

Mississippi Delta Community College All Campuses

2025-2026 Instructional Council Handbook



Mississippi Delta Community College
All Campuses
Instructional Council

FOREWORD

The Curriculum Committee has long played a vital role within institutions of higher education, serving as a key faculty forum for the proposal and review of courses, programs, and curricula. Historically, these committees have been central to the development, revision, and evaluation of academic offerings—often serving as the starting point for course and program changes that compete for limited institutional resources. These committees have also provided a structured process for ensuring that proposed changes align with the quality standards required by regional accrediting bodies.

When the College Curriculum Committee at Mississippi Delta Community College was originally established, careful consideration was given to creating a structure that ensured representation from all three academic divisions of the college—particularly faculty. The primary goal was to leverage the institution’s collective expertise to guide the development of high-quality instructional programs.

In 2025, adjustments were made to expand the role of this committee beyond curriculum oversight. Its charge now includes reviewing and guiding instructional policy changes and decision-making processes that directly impact classroom instruction and student learning. To more fully capture this broader scope, the committee was renamed the *Instructional Council*.

This document is the result of the council’s ongoing work and is intended to serve as a handbook for faculty, staff, and administration. It outlines the procedures for proposing or reviewing curriculum and substantive changes for recommendation to the President, Vice President of Instruction, and Department Chairs. The council hopes this document will continue to enhance the quality of instruction and support the educational success of all MDCC students.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Foreword | |
| Members for 2025-2026 | 4 |
| Instructional Council Function | |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Duties and Responsibilities | 5 |
| Instructional Council Organization | |
| Council Composition | 6 |
| Instructional Council Operation Guidelines | |
| Number of Members | 6 |
| Term of Membership | 6 |
| Number of Meetings | 6 |
| Chairperson | 6 |
| Duties of Chairperson | 6 |
| Attendance at Meetings | 7 |
| Recording of Minutes..... | 7 |
| Protocol for Meetings | 7 |
| Processing of Documents..... | 7 |
| Revision of Operational Guidelines | 7 |
| Procedures Governing Course Requests | 8 |
| Procedures Governing Program of Study Requests | 8 |
| Procedures Governing Policy Requests | 9 |
| Procedures Governing SACSCOC Substantive Changes | 10 |
| Conclusion..... | 10 |

INSTRUCTIONAL COUNCIL

2025-2026

Andrea Richardson—Chairman

| Name | Discipline | Rotates Off |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Candy Wheat Michael Stevenson Deshundra Meeks | Academic Instruction Career/Technical Health Sciences | Fall 2026 Fall 2026 Fall 2026 |
| Heather Williams Joe Galey Catherine Dunn | Academic Instruction Career/Technical Health Sciences | Fall 2027 Fall 2027 Fall 2027 |
| Anuradha Banerjee Hope Lang Traci Thompson | Academic Instruction Career/Technical Health Sciences | Fall 2028 Fall 2028 Fall 2028 |
| Karen Haun Xavier Hudson Amanda Fondren | Academic Instruction Career/Technical Health Sciences | Fall 2029 Fall 2029 Fall 2029 |
| Kathryn Ledbetter David Grant Bettinica Gatewood Cobbs | Academic Instruction Career/Technical Health Sciences | Fall 2030 Fall 2030 Fall 2030 |
| Members At Large: Dr. Ben Cloyd, Vice President of Effectiveness and Enrollment Jay Gary, Registrar Dr. Charnecca Barnes, Advising Coordinator Hayley Murrell, Recorder Dr. Valarie Morgan, Vice President of Instruction | | |

Function

Introduction

The framework for educational coursework at the community college level occurs at many levels. Common sources of curricula and course proposals include, but are not limited to, other institutions of higher education; people or groups within the community; the Board of Trustees; employers; advisory councils and committees; and needs surveys. Once a need for a course or program of study has been determined, the Instructional Council provides a mechanism for organizing and developing a course and/or program of study from an educator's perspective. This process ensures faculty involvement in the curriculum development process and provides a broad-based cross-section of faculty and educators to assist the administration in reviewing curricula proposals. Also, it assists the college in maintaining consistency between the curricula and the mission, goals, and values of the institution. With these tenets in mind, the Instructional Council was organized to serve the college in the development and continuous improvement of educational programs, courses and processes.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. To serve as a recommending body for all new credit courses and programs of study offered by the college.
2. To recommend to the President and/or Vice President of Instruction additions, deletions, and/or changes in existing courses or programs.
3. To recommend to the President and/or Vice President of Instruction changes, additions, and/or deletions in existing instructional policies.
4. To serve as an open forum for discussion of topics related to instruction including policy change recommendations and SACSCOC substantive change recommendations.

