

Section 8

Planning, Accreditation, Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Reporting

8.0 Planning

8.0.0 Responsibilities (SB)

The Chancellor has responsibility for developing, implementing, and evaluating system-level planning initiatives. College presidents are responsible for maintaining comprehensive planning and evaluation processes at each college.

8.0.1 System-level Planning Process (C)

Periodically the Chancellor will initiate a system-wide planning process. It will involve college faculty, staff, administrators, and others external to the System. The process will be designed to: (1) review and revise the VCCS mission; (2) evaluate current initiatives; and (3) set system-level goals.

8.0.2 College Planning (C)

The planning and evaluation processes established at each college should reflect local and regional needs, meet accreditation requirements, and support system-level goals. Each president shall periodically submit updated copies of the college's master plan or equivalent planning documents to the Chancellor. In addition to other data and information, these plans and documents shall contain the college's major administrative and educational goals and a schedule for implementing them.

8.0.3 Feasibility Analysis For New Campuses (SB)

To initiate the state-level process for approval of new community college campuses, each college shall obtain approval from the State Board for Community Colleges for conducting a feasibility analysis. The stipulations for information that should be included in the analyses will be conveyed by the Chancellor to the presidents, but at a minimum will include: enrollment projections; impact on existing colleges and campuses of an additional campus; types of programs to be offered; availability and location of potential sites for the new campus; support from local entities; probable construction or lease costs and proposed methods of financing; possible environmental impact problems; and projected capacity and size.

After the feasibility analyses are submitted, the Chancellor will recommend to the State Board whether planning for these campuses should proceed. Upon approval by the State Board, the colleges will conduct and submit to the State Board for approval a Preplanning Study and an academic master plan.

8.0.4 Academic Master Plan for New Campuses (SB)

Each college shall develop an academic master plan for a new campus and submit it to the Chancellor and State Board for Community Colleges for approval. Upon approval by the State Board, the plan will be transmitted to the State Council of Higher Education.

The academic master plan shall describe fully the purpose of the new campus and the types, numbers, and special needs of the students who will be served by the campus. A description of proposed curricular programs shall be included in the plan and the time frame for initiating each program established. The time frame should span at least a three-year period and begin when the first programs are offered. The description should include the initial array of programs to be offered at the new campus, the relationship of these programs with the same or similar ones already offered at other campuses of the college, and any other programs that will be new to the college. The academic master plan shall also describe how the programs will use technology and other instructional innovations to enhance quality and to ensure that students achieve educational objectives. Student support services that complement the curricular programs of the new campus shall be fully described.

The academic master plan shall show evidence of partnerships with other educational providers, such as: copies of memoranda of understanding and articulation agreements signed by the community college president and appropriate four-year college and university presidents that assure educational opportunities and services appropriate for transfer students; and letters from presidents of the colleges and universities in the same geographical region supporting the academic plan for the new campus, stating their intention to share faculty and facilities, if appropriate, and pledging to work cooperatively to offer programs that are not unnecessarily duplicative, and that increase educational opportunities in the region.

8.1 Accreditation

8.1.0 General Requirements (C)

Each college in the VCCS shall follow the accreditation requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Each community college president shall provide the Chancellor with a schedule of all visits from an accreditation or approval committee, official, or agency. The president shall provide the Chancellor a copy of all reports and findings the community college receives from the accreditation or approval committee, official, or agency.

8.1.1 Response to Committee Reports (C)

The college's response to the visiting committee's recommendations shall be forwarded to the Chancellor when it is submitted to the accreditation or approval agency.

8.1.2 Procedure During Accreditation Visits (C)

The following procedures shall apply during accreditation visits:

- a. The Chancellor or the Chancellor's designated representative and the college president shall meet with the visitation committee at the beginning of the visit to describe the VCCS.
- b. When requested, a VCCS representative shall be available during the Committee's visit to provide assistance and to answer questions which may arise.

8.1.3 Accreditation Summary (SB)

The Chancellor shall be responsible for advising the State Board as to changes in the accreditation status of each college in the System.

8.2 Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Reporting (SB)

8.2.1 Responsibilities

8.2.1.0 Colleges

Each community college shall maintain a comprehensive planning and evaluation process to promote quality and to demonstrate institutional effectiveness. Colleges shall use a variety of methods to evaluate institutional effectiveness, and shall measure student achievement through outcomes assessment.

8.2.1.1 System Office

The staff of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Services and Research shall identify system-wide study needs, conduct system-wide institutional studies, and collaborate with college research staff or researchers from outside the System in the design and evaluation of studies.

8.3 Enrollment Reporting and Excluded Enrollments (SCHEV; SB)

VCCS policies shall conform to the enrollment reporting policies and procedures in the annually published SCHEV Reporting Guidelines.

8.3.0 Census Dates and Registration Periods (SB)

Enrollments reported for all credit classes shall be those recorded at the end of the census date for a given session.

The census date for a standard and non-standard term shall be the fifteenth percent (15%) of the calendar days in a session, which includes all instructional and exam days. If the census date falls on a weekend or holiday, then the census date shall be the next working day.

The last day to drop a class with a refund of tuition shall be the census date, or the fifteenth percent (15%) of the session for that class. The last day to register or to add a class may not be later than the census date; however, each college may establish an earlier date if desired.

The enrollment for those sessions with census dates occurring after the mid-term reporting date shall be reported at the end of the semester. The enrollment census date may be extended by community college administrators due to natural disasters, severe weather conditions, or other emergencies which cause the interruption of college operations. The colleges must maintain documents that detail the reasons for such interruption.

Copies of such documents shall be submitted by the college president(s) to the Chancellor.

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8.3.1 Reporting Calendar

In accordance with the SCHEV Reporting Guidelines, the official full-time equivalent student (FTES) enrollment data for the VCCS shall be reported at the end of each semester. For headcount reports only, October 10 shall be established as the last date for application of the census date guideline. Students registering for courses beginning after that date shall not be reflected in the fall term headcount enrollment reports, but shall be included in the FTES enrollment reports prepared at the end of the term.

8.3.2 Enrollment Records Management

Colleges shall develop and implement in-house enrollment records management procedures to assure that an audit trail for enrollment data and reports exists.

8.3.3 Reported and Excluded Enrollments

The headcount and full-time equivalent student (FTES) for all enrollments in credit instruction shall be reported. The following categories of enrollments, as indicated in the SCHEV Reporting Guidelines shall not be included in the official VCCS enrollment reports.

- a. Enrollments which have been withdrawn on or before the census date are not to be recorded in headcount or full-time equivalent student (FTES) totals.
- b. Enrollments in classes which have been cancelled.
- c. The headcount and FTES of students who audit credit courses shall not be included in VCCS official enrollment reports.

8.4 Statistical Reports (U.S. Department of Education (USDOE); SCHEV;(C)

A variety of statistical reports must be completed each year for the United States Department of Education IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System), SCHEV, and the System Office of the VCCS. The System Office shall serve as the distribution, coordination, and collection agency for all statistical reports required by these. The System Office shall maintain a file of all completed statistical reports contained in the Annual Reporting Schedule.

8.4.0 Statistical Reports Definition and Annual Reporting Schedule USDOE; SCHEV; (C)

Statistical reports are defined as those reports required by USDOE (IPEDS), SCHEV, and the System Office of the VCCS relating to student enrollment, faculty and personnel, facilities, and finances. A listing of these reports shall be published by the System Office in the Annual Reporting Schedule. The reporting year shall begin on July 1 of each year and conclude on June 30 of the following year.