

**COMPONENTS OF
A MODEL COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD**

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

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**Curriculum Committee
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ABSTRACT

The course outline of record plays a central role in the curriculum of the California Community Colleges. Standards for the course outline appear in Title 5, in the *Curriculum Standards Handbook*, in accreditation standards, in intersegmental general education agreements with the California State University and the University of California (IGETC and CSU-GE), and serve as the basis for transfer articulation agreements with individual CSU and UC campuses. All of these standards have been revised recently (Title 5 in 1993, the *Handbook* in 1995, IGETC in 1991 and CSU-GE in 1992) or are currently being revised (accreditation). As a consequence, discipline faculty and curriculum committee members are faced with the daunting task of writing and approving course outlines which will meet this array of updated standards.

This paper reviews the role of the course outline and summarizes the requirements and standards for writing approvable outlines of record. (Appendices give the complete versions of each of the published standards.) Moreover, the paper covers each of the required components of the outline and presents an approach to integrating the standards throughout the outline. This approach is summarized in the form of a model course outline of record for credit courses. The purpose of this model course outline is not to force standardization of curriculum but rather to assist faculty in presenting their courses in a format which will accurately reflect the quality instruction they are providing. This format is intended to clearly demonstrate that the course will stand up to the scrutiny of the state and four-year institutions.

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The course outline has evolved considerably from the list of topics covered which an instructor would share with students in the class. It is now a document with defined legal standing which is read by many more eyes than just those of instructor and student. Even so, no model has been written by which instructors might have reasonable assurance that the required components--both within their college and without--are met. To address this need the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges passed the following resolution at its Fall 1994 Plenary Session.

Model Course Outline of Record

Whereas the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges has issued the 1994 Curriculum Standards Handbook which delegates several approval authorities to local colleges and significantly revises the criteria for course and program approval, and

Whereas the California State University, in Executive Order 595, removed the ability of community colleges to self-certify general education courses and has begun a systematic review of all such courses using stringent criteria, and

Whereas many local colleges have experienced difficulties with articulation of courses campus-to-campus, to the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), and to the California State University (CSU) for general education requirements,

Therefore be it resolved that the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges direct the Executive Committee to prepare a position paper recommending to local academic senates and curriculum committees a model course outline of record format and content that substantively addresses the approval criteria for CSU general education courses, for IGETC courses, and for the 1994 Curriculum Standards Handbook.

The purpose of this paper is to develop such a model course outline of record.

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ROLE OF THE COURSE OUTLINE

The course outline of record plays a critical educational role on campus. It is the primary vehicle for **course planning**. When a course is revised or updated, it is the course outline that records the changes. As such, it forms the basis for a **contract among the student, instructor, and institution** identifying the expectations which will serve as the basis of the student's grade and giving the fundamental required components of the course which the student is guaranteed to receive from the instructor and institution. More than just specifying the required components of the course, the outline of record states the content and level of rigor for which students--across all sections of the course--will be held accountable. Courses are designed to provide a coherent body of knowledge to prepare students in a particular subject. The **prerequisites** students need to advance successfully through a series of such courses are based on information in the outline of record.

Maintaining academic standards means providing consistent, quality instruction in the classroom. As our courses are taught by various instructors, both full- and part-time, it is by reviewing the course outline that they may clearly identify the standards and content of the course they are to teach. In addition, the course outline plays a critical role in the on-going process of **program review** by which a college seeks to keep its curriculum relevant and to allocate its resources sufficiently to maintain its programs. When **new programs** are designed, it is through the selection of courses and construction of new course outlines that the program design is evaluated for its ability to meet the newly-identified needs of students.

The course outline of record should not be confused with the **syllabus**. While a course outline is a contract between the college and the student containing the requirements and components of the course, a syllabus describes how the individual instructor will carry out the terms of that contract through specific assignments. Syllabi give specific dates, grading standards, and other rules of the conduct of a course required by the individual instructor. A course outline gives the basic components of the course required to be taught by all instructors. A syllabus allows the individual instructor to include methods and topics which may go beyond the course outline. It gives the instructor the opportunity to bring out his or her particular talents and strengths.

