

**Subject: Academic Quality Assurance**

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**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for course outlines, syllabi, general education assessment, general education requirements, curriculum and program oversight, Program Advisory Committees (PACs), and dual enrollment to ensure for academic quality.

**2. Policy**

All teaching faculty, deans and academic officers shall comply with the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) Policy Manual Sections 2.0.4, 5.0.2, 5.1, and 6.7, the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement (Standards 6.2c, 8.2a, 8.2b, 9.3, and 10.4) and the State Council of

Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education in meeting the following academic quality standards for all courses and programs regardless of delivery mode:

### **2.1. Course Outlines**

Discipline faculty shall develop Official Course Outlines in accordance with procedures contained in the *Curriculum Procedures Handbook*. Outlines shall include all required components and support at least one General Education Core Competency. Deans shall ensure compliance with academic quality standards and requirements.

### **2.2. Course Syllabi**

Prior to the start of each semester, faculty shall download a current syllabus for each course section they teach from Syllabus Builder and add their unique content in accordance with *TCC Syllabus Builder User's Guide* procedures. Faculty shall provide a copy of the syllabus to their deans and students no later than the first day of class. Any policies listed or implied in course syllabi shall be consistent with the policies of the college. If there is a conflict between a course syllabus and published college policies, the college policies supersede those listed in the syllabus. Deans shall direct the design and development of syllabi consistent with college policies and procedures, and assure that appropriate course syllabi are developed by each faculty member. Deans may specify additional required information to be included. Deans shall maintain copies of syllabi for one year after the end of the semester.

### **2.3. General Education Assessment**

All teaching faculty shall implement the General Education Assessment (GEA) as defined in the *GEA Plan*, published on the college intranet. Academic Affairs shall coordinate execution of the GEA. The Instruction Committee shall review annually the *GEA Plan* and recommend changes to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for approval (VP). The Office of Academic Affairs shall coordinate this assessment.

### **2.4. General Education Requirements**

The General Education Committee (GEC) shall consider new courses for inclusion as general education and approved transfer elective courses and perform periodic reviews to ensure continued satisfaction of required core competencies and transferability. The GEC shall base recommendations on SACSCOC Standard 9.3.

### **2.5. Curriculum and Program Oversight**

Faculty shall ensure academic programs are coherent, current and aligned with the college mission and goals and workforce/transfer demands. Faculty shall

ensure programs contain essential curricular components, such as general education coursework, and that content and pedagogy are appropriate.

Faculty shall develop student learning outcomes for each program, determine how and when to assess the outcomes, review findings, and determine and implement changes needed to foster student learning. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) shall coordinate this assessment.

The faculty responsible for these elements shall be qualified in fields appropriate to the curricular content and award level of the academic program.

## 2.6. Program Advisory Committees

Deans shall oversee or delegate to program leads the formation and operation of Program Advisory Committees (PACs) composed of community representatives for all career and technical and transfer programs, unless stackable into another program at the college. In accordance with procedures contained in the *PAC Handbook*, PAC facilitators shall ensure PACs meet at least once and post membership rosters and reports documenting completion of PAC objectives in i-INCURR annually.

## 2.7 Dual Enrollment

Deans shall ensure courses and curricula offered in high schools are of the same quality and rigor as the courses offered on campus, and that students enrolled in dual enrollment courses are held to the same standards of placement and achievement as students in campus-based courses.

## 3. Responsibilities

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer (“Vice President”) shall develop and maintain procedures that are consistent with this policy and that comply with the policies and principles of the VCCS, SACSCOC, and SCHEV. The Vice President for Information Technology shall be responsible for developing and maintaining technology applications in support of this policy.

## 4. Procedures

Procedures to implement the academic quality assurance policy are detailed in the *Curriculum Procedures Handbook*, which is annually reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, the *TCC Syllabus Builder User’s Guide*, and the *PAC Handbook*, each published in i-INCURR; and the *GEA Plan*, published on the college intranet. The Office of Academic Affairs shall ensure these documents are current.

## 5. Definitions

**Course Outline.** The course outline is a concise, general purpose document used by all faculty teaching a given course as a common basis for describing the major elements

of the course regardless of who teaches the course (i.e., full-time or part-time faculty member), where the course is taught (e.g., a campus, center, military base), or delivery modality (i.e., traditional, hybrid, online/virtual). The course content summary is designed by the faculty within a discipline and reviewed annually. The course outline is used to create a course syllabus and for various administrative purposes, including description of course content to external parties and students who are seeking credit for prior learning. There is only one official course outline for each credit course offered by the college. Course outlines shall include all required components as identified in the Official Course Outline template published in i-INCURR. The course outline is the official document that contains what a faculty member is hired to teach at TCC.

**Syllabus.** The syllabus is an official document that serves as an agreement between a faculty member and their students that specifies the plan for conducting instruction in a course developed by the faculty member teaching the course. A course syllabus shall include all required components as identified in the most current version of the Official Course Syllabus template published in i-INCURR. The course syllabus will inform the student about the core competencies and learning outcomes to be achieved, the topics that will be covered, student responsibilities, attendance, assignments, how grades will be determined, as well as relevant college policies and procedures.

## 6. **References**

[Virginia Community College System Policy Manual Sections 2 and 5](#), Policies 2.0.4, 5.0.2, 5.1, 6.7.

Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges [Principles of Accreditation: Foundations of Quality Enhancement](#), Comprehensive Standard (Standards 6.2c, 8.2a, 8.2b, 9.3, and 10.4)

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education

[Library of Virginia, Records Retention and Disposition Schedule \(General Schedule No. GS-111\)](#)

## 7. **Review Periodicity and Responsibility**

The Vice President shall review this policy at the anniversary of its approval and, if necessary, recommend revisions.

## **8. Effective Date and Approval**

The revised policy is effective upon its approval by the College President on November 23, 2020.

Policy Approved:

Procedure Developed:

Dr. Marcia Conston  
President

Dr. Michelle Woodhouse  
Interim Vice President for Academic  
Affairs and Chief Academic Officer

## **9. Review and Revision History**

The initial version of this policy was approved April 23, 2015.

1. Revision 1 includes the following changes:

- Extracted procedures.
- Added sections for curriculum and program oversight, program advisory committees, and dual enrollment.
- Specification of quality assurance standards across the curricula and in all delivery modes.
- Renamed policy to Academic Quality Assurance.

Approved November 23, 2020 by President Marcia Conston, Ph.D.