for determining the appropriate awarding of credit as outlined in 34 CFR §668.8(l).

## Local Policy

Colleges are encouraged to develop local policy, regulations, or procedures specifying the accepted relationship between contact hours, outside-of-class hours, and credit for calculating credit hours to ensure consistency in awarding units of credit. The creation of a standing policy or formal calculation document helps districts fulfill the responsibility of local governing boards under Title 5 §55002 to establish the relationship between units and hours for the local curriculum development and approval process.

# PREREQUISITE SKILLS AND LIMITATIONS ON ENROLLMENT

# PRE/CO-REQUISITES/ADVISORIES AND OTHER LIMITATIONS ON ENROLLMENT

## Demonstrating and Documenting Need

Justification of prerequisites requires documentation, and colleges have generally developed forms for the various types of evidence. This evidence can take many forms: equivalent prerequisites at UC and/or CSU, content review, legal codes mandating the requisite, or data collection and analysis. While these forms are not required to be part of the course outline, they are often attached as documentation of the process having been completed. Subdivision I.C.3, A, 2(a)vii of the Model District Policy on Requisites (CCCCO, 1993) strongly advises that districts “maintain documentation that the above steps were taken.” A simple method for achieving this record is to retain the content skills scrutiny documents for each requisite course.

## Content Review

All courses with requisites and/or advisories must document those requisite skills which have been developed through content review in a separate section of the course outline. The primary goal of identifying requisites and providing advisories is to facilitate student success.

A content review process should document that pathway by showing how the skills achieved in the requisite course are fundamental to success for most students taking the “requiring” course. The writing style of the prerequisite skills section is the same as that for the objectives. The section usually begins with a phrase such as “Upon entering this course the student should be able to:” with a list of those entry skills following, expressed using active learning verbs following Bloom’s taxonomy (Appendix xx). In its simplest form a content review consists of comparing the entry skills list with the exiting skills of one or more courses to identify courses that would be appropriate requisites. This list of entry skills is also very useful in determining articulation pathways for students coming from other institutions or life experiences.

Although it is not required, if a course has more than one requisite course, separate lists for each one may make it easier to track their validation. For example, if an advanced physics class has both a calculus and a pre-calculus physics prerequisite, this section would have two separate lists.

## Content Review, Statistical Validation, and Communication/Computation Requisites

For programs specializing in communication and computation, requisites may be placed on courses using a content review process alone. In contrast, Title 5 §55003(b) and (e) require requisites be based upon “data collected using sound research practices” (also referred to as statistical validation) for the skills of communication and computation when they are being required outside of those respective programs. However, since 2011 colleges have been allowed by title 5 to place communication and computation prerequisite courses on non-communication and non-computation courses through a content review process only, provided that the district meets specific criteria explained in Title 5 §55003(c). For example, an English course having a prerequisite of a lower level English course must validate this need through content review, but a business course requiring that same lower level English course is additionally required to base this need upon “data collected using sound research practices” unless districts have met the requirements off §55003(c).

## Requisites and Articulation

When considering placing a requisite on a course, faculty should consider the impact that action may have on a proposed or existing articulation agreement. Receiving institutions, when determining whether to grant articulation, will closely review any requisites on a course, or the lack of a requisite that it considers essential, as indicators of the scope and rigor of the course. Faculty should review parallel courses at primary institutions for transfer in their region to be aware of requisite expectations local CSUs and UCs have on comparable courses. In addition to reviewing university courses, faculty should consider any requisites identified in course descriptors created through the Course Identification Number (C-ID) system.

## Other Limitations on Enrollment

There are times when a course has enrollment limitations other than pre/co-requisites or advisories. Some common limitations on enrollment are: a requirement to pass a tryout prior to being enrolled in an athletic course or team, or physical requirement where the student’s safety would be compromised by an inability to meet specific physical capabilities. While the specific criteria of the limitation does not have to be in the course outline of record, such should be well defined and be as measurably objective as possible. So, a sight acuity limitation might include specific vision parameters and list any medical conditions that impose or exacerbate the limitation. If it is a tryout for athletics, the criteria should be very specific and realistic to the needs. So “be able to swim ten laps in a standard competition pool in under eight minutes” would be reasonable for a water polo tryout, but requiring this be done in less than one minute would be extreme. Limitations on enrollment should be fair and reasonable and should produce consistent evaluation results.

# CATALOG/COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the catalog description is to convey the content of the course in a concise manner. Because the catalog description is the primary way by which course information is disseminated, it is important that it contains all essential information about the course and that it is written to meet the needs of varied audiences. Students need information to create their educational plans, as do counseling faculty advising them. Outside reviewers, such as accreditors and compliance monitors, base their assessments on the information printed in the catalog. The heart of the catalog description is the summary of course content, also referred to as the course description. The catalog description It should be thorough enough to establish the comparability of the course to those at other colleges, to distinguish it from other courses at the college, and to convey the role of the course in the curriculum a program, where applicable, in regards to progression of rigor or other characteristics that distinguish a course in the program To save space, many colleges use phrases rather than complete sentences. It is helpful to students to include a statement about the students for whom the course is intended to assist in educational planning. Examples of this type of information include “first course in the graphic arts major” or “intended for students in allied health majors.” To save space, many colleges use phrases rather than complete sentences.

## Units, Hours Credit Status

In addition, the catalog description contains the units, hours, prerequisites, transferability and credit status of the course. Unit limitations should be specified such as “no credit for students who have completed Math 101A” and “UC transferable units limited.” Hours are typically reported listed on a COR on a weekly basis and are may be broken down by type, : for example, “3 hours lecture, 3 hours lab, 1 hour discussion.” The types of hours may also be listed as activity or studio hours in appropriate courses.

Variable unit courses should show the hours as variable, for example: “1-3 hours lecture, 1-3 units.” However, some colleges’ COR show the total term hours of instruction for the term rather than the weekly hours. This practice is particularly useful for courses offered in a variety of short-term formats as well as for work experience courses. However, for regularly scheduled courses, listing weekly hours is more clear for serve the primary audience students much more directly.

In addition to listing the number of hours per week or total hours per term in a catalog description, courses regularly offered on a short-term basis may be specified in the description as well: “9-week course” or “Saturday course; see page xx for more information.” Some colleges find it useful to include the terms in which the course will be offered, for example, “summer only.” Some courses may be taken multiple times if appropriate criteria are met. In the case of a repeatable variable unit course, it may be necessary to list total units that may be earned by repetition. For example, a COR may say“Variable Units - May be repeated, students may not exceed 16 units. “Be sure to follow unit and credit hour requirements of Title 5 §55002.5.

Courses may be offered on a credit (letter grade) basis only, on a Pass/No-Pass (P/PN) basis only (C or better equals Pass), or on a letter grade or Pass/No-Pass basis (at the option of the student in this latter case). Note: Use of the terms “credit/no-credit” expires beginning Fall 2009 to be replaced in Title 5 by the terms “pass/ no-pass.” Generally, course credit is assumed to be awarded on a letter grade basis unless indicated otherwise with catalog statements such as “pass/no pass only” or “pass/no pass option.” Courses are also assumed to be degree applicable unless otherwise noted as “nondegree-applicable credit course” or “noncredit course.” However some districts may separate catalogs into a credit and noncredit catalog due in part to their organizational structure and the relative size of their noncredit programs.

## Requisites and Transferabiity

Prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories can be listed in conjunction with placement assessment alternatives, along with limitations on enrollment as well as any other skills required or recommended. The following are examples of ways in which requisites might be included on a COR.

* Prerequisite: Completion of French 1A with a ‘C’ or better
* Corequisite: Geology 10
* Prerequisite: Math 24 (with a ‘C’ or higher) or appropriate skills demonstrated through the math placement process
* Advisory on Recommended Preparation: eligibility for English 1A
* Advisory: high school biology with a “B” or better is recommended
* Advisory: Reading level 3 (see p. 17)
* Limitation: Enrollment limited by audition

Some courses may be taken multiple times if appropriate criteria are met. In the case of a repeatable variable unit course, it may be necessary to list total units that may be earned by repetition. “Variable Units - May be repeated, students may not exceed 16 units.”

It is common practice for catalog descriptions to include the transferability of the course, usually just and may be indicated by including “UC, CSU” (as appropriate) to at the end of the catalog description. There are several things to note: such Such a notation indicates general transferability, i.e. for elective credit, and does not guarantee articulation to meet a major or general education transfer requirement. The transferability status may take one or more years to establish so local practice may call for the developer to indicate this intent, but catalog descriptions should only be so modified when course transferability has been determined through formal articulation processes.

Courses may be offered on a credit (letter grade) basis only, on a Pass/No-Pass (P/PN) basis only (C or better equals Pass), or on a letter grade or Pass/No-Pass basis (at the option of the student in this latter case). Note: Use of the terms “credit/no-credit” expires beginning Fall 2009 to be replaced in Title 5 by the terms “pass/ no-pass.” Generally, courses are assumed to be on a letter grade basis unless indicated otherwise with catalog statements such as “pass/no pass only” or “pass/no pass option.” Courses are also assumed to be degree applicable unless otherwise noted as “nondegree-applicable credit course” or “noncredit course.” However some districts may separate catalogs into a credit and noncredit catalog due in part to their organizational structure and the relative size of their noncredit programs.

Some colleges find it useful to include the terms in which the course will be offered, for example, “summer only.”

## Field Trips, Required Materials, and Other Expenses

Field trips, required materials for the course, and other probable expenses should be listed in the catalog description. This alerts students to possible expenses that may influence his/her decision to enroll in a course. Under current regulation Per Title 5 §59400(b), it is not permissible to charge a general materials fee where a student does not walk away with a physical object or permanent access to some body of knowledge as they would with a book. While this listing can be fairly generic in the course description, it should be more specific in the overall course outline and, in particular, should be detailed in the syllabus.

## College Catalog Course Description Checklist

The following is a checklist of items that should appear on all COR.

