



Educational Success

Do your students need skills prior to taking your classes?

How can we ensure student success?

[The curriculum process]

- You decide your curriculum.
- You are experts in your discipline.

- The curricular process:
 - Governed by State law.
 - Established guidelines which we are required to follow.

- Believe it or not, it isn't that difficult.
 - The main effort on your part is the “philosophy” behind your curriculum – the “paperwork” isn't the barrier.
 - We are here to help!

Who is behind this presentation?

- Riverside Community College District
 - Academic Senate
 - Curriculum Committee
 - PCA Sub-Committee

Where is this information found?

- *“Model District Policy on Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories.”*
 - Found on RCC’s matriculation web page.
 - Your representative on the Curriculum Committee should have working knowledge.
 - The PCA committee has specific expertise.

Who is involved in this process?

RCCD School Board of Trustees

RCCD Academic Senate

Curriculum Committee

Subcommittee on P/C/A's.

Initiating faculty
department or discipline

[When you have a class:]

- Are all students allowed to take it?
 - Yes – we are an “open access” institution.
 - If you restrict access, you must give students options to enrollment.
- Can you require entry skills?
 - Yes, but you need to justify these skills.

Why do you “need” this requirement?

You must establish “need”.

- In order to establish “need”, one of the following conditions must be met:
 - “A student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade, unless the student has knowledge or skills not taught in the course.”
 - “Success in the course is dependent on communication or computational skills.”
- This is mandated by Title 5.

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II.A.1.g.(3)

Entry requirements can come in many forms:

P/C/A's = prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories.

- Prerequisites
 - The minimum “standard” a student must possess prior to entering into your class.

- Corequisites
 - A “skill” that a student needs concurrently.

- Advisories
 - These are skills that are recommended, but not required.

- Limitations on Enrollment

Limitations on Enrollment

- LOE's are an academic matter.
 - Established by the curriculum review process.

- This can be influenced by:
 - Collective bargaining.
 - Outside agency requirements.

- LOE's can only be allowed if the student has other means to attain a certificate or an associate degree requirement.

How do you establish prerequisites or corequisites?

- If you have a class that teaches basic information:
 - Levels of scrutiny are required.
- If you have a class that builds on previous information:
 - Sequential course justification is required.

Prerequisites and corequisites can only happen if:

- It can be shown that the P/C an “appropriate and rational measure” of student readiness.
 - This is an established step-by-step process.
 - Each step must be followed, in order for the desired P/C to be established.
 - This is mandated by Title 5.

- Remember, that faculty decide what measures are required.
 - These just need to be justified.
 - These can’t be based on “gut feelings.”

Prerequisites and corequisites can only happen if:

- The P/C must be approved as a separate issue from the course.
- Initiation is done at the department/discipline level.
 - Expertise to decide how student success would be enhanced.
- The RCCD Board of Trustees relies primarily on the Academic Senate in matters of P/C/A's.
 - Decisions are made in joint agreement.

What are “levels of scrutiny”?

- Option #1: Content review.
 - Significant relationships between exit and entry skills must be established.
 - Content review must be performed at all times.

- Option #2: The standard prerequisite or corequisite.
 - Content review.
 - In addition to content review, find 3 UC/CSU campus course catalog descriptions which match the P/C which you wish to implement.

- Option #3: Content review, and conduct research.
 - This is the last resort option.
 - After performing content review, conducting research is required for communication, computation, or non-course P/C's.

The department/discipline has the responsibility to make sure that all courses meet the levels of scrutiny.

[Are the “levels of scrutiny” really that important?]

- Absolutely!
- This is what the PCA subcommittee will review as their first step.
- These levels of scrutiny are the primary justification for your P/C.

Content Review

“Levels of Scrutiny” Option #1

- Content review should show a significant relationship between the:
 - Entry skills upon entering your course.
 - Exit skills upon successfully completing the target course.

- Content review is the first step, and must be conducted in all PCA’s.

Content review begins with a review of the course.

- Complete review of the course or program:
 - Involvement of faculty with expertise.
 - This is a continuing process involved in Program Review.