Another role of the course outline is to demonstrate that all of the **required components** are present in the course to the required degree of rigor as specified in Title 5 and the Curriculum Standards Handbook. It is the responsibility of the college curriculum committee to review course outlines submitted by discipline faculty to assure that they meet these standards. Such **course approval** is the central task of the curriculum committee. When initially offered as part of a program, the course outline is submitted to both the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) and the Chancellor's Office in the **program approval** process. When questions arise as to the appropriateness of a college's course or program offerings, the Chancellor's Office or CPEC may request copies of the pertinent course outlines for review. If these reviews and approvals are not satisfactory, the colleges may not offer the programs and/or courses. In addition, the Chancellor's Office may also use the quality of the course outline of record to determine that colleges are meeting the conditions for delegation of curriculum approval authority. (See section 2.4 of the *Curriculum Standards Handbook* excerpted in the appendix.)

Title 5 regulations in the area of matriculation allow the establishment and enforcement of **prerequisites**, but only when students would be highly unlikely to succeed without them. In some cases those prerequisite skills must be documented in the course outline of record. The process that the college uses is included in its annual Matriculation Plan and is part of the documentation provided for site visits by the Chancellor's Office.

Outlines of record are also submitted annually for approval as meeting California State University General Education (**CSU/GE**) breadth requirements and for inclusion in the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (**IGETC**). Each college also establishes **Transfer Articulation Agreements** with surrounding four-year colleges and universities. Again, the course outline serves as the basis for evaluation of the transferability of these courses and to substantiate their equivalence to those courses offered at the four-year schools.

Each college maintains its **accreditation** through reviews conducted by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (**WASC**). In the self-study done in preparation for such reviews--and during the site visits which accompany them--course outlines of record serve as documentation of the college's high academic standards and quality certificate and degree programs. In the current move toward increased **accountability** many other outside agencies have begun to look at the course outline of record--its quality and rigor--as a means of evaluating institutional effectiveness. For example, course outlines are cited by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), in its effort to reduce fraud and abuse in the use of federal financial aid as the State Postsecondary Review Entity (**SPRE**). CPEC's SPRE standard 1, Information for Students, requires that "to document the accuracy of these materials, the institution should have available current course syllabi/outlines...."

TITLE 5 REQUIREMENTS

The major section in Title 5 which addresses the requirements for the course outline is 55002, Standards and Criteria for Courses and Classes. Subsection (a) on associate degree credit courses is found in the appendix. The course outline also plays an important role in establishing prerequisites (particularly section 55201), course and program approvals (section 55000.5) and in distance learning (particularly sections 55352, 55376, and 55378). These sections also appear in the appendix.

Title 5 places some specific requirements on the course outline of record. The course must have a **grading policy that is clearly based on course objectives** in the course outline. The grade must be based on demonstrated proficiency at least part of which is either in the form of **written essays or**, if the curriculum committee deems it more appropriate, **problem solving ability** may be added to or substituted for essay writing.

The number of **units** must appear in the course outline. Each unit must be shown to require three hours of work per week by the student either in or out of class. The division of credit among lecture, laboratory, and activity must be shown. (Typically, one lecture hour is deemed to require at

least two hours of work outside of class and so equals one unit. Three hours of laboratory or activity is commonly equated to one unit of credit. This is based on the definition of the credit hour in Title 5 section 55002.5, commonly called the Carnegie unit.) In all courses, even those which are predominately laboratory or activity courses, the course outline must demonstrate that students are required to study outside of class.

Prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories on recommended preparation are based on a review of the course outline and other course materials. In the case of sequential courses within and across disciplines (such as Chemistry 1A for Chemistry 1B or Anatomy 1 for Nursing 1), a list of prerequisite skills which serve as the basis for content review is to be included in the course outline if the district's policy is to be in accord with the Model District Policy. (The appropriate section of the Policy also appears in the appendix.) Indeed, it is one of the responsibilities of the curriculum committee to ascertain if prerequisite skills are needed for a course, especially skills in the areas of English and mathematics.

A credit course is required to incorporate **critical thinking** along with learning skills and a vocabulary that is definitely at the **college level**. It is through the course outline that these skills are demonstrated to be at college level and an integral component of the course.

