



**PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**ACADEMIC REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

September 23, 2005

# **PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC REVIEW COMMITTEE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

## **Purpose and Role of ARC**

The Academic Review Committee (ARC) at PWSCC is charged with oversight of instructional programs offered by the College. Through the review and approval of courses, instructors and programs of study, the ARC ensures appropriate academic standards and quality assurance measures are adhered to in the areas of liberal arts education, professional technical programs, corporate and industry training and special interest programs throughout the institution.

## **Responsibilities of the Academic Review Committee (ARC)**

- A. Review for approval all credit courses recommended by the Dean of Instruction or Outreach Campus Coordinators.
- B. Review for approval all potential instructors recommended by the Dean of Instruction or Outreach Campus Coordinators.
- C. Schedule the review of course and instructor files.
- D. Review all proposals for new or revised degree or certificate programs prior to referral to the campus President. Program proposals are then referred to the PWSCC College Council, Statewide Academic Council (SAC), and the University of Alaska, Board of Regents for review and approval.
- E. Make recommendation to the Dean of Instruction and campus President regarding academic policies and procedures.

## **Academic Review Committee Membership**

- A. Membership will be composed of a minimum of nine members with representation from full-time faculty, administration and the training department. Recommended representation includes two full-time liberal arts faculty members, two full-time vocational faculty members, an adjunct faculty member, training department representative, Cordova and Copper Basin Coordinators. The Dean of Instruction will chair the committee and abstain from voting.
- B. The members are recommended by the ARC chair/Dean of Instruction and approved by the President.
- C. Attendance of five voting members of the committee at any scheduled meeting constitutes a quorum.

## **Committee Meetings and Documentation**

- A. Regular meetings will be held following a schedule published at the beginning of each semester. Meetings are open.
- B. Minutes will be recorded, reviewed, approved, and made available to all interested parties. Minutes are to document action taken by the Committee.
- C. Discussion concerning personnel matters will be addressed in executive session.
- D. A database of approved instructor will be maintained. At a minimum the database will include discipline areas/courses the instructor is approved to teach and dates of approval.
- E. A course database of approved courses will be maintained. At a minimum the database will include courses approved and the last approval/review date.
- F. Only one file will be maintained for each course and will include course revisions. When a substantial change results in a replacement course being created, cross reference notations will be included in both the old and new course files.
- G. Files for deleted catalog courses and special interest courses not taught for a period of five years may be archived.
- H. Files for instructors who have not taught for a period of five years may be archived.

## **Course Approval**

- A. Standards for Course Approval
  - 1. Course content must be deemed reasonable, complete, beneficial to the student, appropriate to the mission and goals of PWSCC, appropriate level, and when appropriate, demonstrate the potential for articulation with four year campuses of the University of Alaska system and Alaska's private colleges and universities.
  - 2. The ARC expects professional presentation of course instructor files that demonstrate careful planning. Materials should be typed and accurate. To insure that the information is accurate and clearly understood, material presented should be in final format.

3. The course outline must contain the following:
  - a. Course Description: The course description is the narrative that appears in the current college catalog. Anyone teaching the course must follow the approved description or submit a new one for approval. The course description provides a general statement about the scope of the course and what material will be covered.

Course descriptions for catalog courses will conform to those established at the University of Alaska Anchorage to facilitate transferability of courses.

- b. Course Content: Course content must describe the major areas of study. Course content is generally presented in an outline format, listing major topics to be covered in the course.
  - c. Student Learning Competencies/Outcomes: A precise list of competencies/outcomes the student is expected to have acquired upon satisfactory completion of the course. The Course Outcomes must be aligned with the appropriate Program Outcome statements (i.e., General Education Outcomes, Professional Technical Outcomes, or Training Outcomes.) The evaluation method used to assess student learning of each outcome must also be stated. See the attached sample Course Outline Template including Outcomes Grid.
  - d. Teaching Methodologies: Description of the teaching methods (lecture, class discussion, small group exercises, role-playing, demonstrations, etc.) used to achieve learning objectives must be stated.
  - e. Evaluation methodologies: Methods of evaluation must be stated and include factors indicating the relative value of each activity. Examples of evaluation methods may include quizzes, examinations, oral or written reports, demonstration of skills, projects, etc.
  - f. Resources: Required text and materials must be listed. Recommended supplemental bibliography may be listed.
4. Distribution of lecture and laboratory hour is to be indicated. One credit is defined as 45 clock hours of instruction. One clock hour is defined as 50 minutes of instruction.
  - a. This can be summarized for full semester length courses as follows:

Lecture/Discussion courses require a minimum of 15 clock hours (750 minutes) of instruction, and assume approximately 30 hours of outside of class work (1 for 1).

1 hour lecture + 2 hours outside study x 15 weeks  
=45 hours = 1 credit.

Lecture/Lab courses require a minimum of 30 clock hours (1500 minutes) of instruction, and assume approximately 15 hours of outside of class work for each credit awarded. (2 for 1).