- Content review contains the minimum:
 - Detailed course outline, syllabus, and materials.
 - All of these are kept on file with the Curriculum Committee.
 - Identify the specific body of knowledge/skills necessary.
 - Match exit skills of target P/C course with your course entry skills.
 - Maintain documentation of steps outlined.
 - Include department/discipline meeting minutes.
 - Include an approved content review form (see your packet).

- This list is not complete (refer to RCCD policy).

What are the ways in which content review can be shown?

- Content Review Grid
 - This is the primary tool.
 - Used to visually illustrate how entry and exit skills are matched between the two courses in question.

- Written Narrative
 - This is a written justification.
 - This will be allowed only in certain circumstances.
 - The PCA subcommittee will determine if the narrative method is appropriate or not.
 - Chances are the Curriculum Committee will not allow a narrative justification without PCA approval.

How do you determine entry skills that are important for success?

- This begins at the department or discipline level.
- This is an academic matter, established by the faculty involved.

[Where do you find the exit skills?]

- These are found on the course outline of record for the P/C course.
- You simply match the skills that you deem important for your students.
- You don't necessarily need to use all of the exit skills of the target course.
 - Only the ones you find most appropriate.

Content Review Grid

Entry skills				
E X I T S K I L L S		1	2	3
	1		X	
	2	X		
	3		X	
	4			X
	5			X

- This has been developed by the RCC curriculum committee as a tool in content review.
 - The columns represent the entry skills of your target course.
 - The rows are the exit skills which your students need to enhance their success.
- This example shows how the three important entry skills of your students are met by the five exit skills of the target prerequisite course.

What happens if you wish to have language or mathematics as a prerequisite?

- This falls under the categories of “communication or computational” skills.
 - You can establish these as prerequisites, but it takes research to justify the “need.”

- This is Option #3 for “Levels of Scrutiny”:
 - Content Review (must be conducted first).
 - Statistical analysis of student performance.
 - Performed by RCCD Institutional Research.
 - This must be requested via PCA committee.

Conduct Research (if needed)

- This needs to be done when communication or computational skills are required.
- Other non-course P/C's also require research.
 - GPA minimums.
 - “Recency” requirements.
- The PCA committee will determine if research is warranted.
 - The faculty involved will present their arguments for research.
 - If research deemed needed, the subcommittee will initiate a request for research.
 - Neither the faculty or the department/discipline can request research directly.
 - All statistical research shall follow RCCD policy.

What happens if the research results don't justify the P/C?

- You can approve the course without the P/C.
 - Remember, these are separate issues.
- Further work may be done to meet the requirements.
- If these requirements are later met and documented, then the P/C can be implemented.
 - This includes further research.
- An advisory for these skills can be implemented.
 - This can be done immediately.
 - But remember, these can't be enforced.

[How do establish an advisory?]

- Your department or discipline can recommend that a student meet a standard of readiness.
- Advisories require content review.
 - This doesn't make sense to many faculty.
 - This is a Title 5 mandate (Section 55201(b)(1)).
 - Remember, "gut feelings" are often proved inadequate.
- Approval for the advisory must be explicit.
 - Standardized terminology should be used in the catalog.
 - Approval of the advisory is not inferred by the approval of the course.
 - The advisory must be clearly stated.

What about a “Limitation on Enrollment”?

- Community college’s cannot deny student applications.
 - “Open access institution.”
- Enrollment is not allowed to be restricted, except under certain guidelines.
- Prerequisites, corequisites and limitations on enrollment in effect restrict enrollment to courses or programs.
 - Strict guidelines must be followed.

Limitations on Enrollment

- There are non-academic standards that can limit enrollment in your classes:
 - Requirements set upon the district by outside agencies:
 - Fire or law enforcement agencies.
 - Licensing requirements.
 - Contracts in which RCCD has in agreement.

- Keep in mind, contractual obligations with agencies are part of the overall process.
 - We still operate under Title 5 provisions.
 - Title 5 does allow some flexibility, however.
 - This is a case-by-case situation.