In the Title 5 subparagraph which addresses the course outline of record specifically, the required components are **unit value, scope, objectives, and content**. The outline must also specify **assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation**, although in these sections **only types and examples** are required. This is an important distinction. Objectives and content in the course outline are required of all instructors. Individual instructors are, however, free to use different assignments and methodology as long as the types they use are equivalent (in covering course content and achieving student outcomes) to those illustrated in the course outline. This section also requires types of reading assignments, that is, **texts and other instructional materials**. Again, not all instructors must use the same text, but a complete list of the types used should be included in the course outline. This is difficult to achieve given that instructors change texts and other reading assignments regularly. Many colleges meet this requirement by maintaining a complete list of required material in the bookstore and/or library and then make reference to this list in the course outline. (When they are to be reviewed by those outside the college, the course outlines must, of course have such reading assignments appended.)

The course outline is also an important part of the regulations and guidelines on **distance education**. Course quality in distance education courses is to be judged by the same standards as spelled out in Section 55002 above. As such, distance learning is a mode of presentation to be described (types and examples) in the sections on assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation. It is noteworthy that the outline must indicate the instructor contact as specified in Section 55376. As indicated in Section 55352, the course outline may also reflect a review of the effect of the number of students on academic standards. These components are required to be part of the course outline in part because Section 55378 requires separate approval by the curriculum committee of courses and sections taught in distance learning mode.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS HANDBOOK REQUIREMENTS

Currently, under delegation of curriculum approval authority, colleges submit only new programs to the Chancellor's Office for approval. However, to maintain the delegation of approval authority, colleges must certify that their local approval standards are equal to or exceed those specified in the Curriculum Standards Handbook. Those standards consist of five criteria: mission, need, quality, feasibility and compliance, as explained below.

The objectives of the course must be **consistent with the mission** of California Community Colleges and with the local college mission as expressed in its master plan. In addition, there must be a definite **need** for the course. In most cases, associate degree credit courses serve as required preparation for a degree, certificate or transfer. In many cases, such courses also meet general education requirements for the associate degree and/or transfer major. The course *objectives* must be clearly designed to meet that stated need.

The outline of record must reflect a **quality** in the course sufficient to obtain the objectives. To do this the outline must be *complete*, that is, contain all the elements specified in 55002(a)(3): unit value, scope, objectives, and content. The outline must also include types and examples of assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation. It must be *rigorous and effective* in integrating throughout the outline the required components of critical thinking, essay writing/problem solving, and college level skills and vocabulary. An *integrated approach* is one in which each element appears throughout the objectives, is covered in the course content, is reflected in comprehensive assignments, is taught using an effective methodology, and serves as an essential part of the evaluation of student performance. Citations of texts and other reading material must be *current*, that is, reflect the present knowledge of skills and principles upon which the course is founded.

The college must commit the resources, both in terms of staff and facilities, to assure the **feasibility** of offering the course with sufficient frequency to maintain course objectives--at least every two years. Lastly, the course must *comply with any other applicable laws* such as those related to classes for those with disabilities.

CSU/GE AND IGETC REQUIREMENTS

The California State University General Education-Breadth requirements are detailed in Executive Order 595 which appears in the appendix. The Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum is presented in the appendix. Both of these sets of general education standards focus on the particular subject matter and appropriate approaches which a course must have to qualify as fulfilling the requirements of a given area in that system. Individual courses are submitted by community colleges and reviewed by committees consisting primarily of CSU and UC faculty. What features of a course 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. Very common is a simple **failure to meet the subject matter requirement** of the area. For example, a psychobiology course may not be rooted in the "principles which form the foundations of living systems" (CSU/GE Area B: Physical Universe and Its Life Forms), that is, it does not cover enough general biology. Or a survey course in consumer chemistry may not "emphasize experimental methodology" (IGETC Subject Area: Physical and Biological Sciences), that is, it just describes and imparts facts rather than promoting experimental inquiry. Another problem is the course which is **too narrow in focus**. For example, a special topics course in women's literature may be a valuable course but may not be appropriate for general education if it just covers American Anglo writers rather than being "designed to develop a historical understanding of major civilizations and cultures, both Western and non-Western, and an understanding and appreciation of the contributions and perspectives of women and of ethnic and other minorities" (IGETC Subject Area: Arts and Humanities).

