

**STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES
ACADEMIC, STUDENT AFFAIRS, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE
JULY 19-20, 2006**

TITLE: PROPOSED REVISION TO SECTION 5.1.0.1 OF THE VCCS POLICY MANUAL ON COMPUTER COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS (III.A.2.a, Academic, Student Affairs, and Workforce Development Committee)

BACKGROUND:

At its March 2006 meeting, the VCCS Academic and Student Affairs Council (ASAC) approved adoption of the seven goal areas that encompass a competency-based model of general education proposed by the VCCS Task Force on General Education and Table 5.1. The seven goal areas, student learning outcomes, and competency-based model were subsequently approved by the Advisory Council of Presidents in April 2006 and the State Board for Community Colleges in May 2006. Embedded in the description of the Information Literacy goal area was a Task Force recommendation to remove the computer competency requirements in Section 5.1.0.1 of the VCCS Policy Manual with adoption of the competency-based model. This recommendation is now proceeding through the governance process as a proposed policy change, having been approved by the Academic and Student Affairs Council at its May 2006 meeting, and by the Advisory Council of Presidents at its June 2006 meeting.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the State Board for Community Colleges approve the removal of Section 5.1.0.1 *Computer Competency Requirements* of the VCCS Policy Manual.

PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED BY:

- ✓ VCCS Task Force on General Education/Table 5.1
- ✓ Academic and Student Affairs Council (approved May 2006)
- ✓ Advisory Council of Presidents (approved June 2006)

RATIONALE:

In increasing numbers, students are entering community colleges with specific computer skills acquired formally through the K-12 curriculum or informally through exposure to computers at home or in the workplace. In addition, the use of technology in higher education as a learning tool in a variety of disciplines has become common practice in the

years since the Computer Competency Requirements were introduced into VCCS policy in September 1997. While the teaching of isolated computer skills (e.g. word processing, presentations, spreadsheets, email) is important to student success, reinforcement and enhancement of those skills in context is even more critical to academic success at the collegiate level. The newly adopted VCCS General Education Goal integrates computer skills with problem-solving and critical thinking skills in content or discipline areas by focusing on the broader concept of information literacy rather than the narrowly defined computer competencies.

New General Education Goal Area

(approved by the State Board for Community Colleges in May 2006)

4. Information Literacy

A person who is competent in information literacy recognizes when information is needed and has the ability to locate, evaluate, and use it effectively. (adapted from the American Library Association definition)

Degree graduates will demonstrate the ability to

- 4.1 determine the nature and extent of the information needed;
- 4.2 access needed information effectively and efficiently;
- 4.3 evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base;
- 4.4 use information effectively, individually or as a member of a group, to accomplish a specific purpose; and
- 4.5 understand many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally.

Current Policy Language

5.1.0.1 Computer Competency Requirements (SB)

The Virginia Community College System affirms that all students should experience a teaching-learning environment that promotes computer and information literacy in accessing electronic resources and applying knowledge through technology. The VCCS endorses the principle of computer competency for all students intent on completing a curriculum in excess of 45 semester credits. Students must demonstrate proficiency in specific computer competencies defined within programs and by individual colleges.

Each college must ensure that a computer-competent student will be able to:

- demonstrate a working knowledge of computing concepts, components, and operations to accomplish educational and career tasks;
- use appropriate components of an integrated productivity software package involving word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, and/or communication applications;

- access, retrieve, assess, and apply networked information resources, e.g., on-line catalog, virtual libraries, and the Internet; and use telecommunication software, e.g., electronic mail, listservs, bulletin boards, and/or newsgroups, to communicate with faculty, students, and information providers.

RESOURCE PERSONS:

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