



OFFICIAL COLLEGE POLICY

Program Management Policy

Division or Sector: Academic

Responsibility: Academic Dean

Reviewed by the Vanier community: 12 May 2017

Recommended by Academic Council: 26 May 2017

Approved by the Board of Directors: 13 June 2017

Date of next review: 13 June 2018

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1 POLICY STATEMENT

Education at Vanier College is viewed as a transformative process that leads to the personal and professional self-realization of all students as engaged citizens of the world. Well-developed programs play an essential role in supporting students as they reach their full potential.

The College aims to ensure the quality of its programs through an ongoing program improvement approach that allows programs, departments, teachers, and other members of the Vanier community involved in program activities to collaborate in order to respond to opportunities and changes in a timely manner, while supporting the mission, vision, and values of the institution.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to favour an ongoing improvement approach over the model of in-depth, comprehensive program evaluations. More specifically, this can be achieved by:

- enabling program committees, in collaboration with departments, to take appropriate actions that ensure the quality of the program by focusing on particular aspects where change is needed;
- allowing programs to respond to internal and external changes in a timely manner;
- fostering collaborative approaches between teachers and other members of the Vanier community involved in the life and evolution of programs;
- providing a framework for the continuous improvement of programs that covers all aspects of program management;
- clarifying roles and responsibilities;
- simplifying procedures.

3 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to programs, departments, teachers, and other members of the Vanier College community who are involved in any aspect of the life and evolution of a program.

The policy covers all stages of the program management process for day programs leading to a Diploma of College Studies (DCS¹).

¹ A DCS is also known as a DEC (*Diplôme d'études collégiales*).

The policy and its associated procedures are carried out within the provisions set by the government and other external bodies in documents such as the following:

- College Education Regulations (*Règlement sur le régime des études collégiales*);
- General and Vocational Colleges Act (*Loi sur les collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel*);
- *Loi sur la Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*;
- Collective agreement between *La Fédération nationale des enseignantes et enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ)* and *Le Comité patronal de négociation des collèges (CPNC)*;
- Collective agreement between *La Fédération du personnel professionnel des collèges (FPPC-CSQ)* and *Le Comité patronal de négociation des collèges (CPNC)*;
- Collective agreement between *La Fédération du personnel de soutien de l'enseignement supérieur, au nom des syndicats du personnel de soutien des collèges (FPSES-CSQ)* and *Le Comité patronal de négociation des collèges (CPNC)*.

This policy and its associated procedures replace the Program Evaluation Policy (Policy Number: 7210-24) and any related procedures adopted prior to the Program Management Policy.

4 ONGOING PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

4.1 General Approach

The policy approaches program management as a cyclical, iterative process through which incremental, ongoing actions lead to continuous and gradual changes, ensuring the quality of the program. This avoids the need for regularly scheduled, in-depth comprehensive evaluations.

Programs have the possibility to determine their own life cycle within the constraints and regulations established by the Ministry. By following the ongoing improvement approach, program committees have the latitude to set targets for maintaining or improving the quality of the program that can be implemented within one single academic year or across several academic years. As such, they address the following:

- program coherence;
- program relevance;
- program effectiveness;
- program governance;
- teaching methods or student support;
- human, material or financial resources.

Regardless of the time required for their completion, program improvement initiatives should go through the main phases which define the movement of the improvement cycle:

- development;
- implementation;
- and evaluation.

The procedures for ongoing program improvement associated with this policy should be consulted for additional information.

4.2 Exceptions

All programs are expected to follow the ongoing improvement approach. Only in exceptional circumstances will the targets need to move away from incremental actions and require more resources from the College. In such circumstances, the targets will require a relatively longer and deeper focus, expanding the normal improvement cycle at certain phases and, as a result, lengthening the process.

Such exceptional circumstances are briefly described below. The procedures associated with these special cases should be consulted for additional information.

New Program

The following are conditions that can trigger the development of a new program at Vanier:

- a need for a new option or profile within an existing program;
- the opportunity to offer a program new to Vanier but offered elsewhere in the college network;
- a new program that is created by the Ministry.

Ministerial Revision

A Ministry mandated program update requires a lengthy program revision, which includes a thorough review of the current program and the development of a new program on the basis of the ministerial *devis*.

In such cases, the length of the implementation phase corresponds to the length of the program, as follows:

- 2 years for pre-university programs, starting with the registration of the first cohort of students in the new program or profile;
- 3 years for career and technical programs, starting with the registration of the first cohort of students in the new program or profile.

