



AP 4021 Educational Program Viability Review

I. Introduction

An educational program is defined in title 5 section 55000 (m) as “an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education.”

Educational Program Viability Review (EPVR) defines the process for evaluating a program’s viability distinct from the College’s program review process and separate from discipline faculty-initiated program deactivation, or modification through the Curriculum Committee process.

Educational Program Viability Review provides the Chief Instructional Officer of the college with a written report that includes recommendations regarding an educational program’s continuance (no action taken), revitalization, consolidation, suspension, discontinuance, or hold due to dire fiscal emergency.

The College shall not suspend, discontinue, or place a program on hold due to a dire fiscal emergency unless an EPVR process has been conducted.

II. Guiding Principles

- In all cases, primary consideration shall be given to how to best serve the college mission and student needs.
- The formal initiation of the EPVR should follow collegial consultation between faculty and administration regarding the program’s viability.
- The purpose of the EPVR is to have criteria and a procedure in place to guide a discussion when the process is needed. The process shall provide the opportunity for participation by all stakeholders, which may include, but is not limited to students, faculty, classified employees, administrators, transfer institutions, and the community.
- The process shall require careful examination of all pertinent evidence. This may include, but is not limited to, human, curricular and budgetary considerations, alternative organizational structures, community needs, external regulations, and the college culture. Sources of data for all evidence shall be referenced and cited.
- Consideration of continuance (no action taken), revitalization, consolidation, suspension, or discontinuance shall include an analysis of the potential



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benefits and the potential costs of each alternative. This analysis shall include non-monetary costs (e.g., faculty workload, student impact).

- Following the District’s overall “evidence-based decision-making process,” the EPVR shall consider examples of quantitative and qualitative evidence as outlined below (anecdotal evidence is inappropriate and shall not be considered).

III. Educational Program Viability Review (EPVR) Initiation

The EPVR may be initiated by the:

- Chief Instructional Officer
- Dean of the program
- Academic Senate

The recommender(s) shall prepare a written proposal clearly stating the reasons calling for EPVR, including evidence of prior dialogue among stakeholders. Potential stakeholders include (but are not limited to) department faculty, advisory committees, and relevant administrators. The proposal shall discuss each of the supporting factors and identify the sources of all supporting data. The recommender(s) shall also consider and refer to the program’s most recent Program and Services review (PSR) in the proposal. The proposal shall be submitted to the Chief Instructional Officer and the Academic Senate President who will jointly assemble the EPVR committee.

IV. EPVR Committee Membership

Educational Program Viability Review (EPVR) Committee:

- Curriculum Committee Chair (or designee)
- Curriculum Committee Faculty
- Academic Senate President (or designee)
- Academic Senate Senator (ideally from the area or as designated by the Academic Senate President or Curriculum Chair, respectively)
- Chief Instructional Officer (CIO)

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- Dean of the school most closely aligned with the program proposal. If more than one school is effected, the dean of each school can participate.
- CTE Liaison and/or Articulation Officer (whichever is most relevant to the proposed program)
- Transfer/Career Center Administrator

The dean (or dean designee with the CIO approval) and one faculty member shall be selected by the committee members as the co-chairs of the EPVR Committee. The responsibilities of the co-chairs of the EPVR Committee include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Maintenance of objectivity, neutrality, and integrity during the entire process.
- Providing for the recording of summary notes for each meeting. In addition to written notes, meetings may be recorded by agreement of a majority of the committee members. If the meeting is recorded, this shall be announced to all present, including visitors.
- The creation of a report that specifies the outcome of the EPVR Committee's research and deliberations and makes specific recommendations, complete with timelines.

The committee shall have access to research compiled by the Office of Institutional Research, along with assistance from, and information supplied by, other college departments as necessary in the conduct of its activities pursuant to this procedure.

The committee shall exist until it completes its recommendations and report, and either (1) its recommendations are fully implemented, (2) the committee determines that the program is viable and recommends termination of the EPVR process, or (3) the committee has discharged its obligations as outlined in section VIII of this procedure.

