

NORTHLAND COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

3330 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE DEFINITION

A college program advisory committee provides guidance and advice on development, accountability, growth and closure of academic programs or related program clusters at the college or with related programs at high schools, colleges, and/or universities.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE PURPOSE

A college program advisory committee provides guidance and advice on development, accountability, growth and closure of academic programs or related program clusters at the college or with related programs at high schools, colleges, and/or universities. A college program advisory committee includes employers, students, and faculty; others may be included. The primary purpose of this policy is to guide college occupational programs in establishing an advisory committee. Where applicable, this policy will guide an advisory committee for liberal arts education.

SIZE OF COMMITTEE

The size and composition of an effective advisory committee should be appropriate to meet the educational, economic, social, and cultural obligations of the program and the college. The number of persons appointed to an advisory committee should be determined by the committee's functions, the size of the program, and the size of the community. It is recommended that the committee have a membership of between 6 and 12.

SELECTION OF MEMBERS

Advisory committees should consist primarily of employers. To be effective, committee members should have a clear sense of trends in the field. They should be able to identify skills that will ensure the employability of program graduates, and they should be able to identify jobs that don't yet exist but are likely to in the near future.

Other members should include:

- One or more college technical instructors
- Program students and graduates
- Different company types, sizes, and structures
- Community-based organizations, workforce development groups, and social service agencies
- Secondary and postsecondary educational institutions (represented on the committee by ex officio, nonvoting members)
- The general population (which is diverse with respect to gender, physical disability, age, race, and ethnicity)

COMMITTEE OFFICERS

The advisory committee elects officers from its membership. Suggested officers are a chair, a vice-chair (or co-chair), and a secretary. At the very least, a chair and secretary should be elected. The chair should be from industry. The committee chair may appoint subcommittees as necessary to facilitate committee business.

Chair - The two main roles of the chair are to set meeting agendas and conduct meetings.

Secretary – The secretary's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that minutes are taken at meetings.
- Managing other administrative functions of the committee such as communication issues.
- Ensuring that the committee's work is recorded.

Copies of all agendas and past meeting minutes must be on record with the committee secretary, department, dean's assistant, and on the college's virtual office (advisory committees). The program faculty are responsible for assuring that minutes are recorded and shared with committee members and the academic dean's assistants.

Terms of Office

Each advisory committee should establish its own criteria and guidelines for member recruitment, selection, appointment, and replacement. Following are guidelines.

- The suggested maximum term for members is three years. It is recommended that members not be appointed to successive terms and that at least a one-year absence be considered before reappointment. A rotational, three-year term of service allows for both continuity and change. One third of the total membership would change each year. New members should be appointed as terms expire.
- The suggested term of office for the chair is one or two years. The chair should be allowed to serve more than one term.

Committee membership should be reviewed and updated yearly to ensure broad-based representation of the industry and to ensure that the work of the committee continues.

Annual Work Plan

For a full description of categories in the program of work, see the Program Advisory Committee Handbook. Priorities for the advisory committee's annual work plan usually fall into one of these categories:

- Curriculum
- Assessment, program review, and program sustainability
- Staff development
- Career development and work-based learning
- Marketing and advocacy
- Student recruitment, mentoring, and placement
- Program resources
- Evaluation (of the program and the advisory committee itself)

COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

Communication with members will occur in both formal and informal settings. Advisory committees should strive to streamline formal face-to-face meetings as much as possible. Providing materials for review in advance, either by email or regular mail can ensure that meeting time is reserved for interactive discussions and decision-making.

Frequency of Meetings

The frequency of the committee's meetings will be dictated by the work plan. Committees meet at least twice a year, once per term not including summer. However, if a committee has an especially intense work plan, it may need to meet monthly. In any case, meetings should NEVER be called simply for the sake of holding a meeting. There should always be a reason for a meeting.

Meeting Agenda

Organized meetings are one of the keys to a successful advisory committee. Meeting schedules should be established at the beginning of the academic year to allow committee members to plan their calendars accordingly. A reminder (including a proposed agenda) should be sent two weeks prior to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FEEDBACK

The end-product of all advisory committee activities is a set of recommendations for continuous

improvement of the program. Many advisory committees write a formal recommendation letter that is signed by the committee chair on behalf of the entire committee.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE EVALUATION

The advisory committee will evaluate its performance yearly related to accomplishments and progress on the annual work plan.

For complete advisory committee guidance see the Program Advisory Committee Handbook.

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