

CHAMPLAIN REGIONAL COLLEGE
OF GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION



***Institutional Policy for the Evaluation of Programs
Leading to an Attestation of Studies (A.E.C.)***

This Policy was adopted for the first time by Board of Governors resolution number 2212 on June 17, 2005.

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1. PURPOSE, CONTEXT, GOALS AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

1.1 The purposes of the Institutional Policy for the Evaluation of Programs Leading to an Attestation of College Studies (A.E.C.) are

- to define the context, goals, principles and methods which Champlain Regional College uses to assume its responsibility with regards to evaluating its A.E.C. programs;
- to improve the programs evaluated;
- to attest to their quality.

1.2 Program evaluations are carried out within the framework set by the provisions of the *General and Vocational Colleges' Act*, the *Act Respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*, the *College Education Regulations*, the College's Bylaws and Policies, and the various collective agreements.

1.3 The goals of this policy are to provide

- a framework that will ensure consistency between different program evaluations;
- explicit methodological and ethical principles, guidelines and process to orient and support those involved in program evaluations;
- defined responsibilities of the different stakeholders involved in program evaluations.

1.4 Under the joint responsibility of the Director of Studies, the Campus Director and the Director/Coordinator of the Continuing Education Services at each location, this policy applies to the evaluation of all programs leading to an Attestation of College Studies (A.E.C.) offered at Champlain Regional College.

1.5 This Policy will be distributed to all those involved in the program evaluation and to other college staff on request.

2. PROGRAM EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

2.1 Program evaluations are carried out at Champlain Regional College to improve the programs evaluated and to publicly attest to their quality.

2.2 The effectiveness of a program evaluation is dependent upon the preliminary identification of issues related to the program under evaluation, the use of valid and reliable criteria, the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the information and data, the analysis of the data, and the formulation of valid conclusions leading to constructive recommendations for action.

2.3 The six areas examined in program evaluations are

- the program relevance;
- the program coherence;
- the teaching methods used in learning activities and the support services provided to students of the program;
- the resources allocated to the program;
- the program management;
- the program effectiveness.

2.4 Program evaluations require the participation of all stakeholders – students (first and foremost), alumni, faculty, staff and management – working together in a climate of trust and respect.

2.5 Credible evaluation results require that internal and external points of view on the program evaluated be collected and used. To that end students, alumni, employers, workplace supervisors, faculty and any organisation involved in the delivery of the program will be surveyed, met in focus groups or consulted. Surveys may form a major element of the evaluation but do not in and of themselves constitute the basis for an objective and thorough evaluation.

2.6 Adequate resources and support to the evaluation process, and to implementing and following up on the resulting action plan will be allocated.

- 2.7 Results from program evaluations will be used to improve the program, to assist in program revision and development, and to facilitate institutional planning, including recruitment, resource allocation and professional development needs.
- 2.8 Program evaluations are carried out according to standards of professional ethics ensuring the respect of individuals, the transparency of the process and accessibility of the results. Consequently, the College ensures that
- the anonymity of the individuals providing data or information is respected;
 - data selection and collection procedures are described in sufficient detail in the evaluation report that readers can assess their relevance and the validity of the analysis and conclusions that are derived from them;
 - consultation takes place at all the appropriate levels as described in this policy;
 - the adopted evaluation report and action plan are distributed to the program faculty, to other college staff as relevant and to others on request;
 - an executive summary of the evaluation and the action plan is made available to the general public via the College's Web site.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 3.1 The framework for program evaluation is based around the six evaluation criteria (and their sub-criteria) set forth in the program evaluation guidelines of the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*. Within the context of a given evaluation, not all these criteria and sub-criteria may be applicable. Consequently the evaluation plan must specify which criteria and sub-criteria will be retained to generate the specific questions that will guide the evaluation process.

Program Relevance

- 3.2 The relevance of the program focuses on the ability for the program to meet student expectations and needs as well as those of the labour market. Sub-criteria may include
- the program takes into account student characteristics, needs and expectations from their entry in the program to their graduation;
 - the program objectives satisfy the labour market needs.

Program Coherence

- 3.3 The coherence of the program focuses on the structure and content of the program. Sub-criteria may include
- program objectives and grid, and the sequence of learning activities aim at facilitating student learning;
 - learning activities are clearly defined and their contents are consistent with the program approved by the Board;
 - requirements and learning assessment methods and tools for each learning activity are realistic and clearly defined in course outlines.