Limitations on Enrollment

- Options must be made available to students.
- In the course outline of record...
 - A list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course meets.
 - List all other courses that also meet the requirement.
- Do limitations have a disproportionate impact on any historically under-represented group?
 - If so, a plan to seek remedy shall be implemented.

[Can you limit enrollment in Honors Courses?]

- Yes, but you must offer other courses that meet graduation requirements for students.
 - English 1A and Honors English 1A.
 - You must still offer English 1A for all other students.
- Alternative courses must be clearly listed on outline of record.
- If this is part of the Associate degree or certificate requirement, this must be stated in the official course outline of record.

Health and Safety Requirements

- A health and safety P/C or LOE requires that the student possess what is necessary to protect his or her health and safety, and the health and safety of others, before entering the course.
- As an example, the Culinary Academy
 - Negative TB test within the last 3 years.

How do these requirements impact new or existing courses or programs?

- New course?
 - You can institute a P/C even if you haven't conducted research.
 - This can be instituted for a maximum of 2 years.
 - This allows data to be gathered for further justification.
 - After two years is completed, analysis must be conducted.
 - If the research does not justify the P/C, it must be removed.

- Students may take the course during this time even if they haven't had the P/C, provided that...
 - Students are informed at registration.
 - A process to allow enrollment is in place (petition, first-come basis, etc.).
 - This group comprises not more than 20% of the roster.

Considerations regarding new courses:

- How important is the P/C out of the total grade?
 - This must be shown in the course proposal.
 - Make this requirement high enough to make it highly unlikely for the student to receive a satisfactory grade.

 - Example: If writing skills are a requirement, and 25% of the final grade comes from one research paper:
 - Student must get 90% of remaining points to receive a letter grade of “C”.
 - This may prohibit a student without the P/C from being successful.

- What about extra-credit?
 - Will your instructor offer extra-credit?
 - If extra-credit points offset the P/C, then the P/C is not needed.
 - This needs to be discussed at the Department or Discipline.

[What about existing P/C's?]

- RCC has many courses that currently have P/C or LOE's.
- Existing P/C's can only exist in accordance with regulation.
 - There is no “grandfather” clause in Title 5 on this matter.
- If a P/C is in place without the appropriate level of scrutiny:
 - It must be brought into compliance or removed.
 - This leads us to “Program Review.”

[How are P/C/A's reviewed?]

- Every course must be reviewed periodically.
 - The department/discipline has the obligation to review their course offerings.
 - This is done with oversight of the Curriculum Committee.
 - This is normally done through the Program Review process.

- Support to continue the P/C/A must be established by both the department/discipline and the Curriculum Committee.
 - Proper documentation must be kept on file with the Curriculum Committee.
 - If the P/C does not continue to be justified, it must be removed as a prerequisite or corequisite.

[Review of existing P/C's:]

- P/C's must be reviewed every six years.
 - This is part of program review.
 - Review must be presented to the Curriculum Committee.
- Existing P/C's must be in accordance with regulation.
- The department/discipline is responsible to justify the continued use of the P/C.
 - The Curriculum Committee is responsible for the oversight.
 - They are, however, not your “babysitters.”
 - Procrastination or laziness are not valid excuses.

What about the course outline of record?

- This document is of vital importance.
- A course outline of record must be submitted to the curriculum committee.
 - A new template for outlines is now available.
- It must contain complete:
 - Descriptions of entry/exit skills.
 - Descriptions of topics to be taught.
 - Description of methods of teaching.
 - The alignment of P/C exit skills with course entry skills (content review grid).

[What about the actual course?]

- All courses shall be taught according to the official course outline of record.
 - The outline of record constitutes the instructors contract of employment for teaching the course.
 - All courses will be taught according to the outline of record.
 - This is not an “academic freedom” issue.
 - The course is designed by faculty, so will be taught as it is designed.

- The prerequisite or corequisite courses must be taught according to the official course outline of record.
 - This is the foundation for using this course as a P/C.
 - Imagine the P/C course not teaching the skills that are important for student success in your course.

