

CHAPTER 6

APPROVAL FUNCTIONS

Section 1. Authority.

Wyoming Statute 21-18-202(d).

Section 2. Purpose.

This chapter defines the Commission's approval functions.

Section 3. Approving New Certificate and Degree Programs.

(a) The Commission reviews and approves or disapproves programs based on the *WY Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan*. Approval of nursing and allied health programs by the appropriate agency may also be required.

(b) Community colleges shall submit all proposed new, long-term programs to the Commission for approval.

(c) Community colleges requesting approval for new, long-term credit programs shall submit an application addressing:

(i) the alignment of the program with the *WY Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan* objectives at the time of implementation and in future years;

(ii) projected labor market demand for graduates in the state and region which includes a five (5) year period from the proposed implementation date;

(iii) wage projections for program graduates who enter an occupation directly related to their earned academic certificate or AAS degree;

(iv) documented citizen, business and industry input in program design and assessment (AAS or credit certificate);

(v) the means by which the proposed program shall coordinate internally and externally with other programs, colleges, and agencies;

(vi) a list of similar programs at other Wyoming community colleges;

(vii) the program layout including new course descriptions, student learning outcomes, suggested Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code, and where applicable, any program accreditation process;

(viii) the breakdown of the program's course teaching pedagogy, identifying the number of classes in a semester that shall be conducted (lecture, lab, practicum, clinical, internship or other) and the offering mode(s) for the requested program (face-to-face, online, hybrid or other);

(ix) the credit hours required for a program's degree or certificate attainment;

(x) any proposed level of instruction code for course prefixes that are new to the Wyoming community colleges;

(xi) additional resources that will be required to start the requested program and how the community college plans to provide those resources; and

(xii) the means for assessing student learning and completer follow-up per performance indicators.

(d) As defined in the *WCCC Policy on Consultation*, the Program Review Committee shall render final approval or denial of a new pilot program request.

(i) Within 10 business days of receipt of a pilot program application, the Commission and applicable community college shall be informed in writing of the final decision.

(ii) Pilot programs shall have a 4 semester or 24 month developmental stage prior to requesting multi-level approval and "long-term" program designation.

(e) Community colleges requesting approval for pilot programs shall submit to the Commission a condensed application that addresses: Chapter 6, Section 3(c)(iv), (v), (vi), (vii), (viii), (ix), (x) and (xii) above.

(f) The Commission shall have final authority to approve, conditionally approve or deny requests for new long-term programs.

(g) The Commission shall have final authority for any pilot program denied by the Program Review Committee through the appeal process initiated by the affected college.

(h) The implementation of a long-term and/or pilot program may begin immediately after the approval. Should conditional approval be granted, implementation shall not start until all identified conditions have been acceptably met and approved by the Program Review Committee.

(i) A community college district may request to change a program at any time. Program modifications that include program completer outcomes change, program intent change, or target audience change require approval by the Executive Council. For programs to move from pilot to long-term status, the requesting community college shall resubmit the program to the Commission using the long-term application.

(j) A community college district that discontinues a program will notify the Commission within 30 calendar days of notifying the Higher Learning Commission of the cessation of that program, identifying the program and the date of discontinuation.

Section 4. Approving Enlargement and Formation of Community College Districts.

The Commission shall utilize the appropriate council or committee as defined in the *WCCC Policy on Consultation* to develop, administer and report the survey requirements outlined in W.S. 21-18-312 (d).

Section 5. Approving Capital Construction Projects.

(a) Community colleges shall submit new capital construction project proposals, pursuant to W.S. 21-18-202 (d)(v)(A),(B) and (C) and W.S. 21-18-225, to the Commission in accordance with Chapter 5, Section 13 of *Commission Rules*.

(b) A Level I study shall be completed prior to submission of any capital construction project for authorization or approval.

(c) Each community college shall maintain a 5-year master plan for its campus and other facilities, and it shall be submitted to the Commission whenever an existing plan is updated or amended or when the plan is completely re-written.

(d) Submission of a capital construction project proposal shall be in a format approved by the Commission and shall include:

(i) Specific identification of the proposed project and its priority within the community college's master plan along with assurance that the proposed project supports the *WY Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan*.

(ii) Estimated gross square footage by space use code as recognized by the Postsecondary Education Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual.

(iii) Estimated construction, design and contingency costs, as well as any costs not directly related to construction (demolition, land acquisition, special assessment, required landscaping and furnishings not considered fixtures, furniture and equipment).

(iv) Specific identification and rating of projects that address life safety issues.

(v) Provision of a facilities condition index as described in the *Facilities Handbook* and the Users' Manual for the CapCon model.

(e) Community colleges shall provide assurance that the cost of meeting standards for all environmental, health or safety code liabilities associated with the acquisition of previously owned buildings or renovation of acquired facilities would be the responsibility of the community college involved.

(f) The Contingency Reserve Account shall be used to supplement community college budgets for emergency repairs and preventative maintenance as provided in the funding allocation model (Chapter 5, *Commission Rules*). Contingency Reserve Account funds shall be allocated as approved by the Commission, and as they become available.