* Course number and title
* Status (degree-applicable/non degree-applicable)
* A content/objective description, as per above
* Course type (lecture, lab, activity, special topics, etc.), contact hours and units
* Prerequisites, corequisites, advisories, and other enrollment limitation(s)
* If course fulfills a major, area of emphasis or GE requirement
* Transferability (intentions)
* Field trips or other potential requirements beyond normal class activities

## Course Schedule

Note that the The course description in the class schedule is generally an abbreviated version of that in the catalog and has no specific requirements under Title 5 regulation. Also note that a However, a course outline of record is recognized as a contract between the college and the student containing the requirements and components of the course, whereas and a syllabus describes how the individual instructor will carry out the terms of that contract through specific assignments. All faculty should be aware of these distinctions and prepare both COR and the syllabus with those obligations in mind.

# OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this section is to convey the The objectives of a course are the primary components concepts and skills leading which lead to student achievement of the course’s intent purpose or student learning outcomes. The objectives should highlight specify these components concepts and skills to ensure that course delivery by any faculty delivering the course causes students to achieve the intended student learning outcomes. They bring to the forefront what must be focused upon by any faculty delivering the course. Objectives should be written in complete sentences or comprehensive phrases using language that is discipline specific and demonstrates the level of rigor appropriate for the class.

Related to the number of units and hours of a course is the need to demonstrate in the COR that the course meets the standards for level and intensity in both quantity and effort. The developer needs to assess what is a reasonable time frame for most students entering at the requisite levels to acquire capabilities defined by each objective. While there is no requirement to describe this assessment or detail it in any way, the presentation of the course objectives as a whole should demonstrate obvious evidence of the need for the units, contact hours and other elements being approved.

## Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

Course objectives state the concepts or skills instructors introduce to students in a course or program to prepare students to perform a student learning outcome. Objectives are the means, not the ends. Course SLOs are the intended abilities and knowledge students can do after successfully completing the course objectives. SLOs must be written in measurable terms and written as actions that a student will perform, where objectives may be content matter to be covered or actions that are essential for a student to complete in order to learn the skills necessary to perform a course SLO.

For example, for a Swimming 101 course, the course objectives may consist of all four competitive swimming strokes and several recreational swimming strokes; the course SLOs will measure the student’s ability to perform all four strokes. The following is an example of a course objective that supports an SLO for a swimming course:

Course objective:

Learn proper breathing techniques and arm position for the backstroke

SLO:

Swim the backstroke for at least ten yards.

In this example, a student can perform the SLO only after completing the objective.

Another example:

Course objectives:

Learn proper breathing techniques and arm position for the backstroke

Learn proper breathing techniques and arm position for the front crawl

Learn proper breathing techniques and arm position for the breaststroke

Learn proper breathing techniques and arm position for the butterfly

SLO:

Swim all four strokes of the medley relay for 25 meters each within 3 minutes.

In this example, all four objectives culminate in an student being able to perform and SLO that synthesizes the content and skills learned by completing all the objectives

The format for each objective typically begins with the phrase “Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to…”. These are sometimes referred to as “behavioral objectives.”

## Writing Objectives and the COR

When writing objectives for a new course, begin with the end in mind. What is the purpose of the course in terms of what students should be able to do after completing the course? This is expressed in the course SLOs. Once you’ve determined the outcomes expected, determine what concepts or formative skills must be learned before students can perform the outcome. Depending on the scope of the outcomes you’ve written, There are several considerations to writing the Objectives section. First, the there may be hundreds of specific learning objectives; however, not every objective must be listed. do not have to be so thoroughly documented such that each one is listed. These can be distilled down to a manageable number, commonly no more than 20 for a typical one- to three-unit course, and are often fewer than ten that is based on the major areas of content and most important skills student should learn. More details with the objectives can be identified in the Core Content of your COR based on . The key is grouping individual items into sets which shared commonalities. For example, a sociology course might have many detailed items for students to learn in the area of cross-cultural comparisons, but the collective statement in the Objectives section might be “…compare and contrast traditions and behaviors in a variety of cultures.” Or a chemistry class might take two or three weeks to discuss the properties of states of matter (gas, liquid, solid) but the objective might be summarized as “research and diagram the properties of the states of matter, use appropriate equations to calculate their properties, and explain those properties on the molecular level.” Note that In the last example, each statement is really a collection of objectives rather than a single objective, and a potential SLO for the course that includes this objective may be “Prepare an written report which demonstrates knowledge of the properties of matter at the molecular level and presents information in text and visual representation.” And the focus highlights a level of learning that is much more then merely memorizing the Periodic Table and the Properties of Fluids and Solids. Again, the obetvies are the means, not the end.

## Critical Thinking in the Course Objectives

Degree-applicable credit courses require students to demonstrate critical thinking. The incorporation of critical thinking must be evident throughout the course outline, but particularly in the Objectives, Methods of Instruction, and Methods of Evaluation elements. It must be clear that students are expected to think critically, are instructed in how to do so, and are held accountable for their performance. The manner in which the Objectives section reflects critical thinking in the higher cognitive domains is by expressing the objectives using verb rubrics a taxonomy of thinking and learning skills such as Bloom’s Taxonomy, a summary of which appears below in Appendix ??. Basically, cCritical thinking involves active higher cognitive processes which analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate information. This contrasts with the more passive activities such as recognizing, describing, or understanding information; however, . Note that not ALL objectives need to reflect critical thinking. Note also that it is not sufficient for such higher skills to be listed only in the Objectives. The course outline must demonstrate that students are taught how to acquire these skills and must master them to pass the class. (See the following sections on Methods of Instruction and Assignments and Methods of Evaluation.)

For nondegree-applicable credit courses the requirement for critical thinking is different, but it still exists, so the above section still applies. The difference is that in these courses students are initially being taught how to think critically. But in degree-applicable courses the expectation is that students are already able to think critically and are now learning how to become better at it. Because of this difference, In nondegree-applicable courses the objectives in nondegree-applicable courses may need to cover a narrower scope because students are in the process of learning effective ways to effectively study and think critically. independently on their own. But, like critical thinking, the objectives should prepare students for studying independently and must “include reading, writing assignments and homework” (Title 5 §55002(b)2(C) Intensity–below)

## Regulatory Requirements Reflected in your Objectives

Each of the standards listed below should be reflected in the group of objectives chosen for the course, but each objective does not need to meet all or any of these standards. For example, every objective need not target the critical thinking requirement. So “list proper safety protocols for handling toxic fluids” may not meet the difficulty standard, but it is still an appropriate objective. However, the group of objectives as a whole should address all the standards. Additionally, the objectives should in some way pair in terms of need with the requisite entry skills if such are listed. A course objective that calls for a student to be able to work with differential equations should properly pair with the entry-level skills of Calculus I and Calculus II.

The following are regulatory standards, with their Title 5 citations, that must appear in the course objectives:

Prerequisites and Corequisites §55002(a)2D

When the college and/or district curriculum committee determines, based on a review of the course outline of record, that a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student has knowledge or skills not taught in the course, then the course shall require prerequisites or corequisites that are established, reviewed, and applied in accordance with the requirements of this article.

Intensity §55002(a)2C (Degree-applicable credit)

The course treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that requires students to study independently outside

of class time.

Difficulty §55002(a)2F

The coursework calls for critical thinking and the understanding and application of concepts determined by the curriculum committee to be at college level.

Level §55002(a)2G

The course requires learning skills and a vocabulary that the curriculum committee deems appropriate for a college course.

Intensity §55002(b)2C (Nondegree-applicable credit)

The course provides instruction in critical thinking and generally treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that prepares students to study independently outside of class time and includes reading and writing assignments and homework. In particular, the assignments will be sufficiently rigorous that students successfully completing each such course or sequence of required courses, will have acquired the skills necessary to successfully complete degree-applicable work.

# CONTENT

CORs typically use an outline The format used for the course content (also known as core content at some colleges) section is commonly that of an outline. The content topics are typically arranged with major headings and minor subheadings or bulleted lists of elements that further define the major heading. The outline is detailed enough to fully convey the topics covered, but not so lengthy that a quick scan cannot be used to ascertain the scope of the course. A page or two is fairly typical.

Keep in mind that the content listed in the course outline is required to be covered by all faculty teaching the course unless marked as optional. Furthermore, the listed content does not limit instructors from going beyond the topics in the outline.

## Major Headings and Sub Headings

Content is subject-based so need not be expressed written in terms of student capabilities or behavior. However, as mentioned in the Standards for Approval contained in §55002, the major headings of content should be obviously relevant to the objectives and comparable in number to the objectives . If, For example, if a content item major heading for an anthropology course were “Osteology” it might be appropriate to expand upon this in your subheadings in the following way: such as

COURSE CONTENT

1. Osteology
   1. Major bones of human skeleton in correct position
   2. Composition and shape classes of bone
   3. Pathologies
   4. Skeletal differences between male and female
   5. Determining age from dental and skeletal cues
   6. Advantages and constraints of bipedalism

## Repeatability and Core Content

Except in very limited circumstances, the content of a course may not be designated as repeatable for credit. Title 5 §55041 states that the content of a course may only be designated as repeatable if the course meets one of the following conditions: repetition of the course is necessary to meet the major requirements of CSU or UC for the completion of a bachelor's degree; for the purposes of intercollegiate athletics, as defined in §55000; and for intercollegiate academic or vocational competition, as defined in §55000, where enrollment in the course and courses that are related in content, as defined in §55000, is limited to no more than four times for semester courses or six times for quarter courses. This enrollment limitation applies even if the student receives a substandard grade or “W” during one or more of the enrollments in such a course or petitions for repetition due to extenuating circumstances as provided in §55045.

## Course Families

Where repeatability is not applicable, local curriculum committees may designate course families for “active participatory courses” where appropriate. Active participatory courses are those courses where individual study or group assignments are the basic means by which learning objectives are obtained. Courses that are related in content—families—are courses with similar primary educational activities in which skill levels or variations are separated into distinct courses with different student learning outcomes for each variation.