Internal Evaluation and Revision

In exceptional circumstances, programs will undergo an in-depth evaluation. A need can be triggered by various factors, such as external accreditation standards or an unexpected, alarming change in enrolment, success or graduation rates.

An in-depth internal evaluation can also trigger the need for a program revision, in which case the revision will follow the same improvement cycle as for a ministerial revision as described above.

5 COMPOSITION OF PROGRAM COMMITTEES

Program committees should minimally include the following members:

- At least one teacher from each program-specific discipline. In programs with a main discipline, the number of teachers representing this discipline should form the majority of voting members;
- At least one teacher representing General Education.

Program committees may also decide to invite to their meetings other personnel such as academic advisors, laboratory technicians, representatives from Continuing Education, Student Services, the Vanier College Student Association, the program's advisory board, or any other relevant body.

The coordinator of the program committee is a teacher elected by all voting members of the program committee.

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is a distribution of roles and responsibilities of those involved in the ongoing improvement and management of programs:

Program Committee²

- Ensures the quality and pedagogical harmonization of the program, the integration of learning and interdisciplinary consistency.
- Defines its internal regulations and forms such committees as are necessary.
- Participates in the development, implementation and evaluation of the program.
- Establishes program improvement targets.

² For details regarding the mandate of a program committee, refer to the collective agreement between *La Fédération nationale des enseignantes et enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ)* and *Le Comité patronal de négociation des collèges (CPNC)*.

- Develops program materials in collaboration with its departments (e.g., exit profile, program comprehensive assessment, program grid, frameworks for program specific courses).
- Recommends the program grid and exit profile to the College.
- Approves the program comprehensive assessment.
- Reviews frameworks for program specific courses in collaboration with its departments.
- Submits the program the program work plan and year-end report to the College.

Program Committee Coordinator³

- Holds and facilitates meetings.
- Ensures that meetings are held on a regular basis.
- Follows up on work performed by the committee and subcommittees.
- Maintains the communications required to fulfill the program committee's mandate, with the College and departments, and other bodies, individuals or groups outside the program, including representatives of General Education.
- Produces and submits the program work plan and year-end report to the College.

Department

- Appoints representatives of its discipline or disciplines to relevant program committees.
- For General Education departments, appoints representatives on the General Education Committee.
- Through its representatives, provides expertise on its discipline or disciplines to program committees and the General Education Committee.
- Is responsible for pedagogical matters within its discipline or disciplines.
- Through its representatives, recommends, when relevant, program materials (e.g., exit profile, program comprehensive assessment, program grid, program course frameworks) to program committees and the General Education Committee.
- Develops and approves, in collaboration with the program committee, all program specific course frameworks.
- For General Education departments, develops and approves all course frameworks specific to its discipline.

³ For a list of program committee coordinator activities, refer to the collective agreement between *La Fédération nationale des enseignantes et enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ)* and *Le Comité patronal de négociation des collègues (CPNC)*.

General Education Committee

- Addresses concerns and challenges specific to General Education in relation to programs.
- Represents General Education in program committees.
- Helps other program committee members to understand the objectives and standards of General Education disciplines and their role in programs and college education.
- Supports programs in setting General Education related priorities and establishing program improvement targets.
- Advises programs on how to promote General Education.
- Participates in the ongoing improvement of programs.
- Recommends the Committee's work plan and year-end report to the General Studies Curriculum Committee, which then submits them to the College.

General Education Committee Coordinator

- Holds and facilitates meetings.
- Ensures that meetings are held on a regular basis.
- Follows up on work performed by the committee.
- Maintains the communications required to fulfill the committee's mandate, with the College, departments and programs.
- Produces a work plan and year-end report.

Academic Dean's Office

- Is responsible for the quality of programs, as per Ministry mandate.
- May initiate a review of any measure adopted at the program committee level.
- Establishes the guidelines for the program work plan and year-end report (e.g., template, deadlines).
- On the basis of consultation with program committee coordinators and evaluation of priorities, allocates available resources to programs and departments for the realization of improvement activities.
- Keeps a record of program improvement activities.
- Maintains the program information system.
- Submits to Academic Council an annual college-wide report of program improvement activities for all programs.
- Makes a final decision in resolving disagreements regarding the allocation of disciplines within programs.
- Establishes program admission criteria, in collaboration with programs and departments.
- Approves exit profiles recommended by Academic Council.
- Approves the procedures associated with the Program Management Policy.
- Approves any revisions to the procedures associated with the Program Management Policy.
- May initiate revisions to the Program Management Policy and its associated procedures.

- Oversees the revision and implementation process of the Program Management Policy and its associated procedures.

