



***Faculty Council of Community Colleges
Guidelines for Faculty Evaluation of Educational and Grant-Funded Initiatives***

The recent *Faculty Council of Community Colleges Guidelines for Faculty Governance Inclusion in Educational and Grant-Funded Initiatives* re-affirms that “Curriculum development, course content and the teaching methods used in the classroom are the purview of the faculty.” In addition, this document states 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.”

The purpose of this document is to help guide faculty as they evaluate and consider adopting new teaching technologies, pedagogies, techniques, programs, products, or delivery systems (herein after referred to as *instructional materials*).

Student learning and success can be defined in many different ways. For some disciplines the emphasis is placed on skill development while other areas of study place a greater focus on conceptual understanding and analysis. Students may be judged by how they can interweave the concepts of one discipline with another or how a student performs in subsequent courses within a discipline. In recent years, the determination of student success has been also defined by the timely completion of an academic credential.

There have always been “Ready to Use” instructional materials created by both commercial and non-profit organizations that offer curricula to potentially deepen student learning and improve student success. It is the role of the faculty to determine whether these programs are appropriate for their particular institution.

It is therefore imperative that before new instructional materials are adopted faculty analyze the products with respect to the needs of their own institution, program, and courses.

When evaluating the need for new instructional materials, consider asking the following questions:

- How do you define student success and learning?
- What are the problems you are trying to solve?
- What is currently lacking in your present curriculum?
- Is there a sustainable population of students on your campus who warrant this change?
- What is the cost to the student?

While reviewing new instructional materials, consider the following questions:

Institutional Planning and Resource Allocation

- Does your campus have adequate and sustainable human, fiscal and physical plant resources to support the change?
- Do the instructional materials include training and follow up support?

Student Success

- Will this change in instructional materials better prepare your students for future study in the discipline or careers?
- Do these instructional materials address the needs of your students? Department? Campus?
- Will these instructional materials improve student success?

Instructional Design

- Is the content in the program or product comprehensive, accurate, and current?
- Does the content in the instructional materials contain both depth and breadth of the discipline? Does the content in the instructional materials thoroughly cover concepts?
- Do the instructional materials contain lesson plans designed to include effective concept introduction, practice, summary, and assessment of key concepts?
- Are the instructional materials appealing and easy to use for both faculty and students?
- Is there credible research to support the effectiveness of the instructional materials?
- Is the philosophy of the instructional materials clearly articulated and grounded in credible research and consistent throughout?
- Are there faculty in your department who embrace this philosophy? Does the philosophy of the instructional materials align with the philosophy of your department? Campus?
- Do the instructional materials employ effective, innovative, and engaging teaching methods that are supported by data?
- Are concepts in the instructional materials developed in a way that is supported by research?

Assessment

- Do the instructional materials contain student learning outcomes that are clearly articulated? Does each lesson contain student learning outcomes? Do the lessons and activities support these learning outcomes? Do the assessment activities assess these learning outcomes?

Once the faculty determines that a new teaching technology, pedagogy, technique, program, product, or delivery system should be adopted, it is imperative that the development and approval be conducted through systematic, deliberative, transparent and consultative shared governance processes.