

April 12-13  
2012

**Grossmont/  
Cuyamaca  
Community  
College  
District**

**Business Process Analysis:**  
*Curriculum Approval Process*

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with Strata Information Group



## Workshop Objectives

As part of the implementation of CurricUNET at Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District, Strata Information Group (SIG) is working with the Colleges and the District to analyze and improve the underlying process. This analysis yields two primary outputs: 1) a plan for improving the existing process, and 2) an ideal process map to be used in the deployment of CurricUNET. The objectives are to develop a better process, and to take full advantage of the new technology.

To meet the objectives, a two-day Business Process Analysis (BPA) workshop was conducted to examine the curriculum approval process at both Grossmont and Cuyamaca Colleges. The objectives of the workshop included the following:

- Review the principles of Business Process Analysis (BPA)
- Map the existing process
- Analyze the process map and identify obstacles and potential opportunities for improvement
- Develop a new process that improves effectiveness, reduces steps, and takes full advantage of the technology

Participants represented Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs/Instruction, Office of Instruction, Academic Senate, Curriculum Committees, Deans, Faculty, Classified Staff, and ITS. Kari Blinn, from SIG, facilitated the workshop. Sheri Willis and Brian Nath, also from SIG, as well as Steve Thyberg (from Governet/CurricUNET) provided expertise and guidance during the sessions. Participants were engaged and thoughtful. They worked hard to identify the issues with the current process – and to develop a new process. This document contains the contents and outcomes of the group’s efforts.

## Observations

During the workshop, participants identified issues with the current enrollment process. Themes included the following:

- Process is long and complex
  - Many redundancies
  - Loop-backs to previous steps
  - Many layers
  - Convoluted
  - “Daunting”
- Reliance on Instruction to identify issues and monitor the process
  - Many hurdles to overcome to complete the process
  - “Deep filter”
- Paper-intensive and paper-driven

## Top Opportunities

Over the course of the workshop, participants identified many opportunities for process improvement. At the end of the session, they participated in an anonymous weighted voting exercise. Each participant was given ten “votes.” An individual could place all her votes on a single opportunity or spread her votes among several. This allows us to identify which opportunities the group deems most important for GCCCD. It also lets the group see if there is emerging consensus around any items. The results are listed below:

# of Votes	Opportunities
24	Make information readily available to faculty – e.g. resources, context-specific help
23	Facilitate communication
16	Single source of data – enter information once
16	Transparency – ability to see where a proposal is in the process
13	Eliminate paper
13	Allow faculty to focus on creation and implementation of curriculum
12	Clear notification of deadlines – accountability
12	Allow simultaneous communication – i.e. workflow – to the library, transfer articulation, deans, alignment, etc.
10	Streamline process
1	Online/real-time catalog

## Next Steps

- Write report from BPA workshop (Kari Blinn)
- Assemble task force (Barbara, Robin)
- Schedule and conduct CurricUNET demonstration – start with task force, then include others (Sheri, Barbara, Robin)
- Reach out to other CurricUNET schools – “What would you have done differently?” (task force members)

