

PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

I – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICIES

I – 115.0 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

Policy #:	I – 115.0
Effective:	September 2008
Revised:	March 2011
Revised:	July 2011
Responsible Dept.:	VPISS

Purpose

Compliance with SACS criterion 3.12.1.

Policy

All substantive changes will be reported to The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in accordance with SACS COC policy on “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges.”

Procedures

Closing a Program

The Commission requires *six months prior notification and prior approval* from the Commission before closing a program.

When the college anticipates a program closure, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services informs PVCC’s Accreditation Liaison at least seven months in advance of the effective date of the closure and provides all relevant information about the date for discontinuation, notification of students, and teach-out procedures. The Accreditation Liaison prepares an appropriate letter of notification for the Commission and forwards the letter to the VPISS for review. The VPISS forwards the letter to the President for review and signature. The President’s Office sends the letter of notification to the Commission six months in advance of the program discontinuation date.

Expanding at the current degree level - significant departure from current programs

The Commission requires *six months prior notification and prior approval* from the Commission before implementing programs that are a significant departure from current programs.

When the college anticipates opening a new associate degree, certificate, or career studies certificate that differs significantly from existing programs, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services informs PVCC’s Accreditation Liaison at least seven months in advance of the effective date of implementation. The VPISS and Accreditation Liaison prepare a letter of notification and full prospectus for the Commission and forward the letter and prospectus to the President for review and

signature. The President's Office sends the notification and prospectus to the commission six months in advance of the program implementation date.

Expanding at the current degree level – *not* a significant departure from current programs

PVCC will continue to notify the Commission of non-substantive changes to program offerings. When the college anticipates opening a new associate degree, certificate, or career studies certificate program that *does not differ significantly* from existing programs, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services informs PVCC's Accreditation Liaison. The Accreditation Liaison prepares an appropriate letter of notification for the Commission and forwards the letter to the VPISS for review. The VPISS forwards the letter to the President for review and signature. The President's Office sends the letter of notification to the Commission.

Initiating Distance Learning

PVCC has previously been approved by the Commission for the electronic delivery of 50 percent or more of a program's credits. PVCC will continue to notify the Commission of changes to the list of programs PVCC offers by electronic delivery and the percentage of credits students can earn by electronic delivery in each of the college's programs.

Distance Learning offerings will be regularly monitored in order to identify and notify the Commission in advance of programs in which students will be able to earn 25 to 49 percent of credits, or 50 percent or more credits, by distance learning. By February 15 and October 15 of each academic year, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services and the Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness will jointly review the college's distance learning offerings for the next summer, fall, and spring semesters respectively, and determine what impact any new or anticipated distance learning offerings will have on programs not previously reported to the Commission.

When it is anticipated that a student can earn a significant number of credits toward a program(s) by distance learning, the VPISS and Accreditation Liaison prepare a letter of notification for the Commission and forward the letter to the President for review and signature. The President's Office sends the notification to the Commission.

Timely notification in regard to distance learning depends on regular reviews of anticipated course offerings. Academic Deans will notify the VPISS and the Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness before adding to a semester schedule a class not previously offered online after the schedule has been posted/published for the term. All such additions must be approved by the VPISS before they are implemented.

Initiating Off-Campus Sites

The Commission requires *six months prior notification and prior approval* from the Commission before initiating off-campus sites at which students can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward a program (or before students can earn more than 50 percent or more credits toward a program at an existing off-campus site).

The Commission also requires *notification prior to implementation* of any off-campus site at which students can obtain 25-49 percent of credits toward a program.

New Off-Campus Sites: When PVCC anticipates offering credit courses at any *new location*, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services provides to the Accreditation Liaison at least seven months in advance the location, list of anticipated course offerings, and an analysis of all programs for which students will be able to earn 25 - 49 percent and 50 percent or more credits at the new location. The VPISS and Accreditation Liaison prepare a letter of notification and full prospectus for the Commission and forward the letter and prospectus to the President for review and signature. The President's Office sends the notification and prospectus to the Commission six months in advance of the program implementation date.

Significantly Different Programs at an Approved Off-Campus Sites: Anticipated course offerings at approved off-campus sites will be regularly monitored in order to identify and notify the Commission in advance of *significantly different currently approved programs* in which students will be able to earn 25 to 49 percent of credits, or 50 percent or more credits. By February 15 and October 15 of each academic year, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services and the Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness will jointly review the college's off-campus offerings for the next summer, fall, and spring semesters respectively, and determine what impact any new or anticipated offerings will have on sites and programs not previously reported to the Commission.

Based on this review of off-campus course offerings, the VPISS identifies any significantly different programs for which students will be able to earn a significant number of credits at off-campus site. The VPISS also notifies the Accreditation Liaison of the addition of any significantly different currently approved programs that will be offered at an approved site.

When it is anticipated that a student can earn a significant number of credits toward a program(s) at an off-campus site, the VPISS and Accreditation Liaison prepare a letter of notification for the Commission and forward the letter to the President for review and signature. The President's Office sends the notification to the Commission prior to implementation in accordance with SACS policy.

Timely notification in regard to off-campus sites depends on regular reviews of anticipated off-campus course offerings. Academic Deans will notify the VPISS and the Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness before changing the location (site) of a class after the class schedule has been posted/published for the term, or adding off-campus classes to a previously posted/published class schedule. All such changes and additions must be approved by the VPISS before they are implemented.

Initiating Programs/Courses Offered Through Contractual Agreement or Consortium

The Commission requires *notification prior to implementation* of programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium.

The Vice President for Instruction and Student Services informs the Accreditation Liaison of any such agreements, and prior to implementation, prepares a letter of notification for the Commission. The VPISS forwards the letter to the President for review and signature (with copy to the Accreditation Liaison). The President's Office sends the notification to the Commission.

Altering Significantly the Length of a Program

The Commission requires *six months prior notification and prior approval* from the Commission before altering significantly the length of a program.

The Vice President for Instruction and Student Services informs the Accreditation Liaison of any such change to the length of a program, and not less than six months prior to implementation, prepares a letter of notification and prospectus for the Commission. The VPISS forwards the letter to the President for review and signature (with copy to the Accreditation Liaison). The President's Office sends the notification to the Commission.

Other Substantive Changes

The President and Vice President for Instruction and Student Services are responsible for monitoring PVCC's status in regard to all other substantive changes* and coordinating the appropriate notification to the Commission, as specified by Commission policy.

*Other substantive changes specified by SACS-COC policy include: initiating courses or programs at more advanced or lower levels than currently approved, initiating a branch campus, initiating a merger/consolidation, significantly altering the educational mission of the institution, relocating a campus, initiating degree completion programs, and changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status.