Teaching Methods and Support Services

- 3.4 The criterion of teaching methods and support services provided to students verifies that teaching methods, student workload and the support provided to students are conducive to their success. Sub-criteria may include
- teaching methods are effective and adapted to the learning activity objectives while taking student characteristics into account;
 - student workloads correspond to the program and course documentation provided to students;
 - evaluation of student learning is fair and consistent with the course outlines;
 - support measures in place at the program and within the college help students succeed in their program.

Program Resources

- 3.5 The human, material and financial resources allocated for the offering of the program are of quality and are sufficient. Sub-criteria may include
- the teachers are qualified and responsive to student needs;
 - the equipment and laboratory are adequate both in terms of quantity and quality;
 - the access to equipment and facilities are sufficient and convenient;
 - the funding for the program is adequate.

Program management

- 3.6 The management of the program examines the administrative aspects of the program including its promotion and the nature of information handed out to potential and actual students. Sub-criteria may include
- recruitment methods are effective;
 - selection and orientation measures allow students to complete the program;
 - information provided to students regarding the program is both accurate and complete;
 - means of communication with students, faculty and external organisations are effective;
 - means used to maintain a vibrant link with the community organisations are effective;
 - management methods and structures facilitate and promote a program approach.

Program Effectiveness

- 3.7 The effectiveness of the program analyses the course success, retention, graduation and job placement rates. Sub-criteria may include
- course success, retention and graduation rates are satisfactory and meet the expected standards;

- internships meet the program objectives and satisfy the students' and the employers' needs;
- graduate placement rates in a field related to their studies meet the College's objectives.

4. PROGRAM EVALUATION FREQUENCY

- 4.1 Programs to be evaluated are chosen jointly by the Campus Director and the Director/Coordinator of the Continuing Education Services, in consultation with the Director of Studies, based on the following considerations:
- evaluations requested by the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*;
 - upcoming program revisions set by the Ministry of Education or by the College;
 - major changes in the environment, anticipated or actually occurring, and likely to have an impact on a program;
 - emerging concerns about a given program;
 - likelihood of offering the program within the next two years.
- 4.2 The Campus Director and the Director/Coordinator of Continuing Education Services, in consultation with the Director of Studies, determine during the annual planning process which, if any, A.E.C. program will be evaluated the following year.
- 4.3 The evaluation of a new or revised program should not occur prior to the graduation of at least two cohorts from that program.
- 4.4 Programs are normally evaluated every four years or after eight cohorts. The maximum length of time allowed between consecutive evaluations of a program shall not exceed six years.

5. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

- 5.1 The evaluation process is articulated around the development of the evaluation plan, the evaluation report and the action plan.
- 5.2 Program evaluations are normally completed within six months.
- 5.3 The Campus Director, in consultation with the Director/Coordinator of Continuing Education Services, assesses and allocates the resources needed to carry out the evaluation (e.g., release time, secretarial support, survey resources, data analysis and printing costs).
- 5.4 The Director/Coordinator of Continuing Education Services oversees the evaluation process, including the gathering of the information, data and documents required for the evaluation.

Evaluation Plan

- 5.5 The Director/Coordinator of Continuing Education Services, in collaboration with the Campus Director and the Director of Studies, reviews the information available and, using his/her knowledge of the current status of the program, formulates an evaluation plan.
- 5.6 The evaluation plan specifies
- concerns and issues identified with the program;
 - the chronological scope of the evaluation;
 - the criteria retained for the evaluation and the precise sub-criteria evaluation questions that will provide focus for the evaluation and ensure that all major aspects of the issues are addressed;
 - the activities which will be carried out to provide answers to the evaluation questions;
 - the methods to be used for gathering the required data;
 - the resources available for the evaluation process;

- a timeline for the completion of the evaluation and a breakdown of responsibilities.

- 5.7 The program faculty, the relevant staff and relevant external organisations are consulted on the evaluation plan before it is formally approved by the Campus Director and Director of Studies.

