



## Faculty Council of Community Colleges

### Guidelines for Faculty Governance Inclusion in Educational and Grant-Funded Initiatives

Curriculum development, course content and the teaching methods used in the classroom are the purview of the faculty. In its 1966 *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*, the AAUP stated, “faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter, and methods of instruction.”

In a joint statement dated January 2015, the SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges, the SUNY University Faculty Senate, and the CUNY University Faculty Senate agreed that “faculty’s disciplinary and teaching expertise are essential for determining the curriculum, developing appropriate pedagogical methods, and advancing knowledge,” and that “colleges and universities work best when faculty, individually and collectively, are responsible for exercising their academic judgment to determine who teaches, what is taught, to whom and how, and what performance standards are appropriate.”

In recent years, several trends have become potential threats to the rights and responsibilities of faculty. These include the following:

- pedagogical techniques available for purchase,
- external forces regarding workforce employment needs,
- mandates regarding assessment and student completion,
- programs advertising new methods to maximize student access, opportunity and success,
- grant-funded programs impacting curriculum
- increased availability of open educational resources, and
- curricula, course packages, and teaching techniques offered by non-profit and for-profit foundations or corporations.

External directives (such as Seamless Transfer) have created pressure to reduce the number of credit hours and the courses within academic programs, impacting content, academic standards and degree requirements. At the same time, grant-funded initiatives have increasingly become a means of fostering innovation; however, when funding is found, financial motivations, rather than faculty expertise and academic soundness, may drive decisions.

In addressing these trends, the Faculty Council of Community Colleges reaffirms its core principles of academic excellence, academic freedom, and sound shared governance practices. Therefore, when colleges are considering the adoption of new educational initiatives or developing proposals for grant-funded programs impacting curriculum, the Faculty Council strongly recommends the following guidelines to protect faculty purview over curriculum, academic integrity, and participation in shared governance.

I. Faculty purview over the curriculum:

Whenever new teaching technologies, pedagogies, techniques, programs, products, or delivery systems are under consideration:

- a. The faculty directly involved in teaching the courses in question must determine the need before considering grant funding, adoption, donation or purchase.
- b. The faculty directly involved in teaching the courses in question must be included in all discussions regarding the impact on curriculum.
- c. The faculty directly involved in teaching the courses in question must approve purchases or adoptions.
- d. Faculty are solely responsible for developing the content of all courses, both credit and non-credit, when those courses lead to a state-approved educational credential.
- e. All new courses and programs must be developed within established shared governance processes requiring the approval of faculty.

II. Established curriculum approval processes are an essential part of shared governance:

Whenever new teaching technologies, pedagogies, techniques, programs, products, delivery systems or degree requirements are under consideration:

- a. The development and approval of such must be conducted through systematic, deliberative, transparent and consultative shared governance processes.
- b. When colleges consider grants or donations related to these curricular matters, faculty directly involved in teaching the courses in question must be involved in every stage of the funding request process.
- c. When funding is an issue for competing educational initiatives at a college, an open, fair, transparent and collaborative process for prioritization established through shared governance must be used.
- d. The faculty directly involved in teaching the courses in question must determine when new teaching technologies, pedagogies, techniques, products, or delivery systems impact course content or are appropriate to their students.
- e. When such changes or innovations impact content, such changes must be approved by faculty through established curriculum approval processes.
- f. In order to facilitate time-sensitive initiatives, shared governance systems should consider establishing fast-tracking curricular approval procedures.