V. Criteria Used in Conducting the EPVR

The EPVR must take into account both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Factors to be considered include but are not limited to the following:

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- All viable programs should: facilitate transfer and/or support employment in the field of study with attainment of a regional thriving/livable wage as established by the Center of Excellence.
- Alignment and relationship to the Educational Master Plan.

A. EVIDENCE OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND CHALLENGES

- Quality and relevance of the program, which may include input from PSR, student evaluations, outside agencies, transfer institutions, local businesses and/or industry, and the community.
- Evidence of community need (e.g., articulating colleges and universities, employing businesses or industries, program awards and commendations).
- Ability of programs to meet the standards of outside accrediting agencies, licensing boards, and governing bodies.
- Analysis and explanation of enrollment
- Budgetary profile of the total costs associated with the program and any unmet needs

VI. Procedures for EPVR Committee

- EPVR Committee to be assembled within thirty (30) faculty contract service days of the original recommendation; EPVR Committee shall be convened during the regular academic year, with all meetings taking place during faculty contract service days.
- The EPVR Committee shall develop a schedule for completion of its work.
- The EPVR Committee shall complete its work within the equivalent of one semester ("EPVR Period"). However, if the EPVR Committee determines that more time is required, the Committee may adjust the EPVR Period.
- EPVR Committee shall prepare a written report that includes recommendations. That report shall be made available to the program stakeholders (dean, impacted students, faculty) and the public.
- Impacted students, faculty, and any other stakeholders shall have fourteen (14) days to prepare, if desired, a response to the report that will accompany the EPVR Committee's report to the Chief Instructional Officer.

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- The EPVR Committee's report and the dissent shall be combined into one document and presented to the Chief Instructional Officer. The Chief Instructional Officer shall issue a decision within thirty (30) business days after consultation with the Executive Committee and the Superintendent/President.
- The EPVR Committee's report and records of the evidence and comments pertaining to that report shall be maintained publicly and electronically, giving access to the College community and stakeholders.
- The Chief Instructional Officer shall distribute the decision and action plan to all stakeholders both internal and external, including, but not limited to the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Catalog and Scheduling office, Counseling, and Financial Aid. When appropriate, notification of the decision shall be communicated to the Chancellor's Office, the College's accreditor, outside accrediting agencies, and local industry.

VII. EPVR Report

The EPVR Committee's report shall be in writing and include:

- An executive summary.
- The Program Viability Review Form.
- The membership of the EPVR Committee.
- The schedule for the EPVR Period.
- Summary notes of each EPVR Committee meeting.
- A description of all relevant evidence considered.
- Recommendations, including the rationale for the EPVR Committee's recommendation(s).
- Discussion of impacts on students, faculty, and any other stakeholders.
- The response to the EPVE Report if applicable.



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VIII. EPVR Recommendations

The possible results of an Educational Program Viability Review are discussed below.

A. Program Continuation

The EPVR may recommend that the program continue, and that no action is necessary.

B. Program Revitalization

The EPVR Committee may recommend that a program continue with qualifications. These may include, but are not limited to, specific interventions designed to improve the program's viability as part of the EPVR plan resulting from a cooperative effort between the District and affected faculty and staff. After the specified revitalization period is completed, the program will be reviewed again on a regular PSR cycle.

C. Program Suspension

The EPVR Committee may recommend that a program be temporarily suspended for one to three years. Any recommendation for program suspension must include the criteria used to arrive at the recommendation. After the recommended suspension period, the program will go through a new viability review.

D. Program Discontinuance

A recommendation to discontinue a program will occur when it is concluded that the program is no longer viable for the College, its students, and the community.

IX. Impact Plan for Suspension and Discontinuance

When findings for Suspension or Discontinuance are issued, program relevant faculty, staff, and administrators will develop an impact plan that takes the following into consideration:

- Detailed timeline for discontinuing the program with the least impact on students, faculty, staff and the community.



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- Recommendations as to how currently enrolled students may continue their program of study or a plan for students to meet their educational objectives through alternative means once the program is discontinued.
- Recommendations for retraining and reassignment of program faculty and classified staff must also be addressed in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreements.

References: Education Code Section 78016;
Title 5 Sections 51022 and 55130;
ACCJC Accreditation Standard 2

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