

3043 - Curriculum Purpose and Effectiveness Policy

Curriculum Purpose

The College shall provide students with the opportunity to meet their goals through a multifaceted, flexible, innovative, and dynamic curriculum that is designed to meet both current and future educational requirements. The curriculum includes the knowledge, skills, and values that the College provides through organized instruction and related experiences. Through faculty and staff expertise the College shall develop and maintain a curriculum that reflects the general needs of the local community, as well as the specific needs of business. The curriculum is continuously developed to have internal and external integrity and to have its content match the goals of the College.

All parts of the curriculum are rooted in the College's mission statement, with different parts of the College's diversified offerings designed to serve the needs of different student populations. These major groups include those needing career entry skills or upgrades, persons in need of improving their basic skills, those seeking the first two years of baccalaureate study, and academically advanced students.

Washtenaw Community College (WCC) admits all individuals who can benefit from its curriculum. The College maintains an "open door" curriculum that includes assessment, orientation, and advising to help students establish challenging, but realistic, educational plans. WCC is committed, through the work of its faculty, to offering and guaranteeing (see Board Policy #3010) a curriculum of the highest quality. Curricular excellence is maintained by conducting ongoing assessments of community needs, students needs, and the external educational requirements needed for students to succeed. The goal is to maintain a strong match between student and community needs and the curriculum. This is accomplished through the assessment of student and community requirements, and the subsequent assessment and adjustment of the curricula to match those requirements.

The College's curriculum shall be developed and maintained to be a community resource offering a wide spectrum of educational programs suited to the unique needs of those served. This spectrum of offerings will include associate degree programs of 60 to 75 credits that include the twenty-four core elements appropriate general education requirements (see Board Policy #3045), certificate programs of 6 to 38 credits, special credit offerings for specific populations as well as non-credit offerings such as short courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, and teleconferences.

The College shall maintain a curriculum that is tailored to the educational readiness and intellectual capabilities of a range of students. In this regard, it shall be an area of emphasis, consistent with the College's mission. To offer developmental resources and courses designed to provide students the basic educational learning needed to address standard college courses and programs. It is also within the scope of the College's mission to offer programming which shall contain subject matter depth, rigor, and pace of coverage suited to the abilities of advanced learners. Such special offerings shall not be restricted by subject matter, student's educational intent, or program purpose.

Curriculum Effectiveness

The College is to set procedures to assure that currency and quality are maintained in all courses and programs. Standards of curriculum quality and currency are based upon the expectations of students, faculty, business and industry, and the needs of the local community. These are to be maintained by teaching up-to-date subject matter and skills, and applying the most effective teaching and learning approaches. In order to assure currency and quality, the College will: (1) maintain responsiveness by meeting student and community-based educational needs through on-going curricular improvements, (2) promote core subject-matter integration and reinforcement across disciplines, (3) demonstrate external continuity through ongoing articulation with other institutions, and (4) promote curricular innovation.

An important part of maintaining currency and quality is to demonstrate that the College's courses and programs smoothly articulate with those of other institutions. Instructional divisions and departments, with support from administrative offices, will develop appropriate articulation agreements, on a course-to-course and/or program-to-program basis, with local high schools, senior, post-secondary institutions, and also with business and industry training programs. The College is committed to maintaining, expanding, and improving existing agreements. Special emphasis is to be placed on program-to-program articulation that reflects a continuous curriculum that smoothly flows across the public schools, the College, business and industry, and senior colleges and universities.

Instructional faculty and deans, supported by appropriate administrative offices and College committees, are responsible for review and analysis leading to recommendations that will improve the curriculum. The processes for curriculum development and review are to be open, collaborative, and interdepartmental. Although the faculty is primarily responsible for final authority for the curriculum and its effectiveness.

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