Because, with few exceptions, students can only take each of the specified active participatory courses once, colleges may establish courses families. Title 5 allows for no more than four levels or experiences within a family such that each course may only be taken one time. Course families should provide students with an opportunity to build their knowledge, skills, abilities, and fitness levels in physical activity courses within a set or family of discreet individual courses. The need to develop leveled or distinct courses should be founded on these principles and should be done to ensure programmatic needs are met, where appropriate.

Course content for each course in a course family must be significantly different in *level*, *intensity,* and other standards, although the courses are related in content, including level-specific course objectives and outcomes. When local colleges create multiple courses or course levels, the courses may be offered simultaneously rather than scheduled separately, with the enrollment across all sections being counted together for minimum or maximum enrollment considerations, FTES computation, and teaching load. For example, a local college may create a Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Ceramics course sequence (CERM 100, 101, 102 for this example). CERM 100, 101, and 102 can then all be scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 12 with the same instructor.

A variation on leveling is to create courses with a more specific focus within an area of emphasis, which allows students to have similar learning experiences that develop key skills but do so using significantly different content. For example, some colleges may split a “Painting” area of emphasis painting up into oil, acrylic, and watercolor courses or separate out relief printmaking from intaglio, lithography, or screen-printing. There are both curricular and pedagogical justifications for this approach. The primary concern with this approach is that receiving institutions (UC and CSU in particular) typically do not break up the curriculum in this way. Most schools in the CSU or UC systems only require one or two courses in any given medium for major transfer preparation. Local faculty should work closely with their articulation officers to assess the potential impact of this approach on students preparing to transfer.

In regards to using families of courses, local curriculum committees are encouraged to should be conservative in making such decisions. The definition of “courses that are related in content” is not intended to be so narrow that it becomes inhibiting or useless, but neither is it intended to allow colleges to proliferate levels and active participatory courses by turning every course in the curriculum into a family.

# METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

The Title 5 sub-section defining the course outline does not mandate a comprehensive list of instructional methods. Rather, the outline must “specify types or provide examples.” Thus faculty have the freedom to select instructional methods to best suit their teaching style. The methodologies used by the instructor are to be consistent with, but not limited by, these types and examples. In all cases, the methods of instruction should be presented in a manner that reflects both integration with the stated objectives and a likelihood that they will lead to students achieving those objectives. A course developer should also consider the course student learning outcomes when determining methods of instruction since those skills and abilities faculty will assess at the end of the course may be modeled through instructional methods.

In many cases, the environment in which the learning occurs needs to be may be described by listing potential methods of instruction the faculty have agreed are effective for the specific content, objectives and outcomes. While any course should be crafted to accommodate for differences in setting, many courses such as lab courses rely heavily upon their environment as a critical element of the learning experience. However, this should be framed in the context of types and examples such as “The student will conduct clinical patient evaluations in a hospital environment” versus “The student will evaluate live patients in the emergency room of St Mary’s Hospital.”

Describing the The methods of instruction tends to imply a description of what the instructor will be doing to cause learning. While this may be included, the focus should be about describing what describes activities the students will be doing and experiencing that lead to learning, not only with respect to the instructor, but in some cases with respect to each other, and with their environment. What the communication student will do in an instructional component to interact as a presenter and as an active listener are both learning elements that are the methods of instruction, and this description clearly lays the groundwork for developing or refining the evaluation methods and criteria.

The requirement to “specify types or provide examples” has, unfortunately, been incorporated into the course outline by some colleges as a list of options to select either by checking a box or choosing from a drop-down list type list. An example is shown below. This approach does not meet all Title 5 requirements because the oversimplification of teaching methods to a menu of options it does nothing to not illustrate the methods for determining “whether the stated objectives have been met by students” and does not effectively support or integrate with little to cross validate (integrate) some of the other course outline elements.

When considering the writing style of this section, it is important to keep in mind that the examples of assignments and methods of instruction and evaluation must be appropriate to the stated objectives and meaningful for assessing student learning outcomes. In particular, because the learning experiences must either include critical thinking, or experiences leading to this capability, the methods of instruction must effectively teach critical thinking and the methods of evaluation must effectively evaluate students’ mastery of critical thinking. The themes established by the objectives must be integrated into methods of instruction and evaluation. The following table shows examples of methods of instruction that support specific course objectives.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Examples of Course Objectives | Examples of Methods of Instruction |
| Interpret and compare dramatic texts as both written plays and in live performance, including works by a variety of playwrights which represent the influence of diversity (such as of gender, cultural background, class, sexual preference, and historical period). | Follow-up in-class performances of selected  dramatic texts followed by instructor-guided interpretation and analysis. |
| Observe and analyze the various components of a theatrical performance. | In-class reading of dramatic texts by the instructor and students followed by instructor-guided interpretation |
| Differentiate between the play as literature and the play as performance. | Attendance at required performances preceded by instructor-modeled performance review methods and followed by in-class and small group discussions. |
| Evaluate the effectiveness of theatrical techniques in performance. | Project group meetings in class to develop play  interpretation project and group presentation. |
| Examine the organization of theatrical companies and compare and contrast the roles of theatre personnel, e.g., producer, director, dramaturge, technical director, actors, choreographer, critic, artistic director, development staff, scenographer and designers, and house manager. | ? |
| Analyze the artistic, literary, and cultural perspectives of various playwrights, including, North American, South American, African, Asian, and European. | In-class and out-of-class video and audio presentations followed by instructor-guided interpretation, analysis, and comparison to live performances. |
| Analyze and evaluate live theatre as a dynamic art form in comparison to recorded performances in film and television. | Lecture presentations on the organization of  theatrical companies followed by in-rehearsal and backstage visits at required performances. |

In these examples, it is clear that choosing a type or example of a method of instruction from a drop-down list misses an opportunity to provide more detailed expectations of instructional rigor for both faculty and students. Instead of a list of prescriptive options, the writing style is quite descriptive of each possible activity. Rather than just checking “lecture,” the course developer has described the complete interaction with the student in terms such as “In-class reading of dramatic texts by the instructor and students followed by instructor-guided interpretation and analysis.” When written this way for degree-applicable credit courses, it is clear that critical thinking and scholarship is expected of students at a collegiate level, taught to them in class, practiced in outside assignments, and evaluated as the basis for their grade in the class.

There are several key features to describing the methods of instruction in the integrated course outline.

# METHODS OF EVALUATION AND COURSE GRADING POLICIES

Title 5 does not mandate a comprehensive list of methods for evaluation. Rather, the outline must “specify types or provide examples.” The methods used by the instructor are to be consistent with, but not limited by, these types and examples. In all cases, the methods of evaluation should be presented in a manner that reflects integration with the stated objectives and methods of instruction, and demonstrates a likelihood that they will lead to students achieving those objectives.

## Using Multiple Methods of Evaluation

Effective and accurate student evaluation is not a simple task, nor one to be treated as an afterthought to the other outline elements. Given the diverse populations community colleges serve, multiple methods of evaluation are usually preferred. While knowledge of required material constitutes a significant portion of the evaluation, as reflected in assignments and methods of evaluation, different types of courses as well as differing facilities lend themselves to various types of evaluation. For example, lab courses are often great environments for oral interviews or practical demonstrations of skills, whereas a large lecture hall with fixed seating is not, and the availability of both is impacted by available facilities and resources at the college.

## Methods of Evaluation and Critical Thinking

Because the learning experiences must either include critical thinking or experiences leading to this capability, the methods of instruction must effectively teach critical thinking and the methods of evaluation must effectively evaluate students’ mastery of critical thinking. For this reason, the themes concepts and skills established by the objectives must be integrated into methods of instruction and evaluation, keeping in mind that *Difficulty* standards for degree-applicable credit, nondegree-applicable credit and noncredit courses vary quite a bit, particularly in terms of critical thinking

The following table shows examples of methods of evaluation that support specific course objectives:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Examples of Course Objectives | Examples of Methods of Evaluation |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of general theatre terminology. | Evaluation of written analyses for content, form, and application of dramatic performance review techniques |
| Observe and analyze the various components of a theatrical performance. | Evaluation of contributions during class discussion. |
| Interpret and compare dramatic texts as both written plays and in live performance, including works by a variety of playwrights which represent the influence of diversity (such as of gender, cultural background, class, sexual preference, and historical period). | Evaluation of participation in and contributions to group projects |
| Differentiate between the play as literature and the play as performance. | Evaluation of written criticisms for content, form, and application of critique methodology. |
| Evaluate the effectiveness of theatrical techniques in performance. | Evaluation of performance reviews for completeness, personal perspective, and application of performance review styles. |
| Examine the organization of theatrical companies and compare and contrast the roles of theatre personnel, e.g., producer, director, dramaturge, technical director, actors, choreographer, critic, artistic director, development staff, scenographer and designers, and house manager. | Evaluation of interpretations of live performances and dramatic texts for cultural context, contrasts in live/textual impact, and performance techniques. |
| Analyze and evaluate live theatre as a dynamic art form in comparison to recorded performances in film and television. | Evaluation of final written essay examination and occasional tests for content, terminology, knowledge of subject matter, and ability to compare and contrast types, origins, and presentation modes of dramatic material. |

Difficulty standards for degree-applicable credit, nondegree-applicable credit and noncredit courses vary quite a bit, particularly in terms of critical thinking

## Attendance and Evaluation

Courses and programs, including Many programs with outside agency certifications, have very strict attendance requirements:; therefore students who fail to log a stipulated number of hours of attendance are ineligible to receive certification for program completion, and . This requirement in turn obliges faculty to include attendance as a necessary component in evaluation.

On the whole, however, Title 5 emphasizes that attendance is not a substantive basis for student evaluation:. Title 5 5 §55002 states, “The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency” and attendance is not a factor. And for most objectives it would be difficult to demonstrate that attendance is evidence of proficiency. On the other hand it could be reasonable to argue that non-attendance, particularly during periods of proficiency demonstration, is legitimate grounds for a reduced or failing evaluation.

