

Subject Area Committees

Definition

Subject Area Committees [SAC Chair List] (SACs) are composed of all faculty who teach in a PCC subject area or program, and address the instructional and curriculum concerns of their respective disciplines. These committees represent and articulate those subject area and program issues which are defined by the PCC Mission Statement and College-wide Core Outcomes, and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. As the curricular and content experts for their subject areas, SACs will make recommendations and must be consulted regarding all relevant academic and curricular issues as outlined in the SAC Responsibility section below.

Purpose

SACs assist in coordinating curricula of all course offerings within individual disciplines or in a group of related disciplines on a college-wide basis.

The college-wide SAC is the proper forum for discussion of curriculum issues that have college-wide impact. SACs make recommendations regarding internal academic/curricular issues as well as such issues as high school/college articulation and community college/baccalaureate college articulation and review grant applications when requested, review student petitions to waive graduation requirements (only when requested by appropriate administrative personnel), and participate in course and program analysis.

SACs are not designed to negotiate or adjudicate issues that are of a contractual nature. Issues such as faculty compensation, faculty assessment, campus assignments, professional leaves (e.g. sabbaticals), and hours and days of assignment, for example, are contractual/administration issues which are resolved through mechanisms established by the collective bargaining agreement.

However, SACs may make recommendations regarding issues which would, in the SAC's view, have an impact on instructional programs at PCC.

Membership and Organization

Each SAC will have as members all faculty (including temporary full-time instructors and part-time instructors) teaching in a given academic area or program. Part-time instructors are encouraged but not required to attend SAC meetings.

All instructors, including part-time instructors, have the right to participate in all SAC deliberations including those concerning instructional materials selection, curriculum, faculty qualifications, and class size. Many SACs tend to make their decisions by consensus, while others use a voting process. For SACs using a voting process, part-time instructors with

assignment rights attending a SAC meeting will have the right to vote. SACs may extend decision-making rights to a greater number of their part-time faculty, including full decision-making rights to all SAC members who attend.

Proxy voting is not allowed in SAC decisions. SACs should determine their quorum requirements and voting-by-email policy for SAC actions. SACs should determine their own subcommittee rules and requirements.

SAC members shall determine a chairperson(s) and inform the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs' (VPASA) office.

Whenever possible, the term of office will be one to three years, and multi-campus SAC chairs should be rotated among the campuses. A division dean or other administrator will be assigned to serve as administrative liaison for each SAC by the VPASA.

Meetings, Operation, and Recommendation Reporting

At a minimum, each SAC will meet once during fall term, winter term, and spring term. All members must be notified at least seven days prior to the meeting date; an agenda will be distributed in advance of the meeting. Minutes will be taken, sent to SAC members for approval, maintained, and distributed to all SAC members, the appropriate department chairs, division deans, deans of instruction, campus presidents, and the VPASA.

The SAC Chair(s) or division dean (or other designated administrator) will submit SAC recommendations in memo format (minority reports may also be submitted) to the appropriate venue (for example, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, EAC, EAC standing committee, dean of instruction, and/or other division dean). All further recommendations and actions shall be reported back to the SAC.

The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs or designee will be responsible for responding to SAC recommendations in a timely manner. In the event the administration disagrees with a SAC recommendation, the parties will work collaboratively to try to reach agreement on a recommendation. After this collaborative effort, if agreement is not reached and the recommendation is still not approved, the administration will, in writing, explain the rationale for that decision. The SAC shall be given the opportunity to supply additional information to the VPASA (or, as appropriate, the EAC) and to appeal that decision to the VPASA.

SAC chairs and SAC members may attend the EAC and participate as a guest for any issue on the EAC agenda regardless of which department submitted the item. In addition, SAC chairs or others may request that items be put on the agenda for discussion.

SAC Responsibilities

Contractual

The contract spells out SAC areas of expertise for which they are responsible: instructional material selection, curriculum, faculty qualifications, and class size.

The following is from Article 26.2 of the **Faculty and Academic Professional Contract: September 1, 2005-August 31, 2009**

26.2 The primary vehicle for Faculty involvement in matters related to curriculum shall be the Subject Area Committees (SAC). The composition and responsibilities of these committees shall be as described in the Academic Standards Handbook. The responsibilities and functions of these committees will include:

26.21 Instructional Material Selection. The selection of textbooks and other student-purchased learning materials is the responsibility of Faculty through the SAC. The coordination of selection activities, procedures for ordering the instructional materials, and the determination of what constitutes reasonable costs to students are Management responsibilities. If it is necessary for Management to reject a selection, the reasons for such rejection shall be stated in writing to the appropriate SAC, and representatives of Management shall meet with the SAC to resolve the problem.

26.22 Curriculum. Faculty have the responsibility for the development, review and evaluation of curriculum through the SACs. Faculty assigned to curriculum review or program review may be eligible for release time or compensation. Recommendations for release time or compensation shall be made through the SAC to the VPASA.

Management has the responsibility for approval of new and revised curriculum. Management has the right to evaluate current curriculum.

26.23 Faculty Qualifications. SACs have the responsibility to review and recommend education and experience prerequisites for Faculty positions. Management has the responsibility of final approval and implementation of faculty qualifications. Once approved, faculty qualifications shall not be modified without SAC agreement.

26.24 Class Size. The SAC will periodically review class size limits with regard to both instructional soundness and fiscal responsibility. Recommendations for changes will be stated in writing. The SAC and Administrative Supervisor(s) will then reach written consensus (see Article 1.06) regarding any revised limits. Any revisions will be established prior to schedule input deadlines.