2 hours lab + 1 hour outside study x 15 weeks = 45  
hours = 1 credit.

Laboratory courses require a minimum of 45 clock hours (2250 minutes) of instruction and assume little or no out of class preparation and little or no in-class lecture/discussion (3 for 1).

3 hours lab + 0 hours outside study x 15 weeks = 45  
hours = 1 credit.

- b. Minimums refer to actual instructional time and do not include vacations, missed classes, or the final exam.
  - c. Short courses and classes of less than one semester duration, including weekend workshops must meet contact hour requirements. Course hours may not be compressed into fewer than two days per credit. Assignments may be pre- and/or post-course.
  - d. No course can offer more than two credits in seven days. Exceptions may be approved by the Dean of Instruction.
5. All courses offered through alternate delivery are subject to the same review and standards as courses using traditional face-to-face delivery methods.
- a. “Stacked Courses” – the committee recognizes that a course may vary from the original format when the course is scheduled in an overlay with other courses. The committee will review courses individually as presented.

## B. Process for Course Approval

1. Course files will be presented to the Committee
  - a. Each time a new catalog course is proposed.
  - b. First time a new non-catalog (special topic course) is proposed.
  - c. First time a new training course is proposed.
  - d. Each time a substantial change is proposed to an existing course. The Dean of Instruction will determine whether the change is minor or substantial. All substantial changes must be presented to the committee for review and approval.
  - e. Every three years for all courses listed in the catalog. The Dean of Instruction will set the rotation of review for catalog courses.

2. A course approval file is to include:
  - a. Course Approval by Academic Committee Form.
  - b. Course outline (syllabus).
3. No files will be reviewed which the Dean has not referred. Those approved are forwarded to the campus President for review and approval.
4. Committee members must provide a written explanation on the course approval cover form when abstaining or disapproving the request for approval.
5. Approval of a course outline by five committee members will constitute formal approval. When approval is not unanimous, the Dean of Instruction should address concerns presented by the dissenting members.

#### C. Conditional Approval

1. The ARC may utilize conditional course approval status for course offerings when the file does not meet all committee standards and the information contained is not sufficient or needs clarification. The committee may allow the course to be advertised and instruction may begin but expects prompt response to its concerns within the semester.
2. When complete and accurate responses have been received the file is reviewed by the committee or Dean of Instruction. The approval date is indicated on the original cover sheet.
3. The Dean of Instruction may give conditional approval to a course offering in emergency situations. Such emergency approvals shall be presented at the next scheduled meeting of ARC.

### **Instructor Approval**

#### A. Standards for Instructor Approval

1. PWSCC offers a wide range of credit courses. Course offerings include general education transfer courses, professional/technical courses, and community interest special topics course. The type of course(s) to be taught is considered in the evaluation of instructor credentials.
2. The standard for teaching General Education Transfer courses at the 100 level or above is:
  - a. A Master's degree in the discipline area or a closely related field of study for which the applicant is being approved to teach.OR

- b. A Baccalaureate degree in the discipline area or a closely related field of study AND substantial documented experience working within the discipline area for which the applicant is being approved to teach.
- 3. The standard for teaching Professional/Technical courses is:
  - a. A Master's degree in the discipline area or a closely related field of study for which the applicant is being approved to teach.  
OR
  - b. A Baccalaureate degree in the discipline area or a closely related field of study AND substantial documented experience working within the discipline area for which the applicant is being approved to teach.  
OR
  - c. Documented education, training and/or experience that verify knowledge and application of the content area/subject matter for which the applicant is being approved to teach.
- 4. The standard for teaching zero and 100 level Developmental courses is:
  - a. A Baccalaureate degree in the discipline area or a closely related field of study AND substantial documented experience working within the discipline area for which the applicant is being approved to teach.  
OR
  - b. Documented education, training and/or experience that verify knowledge and application of the content area/subject matter for which the applicant is being approved to teach.
- 5. The Standard for teaching Community Interest/Special Topics courses at zero and 100 level is:
  - a. Documented education, training and/or experience that verify knowledge and application of the content area/subject matter for which the applicant is being approved to teach.

B. Documentation of Qualifications:

- 1. Standard documentation includes: transcripts of relevant postsecondary education, resume or curriculum vitae, and letters of reference.
  - a. Transcripts of relevant postsecondary education:
    - i. Official transcripts of relevant postsecondary education are required for review and are to be maintained permanently in the instructor's records.
    - ii. Photocopies of transcripts may be accepted when official transcripts are maintained on file at local academic agencies or other University of Alaska units. This exception does not apply to permanent full-time faculty.
    - iii. In order to be prompt in response to community demand or requests from industry, when official transcripts are not

immediately available, a copy of the request for transcript(s) and a memorandum from the Dean of Instruction or designee documenting telephone contact to verify the academic record exists will be accepted.