Additionally, there may occasionally be topics, affect or attitudes objectives which the instructor wants to be certain students learn but feels cannot be evaluated by typical assessment practices out-of-class. An example is an aspect of professionalism, such as repeated tardiness, which may need remediation through academic consequences. However, these should be given careful consideration and be well justified. In these cases, it is very important that attendance requirements and the subsequent evaluation thereof be clearly laid out in this section in the syllabus.

# ASSIGNMENTS

Title 5 §55002(a)(3) requires assignments in the course outline but does not mandate a comprehensive list nor does it mandate the way in which those assignments are written. Rather, the outline must “specify types or provide examples.” The assignments used by the instructor of record for a section of a course are to be consistent with but not limited by these types and examples. In all cases, the assignments should be presented in a manner that reflects both integration with the stated objectives, appropriate rigor for the level and difficulty of the course, and a likelihood that they will lead support to students achieving understanding of the those objectives and the ability to perform the student learning outcomes.

## Assignments: It’s in the Way That You Write It

Given the multiple audiences for a COR (students, instructors, articulation officers, university faculty), college faculty should discuss how assignments will be presented on a COR. Per Title 5 §55002(a)(3), assignments may be “types or examples” which should prompt curriculum committees to discuss whether a more simplistic list of types of assignments provides the various audiences of a COR with useful information, or if a more strident standard for writing examples of assignments is appropriate. For example, examples of assignments could be written similarly to an actual assignment prompt with the intended rigor of the course evident in the sample. When writing is required in a sample assignment, instructors should indicate the mode or type of writing and the length of the assignment. Also, assignments may be written to highlight skills and abilities listed in objectives. For example, a type of assignment could be “written assignments that show development of self-criticism.” In any case, the assignments should be written to show the level of rigor for the course, especially when the course requires college-level work or is a course in a family of courses which are distinguished by a progression of rigor.

When writing an assignment, course developers should include the purpose of each assignment is included. For example, rather than just stating “group project” the course developer goes on to add “Preparation of group projects in which major analytical questions are discussed and a major project designed around issues related to play interpretation in performance.”

## Other Considerations for Assignments

In order to best suit the needs of the audiences of your COR, there are a variety of considerations to keep in mind. In some situations, optional and alternate assignment examples should be included to provide options that improve access to coursework for all students. (e.g. For example, an alternate assignment may be allowed in lieu of a required field trip or a cost-bearing assignment such as theatre tickets in order to ensure equitable access to learning experiences among all students. In addition to examples of alternate assignments, CORs could contain examples of out -of-class assignments. If so, those examples must be sufficient to show independent work equal in rigor to the expected hours of independent study determine in the hours to units formula to meet the minimum study time hours of work per week beyond class time for each unit of credit. In addition, examples of assignments might also included any supplemental reading beyond the required texts if the developer of the course believes it is necessary to codify the material on the COR. Finally, while it is not required that the example assignments be so organized in the order they would be used in class within the course outline, giving some thought to this can promote an implementation strategy that leads to a more effective learning experience.

The following table shows examples of assignments that provide appropriate evaluation to support specific course objectives.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Objective | Assignments Written as Types | Assignments Written as Examples |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of general theatre terminology. | Participation in class discussions about plays | Working with several classmates in a group, review a list of theater terms and provide a two-to-three sentence definition of each. |
| Interpret and compare dramatic texts as both written plays and in live performance, including works by a variety of playwrights which represent the influence of diversity (such as of gender, cultural background, class, sexual orientation, and historical period). | Textual analysis in discussion and writing and required study of assigned dramatic texts, including works representative of diverse gender, ethnic, and global perspectives. | Read August Wilson’s *Fences* and write a three-page essay on the themes of masculinity in the play. |
| Observe and analyze the various components of a theatrical performance. | Written analysis of several live performances of amateur and professional theatres presented during the academic term | Write a three-page analysis of a local theater production which focuses on the elements of lighting and blocking. |
| Observe and analyze the various components of a theatrical performance. | Preparation of group projects in which major analytical questions are discussed and a major project designed around issues related to play interpretation in performance | The class will be divided up into groups of 4-6 people. As a group you will become a theatre and will perform a series of functions that every theatre must including choosing a play to produce, and doing all that needs be done in order to produce it. |
| Differentiate between the play as literature and the play as performance. | Listening and viewing  Study of plays on videotape (DVD) and audiotape  Preparation for participation in daily analysis of texts and performances by watching video performances of a play currently being read by the class | Watch Hamlet’s “To Be or Not To Be” soliloquy from the 2000 Ethan Hawke version of *Hamlet* and write a one-page essay describing how the stage direction found in Shakespeare’s text is realized in the film. |
| Evaluate the effectiveness of theatrical techniques in performance | Interpretive analyses of published critical reviews of performances and plays | Read the excerpt provided from the “Writing for the Stage” chapter of Vaclav Haval’s *Disturbing the Peace* and discuss his opinions on his own technical achievements and failures. |

# REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

As instructional materials have evolved with technology, including required texts and other materials in the classroom to support the curriculum has changed. It’s important to base your process first on the Title 5 requirements for standards of approval and other sections relevant to educational materials. While Title 5§ 55002 does not require that materials be listed on a COR, it does indicate that “resource materials” are a criterion that must be considered by a curriculum committee prior to recommendation for approval. Other Title 5 sections §59400(b-c) specify regulations for electronic materials that should be considered when placing required materials on a COR. Fully electronic materials should comply with all 508 compliance rules for disabled student access.

## Materials other than Books

While Title 5 does not directly address other required learning materials beyond the reading assignments, this section should also include any required materials or other equipment such as a sports item, lab equipment, tools, art materials or anything else the student must have to participate effectively in the course.

## Required Materials and Articulation

Primarily textbooks and resource materials specified on a COR plays a central role in the articulation of a course. It Any required materials should be clearly recognized by those in the discipline at other institutions as a major work that presents the fundamental theories and practices of the subject. Required texts can also identify the rigor of a course, especially in courses within a program sequence or a family of courses.

The currency of textbooks is an important consideration for articulation and can vary greatly from subject to subject. Some courses may use reference manuals that are long standing icons of their respective fields. On the other end of the spectrum, UC and CSU generally require texts that are no more than five seven years old. Explanations should be provided when texts are more than five years old. In STEM disciplines or any course that uses a required lab manual created by faculty, faculty should include the manual on the COR and they should be encouraged to update it regularly.

## Materials for Courses Officered via Distance Education

For courses that are available for distance education instruction, educational materials appropriate for that teaching modality should also be included on the official COR either as required or as options for instructors. In addition, in both face-to-face courses and distance education courses faculty may choose to use digital materials that are available at no or low cost to students, often referred to as Open Education Resources (OER). OER are freely accessible, openly licensed documents and media that are useful for teaching, learning, and assessing as well as for research purposes. OER materials should be vetted by faculty in the discipline prior to adoption as required materials. Inclusion of OER materials as primary, required texts for a transferable class should consider any impact on articulation agreements prior to approval.

# DETERMINING LEVELS BELOW GRADUATION/TRANSFER AND CB 21 RUBRICS,

Basic skills status is an important discussion that must take place on your campus and among discipline faculty and administrators. Curriculum committees should work with discipline faculty members to consider the mission and the courses that make up the degrees. The courses must be compliant with title 5 which indicates anything used for a degree or transfer cannot be coded as basic skills.

## Basic Skills and Title 5

While title 5 does not allow basic skills courses to be coded as degree-applicable, degree-applicable courses can be below transfer. Per title Title 5 §55062, states that below-transfer courses may be degree-applicable if one of the following items apply when they fall into the following categories:

* All lower division courses accepted toward the baccalaureate degree by the California State University or University of California or designed to be offered for transfer.
* Courses that apply to the major or area of emphasis in non-baccalaureate career technical fields.
* English composition or reading courses not more than one level below the first transfer level course. Each student may count only one such course below transfer level for credit toward the associate degree, except that reading courses which also satisfy the requirements of subdivision (a) are not subject to this limit. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses which teach composition or reading skills are not considered to be English composition or reading courses for purposes of this subdivision.”
* All mathematics courses above and including Elementary Algebra.
* Credit courses in English and mathematics taught in or on behalf of other departments and which, as determined by the local governing board require entrance skills at a level equivalent to those necessary for the courses specified in subdivisions (c) and (d) above.

Although local curriculum committees are involved with the determination of what constitutes basics skills courses, colleges approach this conversation differently all around the state depending on their reasoning, alignment with existing degrees and student populations. While there are no simple answers or formulas, a course cannot be considered basic skills if it is degree applicable, even if pre-transfer.

## Pre-transfer Courses and Degree Applicability

Some colleges use pre-transfer courses for degrees and certificates that are part of career technical programs or curriculum where transfer level math or English are not considered standard. In this case, even though a course is considered pre-transfer, it could not be coded as basic skills if it is used to complete degree requirements. Title 5 allows one course below transfer in English and Reading to be degree-applicable and two courses below transfer in math to be considered degree-applicable (Intermediate Algebra and Algebra).

Graduation requirements in English are transfer level. If a course in English is credit and one level below transfer, it can be degree-applicable, but it is not adequate for degree completion. The course units can count towards the degree, but a student must complete transfer-level English to meet graduation requirements.

## Aligning Basic Skills Curriculum with the CB 21 Rubrics

In determining levels below transfer, whether pre-transfer or basic skills, curriculum committees should work with discipline faculty to align a course with the CB 21 rubrics. The CB 21 Rubrics are credit rubrics adopted by California community colleges to provide a matrix for comparing courses across the system and reporting student progress through basic skills. The rubrics are not comprehensive standards nor grading rubrics, but rather outcomes that should be evident at each level described that have been universally defined by community college experts based upon research and nation-wide scans. The noncredit rubrics are defined so as to align with credit outcomes at each level. Importantly, the data element dictionary from the Chancellor’s Office for CB21 does not refer to “basic skills”. Courses coded with CB 21 are courses PRIOR to TRANSFER. Some courses prior to transfer are degree-applicable and others are basic skills. The new CB 21 identifies those courses in a sequence that lead to the transferable Reading, ESL, English and Math courses. Assigning a CB 21 level does not alays indicate that the course is always basic skills.

