

Spokane Falls Community College

Advisory Committee Procedures Manual

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Introduction

Policies and procedures of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) require that each college district conform to its policy 4.21.00, entitled “Advisory Committees for Professional-Technical Programs;” and, that each college publish a procedure which describes its unique implementation of that policy. This manual fulfills that requirement.

The Dean of Workforce Education has the authority to direct the formation or dissolution of an advisory committee for a professional-technical program area. Advisory Committees can be established for a single program or a group or cluster of like programs. Likewise, a regional committee can be established for a single program or cluster of like programs in a geographical region. If program cluster or regional advisory committees are used, they should ensure that every professional-technical program area is adequately represented. Regional advisory committees are helpful for the purpose of providing a coordinated educational effort among colleges and school districts.

The primary purpose for advisory committees is to serve as advisors to the college, providing support and advocacy for quality professional-technical education programs. Advisory committees have no administrative or legislative authority.

Role of the Advisory Committee

Advisory committees have three major roles. They advise, assist, and provide support and advocacy for Spokane Falls Community College professional-technical programs. In the **advising** role, advisory committees assess specific areas of professional-technical programs or support services and they formulate suggestions and recommendations designed to improve those specific areas. Examples include assessment of facilities, equipment, curricula and staff development. Recommendations might include the modification of curriculum content, the purchase of new instructional materials or equipment, adoption of a new safety policy, implementation of a new student service or serving on screening committees for new hires. In an **assisting** role, the advisory committee may help the instructor, administrator, or staff with specific activities. Examples could include judging competitive skill events, setting up a scholarship program, developing a marketing strategy or obtaining media coverage for special events. In a **support and advocacy** role, the advisory committee promotes the quality of programs throughout the community. Examples could include talking to legislators, showing support at college and community meetings, writing articles for local newspapers and hiring graduates. Through these roles, advisory committees work with instructors, administrators, and staff to develop and implement procedures, practices and methods that help strengthen and modernize professional-technical/technical education and support services.

Membership and Composition

Advisory committee members should be knowledgeable about the target occupations of the educational program and have significant education, training and or work experience in the occupation. Some qualities that are desirable in advisory committee members include interest, availability, professional demeanor, skill and expertise.

Advisory committees are usually composed of between five and fifteen members. The membership of the committee shall represent equal numbers of employers and employees representing local business, labor and industry and should strive to ensure representation of gender and cultural diversity. When the occupation being taught is apprentice able, and a Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) is active

in the geographical area, at least one member of the JATC must be invited to be a member of the advisory committee. The Dean for Workforce Education is to contact the Chair or Secretary of the JATC, in writing, to request such representation.

Other individuals who may have interests in the program and can offer unique contributions may serve as Associate Members. Associate Members will serve as non-voting members on the committee. Examples of Associate members may be representatives from the local Worksource Office or Spokane Area Workforce Development Council. SFCC employees are not permitted to serve as voting members on program advisory committees.

Appointment of Advisory Committee Members

With the approval and/or recommendation of the program lead, new prospective committee members may be invited to an Advisory Committee Meeting at any time. They cannot vote. If they choose to return, they will be granted a one year “probation” period wherein attendance is mandatory. At the conclusion of this one-year probation period, if they choose to remain they will be officially appointed to a term of their choice and afforded all privileges.

Advisory committee members are appointed for a term of one, two or three years and at the discretion of the program lead, may be appointed for additional terms.

Members who are absent without reasonable cause from two successive meetings may be contacted to determine their continued interest in the committee. If regular attendance does not resume, the member might be considered for resignation. Members desiring to leave the committee prior to the date their term expires should notify the advisory committee coordinator.

Orientation for New Members

The Department Chair, Program Lead or the appropriate Dean of Instruction will provide the orientation for the new advisory committee member. The orientation will include a description of their roles, responsibilities and duties as well as information about the program. The training will also include information about Washington State’s Ethics Law as it pertains to their involvement with the college.

Advisory Committee Administration

The chair of the advisory committee must be a voting member and must be elected by the voting membership. The chair shall serve a term of one year however, may be re-elected for a maximum of two additional terms. The committee may also choose to elect a vice-chair to assist the chair and fill in during the chair’s absence.

The advisory committee chair plays a critical role in maximizing the effectiveness of the committee. The chair in collaboration with other members of the committee and college faculty and staff will establish the goals and work plan of the committee. The committee chair, program lead and program faculty, working in collaboration are responsible for facilitating the work of the committee.