Faculty Dean

- Ensures that program management is conducted in agreement with the policies of the College and in alignment with the College's Strategic Plan.
- Provides guidance to program committees and representatives of General Education in the establishment of improvement targets and the development, implementation and evaluation of appropriate measures and of program materials (e.g., exit profile, program comprehensive assessment, program grid, course frameworks).
- Approves the program work plans and year-end reports.
- Provides adequate support and resources to programs in their program improvement initiatives.
- Oversees and assesses the work of program committees under their responsibility.
- Attends program committee meetings when necessary.

Pedagogical Counsellor

- Supports programs and departments in all aspects of program management.
- Provides expertise and accompanies the reflection process in the development, implementation and evaluation of appropriate measures and of program materials (e.g., exit profile, program comprehensive assessment, program grid, course frameworks).
- Obtains, analyzes, and provides programs with data required for program improvement (e.g., program dashboards, student success data).
- Maintains the recordkeeping for the programs under their responsibility.
- Attends program committee meetings when necessary.

Academic Advisor

- Provides advice to programs regarding course loads, organization, and any other relevant information they have from working with students (e.g., feasible course load per semester in a new program grid).

Laboratory Technician

- Provides advice to programs regarding facilities, materials, lab activities, and any other relevant information they have from working with students.

Academic Council

- Recommends exit profiles to the Academic Dean's Office.
- Recommends program grids to the Board of Directors.
- Recommends the Program Management Policy to the Board of Directors.
- Recommends revisions to the Program Management Policy to the Board of Directors.

- Recommends revisions to procedures related to the Program Management Policy to the Academic Dean's Office.
- Reviews the annual report issued by the Academic Dean's Office on the ongoing program improvement activities for all programs.

Board of Directors

- Approves program grids.
- Approves the Program Management Policy.
- Approves any revisions to the Program Management Policy.

7 ALLOCATION OF CONTRIBUTING DISCIPLINES WITHIN PROGRAMS

In the case of the development of a new program, the Academic Dean's Office provides all departments wishing to contribute to the program the opportunity to present their reasons for doing so.

In the case of a ministerial revision or internal revision, the Academic Dean's Office provides the program committee with an opportunity to justify any proposed changes to the contribution or level of involvement of a given discipline in the program.

If a dispute arises regarding the allocation of contributing disciplines, the Academic Dean resolves the dispute in a fair and timely manner. The Academic Dean makes the final decision in resolving the dispute and provides a rationale in writing.

The procedures on the allocation of disciplines within programs should be consulted for additional information.

8 PLANNING FOR AND REPORTING ON PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

8.1 Planning for Program Improvement Activities

Planning for program improvement activities requires coordination at the program and college levels.

At the program level, each program committee coordinator prepares and submits an annual program work plan and year-end report.

At the college level, the Academic Dean's Office allocates available resources to programs and departments for the realization of improvement activities. This process takes into consideration available financial, material, and human resources; the College's Strategic Plan; program year-end reports from the previous academic year; program improvement targets for the upcoming

academic year; former evaluation reports; program dashboards and any other data deemed necessary for program improvement planning.

8.2 Reporting on Program Improvement Activities

The Academic Dean's Office provides each program committee coordinator with guidelines and a template for completing the program work plan and year-end report.

The work plan describes the program committee's plan for improving the program in the upcoming academic year. The annual report describes the program committee's improvement progress throughout the academic year.

The Academic Dean's Office synthesizes the improvement activities of all programs in an annual college-wide work plan and report.

9 PROGRAM INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Academic Dean's Office collects and stores documents and data essential for making informed decisions regarding the ongoing improvement of programs.

A major component of the Program Information System is the program portfolio. The portfolio provides current information on a given program and traces program history and trends over time. The program portfolio includes all information inherent to a program's life, such as:

- program documents (e.g., exit profiles, program grids, course frameworks);
- program data (e.g., dashboards, surveys);
- program reports (e.g., work plans, year-end reports);
- decisions regarding program improvement activities.

10 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The Academic Dean's Office will ensure the implementation, application, and review of this policy.

The policy revision process will be initiated by the Academic Dean's Office, or may be triggered by a recommendation from Academic Council.

Once approved by the Board of Directors, the policy will be distributed to all teachers and other members of the Vanier community to whom the policy is applicable. The policy will also be made available on the Vanier College website. In addition, the policy will be submitted to the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*. Any subsequent revisions to the policy approved by the Board of Directors will be similarly disseminated.

10.1 Scheduled Policy Revisions

The Academic Dean's Office will review this policy after the first year of its implementation, and afterwards, every five years.