If there is on-going difficulty in determining the level of a course below transfer, the curriculum committee should work with discipline faculty to analyze existing prerequisites or advisories to aid in the determination of where a course falls on the CB 21 the rubric levels. In addition, if the rubrics raise questions about existing prerequisites or advisories, discipline faculty may need to examine data concerning student success along the pathway and re-evaluate the current curricular pathways.

## Determining College Level Coursework

Finally, while Title 5 §55062 speaks directly to the courses below transfer that may be included as degree-applicable (one level below in Reading and English/writing and two levels below in math), colleges are permitted to decide what courses they feel are college level. Title 5 §55002(b)(1) lists other types of course that may be nondegree-applicable credit courses: These include the following:

* courses designed to enable students to succeed in degree-applicable credit courses (including, but not limited to, college orientation and guidance courses, and discipline-specific preparatory courses such as biology, history, or electronics) that integrate basic skills instruction throughout and assign grades partly upon the demonstrated mastery of those skills;
* precollegiate career technical preparation courses designed to provide foundation skills for students preparing for entry into degree-applicable credit career technical courses or programs;
* essential career technical instruction for which meeting the standards of subdivision (a) is neither necessary nor required.

# ELEMENTS THAT APPLY TO NONCREDIT COURSES

## General Notes

Unlike credit courses which may cover a wide array of disciplines and topics, Education Code §84757 stipulates the areas in which noncredit instruction course outlines may be created. Given these restrictions, a course developer must ask at the onset of creating a course outline of record whether the credit or noncredit option best supports student access and success. One local question that needs to be ascertained is if the course outline of record is the same for credit and noncredit courses. Some of the elements listed in the previous section “Elements That Apply to Credit Courses” on Credit Courses, in part, are repeated in the following pages, although they are not identical. However, for the developer, it may be useful to review both sections for additional ideas and to develop a broader context of curriculum development.

There is only one standard for approval mandated by Title 5 for noncredit courses, (§55002(c)1). This standard places the burden of rigor upon the curriculum committee to determine that course elements detailed herein are appropriate to for the intended students

# CONTACT HOURS

For noncredit curriculum, This requires the expected total contact hours (as used in student attendance reporting) to must be contained within the course outline of record. While noncredit courses may provide for coursework outside of class time, this it is not required as it is in credit courses that a calculation be used to demonstrate in class hours and out of class study times. So it is entirely possible that the contact hours listed on the COR will encompass all of the course activities and learning time.

# CATALOG DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the catalog description is to convey the content of the course in a brief and concise manner. Because the catalog description is the major primary way in which course information is disseminated, it is important that it contains all essential information about the course. Noncredit courses are designed to meet the needs of specific groups and/or to achieve a specified objective. While all community colleges courses are open to all students, it is appropriate that a course designed for a particular population be advertised thusly. “Childcare Skills for Parents”, for example, would be open to all, but would be clearly described in the catalog as a course designed to meet the needs of this specific population.

Due to recent regulatory changes, Because noncredit instruction courses can play a more prominent role in programs; can now be offered in programs due to recent regulatory changes, therefore, students are more likely to need information for planning their programs, as do counseling faculty for advising them. Faculty, staff and students at other colleges use catalog descriptions to evaluate the content of the courses incoming students have taken at the originating institution. Outside reviewers, who base their assessments on the information printed in the catalog, can include: college accreditation visitation teams, matriculation site visits, individual program accreditation reviewers, or credit faulty considering the allowance of a credit-by-exam.

## Important Course Content and Educational Planning

The heart of the catalog description is the summary of course content. It should be thorough enough to establish the comparability of the course to those at other colleges and to convey the role of the course in the curriculum as well as to distinguish it from other courses at the college. It should be brief enough to encourage a quick read avoid confusing students with unnecessary detail. To save space in a catalog, many colleges use phrases rather than complete sentences. For noncredit courses that may lead act as development for or prerequisites to credit courses, it is a good idea to consider the catalog descriptions for the common receiving programs or institutions to promote clarify a logical pathway for students intending who pursue this route.

In the catalog description of a noncredit course, it is useful for student educational planning to include a statement about the students for which the course is intended. For examples, the description might include the language “first course in the auto collision repair program,” or “intended for students in health and safety education programs,” or “prepares students to successfully qualify for employment in the XYZ industry.” In addition, it is a useful practice to include the course’s ability to articulate or lead to credit coursework if such opportunity exists. In addition, one should list entry advisories and courses that this course prepares for.

## Schedule Flexibility in the Description

Noncredit courses are often offered in a short-term or flexible formats such as open entry/open exit. The catalog description should describe term lengths, and any attendance requirements that result from this scheduling. There may be pedagogical, logistical, or scheduling reasons why students would need to repeat a course or take two sections simultaneously. Since this can greatly benefit student success, the developer should consider illustrating include those options in the catalog description.It is a useful practice to include the course’s ability to articulate or lead to credit coursework if such opportunity exists. In addition, one should list entry advisories and courses that this course prepares for. Finally, many colleges find it useful to include the scheduling parameters or terms in which the course is intended to be offered, for example, “Summer only,” or “Weekend Program.”

## Course Expenses and Required Materials

Field trips, required materials for the course, and other probable expenses should be listed in the catalog description. This alerts students to possible expenses that may influence his/her decision to enroll in a course. Under current regulation, it is not permissible to charge a general materials fee where a student does not walk away with a physical object or permanent access to some body of knowledge as they would with a book.

Several examples follow which illustrate some of the above elements:

Field trips, required materials for the course, and other probable expenses should be listed in the catalog description. This alerts students to possible expenses that may influence his/her decision to enroll in a course. Under current regulation, it is not permissible to charge a general materials fee where a student does not walk away with a physical object or permanent access to some body of knowledge as they would with a book.

## Examples of Noncredit Course Descriptions

Several examples follow which illustrate some of the above elements.

Example #1: In this first example, there are two courses in a sequence, which is are described, as are the intended students and what their expected entry-level skills already should be. It also includes a general note that the students will be using a computer as a part of the course.

Beginning Citizenship Advisory ESL: Intermediate 2

This first class focuses on the development of spoken English skills and general knowledge of American History and United States Government. It prepares students for passing the written test to become a citizen of the United States. In this class, you will learn:

* U.S. History and government as they apply to the Citizenship examination process.
* Basic skills and techniques used in oral interview.
* The reading and writing skills required for testing to become a citizen.
* How to complete and submit the application for Citizenship.
* What additional documentation you will need.

Example #2

This second example of a catalog description makes it clear that this is a beginning course, and describes a required book purchase as well as the basic objectives of the course. When developing a course, refer to the required reading element in the credit section above if a noncredit course includes any required materials or equipment. This catalog description also makes it clear that this is a beginning course.

Citizenship Interview

Advisory ESL: Intermediate 2

This class follows the Beginning Citizenship class. It is designed to develop student interview skills for those who are waiting for their oral interview. Students should have at least an intermediate level of English reading, writing and speaking skills. In this class, you will attempt the following:

* Practice interview questions related to the required documentation and forms.
* Practice interview questions related to the history and government of the U.S.
* Develop English dialog skills specific to the testing process.
* (Note: students will be required to use computer-based testing to practice Citizenship testing in both classes. All computers and testing materials will be provided.)

Example #3

This third example is very clear about the expectations on incoming students and what they should expect when taking this class. It specifically describes unusual logistical parameters while specifically encouraging those who might be impacted by this to enroll.

Basic Math Skills

This beginning course is intended to cover basic arithmetic concepts beginning with the basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percents. This course may be used for 5 credits in the High School Diploma program under subject (E) Mathematics. Required textbook may be purchased at the campus bookstore.

This third example is very clear about the expectations on incoming students and what they should expect when taking this class. It specifically describes unusual logistical parameters while specifically encouraging those who might be impacted by this to enroll.

Example #4

In addition to this latter the following example, the following catalog directions are very clear about going to the preferred campus for placement and registration. This is particularly important in this case, because the intended student probably will not be the primary reader of this information.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Literacy

Advisory: Literate in native spoken language, semi-literate in native written language

Students will be oriented to the classroom environment and the ESL learning processes. Class emphasis will be on oral English and development of introductory reading and writing skills. Class will take guided walks around campus to develop vocabulary and beginning conversational skills. Mobility challenged students welcome.

Note: For all ESL students; Please contact the campus counseling office at the following numbers or loca- tions for each site. Plan to schedule an appointment to speak with a counseling representative for place- ment assessment and class registration. All students may speak directly to a counseling representative by “walking-in” to the Counseling Office of any campus during the hours of 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In addition to this latter example, the following catalog directions are very clear about going to the preferred campus for placement and registration. This is particularly important in this case, because the intended student probably will not be the primary reader of this information.

These examples above illustrate the ability to provide, in the briefest form, the necessary information for students to plan for and meet their educational needs. It is critically important that the catalog be up front about both fiscal and logistical impositions the course may have.

## Requisites

It is also important to note the use of requisites and advisories. These should follow the same rules as those for credit courses, but Title 5 §55002 places no requirements around the establishment of them in noncredit instruction. However, the section on requisites and advisories, §55003, does not differentiate between credit and noncredit courses. The process and need for developing and implementing requisites applies to all courses. In general, the purpose should be to provide either a requisite, or some elementary guidance with a strong recommendation to seek counseling advisory services. The noncredit course developer should consult with the curriculum chair or other local resource to determine local policy. If local policy allows for this the developer should review the prerequisite, corequisites and advisories element in the credit segment above.

