



AP 4023 Academic Departments

References:

Education Code Section 78015(a)(1) and 78016(a);
Title 5 Section(s) 51022, 53203(d)(1), and 55130

Definitions

Academic Department ("department") – An organizational structure composed of one or more related disciplines, and comprised solely of faculty members, that enable the overseeing of unique, specialized matters of academic content coordination, and academic planning and management among and within disciplines.

Proposals for Academic Department Initiation, Merger, Splitting or Renaming

- a. Formal written proposals are required for any and all categories of new departments. Such proposals shall be brought to the Academic Senate. The Chief Instructional Officer or any full-time faculty member may initiate proposals to create new, additional departments.
 1. Categories/Types of New Departments
 - i. Proposed departments that constitute new disciplinary focus in the District and that do not impact any existing department.
 - A. If the new discipline/departmental proposal includes a proposed new educational program, that proposed educational program must first be approved through BP and AP 4021 before the new department proposal can be advanced.
 - ii. Proposed departments that merges two existing departments.
 - iii. Proposed departments that merge at least one existing department and at least one newly constituted discipline not currently found within the structure of the Office of Instruction.
 - iv. Departments resulting from a proposal to split an existing department into two or more departments.
 - v. Proposals to rename an existing department without

- splitting or merging the department.
- vi. Proposals to rename an existing department as the result of a proposal to merge or split a department.

(Some proposals may fall within more than one category of “new” departments.)

- b. Upon receipt of the written proposal, the Academic Senate will send the proposal to the Program Viability Committee for review. The Program Viability Committee shall assume the responsibility for all AP 4023 proposals and will process them in accordance with the established standards of AP 4023.
- c. Program Viability Committee Functions (for AP 4023 proposals):
 - 1. Determining the initial proposal’s evidentiary sufficiency as required by this procedure.
 - 2. Gather all qualitative and quantitative evidence into a narrative written report.
 - 3. Make recommendations to the Academic Senate as to the proposal’s validity.
 - 4. Use as its guiding principles for recommendation, the following:
 - i. The proposed department is based on the need of the District and not other national or regional standards alone.
 - ii. The District planning mechanisms have collaboratively and democratically prioritized this proposal.
 - iii. The District has the funding resources to sustain the proposed department successfully, equitably and in accordance with all relevant collective bargaining agreements.
 - iv. The proposal must contain a feasible implementation plan addressing all impacted areas and collective bargaining agreements.
- d. The written proposal shall address the following issues:
 - 1. How will the proposal help the students of the college?
 - 2. Is the proposal part of a program review recommendation? If not, what has changed since the last program review that would support the proposal?
 - 3. What is the proposal’s impact on existing students and faculty members? Does the Office of Instruction support the proposal? Please explain, why or why not?
 - 4. Will the proposal provide for a more effective use of time, resources, and faculty? If so, please explain how and why?
 - 5. Is the proposal similar to the departmental structures at other

- institutions? How and why is it the same or different in nature?
6. Is the size of the proposed department a relevant factor to consider? If so, why?
 7. Would the proposal have any impact on negotiated agreements with either of the two faculty unions? If so, how?
 8. Would there be any resulting changes to curriculum, and if so, what is the intended timeline for implementation and approval by the Curriculum Committee? (*Close consultation with the Curriculum Chair, Counseling Office and Articulation Officer is required.*)
 9. CCC, CSU and UC Considerations:
 - a. Is the intended curriculum similar in structure to its equivalent found at the CSU or UC system?
 - b. Is the proposed department's academic discipline common to the California Community College system and mission?
 - c. Does the proposed department's academic discipline currently exist at other community colleges? And if so, what region and how frequently within the state system?
 10. Will the creation of the department result in new certificates, licenses, degrees or transfer degrees? What will they be?
 11. Are there any additional issues raised by the Senate or the Instruction Office? If so, please explain.
 12. Why is the creation of a department and its associated administrative structure necessary to achieve programmatic success?
 13. Can the proposed department be absorbed into an existing department?
 14. Will existing full-time faculty be assigned or transferred to the new Department? And, if so, has funding been secured to provide replacement for any vacancies created by this transfer?
 15. The proposal must include a feasible implementation plan, to include funding for the duration of the pilot department status.
- e. The proposal will be forwarded to the Chief Instructional Officer (CIO) and the Academic Senate at its next scheduled meeting. The Academic Senate must schedule at least two reads of the proposal before taking action. Unless approved by a majority of a quorum of voting members of the Academic Senate, and unless mutual agreement is reached between the Academic Senate and the CIO, the proposal will not be advanced. All proposals must be expressly approved by the President of the College of the Canyons Faculty Association (COCFA) to ensure that implementation of the proposal will not be hindered by, and the District will be able to honor, all existing bargaining contract provisions. All proposals submitted to the Academic Senate must contain an implementation plan. The CIO,

being a nonvoting member of the Academic Senate, shall speak to the matter as it is before the full Academic Senate. In the absence of any stated opposition from the CIO, or designee, and if the proposal is then approved by the Academic Senate, it shall be concluded that mutual agreement has been reached and, the proposal will be advanced for implementation.

Implementation

- a. Unless a specific implementation date is detailed in the approval process, implementation will take place at the start of the next academic year.
- b. If the proposal results in substantive alterations to curriculum or student expectations, the initiation, merger, split or renaming must be approved and completed by the print deadline for the coming academic year College Catalog.
- c. All appropriate college offices shall be notified for any changes required in the college catalog, brochures, and other publications.
- d. Pilot Department Status

All newly initiated departments shall be deemed pilot departments. Three status reports must be provided to the Program Viability Committee of the department's existence. The original proposing party, or Department Chair of the initiated department, shall present the reports.

- 1. Staffing – the authorization to hire full time staff to support any new Department may need to be restricted until the conclusion of the pilot process. Any recommendations to restrict full-time staffing shall be determined and implemented through the regular and existing institutionalized District staffing processes.
- 2. Required Reporting Content
 - i. Report #1 – the report shall be an informational status update to include evidence of the department's growth, success and challenges to date.
 - ii. Report #2 – the report shall quantify the original proposal's projections that were included in the quantitative and qualitative evidentiary requests required by "Proposals for Academic Department Initiation, Merger, Splitting or Renaming" above. The report shall also include a substantiated projection as to the department's likelihood for sustainable success by the Final Report.
 - iii. Final Report – the report shall quantify the original

proposal's projections that were included in the quantitative and qualitative evidentiary requests listed required by "Proposals for Academic Department Initiation, Merger, Splitting or Renaming" above. The report shall also include a substantiated projection as to the department's immediate institutional sustainability.

3. Final Approval – Upon receipt of the Final Report, the Program Viability Committee will make a determination as to whether the pilot department shall be recommended as permanent to the Academic Senate. A majority vote of a quorum by the Program Viability Committee is needed to forward the recommendation for approval by the Academic Senate, which requires a majority vote of a quorum. The CIO must concur with the Academic Senate for the outcome of the vote to be final. If the Academic Senate and CIO disagree on the outcome the parties will continue to meet until consensus is reached.
 - i. Discontinuance – all pilot departments failing to receive approval for permanent status after the Final Report will be deemed strictly discontinued requiring an immediate implementation.

Academic and Professional Matters

This procedure pertains to one of the "other academic and professional matters" described in the District's Board Policy on Faculty Involvement in Governance (BP 7215). It is a matter on which the Senate and the District will reach mutual agreement.

Reviewed by CPC: 05/20/2025

Next Review Date: Spring 2031