## **Process Maps**

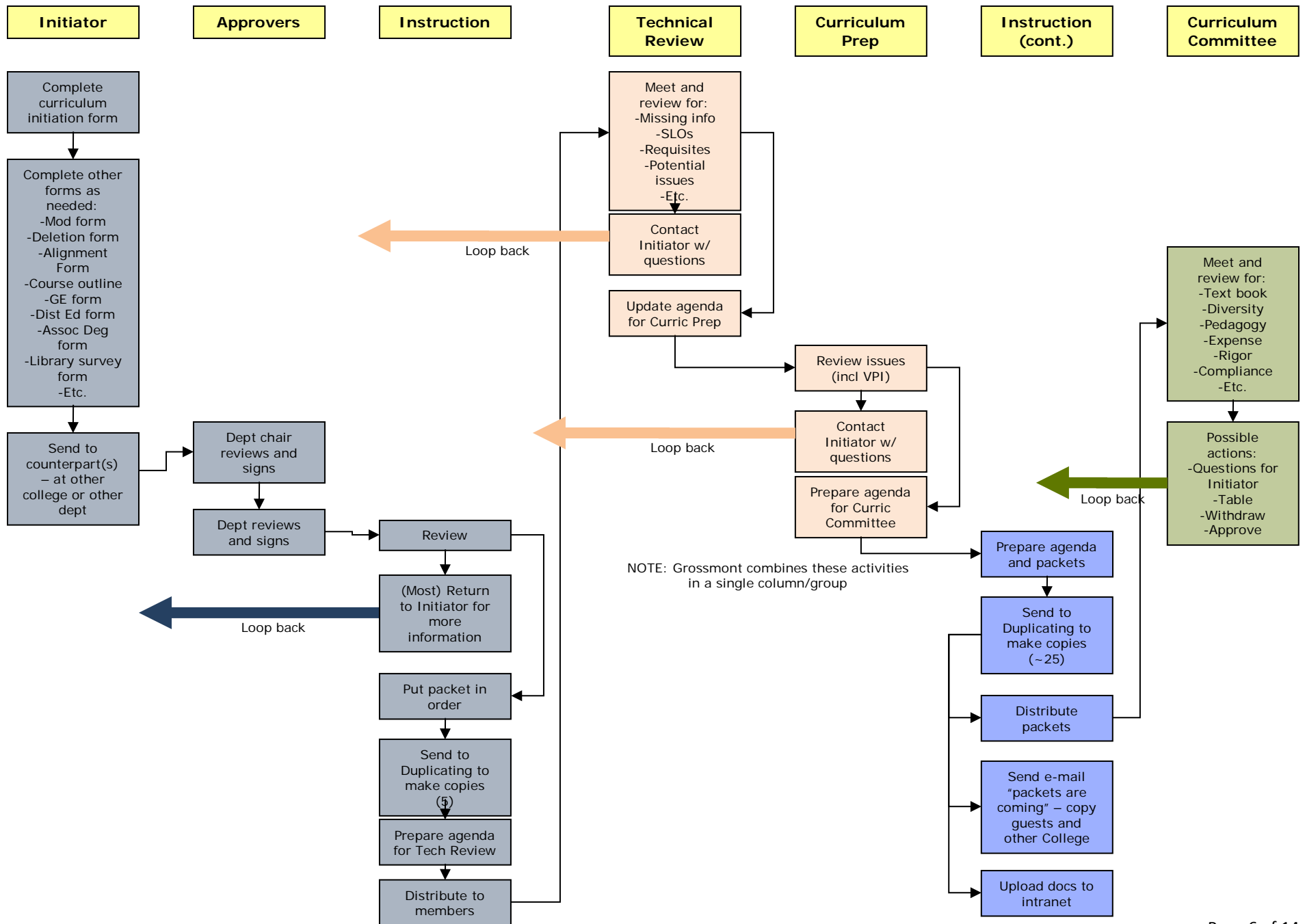
Mapping processes with stakeholders serves as a vehicle to:

- Identify issues with the current process
- Work together to develop clear, streamlined, consistent process
- Take full advantage of new technology

The pages that follow include the maps of the current process, objectives for the new process, and an “ideal” process map. The objective is to use the ideal map as a guide for the task force as they implement CurricUNET and integrate with Colleague.