Even courses that have appropriate breadth and focus may fail because the course outlines **do not show an integrated approach**. A required component such as "exposure to both Western cultures and non-Western cultures" (CSU/GE Area C: Arts, Literature, Philosophy and Foreign Languages) may appear in the course objectives but not in the content, assignments, or student evaluation. Occasionally, one of these **necessary components is missing** or is so tersely written as to provide insufficient basis for evaluation. The use of forms which "check off" such expected items as "essay tests" leave the reviewer without adequate insight into the content of what will be tested.

Finally, some course outlines just **do not show a dedication to quality, currency, and completeness**. For example, courses are routinely rejected if they do not refer to a text (or other appropriate instructional material) or refer to a text which is outdated.

ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, a commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), regularly assesses participating colleges on the basis of eight accreditation standards. Standard Two, Educational Programs, appears in the appendix.

The entirety of Standard Two could not be achieved without strong course outlines. Indeed, documentation for the standard requires current course outlines and objectives for all programs. That said, four provisions stand out in particular.

- 2A.5 Program and **course objectives** clearly specify the **subject matter to be covered**, the intellectual skills to be acquired and **learning methods** used, the affective and creative capabilities to be developed, and the specific occupational skills to be mastered.
- 2B.2 The institution engages in **periodic review** of program and departmental quality and effectiveness under clearly specified and demonstrably implemented procedures.
- 2C.1 The general education segment of all educational programs is based on a **philosophy**

and rationale that are clearly stated and provides the criteria by which the appropriateness of each course in the general education component is evaluated.

2E.1 **Student performance is evaluated** in terms of defined and published course requirements.

The essential components of the course outlines are the foundation upon which the college achieves its educational goals and upon which its accreditation rests. These components as described in Standard Two reinforce the recurrent themes already presented. Course objectives (and how those courses meet program objectives), subject matter covered, learning methods, rationale, and evaluation of student performance are all elements required by Title 5.

Periodic review for accreditation provides an opportunity for the college community to regularly assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of its programs. Understanding the basis upon which that assessment is made is key to making the most of that opportunity. Periodic review of courses and programs--through assessment of the course outlines which describe them--is the vehicle by which that renewal can take place.

COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD FORMAT FOR DEGREE CREDIT COURSES

The following general sections of a typical course outline for a credit course are intended to address the needs specified in Title 5, the Curriculum Standards Handbook, CSU/GE and IGETC requirements, and WASC accreditation standards. This model course outline format is not a "recipe for success." All courses depend on the experience, training, and dedication of classroom instructors to generate the fundamental quality instruction that should be reflected in the course outline. All too many times this quality instruction goes unappreciated because of an incomplete or inadequately written course outline of record. This model is intended to convey the components of a course outline that will be expected when it is reviewed in the variety of venues described above.

The **catalog description** should clearly state the scope of the course, its level, and what kinds of student goals the course is designed to fulfill. For example, state "designed for engineering majors." It should be evident from the catalog description that no two courses in the curriculum are redundant.

Local and statewide approvals are based partly on an evaluation of **need**. One aspect of need is showing that the course plays a role in the curriculum that no other course fulfills effectively. Need statements are critical for innovative courses. Need can be demonstrated in a number of ways.

- X The course is required for completion of an associate degree, a certificate, or an articulated transfer program.
- X The course meets an associate degree and/or transferable general education requirement in a specific area not adequately covered by another course.
- X The course meets a specified need of industry as detailed by an industry advisory committee or survey of employers.
- X The course provides an alternative route to meet goals specified in other courses by students unable to benefit as fully from those other courses. (In such cases it should be made clear that the student cannot receive credit for both courses.)
- X The course makes productive use of particular strengths the college has to offer and is in demand

by students with transfer or occupational goals.
X The course meets an innovative subject matter or instructional need.

