SACSCOC and Academic Leadership

Dr. Patricia L. Donat
Vice President

SACSCOC Policy: “The Quality and Integrity of Educational Credentials”

- Includes all college-level, credit-bearing credentials
  - Certificates,
  - “Applied” associate and select baccalaureate credentials (e.g., AAS, BAS), and
  - “Transfer” associate degree programs (e.g., AA,AS).
- Includes all pathways, regardless of
  - modality (online or face-to-face),
  - location (off-site, dual enrollment, on-campus), or
  - state [or district]-wide cooperative academic arrangement.
- Responsibility to
  - ensure quality and integrity
SACSCOC Policies:
“Distance Education and Correspondence Courses” and
“Dual Enrollment”

Purpose: Quality Assurance
• Describes the expectations for institutions offering online coursework and degree programs and institutions offering dual enrollment opportunities for high school students.

Distance Education is...

A formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous.
Dual Enrollment is...

- Term used to refer to courses taught to high school students for which the students receive both high school credit and college credit, regardless of location or mode of delivery.
  - at the high school,
  - on the institution’s campus,
  - via distance education.

Also includes programs and courses that may be offered as “early college,” “dual credit,” or “concurrent enrollment.”

A high school may serve as an institution’s instructional site.

A site is any facility that is located physically apart from the main campus of the institution at which an institution offers instruction (i.e., students are earning transcripted college credit).

A site is a site is a site, regardless of
- What you call it
- Who owns it
- How many students are there
- Whether the institution’s name is on the door

If students are required to be there, it is a site.
Communication with SACSCOC

• The institution has obligations for communicating with SACSCOC regarding its instructional sites.
  • Sites that provide 25% or more of any academic credential (i.e., certificate, degree program) generally require SACSCOC notification.
  • Sites that provide 50% or more of any academic credential require SACSCOC approval.
  • Sites may be visited by a peer review committee at the time they are established or as part of the institution’s decennial or fifth-year review.

All Commission Principles and policies apply without exception to distance education and dual enrollment students, programs, and instructional sites.
What questions do you have?

For more information:
https://www.sacscoc.org

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Program personnel

- Faculty Qualifications (6.2.a.)
- Full-time program faculty engagement (6.2.b)
- Program coordination (6.2.c)
- Faculty evaluation (6.3)
Faculty

- Faculty are the individuals providing direct instruction in the course and who must be qualified to teach the content.
- Expectations for qualifications are consistent, regardless of instructional location or mode of delivery.

Faculty Credentials

SACSCOC Faculty Credentials guideline:

- Faculty teaching undergraduate courses designed for transfer: doctorate or master’s degree in teaching discipline or master’s degree with a concentration in teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate hours).
- Faculty teaching associate degree courses not designed for transfer: bachelor’s degree in teaching discipline, or associate’s degree and demonstrated competencies in teaching discipline.

- Faculty qualifications ≠ faculty credentials
- Although faculty credentials are the most common and effective method for documenting qualifications, the institution may use other qualifications to supplement an individual’s educational credentials (i.e., professional experience, technical certifications/licensure).
Faculty qualifications documented by the institution

“Instructors of Record” is the individual who:

• Provides direct instruction to students (i.e., teaches the course—not in name only)
• Is included on the Faculty Roster form
• Is supported and overseen by the institution

Program Full-Time Faculty

Consider the appropriate staffing for to ensure the quality, integrity, and review of each program for which you are responsible

• What is the current distribution of full-time and part-time faculty?
• What is the appropriate mix of full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary faculty needed to ensure program quality?
  • Note: The “appropriate mix” may differ across programs.
  • Remember to consider the full scope of faculty responsibilities, not just their responsibilities for instruction.
• How are decisions made regarding the adequacy of the number of full-time positions? Can you justify the current adequacy of full-time faculty in each program area?
Full-Time Faculty Engagement:

What mechanisms are in place to ensure program quality, integrity and review?