10.2 Unscheduled Policy Revisions

Unscheduled revisions to this policy may be initiated in response to the following factors:

- External requirements, such as, but not limited to:
 - changes in the law
 - changes in collective agreements
 - requests or recommendations from the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*
- Internal requirements, such as, but not limited to:
 - changes in related policies or procedures
 - results of policy monitoring
 - results of an evaluation of the policy.

10.3 Ongoing Policy Monitoring

The policy will also be monitored on an ongoing basis, based on the following:

- formal and informal feedback from teachers and other members of the Vanier community who have engaged in program improvement activities;
- reviews by the Academic Dean's Office of the results of program improvement activities (e.g., work plans, annual reports).

The Academic Dean's Office, or a recommendation from Academic Council, may initiate an unscheduled policy revision based on the results of ongoing policy monitoring.

11 HISTORY OF POLICY REVISION

This policy was first implemented on June 13, 2017.

12 ADDITIONAL CONTACT

For any questions regarding this policy or its associated procedures, please contact the Academic Dean's Office.

13 DEFINITIONS

ACADEMIC DEAN'S OFFICE	An administrative unit that includes all academic managers and staff who act under the authority of the Academic Dean.
COMMISSION D'ÉVALUATION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT COLLÉGIAL	An independent and public organization responsible for quality assurance, whose mandate is to assess, for each college, the quality of their 1) program implementation, 2) institutional policies on evaluation of learning and their application, and 3) institutional policies on program evaluation and implementation.
CONTRIBUTING DISCIPLINE	A discipline that contributes to a program by teaching one, or a minority, of the program's courses.
DCS	Diploma of College Studies, also known as DEC (<i>Diplôme d'études collégiales</i>).
DEPARTMENT	A unit composed of teachers within a faculty of the College that is devoted to one or particular academic disciplines. The department is officially established as an administrative unit by the College after consultation with Academic Council. Its functions can be academically driven, such as managing the teaching of its discipline, or administrative, such as managing the department's budget.
DISCIPLINE	A field of study or branch of knowledge within a department or program that is recognized by the Ministry.
EXIT PROFILE	An exit profile is a coherent, unified expression of the learning students have mastered upon successful completion of their program and of the College's vision of the program's local colour.
GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE	An official committee consisting of teachers from the four General Education disciplines (English, French, Humanities, and Physical Education).
IMPROVEMENT TARGET	Broader than an objective, an improvement target is the object of focus upon which it is agreed to take action for improvement of a given program.

MAIN DISCIPLINE	A discipline that is central to the program and whose faculty members teach a majority of the courses in the program.
MINISTERIAL DEVIS	The program description created by the Ministry. It contains the goals and general aims of the program, along with the General Education and program-specific objectives and standards.
MINISTRY	The Québec ministry of higher education.
ONGOING PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT	A cyclical and iterative process that allows program committees to focus on aspects that they deem important, and take simple and concrete actions that lead to incremental changes towards improving their program.
POLICY FRAMEWORK	A set of documents that make up the policy, such as the policy document itself and its associated procedures.
PROGRAM	An integrated set of learning activities organized into courses of various disciplines, including General Education, that together help students develop the competencies set by the Ministry to obtain their Diploma of College Studies.
PROGRAM APPROACH	The notion that a program is an organic whole composed of interconnected courses from various disciplines, including General Education.
PROGRAM COMMITTEE	An official group consisting of faculty teaching in the program's disciplines and of members from other categories of employment, who have been selected to ensure the program's academic quality.
PROGRAM COMMITTEE COORDINATOR	A member of the program committee who has been elected to facilitate the activities of the committee and act as liaison between the College and the committee.
PROGRAM DASHBOARD	An interactive and electronic document which assembles data on a given Vanier program from a variety of external and internal databases and communicates it visually.

PROGRAM GRID	A document that lists by semester the sequence of all the courses in a given program, their competencies, and ponderation.
THE COLLEGE	Vanier College.
WORK PLAN	An annual proposal submitted by the program committee to the faculty dean, describing its plan for improving the program in the upcoming academic year.
YEAR-END REPORT	An annual report submitted by the program committee to the faculty dean, describing the program's improvement progress throughout the preceding academic year.

14 RELATED PROCEDURES

A list of procedures associated with this policy is available on the Vanier College website.

15 RELATED POLICIES

In the application of this policy, certain aspects of ongoing program improvement are governed by relevant College bylaws and policies, as well as collective agreements.

A list of College bylaws and policies associated with this policy is available on the Vanier College website.

16 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Additional documents (e.g., guidelines, templates) related to this policy are available on the Vanier College website and through the Academic Dean's Office.

These documents should be consulted for additional information.