The outline must state the **objectives** of the course, that is, what students will have learned upon successfully completing the course. "Boiler plate" is strenuously discouraged! Objectives should use active verbs for observable behaviors. They must establish that critical thinking is an integral part of the course. For example, rather than "describe animal hunting behavior" state "compare and contrast social aspects of hunting tactics of major mammals."

For those courses with **prerequisites** or corequisites, the course outline should list those skills without which the student would be highly unlikely to succeed. (Or, for advisories, state the skills with which the student's learning in the course would be enhanced.) The basis for these statements of skills is the professional judgment of the instructors in the discipline. Together with a comparison with the exit skills from the prerequisite course, this section is the basis of the required content review.

The central component of the outline is the **course content**. This section should include a complete listing of the topics taught in the course. They should be arranged by major headings with subtopics. The content may include the perspective from which topics are taught, such as "*social* aspects of mammal hunting tactics."

The type or examples of **methods of instruction** should be specifically related to the course objectives. They should provide real guidance to instructors in designing their class sessions. For example, rather than stating "lecture" the description might be "lecture and demonstration by instructor, with in-class practice, including feedback, coaching, and evaluation by the instructor."

Assignments should be directly related to the objectives of the course. They should be specific enough to provide real guidance to faculty and clear expectations for students. A description of the type or examples of assignments are required. For example, rather than "term paper" state "term paper comparing and contrasting the social aspects of the hunting tactics of two mammal species." This section must establish that the work is demanding enough in rigor and independence to fulfill the credit level specified. The nature of the assignments must clearly demand critical thinking. Assignments should be adequate to assure that students who successfully complete them can meet the objectives of the course. Appropriate out-of-class work is required for credit courses.

Typically, a syllabus is attached to the course outline to assist in meeting the requirements of types or examples of methods of instruction, assignments, and evaluation. Remember that a syllabus differs from a course outline in several ways. A course outline is a contract between the college and the student and gives minimum required components of the course. A syllabus describes how the individual instructor will carry out the terms of this contract by giving specific dates, grading standards, and other rules of the conduct of a course required by the instructor. A syllabus allows the instructor to include methods and topics which may go beyond the course outline and gives the instructor the opportunity to bring out his or her individual talents and strengths. However, syllabi should clearly show that all instructors of the course follow the objectives, content, assignments, and evaluation to the level of rigor specified in the course outline.

Types and examples of **methods of evaluation** should be listed. This section should be

substantively related to the stated objectives of the course. The evaluation must clearly show that critical thinking skills are required. Types or examples should be extensive enough to show that all course objectives are evaluated. Statements in this section should clearly show the *basis* for grading. For example, "term paper shows topic coverage, basis of comparison, and critical analysis."

Textbooks are to be listed with specific titles and date of publication. The text and other instructional materials should show the required rigor and scope. (Because of the difficulty in keeping textbook and other materials listings current, many colleges refer to a current list such as that maintained by the bookstore. If that practice is used, a current copy of that list should be attached when the course outline is submitted for review.) In degree credit courses, texts should be written for college level students, but primary sources need not be college level. If "instructor-designed materials" are the only citation, a description of their scope should be in the outline and samples included.

SUMMARY OF COMPONENTS OF AN INTEGRATED COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD FOR DEGREE CREDIT COURSES

- X Show that the subject matter is rooted in basic theory and concepts of the discipline in each component of the course outline.
- X Integrate all components throughout the outline; never just "add on."
 - Objectives** meet the stated needs of the course.
 - Course Content** covers all the objectives.
 - Methods of Instruction** are identified with particular course objectives.
 - Assignments and Evaluation** clearly show how students attain all objectives.
 - Texts** are of college level and cover the theory and principles of the subject.
- X Pay particular attention to critical thinking.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

- X Write a short paragraph as a well developed overview of topics covered.
- X Identify the target audience: required for major, degree or certificate, transfer, etc. "Meets general education laboratory science requirement" for example.
- X List prerequisites, corequisites, and/or advisories.
- X Include lecture/lab/studio hours and units.

NEED/JUSTIFICATION/GOALS

- X State fulfillment of degree, certificate, transfer or other need.
- X Distinguish purpose as related to similar courses.
- X Clearly state goals to allow evaluation of objectives.

