

PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

I – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICIES

I – 30.0 COMBINING COURSES

Policy #:	I – 30.0
Effective:	May 2005
Revised:	
Responsible Dept.:	VPISS

Purpose

Provide an academically and fiscally sound process of offering required courses in low enrollment programs.

Policy

VCCS policy 5.22 allows flexibility related to faculty workload and compensation. It states:

Faculty workload and compensation follows the Virginia Community College System policy. Exceptions to the regular class credit workload/compensation may be made based on factors including but not limited to: team teaching, lab or shop set up or maintenance, enrollment which exceeds or fails to meet normal SCHEV standards by more than 25% of standard, delivery mode, new or excessive preparations in a single semester, combined classes, and mentoring new or less than fully qualified faculty while they develop full qualifications. Exceptions for the assignment of more or less than the regular class credit workload/compensation will be negotiated by the supervisor for the class(es)/instructor(s) and the instructor(s) involved. Assigned exceptions will be calculated based on proportion of excess or deficiency in the normal class credits in the case of enrollment deviance from norms in consideration of the effect of the deviation in class enrollment on the workload involved. Other assigned exceptions will be based on weighted proportions or percentages of class(es) normal credit assignment. In the case of less than whole credits, calculations will be rounded off to two decimal places.

Procedure

Combining Different Courses – Same Mode and Different Mode

1. The respective division dean in consultation with the vice president of instruction and student services sets the minimum and maximum student enrollment of each course.
 - Our policy is to run each course autonomously. Combining different courses will be considered if the course enrollment of a particular course is 50% of the SCHEV standard. For example, if the normal SCHEV standard for occupational/technical courses is a minimum of 16 students, then combining different courses will be considered if the enrollment of the combined courses can result in an acceptable student enrollment and/or faculty workload. Having more than 16 students enrolled is acceptable.
 - If the combined enrollment of the different courses will be less than 16 students, then the combined enrollment must be at least 25% of the SCHEV standard for each course. For example, if the normal SCHEV standard for occupational/ technical courses is a minimum of 16 students, then combining different courses should result in at least 8 students total. Having less than 8 students generally is unacceptable.
2. When faced with the decision of canceling different courses due to low enrollment, we will consider having the different courses taught by the same faculty member, at the same time, and in the same room under the following conditions:
 - The faculty member meets all VCCS and SACS qualifications to teach the combined courses.

- It is realistic that the course content for the combined courses can be taught by the same faculty member, at the same time, and in the same room.
 - If a low enrolled course is required for graduation, and it cannot be combined with another course, the required course will run despite the low enrollment.
3. For purposes of the student information system, students will enroll only in the course they need (e.g., AST 101 or AST 102).
 4. For the purposes of faculty workload, faculty will only receive credit for only one of the courses, not all the combined courses. The course bearing the most credit hours or contact hours will be counted toward workload.

Combining the Same Course – Same Mode and Different Mode

1. The respective division dean in consultation with the vice president of instruction and student services sets the minimum and maximum student enrollment of each course.
 - Our policy is to run each course autonomously. Combining the same course being taught using different modes (e.g., face-to-face and distance learning) will be considered if the course enrollment is 50% of the SCHEV standard. For example, if the normal SCHEV standard for occupational/technical courses is a minimum of 16 students, then combining the same course being taught using different modes will be considered if the enrollment of the combined courses can result in an acceptable student enrollment and/or faculty workload. Having more than 16 students enrolled is acceptable.
 - If the combined enrollment of the same course/different modes will be less than 16 students, then the combined enrollment must be at least 25% of the SCHEV standard for each course. For example, if the normal SCHEV standard for occupational/technical courses is a minimum of 16 students, then combining the same course being taught using different modes should result in at least 8 students total. Having less than 8 students generally is unacceptable.
2. When faced with the decision of canceling sections of the same course being taught using different modes (e.g., face-to-face and distance learning) due to low enrollment, we will consider having the combined sections taught by the same faculty member. And if applicable, at the same time and in the “same room” under the following conditions:
 - The faculty member meets all VCCS and SACS qualifications to teach the combined courses.
 - It is realistic that the course content and modes can be taught by the same faculty member.
 - Combining the different sections and modes will not harm students or their learning.
3. The Instructional Technology Designer must be consulted if combining the face-to-face and distance learning mode is being considered when this is the (1) first time a faculty member is teaching in this type of distance learning mode or (2) first time the combined courses are being taught in this way.
 - The Instructional Technology Designer does not control course content but is concerned with the methods of delivering content in the distance learning mode.
 - The Instructional Technology Designer will determine if the faculty member is qualified to teach using a distance learning mode. If the faculty member is not qualified to teach using a distance learning mode, then the courses cannot be combined or a different faculty assignment must be considered.
 - The Instructional Technology Designer will determine if the course already exists in a distance learning mode. If the course does not already exist in a distance learning mode, then the courses cannot be combined.
4. For purposes of the student information system, students will stay enrolled for the section they originally enrolled in.
5. For the purposes of faculty workload, faculty will receive credit for only one of the sections, not all the combined sections.