Advisory Committee Meetings

Advisory committees must meet a minimum of two (2) times each instructional year. A minimum of three (3) times a year is highly recommended. A good practice is to set tentative meeting dates for the year. Since the frequency of meetings is determined largely by the scope of the committee's program of work, some committees may choose to meet more frequently.

A quorum must be achieved to take official actions. A quorum is defined as 40% of the voting membership with no fewer than three voting members.

Committee Meeting Minutes

Official minutes must be maintained for each meeting. The minutes must contain an attendance roster, a summary of the content of the meeting including all significant discussions, recommendations and actions. When recommendations are made concerning curriculum changes specific information such as course names and numbers must be included in the minutes. Minutes will include both action and justification for recommendations.

The maintenance of the minutes and a roster of each advisory committee for each meeting is the responsibility of the Department Chair, Program Lead, or his/her designee. It is the responsibility of the program faculty to maintain all records required by the SBCTC for advisory committees. Electronic copies of the Advisory Committee meeting minutes and roster are to be submitted to the Dean of Workforce Education within two-weeks of the advisory committee meeting.

The advisory committee chair and the program faculty will review the minutes prior to distribution to the committee and to the Dean of Workforce Education. At the following advisory meeting the minutes will be certified and approved by the committee.

Role of the Faculty

The role of faculty in developing and working with the advisory committee is critical to the effectiveness, value, and success of the committee. Faculty must actively promote the idea that they truly believe in the concept of advisory committees and are willing to accept and carry out the committee's recommendations.

A member of the program faculty should be designated to serve as liaison to the Advisory Committee. The faculty liaison should work with the advisory committee Chair at least two (2) weeks prior to a committee meeting to plan an agenda. The agenda should include minutes of the most recent committee meeting, standing committee and subcommittee reports, officer reports, and unfinished and new business.

Responsibilities of Advisory Committees

The following activities and duties are suggested from the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges policies. Each advisory committee develops its plan of work based on the needs of the program and industry.

Curriculum

- Review labor market information to ensure the occupational program area is in demand and that vacancies exist for future employment.
- Advise the college as to the industry standard or certification required by the occupational area, and/or assist in the development of skill standards where appropriate.
- Review the content of the professional-technical program and respective courses. Advise the college of changing market conditions, technologies and employment needs.
- Advise as to the kinds and balance of theory, technical skill development, production work, and/or realistic enterprise tasks to be accomplished by the students in order to ensure the most effective and efficient use of instructional time. Review instructional materials and recommend those that are most appropriate to the instructional program, i.e. instructional texts, computer software, technical materials, and trade publications. Assist in the development of portable, transferable competencies, skills, and abilities expected of successful employees.

Facilities and Equipment Budget

- Advise the college as to the adequacy of the physical facilities and conditions of the equipment, and prepare recommendations for effecting needed change.
- Assist the college in obtaining instructional equipment.
- Review annual budgetary requests for equipment and supplies, make recommendations, and assist in the development of bid or purchase specifications when appropriate.
- Advise in the development of plans for new construction or remodeling of existing facilities.

Instructional Quality

- Advise the college in the development of qualifications for the hiring of instructors and serve on interview panels when appropriate.
- Advise in the development of evaluation instruments and procedures that may assist in determining the effectiveness of the instructional program, conduct outcomes assessments and recommend appropriate changes.
- Recommend procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating work-based learning experience programs.
- Recommend instructional practices that will promote the development of a safe instructional environment and that will instill safe work attitudes and habits in students.
- Recommend strategies that ensure instructor(s) maintain instructional, industry, and technological proficiency.
- Recommend standards and minimum academic qualifications for student enrollment into programs.
- Advise administration regarding program continuation and/or modification as determined by a review of outcomes.

Instructional Delivery

- Review national and state directives and initiatives and their impact on local programs, and make recommendations on how to incorporate the required changes.
- Help the college secure qualified instructors.

Support and Advocacy

- Assist the college in special events that benefit students and the college, i.e. tours, career fairs, product seminars and college open house.
- Recommend ways to assist students in the obtaining of internships and/or eventual employment.

Ethical Conduct

Although state ethics laws are directed toward state and public employees, advisory committee members are indirectly affected by the law through their relationship with college employees. For example, the ethics laws govern all actions and working relationships of state employees with current or potential customers, government representatives, the media, and others. In these relationships, state and public employees must observe the highest standards of ethical conduct. Each employee is expected to place the college's best interest above his or her own self-interest in all education, business, and other matters and decisions, where there is an actual, potential, or appearance of conflict of interest. Paramount in the public trust that obligates college administrators, instructors, and advisory members in fulfilling their responsibilities is the principle that their position may not be used for personal gain or private advantage within any relationship.