## College Catalog Course Description checklist for Noncredit

* Course number and title
* Status (noncredit versus credit or others)
* A content/objective description, as per above
* Course type (lecture, lab, activity, special topics, etc.), and contact hours
* Prerequisites, corequisites, advisories, and other enrollment limitation(s)
* Repeatability
* Fulfills a certificate of completion, competency or high school graduation requirements
* Ability to articulate or prepare for credit coursework
* Field trips or other potential requirements beyond normal class activities

Note that the course description in the class schedule is generally an abbreviated version of that in the catalog and has no specific requirements under Title 5 regulation.

# OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this the Objectives section on a noncredit course outline of record is to convey the primary components leading to student achievement of the course’s intent and demonstration of the course’s student learning outcomes. The objectives should highlight these components to ensure that course delivery causes students to achieve the intended learning results. They and bring to the forefront specify what must be focused upon by any faculty delivering the course. Please review the credit section of this paper for a definition of objectives and the distinction between objectives and student learning outcomes.

The format for each objective typically begins with the phrase “Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to…”. These are sometimes referred to as “behavioral objectives.” There are several considerations to writing the Objectives section. First, the hundreds of specific learning objectives do not have to be so thoroughly documented such that each one is listed. These can be distilled down to a manageable number, commonly no more than twenty and are often less than ten. The key is grouping individual items into sets which share commonalities. For example, a citizenship course might have many detailed items for students to learn in the area of cross-cultural comparisons, but the collective statement in the Objectives section might be “…become familiar with traditions and behaviors in a variety of cultures.” Or an automotive class might take two or three weeks to discuss the processes for servicing fluids on a vehicle, but the combined learning objective might be summarized as “…look up, print out and complete a 3,000 mile service checklist upon a late model automobile.” Note that each statement is really a collection of objectives rather than a single objective. And the focus highlights a level of learning that is appropriate to the skills being developed.

Unlike in credit courses, students enrolled in noncredit courses are not required to demonstrate or be assessed on critical thinking or to prepare students for directly using skills in the cognitive levels normally associated with critical thinking. However, in some cases courses, the the objectives and outcomes may require that students demonstrate higher cognitive levels will need to be achieved if the students are to be considered successful. Courses with this expectation may While it would not be expected that a noncredit student would achieve a significant mastery of this skill in one course, lay the groundwork for future noncredit and credit courses should be laid such that if they continue to practice, experiment, and learn, they will eventually become such a master. When reviewing the specific learning items and writing collective objective statements, keep in mind the cognitive levels expected of students in each area. See Appendix for examples of taxonomies of learning that explain levels of cognitive thinking.

# CONTENT

The format used for the course content section is commonly that of an outline. The topics are typically arranged with major and minor headings. The outline is detailed enough to fully convey the topics covered, but not so lengthy that a quick scan cannot be used to ascertain the scope of the course. A page or two is fairly typical.

Keep in mind that the content listed in the course outline is required to be covered by all faculty teaching the course unless marked as optional. Furthermore, the listed content does not limit instructors from going beyond the topics in the outline.

Content is subject-based so need not be expressed in terms of student capabilities or behavior. However, as mentioned in the Standards for Approval in Title 5 § 55002, the content should be obviously relevant to the objectives. If, for example, a content item for an auto body and painting course were “Art forms and colors” it might be appropriate to expand upon this such as “Stylistic art forms and color considerations—relative to historical and current automobile designs” to help clarify the actual need for this.

Career Development and the College Preparation (CDCP)

The enactment of the Community College Funding Legislation established the Career Development and the College Preparation (CDCP) program. Certificates are offered in several areas of study. Colleges may offer noncredit programs of two or more courses to prepare students for employment or to be successful in college-level credit coursework.

Noncredit courses offered in the four distinct categories (instructional domains) of English as a Second Language (ESL), Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills, Short-term Vocational, and Workforce Preparation are eligible for "enhanced funding" when sequenced to lead to a Chancellor's Office approved certificate of completion, or certificate of competency, in accordance with the provisions of the California Education Code governing Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) programs.

# METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Similar to credit courses, The Title 5 §55002(c)(2) sub-section requires defining the course outline to specify instructional methods, but does not mandate a comprehensive list of instructional methods. Rather, the outline must “specify types or provide examples.” Thus faculty have the freedom to select instructional methods to best suit their teaching style and support student success. The methodologies used by the instructor are to be consistent with, but not limited by, these types and examples of instructional activity included on a COR. In all cases, the methods of instruction should be presented in a manner that reflects both integration with the stated objectives and a likelihood that they will lead to students achieving those objectives and performing the student learning outcomes. Additionally, since noncredit courses focus more on skill-building than the accumulation of units toward an award, they enjoy more flexibility in scheduling (variable unit hours of class, open-entry/open-exit scheduling, etc), and instructional methods on a COR should be equally flexible. Methods of instruction should also reflect an awareness of the various levels of preparedness students bring to the class since many noncredit classes do not have prerequisites and are not part of a sequence of courses.

In many cases, the environment in which the learning occurs needs to be described. While any course should be crafted to be as flexible as possible to accommodate differences in setting, many courses such as lab courses rely very heavily upon their environment as a critical element of the learning experience. However, this should be framed in the context of types and examples such as “The student will learn by demonstration and repetition to select the proper tools needed to complete the assigned task” versus “The student will learn by demonstration and repetition to properly choose a #2 Phillips screwdriver, a 4 oz ball peen hammer, and a pair of right-cutting tin snips to complete the assigned task.”

Describing the methods of instruction tends to imply a description of what the instructor will be doing to cause learning. While this may be included, the focus should be about describing what the students will be doing and experiencing, not only with respect to the instructor, but in some cases with respect to each other and with their environment. For example, describing what the ESL student will do in an instructional component about verbal dialog, to interact as a presenter and as a listener, are both learning elements that are the methods of instruction, and this description clearly lays the groundwork for developing or refining the evaluation criteria.

The requirement to “specify types or provide examples” has, unfortunately, been incorporated into the course outline by some colleges as a check-box type list. An example is shown below.

Is this example of a checklist needed?

The following are examples of instructional methods that might be included on a COR that are more indicative of rigor and aware of the various levels of preparedness and the flexible scheduling of a course than a simple checklist of instructional methods would provide:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Objective | Method of Instruction |
| Repair various types and grades of damaged sheet metal back to paint grade quality using common shop-hand tools. | Instructor will demonstrate the proper techniques of stretching and shrinking sheet metals, for annealing and cold-working sheet metals. Students will practice and develop these skills using common shop-hand tools. |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of U.S. History as it pertains to citizenship. | Students wll review various in-class videos specifc to this objective and will participate in in-class ficussions prior to reviewing and completing the course workbook un the segment pertaining to U.S. History. |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of the proper methods to safely secure a household from potential dangers to children under the age of ten. | In-class lecture and videos defining in-home safety hazards for children after which students will complete in-class participation activities designed to promote a discussion about student experiences growing up around in-home hazards. |
| Develop a balanced and nutritious weekly menu and properly prepare and serve common nutritious meals in a safe and sanitary manner. | Lecture and reading assignments to develop a general understanding of basic human nutritional requirements, followed by a practical exercise in researching food costs among various food groups and across generic versus named-brand sources. |
| Develop a vocabulary of words commonly used in the field of XXX along with a comprehensive understanding of the word usage and the ability to effectively pronounce and annunciate the learned vocabulary. | Introductory lecture followed by unlimited self-paced use of audio and video recordings coupled with numerous in-class language development practice/participation sessions. |
| Perform elementary arithmetic calculations within workplace scenarios such as properly counting back change or preparing a service order tabulation for a cost estimate. | Introductory lecture coupled with workbook practice sessions to develop calculation skills, followed by review of scenario videos demonstrating proper customer communication and resolution practices. |
| Recognize and identify various types of normal and abnormal behavior or symptoms in children and determine a proper course of action, if such is warranted. | In-class review of several international documentaries of pandemic exposure of children to various unchecked health disasters, followed by in-class discussions and further lecture/reading about symptomology of common childhood ailments. |

# METHODS OF EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE

Title 5 does not mandate a comprehensive list of methods for evaluation. Rather, the outline must “specify types or provide examples.” The methodologies used by the instructor are to be consistent with, but not limited by, these types and examples. In all cases, the methods of evaluation should be presented in a manner that reflects integration with the stated objectives and methods of instruction, and demonstrates a likelihood that they will lead to students achieving those objectives and successfully performing the course student learning outcomes.

It is important to note that while noncredit courses do not produce grades that would be “credited” into a student record, this in no way obviates

Moreover, it is permissible to provide a grade or element of having satisfactorily completed the learning experience in noncredit courses. Title 5 allows for the awarding of grades in noncredit courses, including courses which are a part of a high school diploma or may be accepted for high school credit by high schools. Per the PCAH, “The grading policy for noncredit courses is defined in title 5, §55021(c).” However, in summer of 2016, the Board of Governors approved a change in title 5, §55023 to allow for another grading option for noncredit courses. This change provides the “Satisfactory Progress” (SP) grade as an option for colleges with noncredit courses, but its use would not be mandatory. The options for grading then include Pass (P), No Pass (NP), and Satisfactory Progress (SP). However, with the change, there is not an A-F grading system for noncredit courses, so evaluation of students in a noncredit course design should include some form of student evaluation and feedback.

Like credit courses, the requirement for integrated objectives, methods of instruction, and methods of evaluation is no less challenging due to the constraints often perceived by many noncredit students about “not passing.” The fact of having failed is often used not as an excuse to dig in and try harder but rather as a justification for not proceeding any further. So, it could be argued that a primary goal of evaluation in noncredit is to help the student learn how to be successful in spite of a single, or sequence of performances, that may be less than satisfactory.

