Orange Coast College Process for
Viability Review of Instructional Programs

This document contains the philosophy and process for a Viability Review including the guidelines and the timeline.

Overview

- Orange Coast College supports a campus-wide program review process recognizing the purpose is continuous program improvement. The purpose of the Program Viability Review Process is to determine the vitality and continued viability of a program in response to concerns identified during Program Review or in response to significant changes in enrollment, labor market demand, faculty availability, and/or facility and equipment costs and availability, or not aligned with college vision or purpose. This extended review process provides an opportunity to gather more data or information in response to these concerns. Evaluation may lead to program improvement, or possible elimination or suspension of the program.
- The term *program* as it relates to this review process includes all degree and certificate instructional programs, all instructional disciplines, and all departments or other campus units offering instruction.
- In consultation with the Academic Senate, the college developed procedures for initiating and conducting a viability review of educational programs.
- Education Code 78016, and Title 5, §51022(a) require that a viability review be conducted prior to program discontinuance (termination).

The term *Viability* refers to programs that *are vital, capable of growth and survival*. The *Viability Review of Programs* process is designed for unusual circumstances such as: A course (or program) needing to be replaced due to obsolescence; When it may not be practical to continue teaching the original way for a process but instead requires the updated way; A geographical area once supported a high profile occupational program but is no longer needed. This is not to be confused with the Program Review Process. The viability review process relates to all departments.   (See Appendix A for Background & Philosophy).

The possible <u>outcomes</u> of a viability review include:

- No change.

- *Program Modification/Improvement/stabilization*: Plan of action to enhance the performance and effectiveness of an existing program, discipline or department and identify services helpful to implement a plan of action; for example, curriculum changes, facilities, Industry and Advisory representatives.

- *Program Reorganization/Initiation*: Plan of action to restructure an existing program, discipline, or department or adopt a new program, discipline or department

- *Program Discontinuance*: Termination of an existing program, discipline or department with a specific plan to consider the effects on faculty, students and staff. The plan shall address faculty, students and staff reassignment (per bargaining unit contract) and student continuance of education in the programs major at another institution.

Throughout the process of Program Viability Review, the following must be considered:

When a program goes through a Viability Review for possible curtailment or termination of that program, the college/district shall notify the Bargaining Unit. The Bargaining Unit shall have the right to representation on any committee, including "further review," task force, or other group which is carrying out a program review for the above purposes.

The following describes the 12-Steps for the *Viability Review* Process.

Step 1   Request for Viability Review

Step 2   Evaluation Indicators Verified by IEC to Justify Viability Review

Step 3   Viability Review Committee (VRC) Formed

Step 4   Viability Review Committee Planning
Step 5   VRC Structured Interview with Program Leads
Step 6   Viability Review Discussion Open to the Public
Step 7   Composition of VRC Program Viability Report
Step 8   Final Report forwarded to the appropriate Vice President with copies to the Academic
          Senate and the Bargaining Unit
Step 9   Vice President of Instruction Recommendations
Step 10   President Recommendations
Step 11   Chancellor Recommendations (only if discontinuance is recommended)
Step 12   Board of Trustee Recommendations (only if discontinuance is recommended)

Request for a Viability Review Process

The Viability Review may be initiated by the College Vice President of Instruction (VPI), the department/ program, or the Dean from the appropriate area. Prior to any action taken there must be an informal meeting with a representative of the Bargaining Unit, the faculty/department chair, and the Dean and VPI. If the request moves forward then a brief summary of the meeting should be documented on the request form. See Appendix B for the form.

Step 1   Request for Viability Review
- A formal request is written and brought to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) not later than the final (spring) IEC meeting date. See Appendix B for the form.
- The Vice President of Instruction notifies the Union, the faculty person running the program, the elected department chair and Dean in area addressed.
- For CTE programs an Advisory Committee should be formed and their recommendation submitted for consideration.

Step 2   Evaluation Indicators Verified by IEC to Justify Viability Review
- IEC analyzes the request and verifies the need for a viability review based on Evaluation Indicators. This process will determine whether a Viability Review is justified. (See Appendix C for indicators).
- If approval is granted by IEC for a Program Viability Review, then notification of this decision is forwarded to: the appropriate VPI, the Academic Senate, and the Dean and faculty in the area being reviewed. Then a Viability Committee (VRC) is formed to conduct Viability Review.