Organization

Council Composition

The Instructional Council shall be composed of the President, the Vice President of Instruction, the Vice President of Effectiveness and Enrollment, the Registrar, the Advising Coordinator and the Recorder as ex-officio members and; sixteen faculty members (5 from the College of Academics, 5 from the College of Career-Technical Education, 5 from the College of Health Sciences), and the Council Chairperson. Additional members may be added or deleted as deemed necessary by the President.

Operation Guidelines

Number of Members

The composition, status, and number of members of the Instructional Council are determined by the President of Mississippi Delta or his/her designee. The membership of the council will be consistent with any school policies.

Terms of Membership

One member of each college will serve for five years. Each succeeding year, one member of each college will be replaced. The terms will correspond to the community college's academic year. At the request of the college's Administration or the individual member, they may be reappointed to serve on the council. Appointments will be made for any vacancies to carry out any remaining time on the council.

Number of Meetings

There shall be a minimum of two (2) council meetings per school year in the fall and spring of the calendar year unless extenuating circumstances exist. If there is no business to conduct, meetings may be canceled.

The Chairperson

The President or his/her designee prior to the first meeting of the council each school year shall select the chairperson of the Instructional Council. The chairperson will serve for a term of two years. At the request of the college's Administration or the individual member, the chair's length of service may be extended.

Duties of the Chairperson

The primary duty of the chairperson is to preside at all meetings of the Instructional Council. He or she, along with the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Enrollment and the Vice President of Instruction, will be expected to provide all council members with a tentative agenda for council meetings, a copy of all course requests, program of study requests, and/or policy requests at least one week prior to the council meeting; copies of council meeting minutes; and conduct all council meetings expeditiously.

The chairperson may also select a Vice Chairperson. This individual shall serve in the chairperson's place in the event that the chairperson cannot attend the meeting.

Attendance at Council Meetings

Instructional Council members are expected to attend regularly scheduled and called meetings of the council. In the event all council members are not present, the Chairperson may declare a quorum for the purpose of conducting business if a minimum of ten (10) members of the council are in attendance.

Recording of Minutes

The Chairperson may, at his/her discretion, select an individual from the council membership to record and make minutes of the Instructional Council meetings and/or utilize the Administrative Assistant for the Vice President of Instruction as a recorder. The minutes from each council meeting shall be reviewed by the Chairperson and distributed to the council membership one week prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting for the members to review. The members shall approve the minutes of the previous meeting at the next scheduled meeting of the council.

Protocol for Meetings

All council meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. If a council member cannot attend a meeting, then that individual may send a representative to the meeting to take notes, receive handouts, and observe council actions, but that individual shall not have any motion making or voting privileges.

Guests are welcome at Instructional Council meetings. The Chairperson may recognize guests for comments, suggestions, and/or questions related to matters of business at his/her discretion or as deemed appropriate by the membership of the council.

Processing of Documents

Following action by the Instructional Council, the Chairperson shall route all course approval forms, program of study forms, and/or policy request forms to the Vice President of Instruction of the college for approval or disapproval. Documents will continue to be processed according to the procedure outlined on the forms until final action has been taken. The Vice President of Instruction must receive all forms at least one week prior to a scheduled council meeting. Any course or program change approved by the council must be implemented within one calendar school year or must be reevaluated by the council.

Revision of Operational Guidelines

The Instructional Council may review its operational guidelines and consider revisions only once per school year. Any revisions to the operational guidelines must be approved by a simple majority of those present and voting during the council meeting. All revisions must be then presented to the Vice President of Instruction for final approval.