PREREQUISITE SKILLS

- X For pre- and corequisites list entry skills without which student success is highly unlikely: "upon entering the course the student should be able to...."
- X For advisories list entry skills which would broaden or enhance student learning but without which the student would still succeed.

OBJECTIVES

- X State in measurable terms what students will be able to do: "upon completion of the course the student should be able to...."
- X Be concise but complete: ten is too many; one is not enough.
- X Use verbs showing analysis: rather than "understand," "identify" or "describe" say "explain" or "compare and contrast."
- X Adequately cover theory, principles, and concepts. Use skills and applications to reinforce and develop concepts. Don't add concepts to supplement skills.
- X Be broad and introductory in scope, not too advanced, narrow, or specific.

COURSE CONTENT

- X Compile a complete list of all topics taught in the course.
- X Arrange the list by topic with sub-headings; half a page is not enough.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- X Use methods appropriate to the objectives. If an objective is self-criticism of original work, lecture as a method is not enough.
- X Types or examples of methods of instruction as well as assignments and how they are evaluated [see below] are required. If all instructors agree, the course outline may show just one teaching pattern. However, instructors have the academic freedom to choose how they will achieve course objectives. If other methods are used, options should be described fully. Detail may be reduced by attaching syllabi with enough information to evaluate instructional methodology.

ASSIGNMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION

- X Give assignments that reflect coverage of all objectives and content.
- X In addition to listing graded assignments, give the basis for grading, and relate to skills and abilities in objectives. For example, say "written assignments which show development of self-criticism." Attach examples if needed.
- X Out-of-class assignments must be sufficient to show independent work.
- X Be sure that knowledge of required material constitutes a significant portion of the grade as reflected in assignments and methods of evaluation.

TEXTS/INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- X Include text (with date of publication) and other instructional material.

PROCESS OF COURSE OUTLINE REVISIONS

As a faculty member, you are charged with constructing effective curricula which meet the needs of students and also the requirements of statutes, regulations, and guidelines of reviewing bodies. The task involves melding your professional skills within the framework of those requirements.

A key aspect of producing effective and appropriate course outlines is **training**, both of curriculum committee members and of the faculty in general. Begin with a subcommittee of dedicated curriculum committee members. Use the resources available both on and off campus. Your college has a wealth of knowledge in its articulation officer, transfer center director, chief instructional officer, curriculum chair, academic senate president, and matriculation coordinator. Use their expertise in training those who write and review course outlines. A number of excellent resources are just a phone call (or e-mail!) away. The appendix gives the names and addresses of those responsible for curriculum review and articulation in the Academic Senate, Chancellor's Office, California State University and University of California. The members of the Academic Senate Curriculum Committee are particularly interested in providing workshops to your campus faculty.

Use this core group of trained on-campus faculty to work with other faculty. When the faculty in a given discipline is revising its curriculum, have one of these trainers go out to their meetings and work with them directly. In the vast majority of cases, the primary hurdle is the writing of the course outline of record, not major revisions to the course itself. As taught in the classroom--but all too often not reflected in the outline--most of our courses do, indeed, meet the requirements cataloged in this paper.

Develop a college curriculum handbook which includes the information on standards and process that faculty must have to design, review, and approve courses, the step-by-step procedures for getting a course outline reviewed and approved, and key contact people to assist with the process. Most colleges use a check-off list to assure that everything is in place. While such check-off lists are not part of the course outline, they do assist those involved in the process in making sure that all steps have been followed. A word of caution is appropriate here. Checking off a box that a required component, such as critical thinking, has been met is not sufficient. The course outline itself must demonstrate that all required components, such as critical thinking, are an integral part of the course. Often the college curriculum handbook will provide examples of various types of course outlines: general education, non-credit, non-degree-applicable, vocational certificate, etc. Annotations on these samples stating the purpose of each of the components are also useful.