- What process is used to “on board” or orient new faculty teaching online or at off-campus locations?
- Do faculty understand expectations for course content, student learning, outcomes assessment, active engagement?
- Are full-time faculty mentors, regular meetings with full-time faculty, syllabus templates/content modules, or other mechanisms provided to align expectations and to support consistency of student learning experiences?
- Do faculty contribute artifacts or student learning outcome results to the assessment of program effectiveness? To the discussion of program improvements or in the implementation of improvements identified by program faculty?
- Is there an effective mechanism for the institution to evaluate faculty providing instruction in online courses or at off-site locations? If there a mechanism for addressing unsatisfactory performance?

Program Coordination and Evaluation

- Organizational structure and clear articulation of oversight mechanisms
- Description of coordinator position requirements and responsibilities
- Documentation of appropriate experience and qualifications of individuals holding the position
- Documentation of regular oversight
  - May include meeting minutes, communications, classroom observations, review of syllabi, review of student artifacts, review of student course evaluations, review of online course content, formal written evaluations, etc.
Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures

Although most personnel policies and procedures are published and documented at the institutional-level, documentation of program-level implementation may be required:

- Regular evaluation
- Comprehensive evaluation appropriate to position expectations
- Evaluation of all faculty types

What questions do you have?

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Curriculum Approval/Modification Process

- What is your institution’s curriculum committee/approval structure?
  - Do you keep minutes and/or other documentation of steps in the process?
- How are faculty or other academically qualified personnel involved in the development and modification of courses and degree programs?
- How are decisions made regarding the amount and level of credit for a particular course?
Publication of requirements

• Are degree requirements clearly published in the institution’s catalog?
  • Total credit hours required
  • Course requirements
    • General education coursework
    • Prerequisite coursework
    • Major coursework

Program Admissions

• Clearly published admissions requirements
• Processes to ensure that policies are followed and that exceptions are controlled and documented
Admissions and Transparency

• Appropriate eligibility and placement procedures to ensure student preparedness for collegiate work
• Accurate advertising, recruiting, and admissions information
• Accurate information regarding transfer of credit achieved through dual enrollment
• Comparable registration and transcripting

Educational Program Assessment and Quality Assurance

Identification of Student Learning Outcomes (Program-level)
Assessment method aligned with outcome
Assessment results
Program improvements based upon results
Content and Quality

A college course is a college course, regardless of where, how, and to whom it is offered.

- Equal rigor
- Comparable content
- Populated with students seeking college credit (not students seeking high school credit only)

Program Content and Assessment

- Identify program student learning outcomes
  - Clearly defined and measurable
  - Use active verbs written in the future tense
  - Structured in terms of the program (rather than the course)
- Aligned with appropriate methods for assessment
  - Direct, indirect
  - Course-embedded
  - Norm-referenced or criterion-referenced
Student Learning Outcome Assessment

Identify student learning outcomes for each educational credential

- Consistent list of credentials in all compliance materials
  - Aligned with institution’s catalog, website, and recruitment and marketing materials
- Certificate outcomes may be a subset of the outcomes for associate degree programs.
- Associate of Arts/Associate of Science (AA/AS) “transfer” programs should be included, even if they focus primarily on general education coursework
  - AA/AS programs that include a “major” sequence may require additional outcomes to assess effectiveness

Assessment Results and Improvement

- Courses offered online or as Dual Enrollment should be included as part of program assessment.
  - Disaggregation is not mandatory but might be helpful.

- Assessment results should be compiled and analyzed so that results can be used to improve student learning.
Library and Information Resources

- Students enrolled online or at off-campus instructional sites, including dual enrollment students, should have access to library and information resources—whether on-site, virtually, or both—appropriate to the programs offered
- Reference/research support
- Regular and timely instruction in library resources

Academic and Student Support Services

- Advisement regarding college curriculum
- Student Support Services
- Student complaints
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Security of personal information
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**Document Retention Summary**

**Documentation (items to consider)**

- Meeting minutes
- New program approvals and course/program modifications
- Program assessment of student learning outcomes
- Position descriptions
- Faculty qualifications
- Faculty evaluations
- Documentation of engagement of off-site program locations