*Name of Committee:* **Instructional Materials Committee**

*Committee Mission:*

To serve as a deliberative and advisory body for instructional materials policies and procedures. The committee and its decisions reaffirm that instructors, as subject matter, disciplinary, and pedagogical experts, are to be given primacy in the selection of instructional materials.

*Committee Charge:*

1. Develop, examine, and make recommendations with respect to instructional materials policies and procedures.
2. Serve as a College repository of instructional materials expertise.
3. Communicate with interested parties about instructional materials developments, policies, procedures, and best practices.
4. Promote communication between instructional materials stakeholders, including the Campus bookstore, the Library, students, faculty, administrators, and staff.
5. Serve as a driver for the diffusion of innovations and to promote best practices with respect to instructional materials.

*Scope of Authority:*

This committee makes recommendations to the Academic Senate and the President of the College through College Council with respect to instructional materials policies and procedures. It serves as a repertory for the College community to address questions and concerns about instructional materials at Bakersfield College.

*Reports to:*

College Council and Academic Senate

*Communicates with:*

The College community.

*Membership:*

Co-chairs: VPAA or designee and Senate President or designee

SGA President or designee

Libraries representative

College liaison to the College Bookstore

4 at-large faculty representatives

*Meetings:*

once a month or as deemed necessary

Rationale:

Bakersfield College does not have an Instructional Materials Committee and we should.

Instructional materials have been taking on increasing prominence as technology has opened up possibilities beyond traditional textbooks and instructor-prepared reading lists. A large variety of online instructional materials are receiving substantial push and push-back and raising a plethora of issues Colleges haven’t addressed. Likewise, the soaring cost of traditional textbooks provided the impetus for new legislation and new efforts to lower the costs of instructional materials as well as to explore alternative instructional materials. An institutional structure to serve as a hub of expertise and deliberation about instructional materials policy, procedures, innovation, and exploration is overdue.

**Instructional materials policies and procedures**

Title 5 is the governing legislation with respect to instructional materials and textbooks, but applying Title 5 to actual practices is not simple. The State Chancellor’s Office has issued several legal opinions to deal with perplexing questions, notably L02-26 and L07-09: in both they strongly encourage local Boards of Trustees and faculty contracts to develop policies with respect to instructional materials issues. Our BoT and faculty contract have very little content on these matters, leaving administrators and departments and faculty with little guidance beyond the broadest questions.

One contemporaneous example is the use and standardization of clickers in the classroom. Title 5 has no directly applicable language and we have no local policies in effect. Technological innovations aren’t the only source of new issues unresolved by existing policy or procedure, of course: bookstore practices are another example.

**Repertory for information about instructional materials**

Faculty and their representatives have limited expertise about instructional materials policy and procedure. While we have some familiarity with best practices and emerging instructional materials technologies, we are hardly experts in either. Administrators and staff often also have limited and sometimes divergent understandings of the effectiveness, application, legalities, and instructional materials. An Instructional Materials Committee could serve as a repository of knowledge about these issues.

A recent example of the potential value of such expertise occurred this past fall. An interim administrator directed numerous departments to cease offering faculty-authored instructional materials which earned royalties for those departments. His understanding of Title 5 was at odds with State Chancellor legal opinions and with existing practices at BC. The directive was withdrawn only after substantial effort was expended. A standing committee offers the opportunity for institutional understanding of instructional materials which could have prevented the issues from arising.

**A driver for the promotion of best practices and diffusion of innovation in instructional materials**

Instructional materials are increasingly under scrutiny, both because of rapid technical advance and because of steep increases in the cost of textbooks. Bakersfield College doesn’t have a forum to deliberate about, much less to involve the College community in discussion about instructional materials matters. An institutional structure to examine and drive adoption of technical innovations and to promote best practices could serve our students well.

Three contemporary examples are the OER legislation passed in the Fall of 2012, the explosion of interest in MOOCs, and the building interest in learning objects by the ASCCC. In all 3 instances, Bakersfield College lags: in all 3 instances we should be at the forefront of deliberation and perhaps adoption.

**Institutional Structure Thoughts**

Instructional Materials Committees are still rare and Bakersfield College could lead the way here. The Curriculum Committees of Academic Senates appear to have the lion’s share of existing responsibility in this area, but many Colleges have recognized that their existing workloads call for shifting instructional materials responsibilities out of their purview. Many Colleges have separate Instructional Technology Committees or Educational Technology Committees or, in our case, an Information Services and Instructional Technology Committee.

These solutions conceptualize technical advances in instructional materials as requiring consideration, policies, procedures, and attention separate from existing instructional materials. They also lump together 2 rather different concerns: a College’s technical/communication/software infrastructure and a College’s use of instructional materials. Several Colleges appear to be moving toward a different model, one which regroups institutional structures around instructional materials and technical infrastructure. Mt. San Jacinto College, for example, has a Curriculum Committee, an Educational Technology Committee, and a separate Information, Communication, and Technology Committee.