

CHAMPLAIN REGIONAL COLLEGE
OF GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION



***POLICY FOR THE EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS
LEADING TO A DIPLOMA OF COLLEGE STUDIES***

This policy was adopted for the first time by the Board of Governors'
resolution number 1994 on June 14, 2002.

1. PURPOSE, GOALS AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the context, principles, goals and rules which govern the way Champlain Regional College assumes its responsibility to evaluate academic programs and publicly attest to their quality and effectiveness in enhancing the achievement of the College's educational mission.

1.2 The goal of the Institutional Policy for the Evaluation of Programs Leading to a Diploma of College Studies is to supply Champlain with the following:

A framework providing for useful evaluations, based on active participation of all stakeholders and leading to the betterment of education;

A set of flexible, efficient, and effective rules to be applied to all program evaluations;

Clearly defined responsibilities of administrative and academic services regarding program evaluation;

Explicit ethical and methodological principles and guidelines to orient and support individuals and groups involved in program evaluations.

1.3 This policy applies to the evaluation of all pre-university and technical programs leading to a Diploma of College Studies (DEC) offered at Champlain Regional College.

1.4 The application of this policy is under the joint responsibility of the Director of Studies, the Campus Director and the Dean in charge of academic programs leading to a DEC at each location.

2. PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING PROGRAM EVALUATION

2.1 The evaluation of academic programs is 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* and the various collective agreements.

2.2 The College is part of the public education system. Hence, a fundamental purpose of each evaluation is to ensure conformity of the program with ministerial requirements.

2.3 A program consists of both general and specific education. In any program evaluation, both components must be analysed for their contribution to the program.

2.4 The quality of a program evaluation is dependent upon the preliminary identification of issues related to the program under evaluation, the use of valid and reliable tools, the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the information and data used, thorough analysis of the data, and the formulation of legitimate conclusions leading to constructive recommendations for action.

2.5 A successful program evaluation requires the participation of all stakeholders, first and foremost faculty and students, and also management and staff, working together in a climate of trust and respect.

2.6 Credible evaluation results require that internal and external points of view on the program be collected and used.

2.7 Results from program evaluations are used to improve the education and training offered in a program, to assist program revision and development, and to facilitate institutional planning, including resources and professional development.

2.8 The College recognizes the importance of program evaluation. It commits itself to allocating adequate resources and support to the evaluation process, and to implementing and following up on the resulting plan of action.

- 2.9 Program evaluation is carried out according to standards of professional ethics ensuring the respect of individuals, the transparency of the process and public accessibility to the results. In that perspective, 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 conclusions that are derived from the evaluation.

A summary report is made available to the general public.

3. OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAM EVALUATION

- 3.1 Program evaluation has as its over-riding objective the continuous improvement of an academic program.

- 3.2 The specific objectives of program evaluation are the following:

To verify the coherence of the program as a means to achieve ministerial objectives and standards;

To identify program strengths and weaknesses;

To address issues related to the program or its implementation;

To assess the effectiveness of the program;

To make recommendations for a plan of action which will ensure that the program continues to respond appropriately to educational and social needs;

To publicly attest to the quality of the program.

4. PROGRAMS TO BE EVALUATED AND FREQUENCY OF EVALUATIONS

- 4.1 Programs to be evaluated are chosen jointly by the Campus Director and the Dean, in consultation with the Program Coordinator and 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 the program;

Emerging concerns about a program.

- 4.2 The Dean on each campus develops a five-year calendar for the evaluation of its programs. As much as possible, this calendar will plan for the evaluation of a program to take place in the year preceding its revision and not concurrently.

- 4.3 The evaluation of newly-revised programs should not occur prior to the graduation of a cohort from that newly-revised program.

- 4.4 Calendars are revised annually, and adjusted as needed, based on the considerations in 4.1 and 4.2.

- 4.5 The Campus Director and the Director of Studies approve calendars and modifications proposed by the Dean.

- 4.6 Programs are normally evaluated every five years. The maximum of time between evaluations shall not exceed eight years.

