

**TITLE: PROPOSED CHANGE TO *POLICY MANUAL SECTION 5.1.2. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (SB)* (Academic, Student Affairs, and Workforce Development Committee, Action Item III.A.2.c)**

**BACKGROUND:**

Given the increased pressure on institutions of higher education to get more degrees into the economy, the VCCS is making a concentrated effort to identify and award General Education Certificates to eligible transfer and dual enrollment students. The VCCS views this initiative as a vehicle to help in meeting current and future demands for a more educated, credentialed workforce. This is also a strategy to acknowledge a student's success in reaching the "half way mark" in completing his/her associate degree. Hopefully, this will help to increase student retention, graduation, and transfer rates. As a part of this discussion, at the November 2009 ASAC meeting, a revision to VCCS policy was approved to grant colleges authority to award the General Education Certificate to students without the student having to apply for graduation in this program as is currently required. ACOP approved the revision at its December 2009 meeting.

5.1.2 Graduation Requirements (SB)

Each college shall ensure that students who receive associate degrees, diplomas, certificates or career studies certificates have completed the established graduation requirements.

To be eligible for graduation with an associate degree, diploma, certificate, or career studies certificate from a Virginia community college, students must:

- a. Fulfill all of the course and credit-hour requirements of the curriculum with at least 25% of credit semester hours acquired at the college granting the award;
- b. Be certified by an appropriate college official for graduation;
- c. Earn a grade point average of at least 2.0 in all studies attempted which are applicable toward graduation in their curricula;
- d. Meet any other competency requirements established by the local college;
- e. File an official application for graduation *which may be waived in the case of the General Education Certificate*; and
- f. Resolve all financial obligations to the college and return all library and college materials.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

It is recommended that The State Board for Community approve the above change to policy.

**RESOURCE PERSONS:**

Dr. Susan Wood, Vice Chancellor for Academic Services and Research, VCCS, [swood@vccs.edu](mailto:swood@vccs.edu), 804-819-4972

Ms. Jennifer D. Allman, Director of Student Services, VCCS, [jallman@vccs.edu](mailto:jallman@vccs.edu), 804-819-4971

*Approved January 21, 2010*

Dr. Donna Jovanovich, Director of Institutional Research, VCCS, [djovanovich@vccs.edu](mailto:djovanovich@vccs.edu), 804-819-4964