

Program Alignment Faculty Chairperson Orientation

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Purpose

Each year, faculty committee chairpersons are tasked with convening the faculty committee to discuss the aligned program, foundational courses, implementation success and challenges, best practices, industry trends, and other relevant topics. The purpose of this meeting is to provide any updates to the initiative, processes, or expectations. The meeting also allows chairpersons to ask questions and provide feedback.

2. Relevant New Policies Overview

- The Board of Higher Education approved many new policies in June of 2024. These include R312, R315, R401, R402, R403, and R404. Each of these are related to program offerings. Only a couple of items are related to program alignment.
- Policy R402 – The only credential to be offered for technical education is the Technical Certificate.
 - This certificate should be at least 3 Credits/90 Hours and no longer than 51 Credits.
 - This certificate should not substantially duplicate academic programs.
- Policy 404 – Definitions:
 - Aligned Program – Includes the program name, CIP, program description, program objectives, and foundational course information. The length of the aligned program is the length of the foundational courses.
 - Foundational Courses – a course or group of courses representing the minimum educational requirements (knowledge and skills) for employment or as defined by a regulatory body. These courses are mandatory at all technical colleges offering the program.
 - Regulated Program – a program regulated by an accreditation, state, or federal body that defines specific program competencies, objectives, or length necessary for employment or licensure.
 - Substantive Change – refers to the modification in an aligned program's title, CIP code, scope as defined in description and objectives, or a 25% increase or decrease in length. This includes changes to the criteria set by the institution's accreditor.
 - Supplemental Courses – means courses a technical college adds to an aligned program to address unique regional industry needs. These courses may be required or elective but must count toward the program's graduation requirements.

3. Faculty Meeting Overview

- Schedule: Chairpersons should schedule faculty meetings during August and September and submit potentially proposed changes to USHE in October.
- Institutional Communication: Chairpersons should encourage all faculty representatives to continue their communication with other department faculty members, the institution administration, including department chairs, program directors, curriculum development teams, and instructional officers, regarding proposed changes.
- The faculty committees should be considering content-related topics, program information, and foundational course information. Where supplemental courses are offered at multiple institutions, these courses can also be discussed.
- Faculty members should not be focused on administrative issues such as funding mechanisms, enrollment and scheduling processes, admission procedures, etc. These typically vary widely between institutions and are outside of the purview of the faculty committee.
- Faculty members should discuss information from industry contacts and occupational advisory committees.
- Committees are asked to reconsider foundational courses that are 1 Credit or 4 or more Credits. If possible, please propose foundational courses between 2-3 Credits.
- For faculty committees with chairpersons who have been serving for two or more years, committees should consider electing a new chairperson. Additionally, committees should elect a “chair-elect” or “vice-chair” who will be the next in line to serve as the chair. This rotation typically follows a regular schedule, occurring every year or two.
- Faculty committee meetings should consist of, at most, one faculty committee member from each institution offering the program.
- Chairpersons will notify Kim Ziebarth of all faculty meetings with date, time, location, and link if there is a virtual meeting option.
- Occasionally, an institutional instructional officer will attend these meetings as an observer or to answer any questions or clarify any expectations the committee members may have. They are not to conduct the sessions and are present to direct the committee's work. This work is to be faculty-led.
- In some cases, a Commissioner’s office representative will be asked by one or more instructional officers or other institutional administrators to attend a faculty committee meeting.

4. Program or Change Proposals Review Process

- New or modified aligned program proposals are forwarded to the Commissioner’s office from the faculty committee chairs once consensus has been reached.
 - A majority vote of all institutions offering the program constitutes consensus.

- For any vote that is not unanimous, chairpersons should record dissenting votes and submit those schools to the Commissioner's office.
- New or modified program proposals will be forwarded from the Commissioner's office to the Chief Instructional Officers (CIO) committee for review.
 - This review will take a minimum of two weeks.
 - CIOs can approve the proposal or return the proposal with further instructions.
- New or modified program proposals, once approved by the CIO committee, will be forwarded to the USHE Review Committee for review.
 - This committee provides the Commissioner of Higher Education or designee to review each proposal.
 - Non-substantive changes approved by the Commissioner or designee are considered final. They will be submitted back to CIOs for implementation at their respective institutions and forwarded to the Board of Higher Education as an information item.
- New proposals or substantive change proposals approved by the Commissioner or designee will be forwarded to the Board of Higher Education as an action item for their approval.
 - Board approval constitutes final approval, and proposals will be forwarded to the CIOs for implementation at their respective institutions.
- If at any point in the review process, a reviewing committee rejects the proposal or change, the proposal will be returned to the faculty committee with further instructions.
- Supplemental Course Changes – Changes to any supplemental courses should be submitted to the Commissioner's office through the respective CIO. Although faculty member can submit their proposed changes, the official changes must be submitted by the CIO before any further action can be taken or addressed.
- Program CIPs, Course Prefixes, and Course Numbers are to be assigned by the Commissioner's office for foundational or supplemental courses. Once new or modified changes are submitted, the Commissioner's office will assign these items to the proposals. Recommended CIPs, course prefixes, and course numbers will be taken into consideration in this process.

5. Resources

- Contact Lists: We will get each chairperson a current list of faculty representatives on their committee.
- Most Recent Approved Document: We will get each chairperson a copy of the most recent approved document.
- Proposed Changes: To be submitted to Kim Ziebarth.