5. THE INFORMATION SYSTEM

- 5.1 The College maintains an information system for collecting and storing data and documents essential to program evaluation.

5.2 The scope of topical areas encompassed by the information system shall include but not be restricted to:

Student applications, admission and enrolment;

Clientele characteristics;

Student success in courses, the English Exit Exam and the Comprehensive Assessment;

Retention and graduation rates;

Program completion time;

Qualifications, experience, professional development and allocations of teaching and technical support staff;

Operating and capital budgets;

Room and lab space, equipment and other instructional material;

* Course outlines, teaching and learning assessment methods;

Departmental/ program annual reports and plans of action;

Perceptions of students, faculty, employers and institutions hosting work placements, hiring or admitting our graduates;

Job placement and subsequent success in employment;

Admission to and subsequent performance in university.

5.3 Data, information and documents, collected according to a fixed schedule and stored in the information system, constitute a baseline for any program evaluation and minimize the need for additional data collection during the evaluation.

5.4 To facilitate information retrieval, the College shall develop a set of standard reports that meet the needs of program evaluation committees.

5.5 The College will also develop generic tools to facilitate the work of program committees, namely questionnaires and

outlines for planning and reporting documents.

5.6 The development of the information system, starting from existing components, will be completed within the year following the adoption of this Policy. Responsibilities will be defined as the system is developed.

6. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

6.1 The evaluation process is articulated around the production of the evaluation mandate, the evaluation plan, the evaluation report and the plan of action.

6.2 Program evaluations are normally completed within one semester and submitted for final consultations and approval at the beginning of the following semester. Preliminary steps are preferably done in the semester preceding the evaluation, to facilitate a prompt start when the evaluation gets underway.

Preliminary Operations

6.3 A decision to evaluate a program as per the local calendar is made jointly by the Campus Director and the Dean in consultation with the Program Coordinator and the Director of Studies.

6.4 The Campus Director and the Dean designate a primary evaluator with the appropriate training and experience.

6.5 The Campus Director appoints an evaluation committee. In addition to the primary evaluator, it comprises one or two faculty members teaching in the program; an academic advisor or other non-teaching staff; and the Dean who chairs the committee *ex officio*.

6.6 The Campus Director, in consultation with the Dean, assesses and allocates the resources needed to carry out the evaluation (e.g., release time, secretarial support, information technologies, printing).

6.7 The Dean requests the information, data and documents required for the evaluation to begin.

Evaluation Mandate

6.8 The Dean, in collaboration with the Campus Director, the Director of Studies, the Registrar, the Program Coordinator and others as relevant, review the information available and, using their knowledge of the current status of the program, formulate a mandate which defines the evaluation issues.

6.9 The mandate will determine which of the following criteria will be used for a specific program evaluation: relevance, coherence, educational interactions, resources, management and effectiveness.

6.10 The mandate specifies:
Concerns and issues identified with the program;
Criteria retained for the evaluation and specific evaluation questions that will provide focus for the evaluation and help avoid the evaluation of areas that do not require special attention.

6.11 The evaluation committee is given the mandate, the data, outlines for the evaluation plan and for the evaluation report and a copy of this Policy.

Evaluation Plan

6.12 The evaluation committee develops an evaluation plan that specifies:
The issues and questions on which the evaluation will focus;
The activities which will be carried out to provide answers to the evaluation questions and the methods used;
A timeline for the completion of the evaluation and a breakdown of responsibilities that will provide for the completion of the evaluation.

6.13 The Program Committee and the local Academic Advisory Committee are consulted on the evaluation plan before it is recommended to the Campus Director and Director of Studies for joint approval.

6.14 The evaluation is carried out according to the plan.

Evaluation Report

6.15 The Program Committee is consulted on interim results and partial drafts of the evaluation report, as relevant.

6.16 The evaluation committee develops an evaluation report that comprises:
A brief description of the program, its history and current status;
A description of the methodology and the issues addressed in the evaluation;
An analysis of the relevant data;
Evaluation results which address the specific evaluation questions and criteria retained for the evaluation;
A conclusion giving a general appraisal of the program and recommendations deriving from the evaluation;
A limited set of appendices required to ensure the transparency of the evaluation.

Plan of action

6.17 The Dean designs an action plan in consultation with the Campus Director, the Program Committee, and the Evaluation Committee.

6.18 This plan is based on the recommendations of the evaluation report and specifies:
Which recommendations will be translated into actions;
For each action: responsibilities, timeline, expected outcomes;
A calendar for the implementation of and follow-up on the action plan.

Consultation and Approval

- 6.19 The complete drafts of the evaluation report, appendices and plan of action are sent to the Campus Director and the Director of Studies who jointly decide to submit them to wider consultation.
- 6.20 The local Academic Advisory Committee and the Program Committee are consulted on the conclusions, recommendations and plan of action, and other consultations with faculty, students and management are carried out according to local practices.
- 6.21 The Commission of Studies is consulted on the report and plan of action and makes appropriate recommendations to the Board.
- 6.22 The Primary Evaluator draws up a summary of the evaluation report and the action plan.
- 6.23 The report and plan of action, modified as per results of the previous consultations, and the summary document are submitted to the Board of Governors for approval.
- 6.24 The adopted evaluation report and plan of action are distributed to the Program Committee, Departments, other college staff as relevant and to others on request. The summary document is made available to the public.

Follow-up

- 6.25 The Dean is responsible for the implementation of the action plan.
- 6.26 The Campus Director is responsible for informing the Board on progress made in the implementation of the action plan.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 The Board of Governors is responsible for the approval of:
- The *Institutional Policy for the Evaluation of Programs* and its revision;
 - The program evaluation reports;

The action plans.

The Board of Governors is also responsible for the follow-up on the implementation of the action plan.

- 7.2 The Commission of Studies provides recommendations and advice to the Board of Governors on the above matters.

- 7.3 The local Academic Advisory Committee are consulted on the evaluation plan, the evaluation report and the action plan.

- 7.4 The Director of Studies jointly with the Campus Director:

Provide input into the evaluation mandate;

Approve the evaluation plan;

Decide to initiate consultation on the drafts of 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;

Informs the Board regarding follow-up on the plan of action.

- 7.5 The Campus Director:

Appoints the evaluation committee;

Allocates resources to the evaluation process.

- 7.6 The Director of Studies:

Submits the Policy for approval by the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collegial*;

Ensures the revision of the Policy.

- 7.7 The Dean:

Draws up a calendar for the evaluation of academic programs;

Participates in decisions concerning evaluations;

Requests data and documents needed for the evaluation;

- Develops an evaluation mandate;
- Oversees and participates in the evaluation as Chair of the evaluation committee;
- Develops the plan of action;
- Submits the evaluation report to the Academic Advisory Committee and the Commission of Studies.
- 7.8 The Registrar:
- Provides input into the evaluation process;
- Supplies information regarding applications, admissions and enrolment.
- 7.9 Program Committee, Departments, and Faculty:
- Participate in the evaluation;
- Supply information requested from them by the evaluation committee as per the evaluation plan;
- Provide feedback when consulted.
- 7.10 Students and Alumni:
- Participate in all data collections as they progress through the program and after they have left the college;
- Provide feedback when consulted.
- 7.11 The Primary Evaluator
- Provides evaluation expertise;
- Coordinates the evaluation activities;
- Writes and modifies the evaluation report as required by successive consultations;
- Summarizes the evaluation report and action plan.
- 7.12 The Evaluation Committee:
- Develops an evaluation plan in conformity with the Policy and the evaluation mandate;
- Carries out the evaluation as per the plan;
- Participates in all local consultations.

8. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION

8.1 The *Institutional Policy for the Evaluation of Academic Programs Leading to a DEC* comes into effect as soon as it is adopted by the Board of Governors.

8.2 This Policy is distributed to all Program Committees and Departments, to Evaluation Committees and other college staff on request.

8.3 This Policy may be revised upon request from the Board of Governors, after consultation with the Commission of Studies. The Director of Studies will ensure that the Policy is revised at least every 10 years.

8.4 Consultations on the revision of the Policy are carried out according to college structures and practices.