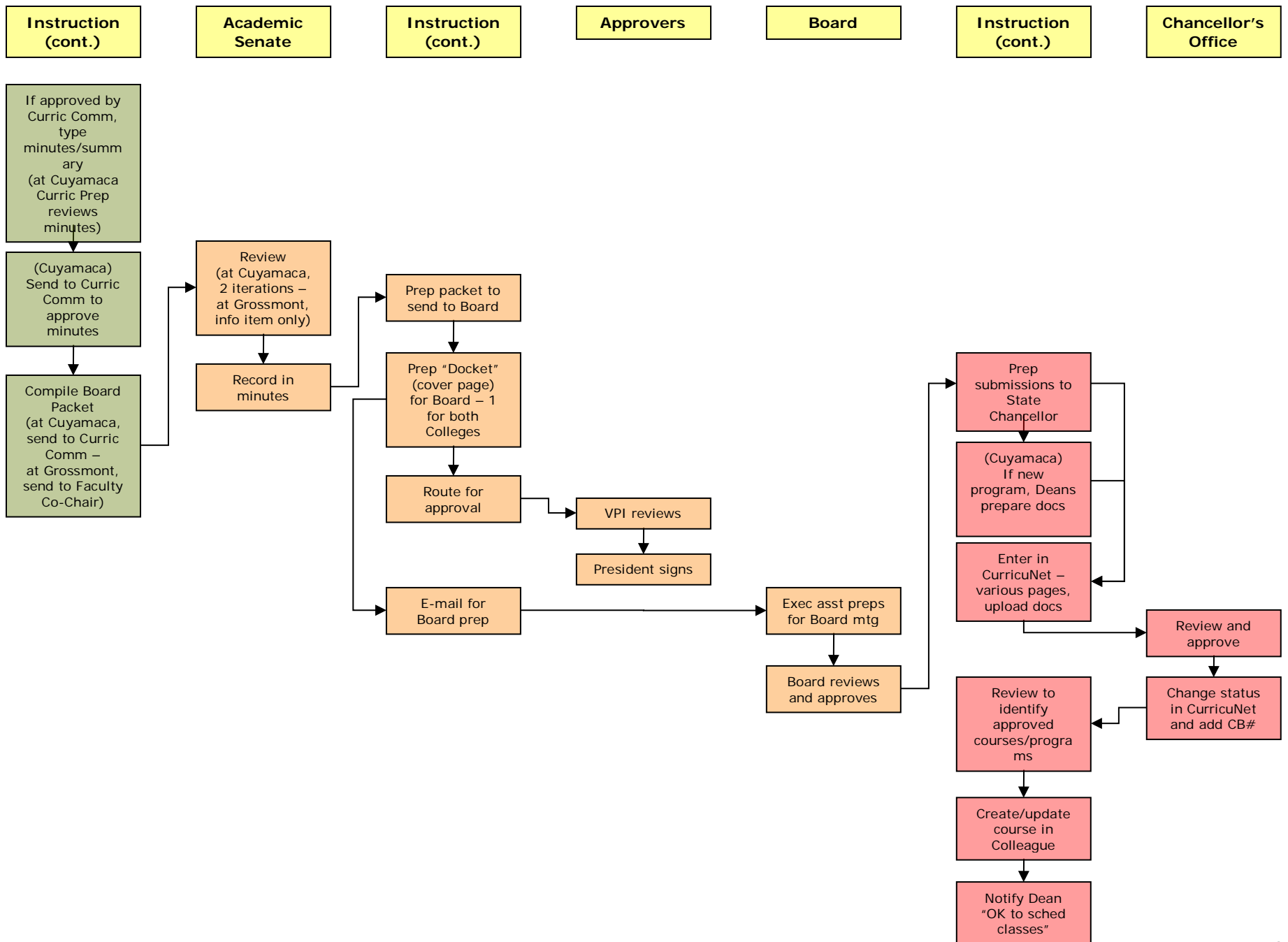


# Current Curriculum Process (Credit) – 1





## Current Curriculum Process (Credit) – 2





## Objectives for New Process

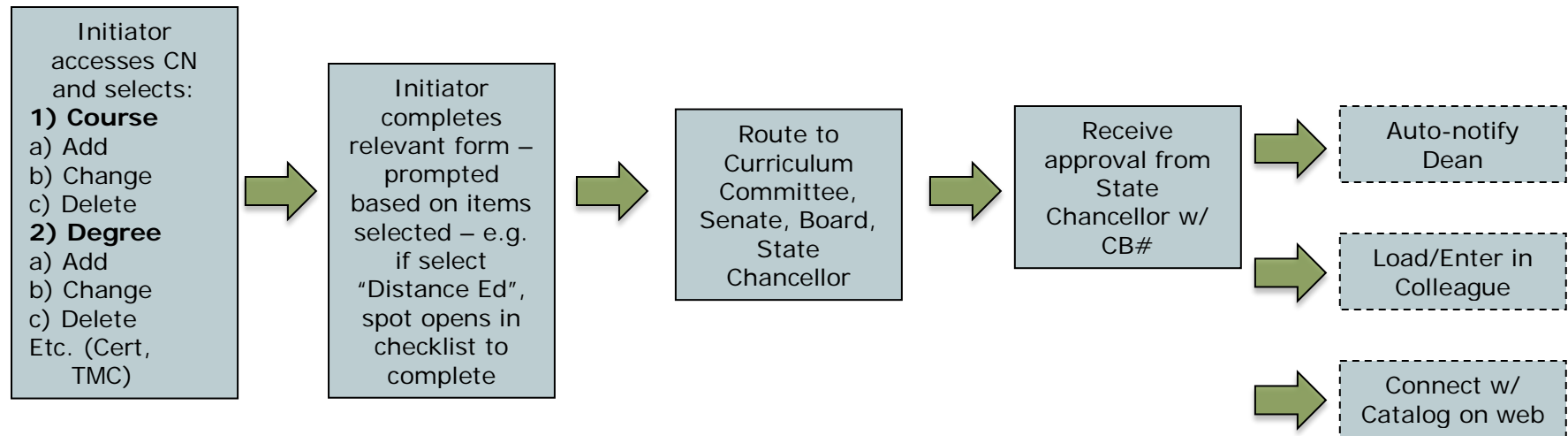
The following objectives were used in developing an “ideal” curriculum approval process:

### Objectives

- Simpler process for faculty – focus on creation of curriculum
- Colleges decide who is responsible for what
- Utilize a single source of data
  - Eliminate need for shadow systems
  - Eliminate double and triple data entry
- Eliminate paper – appeal to value of sustainability
- Unified system – that also allows for process differences at the Colleges
  - Include non-credit, TMC, etc.
- Clarify notification versus approval steps
- Ensure process is transparent – view where proposal is in process
- Improve communications
  - Early/up front
  - Follow-up reminders
  - “Here’s the window for review. After X days, assume approval”