The effort of revising and upgrading our course outlines of records should continue to be a priority for those of us in the classroom. It is through our unique approaches to curriculum that community colleges continue to contribute to and enhance higher education in California and the nation. Our curriculum, as expressed in our course outlines, assures those in business and industry that our students are prepared for their careers and assures our university colleagues that our students are ready for upper division work. The course outline of record is our work product, based on years of collaborative effort, that testifies to the academic integrity of our classes, programs, institution, and system.

APPENDIX 1 - TITLE 5 REGULATIONS

[Specific sections of Title 5 of the California Administrative Code have been excerpted to aid in the review of required components for the course outline of record. Readers should consult the complete text of the regulations to place all excerpted sections in proper context. Some words and phrases have been placed in bold type for emphasis.]

Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction

Subchapter 1. Programs, Courses and Classes

Article 1. Program, Course and Class Classification and Standards

55002. Standards and Criteria for Courses and Classes

(a) Associate Degree Credit Course.

An associate degree credit course is a course which has been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with the requirements of Section 55805.5 and which has been recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee and approved by the district governing board as a collegiate course meeting the needs of the students eligible for admission.

(1) Curriculum Committee

The college and/or district curriculum committee recommending the course shall be established by the mutual agreement of the college and/or district administration and the academic senate. The committee shall be either a committee of the academic senate or a committee that includes faculty and is otherwise comprised in a way that is mutually agreeable to the college and/or district administration and the academic senate.

(2) **Standards for Approval**

The college and/or district curriculum committee shall recommend approval of the course for associate degree credit if it meets the following standards:

(A) **Grading Policy.** The course provides for measurement of student performance in terms of the stated course objectives and culminates in a formal, permanently recorded grade based upon uniform standards in accordance with Section 55758 of this Division. The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency, at least in part, by means of **essays, or**, in courses where the curriculum committee deems them to be appropriate, **by problem solving exercises or skills demonstrations by students.**

(B) **Units.** The course grants units of credit based upon a relationship specified by the governing board, between the number of units assigned to the course and the number of lecture and/or laboratory hours of performance criteria specified in the course outline. The course also requires a **minimum of three hours of work per week, including class time, for each unit of credit**, prorated for short term, laboratory and activity courses.

(C) **Intensity.** The course treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that requires students to **study independently outside of class time.**

(D) **Prerequisites and Corequisites.** 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 Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 55200) of this Subchapter.

(E) **Basic Skills Requirements.** If success in the course is dependent upon communication

or computation skills, then the course may require, consistent with the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 55200) of this Subchapter, as prerequisites or corequisites eligibility for enrollment in associate degree credit courses in English and/or mathematics, respectively.

(F) **Difficulty.** The course work calls for **critical thinking** and the understanding of concepts determined by the curriculum committee to be at college level.

(G) **Level.** The course requires **learning skills and a vocabulary** that the curriculum committee deems appropriate for a college course.

(3) **Course Outline of Record**

The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the **unit value, scope, objectives, and content** in terms of a specific body of knowledge. The course outline shall also specify **types or provide examples of required reading and writing assignments, other outside of class assignments, instructional methodology and methods of evaluation** for determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students.

(4) **Conduct of the Course**

All sections of the course are to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with a set of **objectives** and with other specifications defined in the course outline of record.

(5) **Repetition.**

Repeated enrollment is allowed only in accordance with provisions of Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 51000), Sections 55761-55763 and 58161 of this Division.

55002.5. Credit Hour; Allowance for Shorter Term.

One credit hour of community college work is approximately three hours of recitation, study, or laboratory work per week throughout a term of 16 weeks. Where a term is more or less than 16 weeks, more or less than one credit hour shall be allowed in the same ratio that the length of the term is to 16 weeks.

Article 2.5. Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Recommended Preparation

55201. Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation.

(a) The governing board of a community college district may establish prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories on recommended preparation, but must do so in accordance with the provisions of this Article. Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to require a district to establish prerequisites, corequisites, or advisories on recommended preparation; provided however, that **a prerequisite or corequisite shall be required if the course is to be offered for associate degree credit and the curriculum committee finds that the prerequisite or corequisite is necessary** pursuant to Section 55002(a)(2)(D) or 55002(a)(2)(E).