Step 3   Viability Review Committee (VRC) Formed

The Vice President of Instruction shall initially convene a Program Viability Review Evaluation Committee by providing an overview of the charge of the committee and then allow the committee to proceed independently The goal of the committee is to analyze all pertinent information and make a recommendation to the VPI.

The committee shall be composed of the following:
- One to three faculty members from the program being evaluated including the elected department chair from the program or related discipline.
- A faculty representative from the Instruction Planning Committee appointed by the IPC   (must be from outside the division of the program under review), or the Curriculum Chair or appointee.
- A faculty member from outside the division of the program under review, appointed by and representing the Bargaining Unit.
- A Senate member from a non-related discipline chosen by and representing the faculty Senate.
- A student appointed by the Associated Students, preferably one who is not currently enrolled in any course within the program being reviewed.
- A member of the Office of Institutional Research to serve as ex-officio (non-voting) member.
- The Division Dean of the program being evaluated.
- For CTE programs, an active member of the Advisory Committee.

The committee will be co-chaired by a faculty member from outside the division of the program under review, to be selected from and by the membership of the committee along with the committee chair.

Step 4   Viability Review Committee Planning   Timelines stated are recommended.
   A. Viability Review Committee (VRC) Initial Meeting (Timeline: 3-5 months, 90-150 days)
- Overview of process
- Suggestions / decide on position papers & outside experts

   B. Data Collection (Month 1 & 2)
- Data collection process
- Data screening and analysis including outlier analysis
- Data analysis
- Solicit position paper from chair or manager
- Solicit position papers from faculty, staff and students
- Conduct structured interviews and focus groups in affected areas with faculty, students and administrators
- Consult with outside experts (Advisory Groups), faculty and administrators from other institutions including GWC and CCC.
- Conduct a gap analysis to determine the degree of differentiability between actual and expected outcomes
- Compose a Department Profile based on the above (Distribute to chair)

   C.   Meeting to Review Department Profile and Plan Interview with Program Leads (End of month 2)
- Identify / discuss areas of concern & design criteria and questions for the structured interview
- Validate criteria and interview instrument two weeks prior to structured interview

Step 5 VRC Structured Interview with Program Leads (Middle of month 3)
- Interviewees: Department Chair, Manager and faculty from the area being reviewed.
- Questions to Department Chair / Manager may include:
  - Respond to the Department profile and areas of concern identified by the Viability Review Committee. In your response, describe any challenges your department has faced to bring it to this state.
  - How can the college assist the department in making department improvements?
  - Do you have any final comments or questions for the Viability Review Committee?
- Additional department members can attend the interview if they wish.

Step 6   Viability Review Discussion Open to the Public (End of month 3)
The VRC facilitates a discussion in the appropriate open planning council and in the Academic Senate.
- Overview of Viability Process and possible outcomes
- Presentation of Department profile
- Questions, comments and concerns voiced by members of the campus community

Step 7   Composition of VRC Program Viability Report (Month 4 & 5 or sooner if possible.)
- Report Contents
  - Summary of Process
  - Department profile & items of concern
  - Specific Recommendations for action with a timeline
  - Assessment of the impact of recommendations on the college, students, faculty & staff

Step 8   Final Report
   This report should be forwarded to the appropriate Vice President, Dean and department or program considered, with copies to the Academic Senate and the Bargaining Unit.

Step 9   Vice President Recommendations
- The Vice President of Instruction will review the report, consult appropriate Dean, Department Chair, Planning Council and Senate, and then either concur with the report or make amendments.
- The Vice President of Instruction will consider the input of these groups, and make formal recommendations to the President.

Step 10   President Recommendations
- After receiving the report from the Vice President of Instruction, the President will review the recommendations from the committee and from the Vice President, discuss the recommendations with appropriate Planning Council and Senate, and then accept or amend the action plan, which may include program no change, stabilization, restructuring, suspension, or elimination.

- If a program is recommended for stabilization or restructuring, the Division Dean and the chair for the program will be responsible for reporting to the Vice President of Instruction at designated intervals (as identified in the final action plan) on the implementation of the action plan until the specified goal has been achieved. (See Appendix D for the Action Plan Timeline)

- All new courses, certificate, and other curriculum requests from a program under review could be suspended until the President takes action on the recommendations from the committee and the VPI, unless it impedes the continuation of existing course offerings.

- Should continuing oversight be a part of the action plan presented by the committee, the continuing role of the Program Viability Review Committee shall be described in detail in the action plan.