- Don’t accept proposals after deadline – system stops submission up front
- Get deans in the loop early – encourage engagement
- Provide access to the right stuff – e.g. current course outline, links to State regulations
- Provide output for course catalog

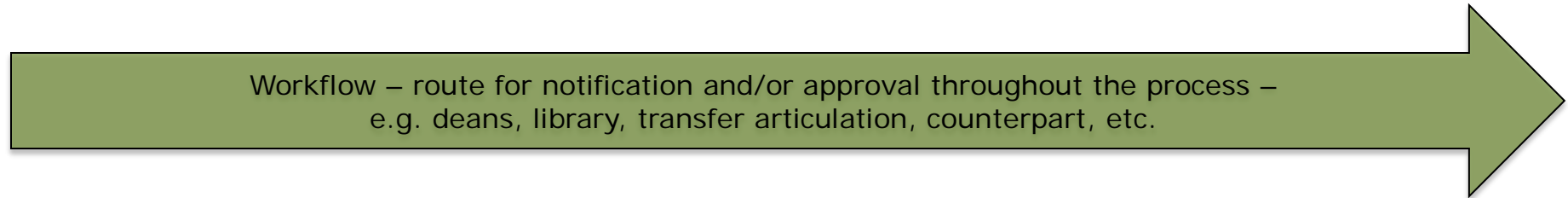


# Ideal Curriculum Approval Process



**NOTES:**  
 -Based on selection, CN displays specific form and checklist  
 -Fields are required prior to submission  
 -CN provides context-specific help  
 -Can access resources from within CN – e.g. current course outline  
 -Ability to track course changes w/out losing original – “course comparison” in CN  
 -Can include co-contributor

**NOTES:**  
 -Can extract and print documents from CN if needed  
 -Agenda templates available in CN



## APPENDIX A

### Opportunities for Improvement

In brainstorming fashion, participants identified the following opportunities. (These are not listed in ranked order, nor do they necessarily represent consensus.)