Procedures Governing Course Requests

The following procedures should be followed in seeking course approvals for a new course, revisions of an existing course, or deletion of a course:

1. The initiator should complete the "Course Request Form" indicating recommended course prefix, number, course title, lecture, lab, and semester hours, and course description.
2. The initiator should indicate within which program(s) the course would be included.
3. The initiator should indicate which four-year institution would accept the course for required or elective credit (it applicable).
4. The initiator should route the request to the appropriate departmental chair or college dean for review.
5. The departmental chair or program chair will route the materials to the Vice President of Instruction for approval and scheduling with the Instructional Council Chair at the next regular meeting of the council.
6. The initiator will be asked to present information regarding the course request.
7. The Instructional Council will recommend adoption or rejection of the course to the President or the Vice President of Instruction of the College.
8. If the Vice President of Instruction approves the course, it will be presented to the President for final approval.
9. If the President approves the course, it will be added to the master file of programs and courses maintained by the Vice President of Instruction for inclusion in the next printing of the catalog

Procedures Governing Program of Study Requests

The following procedures should be followed in seeking program of study approvals for new or revised programs of study or the deletion of a program of study:

1. The initiator shall follow the procedure outlined for approval of all new courses to be included in the program of study, or other changes to be made to the program.
2. The initiator shall prepare a "Program of Study Request Form" setting forth in the curriculum, as it would need to appear in the college catalog. If closing a program, the initiator shall prepare a "Closing a Program of Study" form.

3. The initiator shall attach appropriate materials to justify the addition, revision, or deletion of the program of study.
4. The initiator shall route the request to the appropriate dean or department chair for review.
5. The dean or department chair will route the materials to the Vice President of Instruction for approval and scheduling with the Instructional Council Chair at the next regular meeting of the council.
6. The initiator will be asked to present information regarding the program request.
7. The Instructional Council will recommend adoption or rejection of the program change to the Vice President of Instruction of the college.
8. If The Vice President of Instruction approves the program change, it will be presented to the President or Board of Trustees for approval.
9. All new programs and closed programs must be approved by SACSCOC prior to implementation.
10. If the President and/or Board of Trustees, and SACSCOC (when appropriate) approve the program change, it will be reflected in the master file of programs and courses maintained in the Vice President of Instruction for inclusion in the next printing of the catalog.

Procedures Governing Policy Requests

The following procedure should be followed in seeking policy approvals for college curricula related matters:

1. The initiator must complete the "Policy Request Form" stating the proposed policy and justification for the policy.
2. The initiator should attach any supporting materials deemed appropriate.
3. The initiator should route the request to the appropriate dean or department chair for review.
4. The dean or department chair will route the request to the Vice President of Instruction for approval and scheduling with the Instructional Council Chair at the next regular meeting of the council.
5. The initiator will be asked to present information regarding the policy request.

6. The Instructional Council will recommend adoption or rejection of the policy to the Vice President of Instruction of the college.
7. If The Vice President of Instruction concurs with the proposed policy, it will be presented to the President for approval or presentation to the Board of Trustees for approval.
8. If The President and/or Board of Trustees approve the policy, it will be added and copies will be maintained in the Vice President of Instruction office or inclusion in the next printing of the catalog as appropriate.

Procedures Governing SACSCOC Substantive Changes

A substantive change is a significant modification or expansion in the nature and scope of an accredited institution. SACSCOC requires notification and/or approval of all substantive changes prior to implementation.

The following procedure should be followed in seeking substantive change approvals for college curricula related matters:

1. The Instructional Council shall notify the President's office and the College's accreditation personnel in the event that a request for a substantive change as specified in the [SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#) is made.
2. The Institutional Accreditation Liaison will submit the requested change to the Instructional Council for approval using the "SACSCOC Substantive Change Review" form.
3. After obtaining SACSCOC acknowledgement and/or approval, the Institutional Accreditation Liaison and/or the President's office will notify the Instructional Council and the Vice President for Instruction so that the change can be reflected in the Instructional Council minutes and in the printing of the next catalog.

CONCLUSION

The Instructional Council is considered an institutional resource that provides invaluable assistance in assessing courses, programs of study, and policies that contribute to the development and maintenance of the institution's educational program. Hopefully, Mississippi Delta Community College will value this resource and the professionals who comprise it, and seek to engage not only these council members, but also others in an open review of its courses, programs, and policies. It is hoped that this handbook will be helpful in fostering and supporting this philosophy.