- iv. If official transcripts or approved photocopies are not included in the file a one semester contract may be issued at the request of the campus President or Dean of Instruction. Further contracts will not be issued until the file is complete.
- b. Letters of reference or documented reference interviews:
  - i. A minimum of three (3) letters of reference or documented interview of two (2) references by the Dean of Instruction or his/her designee are required.
  - ii. Current letters or documented interviews must address teaching and/or subject area qualifications. The Reference Interview Form is the accepted means of documenting interviews.
- c. Resume/Curriculum Vitae: A vitae or resume with reference to teaching, other employment, and academic experience as well as additional professional and personal accomplishments that may reinforce qualifications is required.
- d. A letter or memo from the Dean of Instruction, Campus Coordinator, or discipline area faculty/staff member describing personal knowledge of a proposed instructors relevant knowledge and experience can be accepted as partial documentation of qualifications.

2. Alternative Documentation of Qualifications:

- a. PWSCC is committed to evaluation of qualifications documented through alternative credentials. These credentials may be accepted as a substitute for traditional academic preparation. This process is especially applicable to approval of instructors teaching professional/technical, developmental, and community interest/special topics courses; however the process can be applied to general education transfer courses when compelling evidence of competency is presented.
- b. Examples of alternative credentials include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
  - i. Substantial documented field experience.
  - ii. Employment records of teaching with other institutions of higher learning.
  - iii. Certifications issued by organizations providing training, unions, occupational licensing, etc.

- iv. National/ Regional reputation of competency that is recognized within the region or profession and substantiated by a memorandum from the recommending Dean and/or Campus Coordinator.
- v. Detailed narrative material that describes the acquisition of knowledge and competency to teach the content area/subject matter for which the applicant is being approved to teach.
- vi. Professional Portfolios submitted for review that may or may not be retained in ARC files.

#### C. Process for Instructor Approval

1. An instructor file must be submitted to the committee when:
  - a. A new instructor is being considered.
  - b. An instructor is proposed to teach in an area of which he/she has not been previously approved.
2. A instructor approval file contains:
  - a. Instructor approval form
  - b. Documents demonstrating qualifications of the instructor
3. The Dean will refer all files for review. Approved files are forwarded to the campus President for review and approval.
4. Approval of an instructor by five committee members will constitute formal approval. When approval is not unanimous, the Dean of Instruction should address concerns presented by the dissenting members.
5. Committee members will provide explanations in writing on the instructor approval form when abstaining or disapproving the request for approval.
6. Additional documentation and/or information may be requested when the qualifications of a proposed instructor are in question.

#### D. Conditional Approval

1. The ARC may utilize conditional instructor approval status when the file does not meet all committee standards, and the information contained is not sufficient or needs clarification. The committee may allow the instructor to teach the course for one semester or offering, but expects prompt response to its concerns within the semester.
2. When further documentation has been received the file is reviewed by the committee or Dean of Instruction. The approval date is indicated on the original cover sheet.

3. In order to meet immediate training needs, or opportunities to acquire a visiting lecturer, the Dean of Instruction may give conditional approval that allows the instructor to teach for one semester as validated by a signature in the instructor file. The instructor file must be presented to the ARC Committee for review and approval prior to any subsequent instructional assignments.

### **Program Approval Process**

- A. A program proposal must be submitted to the committee when:
  1. A new degree or certificate program is proposed.
  2. A change in degree or certificate program requirements is proposed.
  3. Deletion of a degree or certificate program is proposed.
- B. Levels of program approval include:
  1. Academic Review Committee
  2. PWSCC President
  3. PWSCC College Council
  4. Statewide Academic Council (SAC)
  5. University of Alaska Board of Regents
- C. New degree and certificate programs must be approved at all levels up to and including the University of Alaska, Board of Regents. The exception being departmental or institutional certificates of completion which require only ARC approval. Certificates of completion of 15 credits or more require approval up to and including the PWSCC College Council. New programs also require submission of substantive change documentation to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).
- D. Changes in previously approved degree or certificate program requirements are made at the ARC level and do not require statewide review.
- E. Deletion of a degree or certificate program is made at the ARC, PWSCC President and PWSCC College Council levels, with notification advanced to SAC, the University of Alaska, Board of Regents and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).

- F. New program proposals must include descriptive information that allows reviewers to evaluate the need, viability, academic integrity and structure, and resources available to deliver the program. Proposals should address the following:
1. Degree program description
  2. Relationship of program to the pwscc mission
  3. Relationship to other degree programs within the UA system
  4. Program assessment
  5. Admission requirements
  6. Degree program requirements
  7. Sample two-year program of study
  8. Need for degree program
  9. Projected size of the degree program
  10. Present and projected resource requirements and sources
  11. Program costs
  12. Supplemental information (optional)
- G. Forms for new programs adopted by the Statewide Academic Review Council must be submitted with all new program proposals.
- H. Action related to new program development and approval is to be documented in ARC minutes.