- Contact Chancellor's Office to re-start auto-notification when new courses and programs are approved
- Implement a "smart" submission form (on web) that presents different questions based on selections – e.g. "new course" presents different questions from "update program"
- Deploy a clear checklist for each submission
- Reinforce good personal communication between Colleges
- Ensure all approvals are in place before proposal is routed to Instruction
- Eliminate paper – appeal to value of sustainability
  - Retain information electronically
  - Stop printing physical copies
- Develop tutorial and post to web to explain the process
- Don't create unnecessary obstacles
- Find "sweet spot" for Curriculum Committee – engaged but not bogged down
- Ensure faculty informed – committee members to bring information back to departments
- Clarify role of Curriculum Committee members
- Facilitate process between
  - Board and State approval
  - Then production of catalog
- Clear notification from Chancellor's Office about status of proposal
- Improve non-credit curriculum review – especially given overlap with credit courses and programs
- Clarify Academic Senate's role in reviewing and approving non-credit curriculum
- Facilitate communication around Alignment – e.g. follow-up notifications
- Utilize CurricUNET to ensure proposals don't fall through the cracks
- Use CurricUNET for TMC creation – similar template to degree process
- Clarify details for faculty of all things needed to develop a new degree or certificate
- Utilize information available from the State as we configure CurricUNET
- Include Distance Ed courses in process – rather than "one more form" – provide a "DE" option in CurricUNET
- Connect faculty to resources – virtual handbook
- Ask one decision per screen – with bailout option – or put all decisions together
- Provide support along the way – multiple people, multiple media
- Educate faculty about "Why" this information/process is needed – consider bullets, clear formats
- Include faculty curriculum initiators in implementation project
- Define "counterpart" in CurricUNET – utilize the mapping mechanism
- Develop a common course outline from which to start
- Transparency – allow all to see where proposal is in the process
- Extract information from CurricUNET for catalog – or connect in real-time

- During Curriculum Committee meeting, project CurricUNET – and proposed courses – on a screen (rather than printing paper docs)
- Enter decision and notes during Curriculum Committee meeting – real-time
- Make most fields on proposal forms required – minimize loop-backs to previous steps
- Demonstrate and roll-out new system and process with various committees and groups

## APPENDIX B

### Obstacles

In the same manner, participants identified the following obstacles:

- Not receiving notification from Chancellor's office when proposals are approved – having to check back daily
- Confusing starting point to the curriculum approval process – steps unclear
- Process is daunting, overwhelming
- Process is complicated
- Proposals get to Instruction Office before all the pieces are in place – results in loop-backs and delays
- Proliferation of paper forms
- Process is complex and therefore difficult to repeat
- Confusion about what needs a signature and what needs to loop-back to a previous step
- Trouble with .PDF files on various computers
- Pressure – deadlines
- Board only meets to consider curriculum changes twice a year – results in pent-up demand
- Faculty members want to team – curriculum development is not their first priority – yet faculty “own” the curriculum – this dissonance shows in the process
- Process is not clear to faculty
- Some faculty not competent in using computers
- Not clear that there are several steps between curriculum being approved, and new courses appearing in the class schedule
- Burnout – faculty engagement is suffering
- Have to split large files when uploading to CurricUNET
- When submitted, confirmation is not clear
- General Ed packages not identical
- Buy-in is difficult – change can be stressful
- Faculty want to understand the “why” around the process
- Submitting a new program is a big task
- Sometimes it's like “pulling teeth” to talk with counterpart at other college