Once a P/C has been established, now what?

- Every attempt must be made to enforce the P/C during the enrollment process.
 - This is done through the admissions process.
- Implementation must be consistent among all students at the time of registration.
- RCCD must:
 - State P/C/A or LOE's in the course catalog, schedule, student handbook and other publications.
 - Inform students of the “student challenge process.”
- Can an instructor “add” a student to a course with a P/C?
 - An instructor cannot judge whether a student has met the P/C.
 - Instructors actually don't add any students to any class.
 - Legally, the instructor only gives permission to the student to go through the admissions process.

Absolutely no one can “waive” any P/C for a class.
This includes instructors, administrators, or staff members.

If a P/C is concerned with “skills” for your students, what if the student feels they have these skills?

- There is a “challenge” process.
 - Any student, at any time, can challenge any prerequisite or corequisite.
- Remember, community colleges are open access institutions.
- The challenge process must be made available to students at all times.

Student challenges can be made if:

- Students feel that they have the necessary skills, or have taken adequate courses in order to meet the P/C.
- The course isn't offered often enough, causing a hardship in attaining a degree or certificate.
- Options to courses that involve intercollegiate competition, public performance, or those limited to a "cohort" are not available to other students.
 - Would this P/C create a delay in a degree or certificate program?
 - If other courses are available, there is no delay.

RCCD has established formal a formal challenge process, to ensure that all students have the information needed, and opportunity to challenge P/C/A's.

[Other grounds for challenges:]

- Prerequisites established to protect public health and safety.
 - Example: Police academy, fire training.

- What if the student has a disability?
 - RCC must furnish evidence that there are no accommodations available that would protect public health and safety and allow the student to enroll.
 - Would this cause the District any undue costs?
 - Any legal issue questions go directly to DSPS.

What is the formal challenge process?

- Student must submit a matriculation appeal.
- Student must provide supporting documentation.
- College must provide documentation affecting the challenge.
- RCC has five (5) days to resolve the challenge.
- If the challenge is upheld, or five (5) days passed:
 - If space is available, the student is automatically enrolled.
 - If space is not available, the student can enroll the next semester.

Student rights and responsibilities:

- Students must be informed of the Challenge Process
 - Presented during orientation, in Guidance 45, and in student handbook.
 - Student “ignorance” is not a defense.
 - Procedures and timelines that must be followed.

- The student should file in a timely manner.
 - Should not wait until the “last minute.”
 - RCC shall reserve space (if available) in initial enrollment in the course.
 - There is no legal obligation to support a student’s procrastination.

- What can you do as an instructor?
 - Do not make any decision on whether student meets any P/C.
 - This has legal consequences for you, your department, and RCC.

- How can I protect yourself, and RCC?
 - Follow established guidelines, and let others who are qualified make the decision for you.

Who decides whether a challenge is valid?

- Can the instructor of the course?
 - ABSOLUTELY NOT!
 - The instructor can easily be put into a “bad situation.”
 - Legally and ethically.
 - The instructor should never judge whether a student is qualified to enroll into a course.

- Someone else must make the decision.
 - Within the discipline or department.
 - A committee making the decision is preferred to an individual.
 - All decisions will include discussion with the Department chairperson.

Can students appeal an rejected challenge?

- Yes they can...
 - Generally speaking, the discipline or department decides on the criteria for a challenge.
 - The department chairman then follows established guidelines.

- If the student does appeal this decision:
 - The matriculation department generally will agree with the department chairman's decision.
 - There will always be consultation with the discipline/department.

[How can a student argue their appeal?]

- The student must defend the grounds for the appeal.
- The student must provide all evidence for the appeal.
- But....
 - If RCC has information that the student needs, RCC must provide that information.

[That is it!]

- Now you are an EXPERT on the process!
- Now you too can implement a prerequisite, corequisite or advisory!
- Just remember, we are here to HELP YOU enhance STUDENT SUCCESS.
- Remember...
 - You are the experts...
 - You know what your students need...
 - You have the ability to request, justify, and defend your decision to require prerequisites or corequisites.