The following table provides examples of courses objective in a noncredit course and appropriate methods of evaluation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Objectives | Method of Evaluation |
| Repair various types and grades of damaged sheet metal back to paint grade quality using common shop-hand tools. | Evaluation of various practice pieces culminating in a color painting of the final project piece for subsequent evaluation and determination of flaws and their cause. |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of U.S. History as it pertains to citizenship. | Students review, restudy and reattempt workbook questions until responding successfully to at least 90 percent of the questions. |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of the proper methods to safely secure a household from potential dangers to children under the age of ten. | In-class evaluations by instructor and student participation in feedback sessions to provide a diverse spectrum of safety examples, concerns, and solutions. |
| Develop a balanced and nutritious weekly menu and properly prepare and serve common nutritious meals in a safe and sanitary manner. | Students implement the developed weekly menu for one week and self-evaluate using provided forms to report results in a class-reporting session. |
| Develop a vocabulary of words commonly used in the field  of XXX along with a comprehensive understanding of the word usage and the ability to effectively pronounce and annunciate the learned vocabulary. | Evaluation of in-class participation as discourse becomes more sophisticated throughout the term of the course coupled to scenario practice with audio recordings for feedback and guided self-evaluation. |
| Perform elementary arithmetic calculations within workplace scenarios such as properly counting back change or preparing a service order tabulation for a cost estimate. | Students successfully complete three differing types of estimate and invoice preparations and transact them with the instructor or aide acting as the customer. |
| Recognize and identify various types of normal and abnormal behavior or symptoms in children and determine a proper course of action, if such is warranted | Reviewing videos or scenarios of children in normal settings. Students will correctly identify at least four abnormal conditions that would be |

Attendance

Since noncredit courses, be definition, do not carry unit amounts, attendance is a crucial issue when determining methods of evaluation and student attendance requirements should be on the COR. Title 5 §55002(e)(1)

The number of actual student contact hours must be indicated on a noncredit COR and recorded by the instructor. Per the “Noncredit at a Glance” document, “It is not sufficient for instructors to estimate numbers of hours of student attendance. Thus, if a course is scheduled to meet for four hours and several students leave after two hours, the student attendance reports should reflect that those students did not attend the full number of hours” and the student would not get credit for the course. In regards to attendance for Open Entry/Open Exit Courses, the maximum number of hours a student may be enrolled in an open entry/open exit course shall be determined by the curriculum committee established pursuant to section 55002 based on the maximum time reasonably needed to achieve the educational objectives of the course” and included on the COR. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, § 58164(e)).

While many programs with outside agency certifications have very strict attendance requirements, students who fail to log a stipulated number of hours of attendance are ineligible to receive certification for program completion, and this in term obliges faculty to include attendance as a necessary component in evaluation. In these cases, it is very important that attendance requirements and the subsequent evaluation thereof be clearly laid out in this section.

For most objectives it would be difficult to demonstrate that attendance is evidence of proficiency. On the other hand it could be reasonable to argue that non-attendance, particularly during periods of proficiency demonstration, is legitimate grounds for a reduced or failing evaluation. Additionally, there may occasionally be topics, affect or attitudes which the instructor wants to be certain students learn but feels cannot be evaluated by typical assessment practices. An example is an aspect of professionalism such as repeated tardiness which may need remediation through academic consequences. However, these should be given careful consideration and be well justified.

# ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR OTHER ACTIVITIES

Title 5 Title 5 §55002 which defining establishes the requirement for assignments in the course outline does not mandate a comprehensive list. Rather, the outline must “specify types or provide examples.” The assignments actually used by the instructor are to be consistent with, but not limited by, these types and examples. In all cases, the assignments should be presented in a manner that reflects both integration with the stated objectives and a likelihood that they will lead to students achieving those objectives and the coure student learning outcomes.

For many areas of study the organization or sequence of learning is very important. While it is not required that the example assignments be so sequentially organized in the course outline, giving some thought to this doing so can promote an implementation that leads to a more effective learning experience.

There are several key features regarding assignments in an integrated course outline. The purpose of each assignment is connected to one or more objectives. In some cases, particularly at the lower cognitive levels, the objective and assignment appear identical or very similar. For example, The integrated outline is one where the objective of being able to child-safety proofing a house is in part learned by doing just that, i.e.: making a house safe for children. It is clear that there are sStudent performance expectations, are clear and that these are taught emphasized in class, practiced through various assignments, and evaluated as the basis for any feedback or potential certification.

The following table provides examples of courses objectives and appropriate assignments:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Objectives | Assignments |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of general theatre terminology. | Review the playbills of several classical plays and participate  in class discussions about the various elements commonly found with the theatre environs. |
| Observe and analyze the various components of a theatrical performance. | Attend and present an in-class summary describing various assigned plays covering both the general storyline of the play and other specific factors as assigned, such as audience reaction and participation. An alternate to this will be to review previously recorded plays as assigned by the instructor. |
| Repair various types and grades of damaged sheet metal back to paint grade quality using common shop-hand tools. | Using common shop-hand tools the student will repair at least three different types and/or grades of damaged sheet metal back to paint grade quality. |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of U.S. History as it pertains to citizenship. | The student will read and properly respond to questions in a course workbook in the subject area of U.S. History. |
| Define and demonstrate an understanding of the proper methods to safely secure a household from potential dangers to children under the age of ten. | Using a simulation scenario, the student will properly secure a household from potential dangers to children under the age of ten. |
| Develop a balanced and nutritious weekly menu and properly prepare and serve common nutritious meals in a safe and sanitary manner. | The student will develop a balanced and nutritious weekly menu within a specific budget that will include predefined nutrition parameters as assigned. |
| Develop a vocabulary of words commonly used in the field of XXX along with a comprehensive understanding of the word usage and the ability to effectively pronounce and annunciate the learned vocabulary. | Using the XXX vocabulary workbook, the student will participate in in-class narrations of words, sentences and paragraphs contained within the lesson workbook. |
| Perform elementary arithmetic calculations within workplace scenarios such as properly counting back change or preparing a service order tabulation for a cost estimate. | Utilizing in-class scenarios, the students will prepare an invoice and estimate, properly tabulated, and will transact payment and correctly provide change to a customer. |
| Recognize and identify various types of normal and abnormal behavior or symptoms in children and determine a proper course of action, if such is warranted. | Utilizing online research materials, the student will produce written descriptions of the symptoms of five common childhood ailments to include the flu, mumps and the measles. |

# RELEVENT ADDITIONAL COURSE OUTLINE ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

# MODALITY OF INSTRUCTION DISTANCE EDUCATION

Per title 5 § 55206, in order to offer a section of a course fully online or in a hybrid format, Distance education requirements call for a separate review process is required to ensure that a course taught at a distance is taught to the course outline of record and to ensure quality through regular and effective instructor-student contact as established in title 5 § 55204. Although this requirement exists, there is no requirement that documentation of the separate approval appear on the course outline of record. Typically, this separate review is achieved through the use of a “distance education addendum” which establishes local criteria for authorizing a course to be taught using a distance education modality. However, an option for a college that wishes to note approval of an addendum on the official course outline of record may be to include distance education as an option among the methods of instruction on the COR. Including this note on a COR may be important, as the course outline of record is the basis for articulation, and it is imperative that all sections of a given course achieve the same objectives regardless of instructional modality. Typically, this separate review is achieved through the use of a “distance education addendum.”

# COURSE CALENDAR AND MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE ENROLLMENTS

Title 5 is somewhat silent about both session or term lengths (calendar) and maximum class enrollments class sizes, but. Both are considered to be academic and professional matters; however, both and are commonly issues that are negotiated elements between faculty collective bargaining units and college administration.

Areas for Discussion Between Senate and the Bargaining Unit

If bargaining language or district policy language on either the calendar and length of terms and maximum class enrollments is not satisfactory or is leading to scheduling or enrollment situations which do not seem pedagogically sound, it is critically important for the curriculum committee chair to initiate discussions between the local senate president and bargaining agent. In cases where district policy and contract language calls for a committee review and various signatures, there needs to be clear policy for how to proceed when a disagreement occurs.

Determining Appropriateness of Short Term Offerings

Discipline expertise is the single most qualified source to appropriately determine if offering a course in a shorter term or session is feasible limitations on calendar/ scheduling and class sizes. While in most bargaining agreemnts, the administration has the right of assignment and creates the schedule, faculty should take the time to make a determination if a course can be offered responsibly during a short session or term and make that determination known to the bargaining unit as academic calendars and terms/sessions are negotiated. Inherent to this discussion though, is the potential conflict of interest for faculty who may benefit from being able to teach a profitable number of courses in a fairly shortened term. This in no manner implies that there are not faculty who possess the skills and capabilities to remain highly effective under these conditions. It does, however, mean that faculty are obligated to monitor these practices, and to be diligent in maintaining our excellent reputation through by maintaining high standards of rigor and quality.

To describe within this document a specific set of parameters which define either good or bad calendar/scheduling specifications is really not feasible given the large variety of courses and methods used to deliver them. But there already exist some metrics that are relatively common across the state. These are faculty full-time load equivalency, and maximum course-load limitations for students. These two are pointed out because many of the more egregious cases of abuse seem to be reflected in these areas.

If a course is to be offered in a five or fewer week format such as in a summer session, or an even shorter time frame in a winter intersession, faculty should determine if the course can be offered in a way to uphold standards and rigor, it can be mathematically worked out into terms of traditional semester loads for both faculty and students. Faculty can consider the impact on a typical semester’s workload or a student’s course load to determine if teaching the course in a shortened time frame is feasible. For example, a five-unit course taught in a four-week format is equal to 133% of a faculty’s full time load in most districts where a full load equals 15 class time hours per week in a traditional semester, and would represent anywhere from a 133% to 150% load for the student. Under those terms, faculty can ascertain if is instructional quality occurring is maintained for each and every student within that class, regardless of any delivery constraints?. When making the determination, faculty should ask if Would this affect the quality opportunity for of student success irrespective of is unaffected by who teaches the course or what types of services may or may not be available within any given four-week window? the drastically shorter term. This is particularly relevant to the discussion of . What happens to regular and effective contact and student success in courses taught via distance education or if that faculty member is teaching three-, five-unit, distance education courses during this short term, thereby sustaining a 400% load multiple courses during the short session?.

It is also important to note that in many districts the calendar itself is a negotiated item. Given the impact of course quality and the parameters set in a COR to ensure that quality, Do the senate representatives and bargaining unit representatives agent discussions leading into such negotiations should engage in discussions related to the length of terms that include sound pedagogical parameters? Is and is based on legitimate research done to that demonstrates the fiscal or other pedagogical benefits of such adjustments?.