Step 11 Chancellor Recommendations
- If discontinuance is recommended then report is forwarded to Chancellor.

Step 12 Board of Trustee Recommendations
- If Chancellor agrees with the decision the report is forwarded to the BOT where is will be discussed in an open meeting.

APPENDIX A   Background & Philosophy
Modernization, technological innovation, new trends and internal and external societal factors affect the practice of education and will play a key role that requires campus programs to examine their place and "*fit"* in any academic curriculum or any student support service. Programs can *voluntarily* opt to discontinue based on reaching constituent consensus thus not requiring them to follow this particular process. Program Viability can be an involuntary process and conducted because several circumstances/problems have emerged that need immediate attention and a solution. To that end, this specific policy and process is being created to not only meet state requirements but to also provide guidelines for programs to follow after completing a comprehensive program review. At Orange Coast College, the policy will be known as a *Viability Review of Programs*. Program Viability Review is a college collaborative process and the role of administration, faculty, and the Community Advisory Committee (if CTE), the Academic Senate, and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee are crucial to the recommendation made by the review.

According to *Program Discontinuance: a Faculty Perspective* (1988, Spring), "the development of a program discontinuance process should be considered within the context of the college mission statement and should be linked with the college educational master plan and the department's goals and objectives." The process must be driven by the spirit of access and equity for students. Ideas and recommendations in this policy document represent a culmination of efforts from the Statewide Academic Senate as cited in the ASCCC paper titled *Program Discontinuance: a Faculty Perspective* (1988, spring).

Moreover the ASCCC has recommended that local senates create a process for program discontinuance that takes into account the following issues:

- negative effects on students
- college curriculum balance
- educational and budget planning
- regional economic and training issues
- collective bargaining issues

APPENDIX B   **Request for Viability Review**
Please submit this form with the following to the Institutional Effectiveness Office:
1. A brief summary of the informal viability meeting.
2. A narrative description of the conditions(s) motivating your request for a Viability Review of the department with supporting documentation.
3. A statement describing efforts made to date to remedy the situation
4. The latest Comprehensive Program Review for the department

_____ **Recommended Approval by majority vote of the Instructional Effectiveness Committee to move forward for a Viability Process.**

_____ **Not Approved by the Instructional Effectiveness Committee to move forward for a Viability Process.**

 Date:_____

APPENDIX C   **Request for Viability Review- Evaluation Indicators**

Date: _____   **Initiator:_____**
College Vice President, Faculty/Dean from the area
Department to be reviewed:_____
Department Chair / Manager:_____

IEC members: Select a minimum of three (3) or more of the following conditions that lead you to request a Viability Review:
_____A. Decline of 30% or more in census enrollment throughout the program over a 3-year period (excluding winter & summer sessions)
_____B. Consistently low enrollments of 50% below the maximum fill rate capacity over a 3-year period
_____C. A new program never reached the 50% fill rate
_____D. Poor rate for student achievement of program goals (e.g. completion rate, number of degrees & certificates, transfer, transfer readiness)
_____E. A major shift in the field / discipline
_____F. Personnel changes that will leave, or have left the department without a full-time faculty member/or adequate staffing
_____G. Declining market / industry demand or community needs
_____H. Program no longer central to the college mission and academic master plan
_____I. Program no longer in line with current technology
_____J. Unresolved problem or issue for which all other administrative remedies have been exhausted
     Please explain in an attached narrative
_____K. Other conditions, including a program that has not completed Program Review & Assessment
     Please explain in an attached narrative

APPENDIX D

Action Plan Timeframe for Program to Reach Healthy Status 1-3 Years

Year	Monitoring Process		
Year 1_____	Term: Su_____ Fall_____ Program Review Follow-up Report written and submitted to VRC	VRC Convenes and reviews follow-up report within 30-45 days	VRC Recommendation: _____Achieved Goal _____Submit to College President/VP _____Require Follow-up Rpt 2
Year 2_____	Term: Su_____ Fall_____ Program Review Follow-up Report written and submitted to VRC	VRC Convenes and reviews follow-up report within 30-45 days	VRC Recommendation: _____Achieved Goal _____ Submit to College President/VP _____Require Follow-up Rpt 3
Year 3_____	Term: Su_____ Fall_____ Program Review Follow-up Report written and submitted to VRC	VRC Convenes and reviews follow-up report	VRC Recommendation: _____Achieved Goal _____ Submit to College President/VP _____Program Defunct _____ Recommendation: