

Overall Criteria Guide for A-G Course Approval

1. Course Description

CRITERIA	SUGGESTIONS/EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE
1.1. Provides a brief description of the course.	1.1. A description similar to one found in a school's course catalog for administrators, parents, and students.
1.2. Focuses primarily on the course content.	1.2. A short paragraph describing the course content rather than instructional strategies, assessments, or rationale. It includes what is done in the course, how it is done, and the expected results. A list is insufficient.

2. Textbooks/Supplemental Materials

CRITERIA	SUGGESTIONS/EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE
2.1. Includes a list of Primary and Secondary Texts. (List additional books by clicking "Additional textbooks" on the course submission form.)	2.1. A list of core textbooks (and literature when applicable), including the edition, publication date, publisher, and author(s). List includes if and when each text is read entirely or as an excerpt. For online texts or non-standard material, include the title of the material (or webpage) and the URL.
2.2. Includes a list describing the key Supplemental Instructional Materials utilized throughout the course.	2.2. Following the textbooks is a list of key resource materials (e.g., supplemental readings, articles, websites, technology/multimedia). It is indicated if and when each material is used in part or in entirety. The Supplemental Materials list also includes only the major URLs utilized during the period of instruction.
2.3. All materials support the delivery of the curriculum.	2.3. All texts/materials are integrated into the outline, clearly demonstrating how and why they are utilized in the course.

NOTE: Visual and Performing Arts, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate courses do not require textbooks.

3. Course Purpose

CRITERIA	SUGGESTIONS/EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE
3.1. Briefly explains course-wide objectives (critical learning goals) and overall student outcomes (mastery levels of content and skills).	3.1. A clear summary of the concepts students learn/understand and the skills they accomplish throughout the course. The level of rigor is demonstrated with explanations of how each skill applies to a concept. Language uses active verbs (e.g., "Students <u>analyze</u> " instead of "Students <u>will be able to analyze</u> ").

4. Course Outline

CRITERIA	SUGGESTIONS/EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE
4.1. Based on a solid academic foundation. Demonstrates depth and appropriate breadth of content.	4.1. Outline units emphasize the core knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, including concepts, theory, and texts. Provides clear evidence of the level of rigor and development of essential analytical and critical thinking skills.
4.2. Provides adequate detail about the content, outlining major themes, topics and sub-topics. Demonstrates a sequence of teaching and learning experiences that increases in depth and complexity over time.	4.2. Includes headings for all units of study that clearly explain the teaching and learning experiences that will equip students to develop and demonstrate all desired understandings to accomplish key assignments. A mere listing of topics in outline form (e.g., textbook table of contents or California State Standards) is insufficient.
4.3. Includes specific detail about the range and types of work the students analyze, create, and discuss.	4.3. Provides examples of how texts/materials are incorporated for teaching and how/why they are used by students in the course. Key assignments may be mentioned, never fully explained, in this section.
4.4. Connections between content with curricular activities and instructional strategies are apparent.	4.4. Key activities and instructional strategies (e.g., speakers, fieldtrips, internships) directly support student learning experiences and objectives in the outline.
4.5. For CTE or career-integrated courses, demonstrates how content from both areas of study contribute to the student achievement of learning outcomes.	4.5. Explains how topics correspond to “a-g” and career-related content, deepening the understanding of both areas. Each unit explains the concepts and methods students use to make sense of and identify the real-world applicability of academic concepts.

5. Key Assignments

CRITERIA	SUGGESTIONS/EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE
5.1. Detailed descriptions of all key assignments.	5.1. Includes key learning activities and projects (e.g., writing assignments) that students are required to complete. At the top is a list of key reoccurring homework and classroom assignments (e.g., worksheets, reading texts, journal, etc). Exams or assessments are not included here.
5.2. Each assignment supports and/or reinforces the corresponding unit topic and goals.	5.2. Assignments clearly link to and address topics of instruction mentioned in the outline. They are organized under corresponding unit headings.
5.3. Demonstrates the knowledge and skills that are acquired in detail.	5.3. All activities specify what the students do and what they turn in. For example, presentations state how the students create their work and how they are expected to make their presentations. Instructions given to students regarding the execution of assignments (formatting, timeliness, etc.) are unnecessary. Language uses active verbs (e.g, “Students <u>analyze</u> ” instead of “Students <u>will be able to analyze</u> ”).
5.4. When applicable, the culminating project demonstrates a “learning progression” continuum.	5.4. The culminating project clearly explains all parameters involved with the work students are expected to accomplish. It demonstrates how this work requires a high-level of student proficiency of the overall course material.

NOTE: “a”- History/Social Science, “b”- English, and “d”- Laboratory Science courses require the completion of an additional section(s) for activities. Please refer to

the Subject Specific Templates for further details.

6. Instructional Methods and/or Strategies

CRITERIA	SUGGESTIONS/EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE
6.1. Directly supports and/or reinforces the primary focus and goals of each unit.	6.1. Explains the “delivery systems” for teaching students to understand important concepts and skills. Each method or strategy clearly supports topics in the outline and prepares students for the key assignments and assessments of each unit.
6.2. Indicates how the chosen methods and/or strategies support the curriculum.	6.2. Describes in detail how the chosen types of teaching strategies (e.g., direct instruction, visiting speaker, project-based learning, service-learning, internships) supplement the instructional materials (e.g., texts, source documents, videos) and assessment methods (e.g., tests, essays, group projects, portfolios). Explains which strategies are designed for the entire class, small groups, and individual students.
6.3. For CTE or career-integrated courses, demonstrates the strategies utilized for deepening the understanding of theoretical concepts and achieving learning outcomes.	6.3. Explains strategies utilized to support both areas of instruction. Usually explains the experiential strategies intentionally designed to motivate, challenge, and support students in making their own academic connections.

7. Assessments Including Methods and/or Tools

CRITERIA	SUGGESTIONS/EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE
7.1. Demonstrates the assessment of overall student learning.	7.1. Explains the intent of each method and how it assesses the evidence of competency of student outcomes (e.g., acquired knowledge, skills, vocabulary) for each unit. All assessment methods and/or tools demonstrate direct support and/or reinforcement of each unit’s the primary topics, goals, and purpose.
7.2. For CTE or career-integrated courses, the demonstration of the assessment of real-world connections and learning skills are also included.	7.2. Explains how methods assess the experiential learning opportunities designed with real-world applications, which challenge students to utilize deep thought, investigation, communication, and teamwork.