Evaluation Report

- 5.8 The different audiences of the evaluation report are the faculty and staff of the program, its students, the local Academic/Pedagogical Council or Committee, the Commission of Studies, the Board of Governors and the general public.
- 5.9 The report should be precise and concise. Appendices should be used to provide supporting data or information. The appendices must include the approved evaluation plan.
- 5.10 The evaluation report should be comprised of
- a brief description of the program, its history, enrolment patterns and current status, and the factors and trends which could affect the program in the future;
 - a description of the issues identified, the process followed for the evaluation and the methodology used in the evaluation;
 - under each sub-criterion and for each question posed, a description of the observations made and the relevant data, an analysis and a conclusion followed by recommendations when appropriate;
 - an overall conclusion giving a general appraisal of the program, its strengths and areas of improvement, and outlining the recommendations arising from the evaluation.
- 5.11 Program faculty and relevant staff involved in the program are consulted prior to tabling the final draft of the evaluation report.

Action plan

- 5.12 The Director/Coordinator of Continuing Education Services designs an action plan in consultation with the Campus Director, the Director of Studies.
- 5.13 This plan is based on the recommendations made in the evaluation report and specifies
- the proposed actions resulting from the recommendations;
 - for each action, the people responsible, a timeline or deadline.
- 5.14 The action plan is updated annually until all its actions are completed. This update usually happens on the anniversary of the approval of the action plan, and it is presented in writing to the Commission of Studies, the Executive and the Board.

Consultation and Approval

- 5.15 Complete drafts of the evaluation report, appendices and action plan are sent to the Campus Director and the Director of Studies who jointly decide to submit them to the local Academic/Pedagogical Council or Committee, the Commission of Studies and the Board of Governors.
- 5.16 The local Academic/Pedagogical Council or Committee is consulted on the evaluation report and the action plan.
- 5.17 The Commission of Studies is consulted on the evaluation report and action plan and it makes recommendations to the Board on these documents.
- 5.18 The evaluation report and action plan, modified as per results of the previous consultations are submitted to the Board of Governors for approval.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 The Board of Governors is responsible for the approval of
- the present Policy and its revision;
 - the program evaluation reports;
 - the action plans.

The Board of Governors receives scheduled follow-ups on the implementation status of the action plan.

- 6.2 The Commission of Studies provides recommendations and advice to the Board of Governors on
- the present Policy and its revision;
 - the program evaluation reports;
 - the action plans.
- 6.3 The local Academic/Pedagogical Council or Committee is consulted on
- the present Policy and its revision;
 - the program evaluation reports;
 - the action plans.
- 6.4 The Director of Studies jointly with the Campus Director
- provide input and approve the evaluation plan;
 - decide to initiate consultation at the local Academic/Pedagogical Council or Committee and at the Commission of Studies on the evaluation report and action plan;
 - submit the final drafts of the evaluation report and action plan to the Board;
 - make results of the evaluation accessible internally and externally;
 - inform the Executive and the Board regarding follow-ups on the plan of action.
- 6.5 The Campus Director
- identifies, in cooperation with the Director/Coordinator of Continuing Education Services, the program to be evaluated;
 - allocates resources to the evaluation process.
- 6.6 The Director of Studies
- submits the Policy for approval by the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*;

- ensures the periodic revision of the Policy;
- participates in the identification of the program to be evaluated;
- submits the final drafts of the evaluation report and action plan to the Commission of Studies;
- informs the Commission of Studies on progress made in the implementation of the action plan on an annual basis.

6.7 The Director/Coordinator of Continuing Education Services

- identifies, in cooperation with the Campus Director, the program to be evaluated;
- develops an evaluation plan in conformity with the Policy;
- oversees and participates in the development of the evaluation report;
- develops the action plan;
- presents the evaluation report and the action plan to the local Academic/Pedagogical Council or Committee and the Commission of Studies;
- ensures the implementation of the action plan;
- updates the action plan annually.

6.8 Program Faculty and Staff

- participate in the evaluation as requested;
- supply information requested from them as per the evaluation plan;
- provide feedback when consulted during the evaluation process.

6.9 Students and Alumni

- participate in data collection operations as they progress through the program and after they have left the college;
- provide feedback on the program and the evaluation report when consulted.

7. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION

7.1 This Policy comes into effect on the date of its adoption by the Board of Governors.

7.2 This Policy may be revised at any time, but will be revised at least every 6 years.

7.3 Consultations on the revision of this Policy are carried out according to the College's structures and practices.