At each step at the consensus process, Faculty and Administration representation will be balanced by mutual consent. If needed, the College will provide a mutually acceptable facilitator to help with the consensus process. If consensus cannot be reached, the group will be enlarged to include the next level of administration, and so forth, until consensus is reached.

Non-Contractual

Curriculum Responsibility

All new courses, new programs, course and program revisions, and distance modality proposals must be recommended by the appropriate SAC.

Where no SAC exists for a course/program, the VPASA, in consultation with the appropriate Campus President in the case of a single-campus SAC, will appoint a SAC to make academic recommendations.

SACs are responsible for reviewing outcomes and assessment strategies for all courses and programs taught in their subject areas. Certificate and degree learning outcomes shall be consistent with the college-wide core outcomes.

SACs are responsible for setting the available grading options for their courses.

Course Content & Outcomes Guides

Course Content & Outcomes Guides (CCOGs) are to be developed by appropriate faculty. SACs must review and approve CCOGs. All CCOGs must be reviewed and updated every three years. CCOGs are submitted to the Curriculum Office and posted on the Internet. Some elements of the CCOG require formal approval when changes are made. Refer to the [Curriculum Office Home Page](#) [www.pcc.edu/resources/academic] for CCOG format guidelines and for course revision forms and procedures.

Program and Course Evaluation

Requirements for courses and programs will be reviewed during Fall Term. If there are recommended changes, they should be made in time to meet catalog deadlines. The catalog and brochures must be reviewed and updated as appropriate. To satisfy accreditation criteria and ensure currency, program reviews will be conducted at least every 5 years.

Course Challenges

If a SAC decides to allow a course challenge, it shall develop the challenge criteria as appropriate. Recommendations shall be submitted to the VPASA for approval.

Equipment Purchases

A SAC shall review and make recommendations to the appropriate dean for purchases of equipment that impact its curricula on a district-wide basis.

Library Holdings

SACs shall review library holdings in appropriate subject areas and make recommendations for additional purchases or deletions. Recommendations will should be submitted to the director of the library.

Textbooks/Instructional Materials

SACs will decide when textbook adoptions are group decisions or individual decisions. When a textbook or other materials will be needed for more than one term, the SAC will normally make a collective, uniform choice, so that students will not have to make multiple purchases when they change instructors and/or campuses.

Leadership Responsibilities

SACs may make recommendations regarding any issue which would have an impact on instruction. Recommendations will be made to the VPASA.

SAC Chair(s)

1. Work with SAC administrative liaison to set official meetings and agendas
2. Conduct meetings.
3. Attend to the charges outlined in the “SAC Responsibilities” portion of this standard.
4. Work with SAC administrative liaison to record and distribute minutes to SAC members; faculty department chairs, division deans and deans of instruction involved with the SAC; the VPASA; and other interested parties within 14 days of a SAC meeting.
5. Forward all curricular recommendations to the VPASA or person designated by the VPASA.
6. Work with administrative liaison to maintain an up-to-date historical file readily accessible to all SAC members and administrative liaisons.
7. Be readily accessible to all SAC members.

Administrative Liaisons/Division Deans

Administrative liaisons are typically division deans, who represent the broad interests of the college. They engage in respectful dialog with SACs, clarifying budgetary, contractual, and other implications of SAC curricular work, and they serve as a conduit between faculty and the deans of instruction and the VPASA regarding issues critical to SAC recommendations. Administrative liaisons recommend SAC proposals—or, if necessary, add their justifications for not recommending them—after consulting with other division deans involved with the SAC.

Division deans are responsible for implementing SAC recommendations approved by the administration, including working with faculty and administrative colleagues to determine and secure necessary funding for approved proposals.

Administrative liaisons work closely with faculty as they fulfill the SAC Responsibilities listed above, with particular attention to the following:

1. Administrative liaisons collaborate with SAC chairs to identify issues SACs need to address and bring forward agenda items for SAC meetings.
2. Administrative liaisons help SACs develop degree and certificate programs, including conferring with other schools regarding course transfer and program articulation.
3. Administrative liaisons work with SACs and DOIs to focus, assess, and strengthen programs through program review and academic planning.
4. Administrative liaisons work with SAC chairs to maintain an up-to-date file of CCOGs.
5. Maintain the official SAC-approved listing of textbooks and other required student-purchased instructional materials.

Deans of Instruction

1. Review and make recommendations for curricular revisions in accordance with Curriculum Office processes.
2. Consult with the Campus Presidents and VPASA on SAC issues, including the assignment of SAC Administrative Liaisons.
3. Prepare administrative response to SAC program reviews.

Campus Presidents

1. Review and make recommendations for curricular revisions in accordance with Curriculum Office processes.
2. Consult with the DOIs and VPASA on SAC issues, including assignment of SAC Administrative Liaisons.

Vice-President for Academic and Student Affairs

The VPASA serves as the College's Chief Academic Accreditation Officer and is responsible for working in the best interest of faculty, students, and the institution by ensuring compliance with accreditation standards, policies, and procedures; academic rigor and integrity of the College's curriculum; and the effectiveness of student development services that promote student retention and success.

1. Review and approve/disapprove SAC recommendations as specified in previous sections of this policy.
2. Keep record of approved qualifications and processes for faculty hiring.
3. Maintain the College's official file of all approved Course Content & Outcomes Guides.
4. Update the College Catalog as new and revised courses or programs are approved.
5. Keep the Course Master up-to-date as required by the Course and Program Approval process.
6. Coordinate training briefings for SAC Chairs and administrative liaisons.
7. Communicate information regarding state-wide initiatives, practices, and procedures impacting curriculum.

Effective Summer 2009