

**PALO ALTO COLLEGE  
COLLEGE PROCEDURE**

Procedure Number:	I 4.0
Procedure Title:	High Challenge Course Evaluations and Improvement Strategy Implementations
Relevant Board Policy:	N/A
Relevant SACSCOC Policy:	
Originating Unit:	Dean of Academic Success – Arts and Sciences
Maintenance Unit:	Vice President of Academic Success

I. Purpose: To outline the process by which improvement strategies are implemented and assessed for courses identified as High Challenge. High Challenge Courses are defined as those within the fall or spring semesters with an enrollment greater than 100 and a Productive Grade Rate (PGR) of less than 70%. PGR is defined as the total number of A, B, and C grades in a section divided by that section's census date enrollment.

II. Procedure Statement:

- A. College grade distributions are provided by the district's Institutional Research and Effectiveness Services (IRES) and shared with the college's Institutional Research (IR) department. The data is presented in a High Challenge Course Report (HCCR). The HCCR is produced twice a year by IRES and distributed to the President, Vice President of Academic Success (VPAS), Academic Deans, Department Chairs, and Lead Instructors.
1. The preliminary Fall HCCR is produced in February following the Fall Semester; the final report in the following May.
  2. The preliminary Spring HCCR is produced in June following the Spring Semester; the final report is produced the following October.
- B. In mid-September, the VPAS, Deans, Chairs, Lead Instructors, and appropriate faculty meet to review the previous year's HRCRs, existing sectional data, and the existing action plans. Existing action plans are revised if deemed necessary and new action plans are developed for any new High Challenge Courses. All courses on the HCCR in the last five years will develop/maintain an action plan for improvement.
- C. In the last week of September, the Chairs/Lead Instructors meet with the appropriate faculty to plan the spring implementation of the new/revised action plans. The High Challenge Course Action Plan forms are completed at this time and distributed to the VPAS, Dean, Chair/Lead Instructor and faculty members. Action plans for identified High Challenge Courses are

submitted with departmental Unit Plans the following spring semester and evaluated the subsequent year.

- D. After distribution of the February HCCR the VPAS, Dean, Chairs, and Lead Instructors will meet to review the February HCCR and the previous year's HCCR. Existing action plans are revised if deemed necessary and new action plans are created for new High Challenge Courses. High Challenge Course Action Plan forms are completed and distributed to the VPAS, Dean, Chairs, Lead Instructors, and faculty members. Action plans for identified High Challenge Courses are submitted with departmental Unit Plans during the current semester and evaluated the subsequent year.
  
- E. Chairs and Lead Instructors will hold a follow-up meeting within two weeks with appropriate faculty to plan the implementation of these action plans for the Fall Semester.
  
- F. In addition to discipline specific committees organized to address High Challenge Courses, a cross-discipline High Challenge Course Committee cochaired by the Dean of Academic Success and the Faculty Senate President will meet twice in both the fall and spring terms to develop and maintain a cross discipline action plan for High Challenge Courses. The purpose of the cross-discipline action plan is to address best practices in teaching High Challenge Courses as well as address student support strategies and professional growth opportunities for faculty.

Attachment:

High Challenge Course  
Action Plan (page 3 of 3 of  
this procedure)

Date Created: February 1, 2016

Date Approved: November 3, 2020

Approved:

(signed: Beth Tanner)

Vice President of Academic Success

(signed: Dr. Robert Garza)

President

**High Challenge Course Action  
Plan**

Course Name & Number: \_\_\_\_\_

History of Productive Grade Rate (PGR) & Retention Averages for Course

<i>Semester/Year</i>	<i>PGR</i>	<i>Retention (within Semester)</i>

Please attach sectional PGR and retention data to this form.

Disaggregated by student type:

Student Type	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester
Transfer					
Continuing					
FTIC					
Dual Credit					

Disaggregated by instructional method:

Inst Method	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester	PGR/Semester
Face-to-face					
Fully Online					
Hybrid					

Semester of Implementation: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Assessment of Previous Semester's Action Plan:

2. Proposed Action Plan:

(For example, this could include professional development, curricular changes, pedagogical changes, student academic support changes, etc.)

3. Rationale for Plan:

(Include how this plan interfaces with any previous action plans for this course.)

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Chair

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Date

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Lead Faculty

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Date