(b) A governing board choosing to establish prerequisites, corequisites, or advisories on recommended preparation shall, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 53200-53204 of this Division, adopt policies for the following:

(1) The process for establishing prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories on recommended preparation. Such policies shall provide that in order to establish a prerequisite or corequisite, the prerequisite or corequisite must be determined to be **necessary and appropriate** for achieving the purpose for which it is being established. District policies shall also specify the **level of scrutiny** that shall be required in order to establish different

types of prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories on recommended preparation. At a minimum, prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories on recommended preparation shall be based on **content review**, with additional methods of scrutiny being applied depending on the type of prerequisite or corequisite being established. The policy shall provide that the types of prerequisites described in Subsection (e) may be established only on the basis of data collected using sound research practices. Determinations about prerequisites and corequisites shall be made on a course-by-course and program-by-program basis.

- (2) Procedures to assure that courses for which prerequisites or corequisites are established will be taught in accordance with the **course outline**, particularly those aspects of the **course outline** that are the basis for justifying the establishment of the prerequisite or corequisite.
- (3) The process, including levels of scrutiny, for reviewing prerequisites and corequisites to assure that they remain necessary and appropriate. These processes shall provide that at least once each six years all prerequisites and corequisites established by the district shall be reviewed. These processes shall also provide for the periodic review of advisories on recommended preparation.

The Model District Policy [on Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories]

[The model] provides for all requirements of state law, [and] a district which simply adopts this model and submits it as its local policy will thereby have met all related provisions of law and will receive prompt approval and support by the Chancellor's Office. If, however, the district believes it has a better way to establish, review, and provide for challenges to prerequisites, corequisites, advisories, and limitations on enrollment, it is welcome to adopt the policies it deems most advisable and, then, to submit that policy to the Chancellor together with a rationale for changes in the crucial areas of the model.

II. Review of Individual Courses

A. Prerequisites and Corequisites

1. Levels of Scrutiny

b. Sequential Courses Within and Across Disciplines

A course may be established as a prerequisite or corequisite for another course provided that, in addition to the review by faculty in the department or discipline and by the curriculum committee as described above, skills, concepts and/or information taught in the first course are presupposed in the second course, and **a list of the specific skills and/or knowledge a student must possess in order to be ready to take the second course is included in its outline of record.**

55805.5. Types of Courses Appropriate to the Associate Degree.

The criteria established by the governing board of a community college district to implement its philosophy on the associate degree shall permit only courses that conform to the standards specified in section 55002(a) and that fall into the following categories to be offered for associate degree credit:

- (a) 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.
- (b) Courses that apply to the major in non-baccalaureate occupational fields.

- (c) English courses not more than one level below the first transfer level composition, typically known as English 1A. Each student may count only one such course as credit toward the associate degree.
- (d) All mathematical courses above and including Elementary Algebra.
- (e) 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 sections (c) and (d) above.

55000.5. Handbook; Monitoring and Review of Approved Courses and Programs.

- (a) The Chancellor shall prepare, distribute, and maintain a detailed handbook for use by the local educational agencies. The handbook shall contain course approval criteria, implementation plans for administrative regulations, and procedures for securing course and program approvals.
- (b) The Chancellor shall monitor and review courses and programs which were approved under the provisions of section 70901 of the Education Code for compliance with applicable statutes and regulations on a periodic basis.

[Excerpts from this Handbook are presented in the next Appendix.]

Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction
Subchapter 4. Article 2. Distance Education

55352. Number of Students.

The number of students assigned to any one course section offered by distance education shall be determined by and be consistent with other district procedures related to faculty assignment. Procedures for determining the number of students assigned to a course section offered by distance education may include a review by the curriculum committee established pursuant to Section 55002(a)(1).

55376. Instructor Contact

In addition to the requirements of Section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:

- (a) Each section of a credit transferable course which is delivered as distance education shall include regular personal contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, or other in-person activities. Personal contact may be supplemented by telephone contact and correspondence.
- (b) All other approved courses offered by distance education shall include regular contact between instructors and students consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to Section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors.

55378. Separate Course Approval.

Each proposed or existing course, if delivered by distance education, shall be separately reviewed and approved, according to the district's certified course approval procedures.