Determining Appropriateness of Class Maximums

The presence of a maximum class enrollment number or class max on the course outline of record, though not required by title 5, is also an area of shared purview between the senate and the collective bargaining unit. The extent to which the class’s maximum enrollment is in included on the course outline of record and the role of the curriculum committee in determining that class maximum varies with every bargaining agreement and curriculum chairs and senate leaders should have wide-ranging and honest discussions with representatives of the bargaining unit to develop a process for setting class maximums that places the interests of students at the forefront. The ASCCC paper *Setting Course Enrollment Maximums: Process, Roles, and Principles,* adopted in spring 2012, provides more detailed information on criteria for setting class maximums and examples of effective practice from the field. Title 5 does make the recommendation in §55208 to consider curriculum committee review of class size for distance education courses. In some districts the determination of class size by the curriculum committee has been negotiated by collective bargaining units in conjunction with local academic senates. However the discussion is held and decision is made for setting class maximums, proper documentation of that agreement for each course is crucial to maintaining the integrity of the standard during the life of the course outline.

# OTHER LOCAL ELEMENTS

During the process used to develop or revise a course outline of record, There may need to be review by other disciplines, departments or colleges in a district may need to be aware of pending changes to mitigate unintended consequences. Many colleges have the practice of requesting discussion between disciplines or departments if a course might be seen as encroaching on more than one discipline (e.g. both the Theater Arts and Mass Communications departments might be consulted before a Film Studies course is approved). Colleges in a multi-college district might have a process for discussion of courses that are common or similar between colleges in the district to provide broader academic opportunities for students.

In addition, it has been considered “good practice” by the Chancellor’s Office for there to be discussion with the college library faculty and staff to check if appropriate and adequate library materials and services are available to support the course.

There may be some other locally required data elements that are needed for the local curriculum management/tracking system that aren’t normally included in the outline itself, such as . Ccourse active or inactive status, or multi-college district curriculum approval elements are examples of this.

# GENERAL CURRICULUM CONSIDERATIONS

Local Processes and Autonomy

Education Code §70902 and Title 5 §55002 authorize the primary recommendatory power of academic senates as the primary recommending faculty body in the area of curriculum. However, district Boards of Trustees are the primary approving body, and the California Community College Chancellor’s Office is tasked with ensuring compliance and chaptering locally approved curriculum.

Course and Program Approval

For individual course approvals, the Chancellor’s Office can waive the requirement for statewide approval through a certification process which attests to the fact that college curriculum committees, and their parent senates and Boards, are in compliance with standards set forth in the Program and Course Approval Handbook, (CCCCO, current revision).

The Chancellor’s Office maintains the authority to approve new programs for degrees and certificates, and course outlines of record must be submitted with program approval requests.

For more information about the development of certificates and degrees, as well as the requirements for Chancellor’s Office program approval, refer to the Program and Course Approval Handbook.

Program Review and Revising the Course Outline

The course outline plays a critical role in the on-going process of program review, which is how a college keeps its curriculum relevant and allocates its resources appropriately. For the most part, when a college has an effective comprehensive planning process in place, the results of program reviews drive most other college decision making. The course outline of record is a critical element of any program review process because it lays the foundation for all learning needs such as facilities, equipment, supplies, and staff. Additional guidance on the broader subject of program review can be found in the ASCCC publications *Program Review: Developing a Faculty Driven Process* (ASCCC, 1996) and *Program Review: Setting a Standard* (2009). It is important to remember that the requirement for cyclical program and course assessment and review does not come solely from Title 5 or the Education Code. It is also a central requirement for remaining an accredited institution by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

# CHANGES WHICH TRIGGER COURSE OUTLINE REVIEW

To streamline the course approval process, it should be recognized that nNot all changes in the course outline of record are of equal impact require full committee review. Full curriculum committee review should apply only to those changes which require re-evaluation of criteria to assure that standards in Title 5 and the *Program and Course Approval Handbook* continue to be met. To that end, the Academic Senate suggests the following guidelines for curriculum committee action on proposed course changes.

Full Review by the Curriculum Committee: Substantive Substantial Changes

Full review means a complete analysis of the entire course outline of record by the complete curriculum committee and a motion for approval by the full committee. The following substantive substantial changes should trigger a full review:

* A major change in Catalog Description, Objectives, or Content which alters the need or justification for the course or calls into question the ability of the course to meet standards in Title 5 or the *Program and Course Approval Handbook*
* A change in units and hours
* A change in number of repetitions
* A change in credit/noncredit status
* A change in prerequisites, corequisites and advisories
* A change in modality, e.g. distance education (requires a separate review process)
* Course delivery in a highly compressed time frame
* Offering a course in experimental status
* Determination of imminent need to initiate expedited approval

All proposals should be submitted with the written rationale for the change.

Approved on the Consent Agenda: Minor Changes

Changes which do not affect statutory or regulatory curriculum standards, but require judgment of the extent to which this is true, can be placed on the consent agenda for full committee vote. It is recommended that a A prior review of these items should take place to ensure that the course changes are such that standards are not affected. At most colleges, this review can be done by division faculty or a technical review subcommittee of the curriculum committee, but should not be just an administrative review. Members of the full curriculum committee are expected to read the revised and previous course outlines and the accompanying rationale. They may pull the item from the consent agenda for discussion if necessary. Otherwise, no comment is needed prior to a full committee vote.

It is recommended that the following minor changes to the course outline of record be approved on the consent agenda as recommended either by vote of the division faculty or the technical review subcommittee, or whatever vetting process is agreed upon by the committee:

* A minor, non-substantive changes in Catalog Description, Objectives, or Content (see above)
* A change in course number (within college policy)
* A change in course title
* Add/drop from an associate degree or certificate program (must continue to be of two year or less duration)
* Add/drop from the associate degree general education list.

Again, a written rationale should accompany all proposed changes.

Information Item Only/No Action: Technical Changes

Some changes are technical in nature and require no review other than that of curriculum specialist and technicians who assist faculty to make the changes in the official course outline of record. Others are within the areas of the course outline for which a variety of methods are permissible, provided that the course objectives are met and the course content covered.

It is recommended that the following changes be accepted as information items only, with no action required, upon the advice of the division/departmental faculty or technical review committee. Revised course outlines should be transmitted so that the course file an be kept up to date.

* Non-substantial changes in term length (as long as the Carnegie relationship is maintained)
* Changes in the Text and/or Instructional Materials
* Changes in the sections on Methods of Instruction, Assignments, or Methods of Evaluation (as long as these changes are minor, they continue to enable students to meet objectives, they fully cover the stated content, and they would not trigger the need for a separate review re-evaluation such as is required for ensuring regular effective contact in distance education)
* Addition of a focus area to a special topics course.

# CALIFORNIA’S EDUCATION SEGMENTS, ROLES AND STUDENTS

The major public components of California’s educational segments provide a “ladder” of educational opportunities for California’s citizens, which is not a simple task. Not only do the segments provide many differing types of connection points between each other, but they also have a very wide variety of missions, some of which align and some of which do not.

Articulation between the segments is an important consideration in the development of curriculum and especially the course outline of record, since this is the document most heavily relied on to establish articulation agreements. The process of articulation means to transition, or step from one rung of the learning ladder to another in what is hoped to be an organized manner. This can be from high school directly to a university or it can be a many-staged process such as high school – work – noncredit – community college – four-year university – post-graduate university.

The five segments of education in California include:

* K-12: Elementary, Junior/Middle School, High School, and Adult Education
* Community Colleges
* California State University
* University of California
* Private schools and universities

Examples of articulation efforts include Tech Prep, Career Pathways, and the CSU Lower Division Transfer Pattern.

Course Identification Numbering (C-ID) System and Associate Degrees for Transfer

With the new mandate established by AB 1440 in 2010 for associate degrees for transfer (AA-T and AS-T degrees), the Course Identification Numbering system (C-ID) has provided course descriptors and numbers for all of the courses that currently are used in the Transfer Model Curricula (TMC). C-ID identifies comparable courses and provides an independent number, different from the control number assigned by the CCCCO, to those community college courses that are commonly transferred to universities. That number is based on a course description called a “descriptor” developed by faculty from the discipline in the CSU and community college system. Colleges are required to submit their course outlines of record for approval if a course is to be included in an associate’s degree for transfer. Faculty should consider this system when developing courses or revising them.

# CSU/GE Breadth and IGETC

The California State University General Education-Breadth and the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum are general education standards by which community college students can fulfill the lower division general education requirements of these segments prior to transfer. Individual courses are submitted for consideration by community colleges and reviewed by committees consisting primarily of CSU and UC faculty. Course developers must be aware of which features of this outline can assist in conveying the essential depth, breadth, quality, and appropriateness of a course as they relate to these general education standards.

Courses can fail to receive approval for certification in a general education area in both systems for a variety of reasons. These include a failure to meet subject matter requirements, a narrowness of focus, or simply a failure to demonstrate sufficient quality, currency, and completeness.

Detailed explanations for qualifying courses for CSU-GE or IGETC along with the IGETC Standards can be found on the ASSIST website (www.assist.org).

# Contract Education and Community Service Offerings

Contract education and community service offerings do not collect state apportionment. Contract education courses are funded by an employer or other contractor, while community service offerings are sometimes fully paid for by the students taking the course. Title 5 makes provision for these types of courses to be offered; they often do not come through local curriculum processes and do not require Chancellor’s Office approval. The one exception is Contract Education courses where students receive college credit. If the students receive credit for the course on their transcripts, regardless of the fact that the course is offered through contract education, the course must be treated like any other credit course in terms of content, rigor and approval of the course outline of record by the local curriculum committee. The term “noncredit” is specifically reserved for those courses and programs defined in Title 5 §55002(c), and §55150-§55155. Therefore, the term “not-for-credit” is used to describe contract education and community service offerings.