

INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTIVE 8-1

April 21, 2008

Title: The Development, Revision and Review of Academic Programs

I. Purpose

This directive sets forth the policy and procedure for developing, revising and reviewing academic programs.

II. Policy

It is the policy of Piedmont Technical College that academic programs will be established, reviewed and revised to meet the changing educational needs of the service area, and in accordance with state policy and procedures.

III. Definitions

- A. Programs of Study – shall mean the organized educational experiences which serve to provide education, training and credentials in specific areas. Such programs will be supported by determined needs analyses, costs, curriculum models, course descriptions, and educational objectives
- B. Curriculum – shall mean the organization and sequencing of courses leading to a certificate, a diploma or a degree.
- C. Course – shall mean a specific segment of the curriculum which is accompanied by an identifying prefix, number, descriptive title, academic hours and description.
- D. Office of ID – shall refer to the Office of Instructional Development, which among other duties has responsibility for managing and supporting the deans and faculty in the development and refinement of the college's academic curricula.
- E. SBTCE – shall refer to the staff and functions of the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education.
- F. Technical Competency (Course) – shall refer to the competencies (courses) related to the student's chosen career or major; developed by a student's technical courses.
- G. Core Competency – shall refer to the four generalized areas of career and academic competence common to all graduates of the college (communications, mathematical skills, technology problem solving/decisions making). These are developed by all courses and college activities.

Office of Responsibility: Chief Educational Officer

- H. General Education Competency – shall refer to those five elements that SACS and CHE hold to be fundamental to all college education: natural science, social science, math, language, and arts/humanities. These are developed by the support courses.
- I. Support Course – shall refer to those courses which are required for graduation but which are not judged to be technical courses for that program of study (includes “general education” courses and electives).

IV. Procedures and Responsibilities

A. New Curriculum

1. Associate Degree and Diploma Programs. The procedures for obtaining approval for new associate degree and/or diploma programs are as follows.
 - a. The Division Dean, in conjunction with a relevant group of internal and external experts and advisors, will define the rationale for, the general configuration, the likely costs and income, and the objectives of the recommended new curriculum. This group will include the library director to ensure that costs for the provision of library resources and services are included in projecting overall costs of the proposed curriculum. The dean will designate an individual within the division to serve as liaison and facilitator for the proposal. The dean will forward this to the Office of Instructional Development.
 - b. The Office of ID will review the material, discuss it with relevant people as needed, and forward a draft letter of intent to the Vice President of Educational Affairs/Chief Academic Officer.
 - c. The Council of Deans will review and approve the new program request.
 - d. The Chief Educational Officer will review the material and will submit a letter of intent to the SBTCE.
 - e. The divisional liaison, Office of ID, and Office of Institutional Effectiveness will conduct the employment needs survey necessary to support the request.
 - f. The Office of ID, in conjunction with the divisional liaison, dean and the Chief Educational Officer, will prepare the narrative proposal required by the SBTCE. The Office of ID will serve as liaison with the SBTCE in reviewing, discussing and refining the needs survey and proposal until it meets the SBTCE’s requirements.
 - g. The Chief Educational Officer will submit the new program request to the President for approval and for submission to the Area Commission for approval.
 - h. Upon approval, the Chief Educational Officer will formally submit the proposal to the SBTCE.
 - i. The SBTCE, with the assistance, as necessary, of the Chief Academic Officer and the Office of ID, will obtain the appropriate approvals from the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education and

of the Commission on Higher Education (for associate degree programs).

j. Upon approval, the Office of Educational Affairs will notify the following college groups of the new program so that they can take appropriate action:

(1) The relevant department chair and division dean (for implementation).

(2) The Student Development Division (for admissions, advising, and financial aid).

(3) The Academic Leadership Team and Council of Deans (for information).

(4) College Communications (for catalog and PR action).

(5) The SACS liaison for submission to the Commission on Colleges.

(6) Any other group particularly affected by the new program.

2. New Certificates. The procedures for obtaining authorization for new technical education certificate programs are as follows.

a. The division dean, in conjunction with the department head, will develop a request for a new certificate program, including a title, term by-term course outline, and rationale. This will be forwarded to the Office of ID.

b. The Office of ID will review the request for consistency with state and college policies, will complete the needed documentation, and will forward it to the Chief Educational Officer.

c. The Chief Educational Officer will review the request and will forward it to the President for submission to the Area Commission for approval.

d. Upon approval by the area Commission, the Chief Educational Officer will formally submit the proposal to the SBTCE.

e. Upon receipt of the approved request, the Office of Educational Affairs will notify the following college groups of the new certificate so that they can take appropriate action.

(1) The relevant department chair and division dean (for implementation).

(2) The Student Development Division (for, admissions, advising and financial aid).

(3) The Academic Leadership Team and Council of Deans (for information).

(4) College Communications (for catalog and PR action).

(5) The SACS liaison for submission to the Commission on Colleges.

(6) Any other group particularly affected by the new certificate.

B. Revisions to Curriculum

1. Revision to Degrees and Diplomas. Following are the procedures to use when making program modifications to approved diplomas and associate degrees.

SBTCE Note: Development of specializations, emphases, etc., is an excellent way to add new technology to an existing core curriculum in order to

avoid proliferation of stand-alone majors. In most cases, these emphases can be developed in 18 or fewer credit hours, eliminating the need for SBTCE/CHE review and approval.

- a. By the end of January of each year, Department chairs, with the assistance of departmental faculty, will finalize the Programmatic Assessment matrixes for their program. Program chairs will review assessment results of student learning outcomes and as needed recommend appropriate curriculum changes to improve student learning.
- b. The Division Dean, in conjunction with the department chair, the advisory committee, and other relevant parties, will recommend needed changes to the currently approved curriculum. The changes, along with a rationale, will be forwarded to the Office of ID.
- c. The Office of ID will review the requests for consistency with state and college policies, will complete the needed documentation, and will forward it to the Chief Educational Officer.
- d. The Chief Educational Officer will review and approve the request, and will forward it to the President for approval.
- e. Upon the President's approval, the Chief Educational Officer will forward any program modifications necessary to the request to the SBTCE, with a copy to the Office of ID.

Following are modifications that are required to be sent to SBTCE/CHE for approval:

- (1) Addition of new concentrations, tracks, options, specializations or emphases, or cognates offered within an existing major that total more than 18 credit hours.
 - (2) Revisions to existing majors where 50 percent or more of the total credit hours for the major changes the CIP code.
 - (3) The extension or transfer of an existing, approved program to a new site that is different from the locations(s) or site(s) already authorized using the "50 percent" rule to determine when course offerings constitute a program; (note: extension of any or all of an approved program to additional sites solely by distance education **does not** require Commission review and approval.
- f. Upon receipt of approval by the SBTCE/CHE, the Chief Educational Officer will retain the formal approval and will forward a copy to the Office of ID.
 - g. Upon receipt of the approved request, the Office of Educational Affairs will notify the following college groups of the new curriculum change so that they can take appropriate action:
 - (1) The relevant department chair and Division Dean (for implementation).
 - (2) The Student Development Division (for admissions, advising and financial aid).
 - (3) The Academic Leadership Team and Council of Deans (for information).

- (4) College Communications (for catalog action).
 - (6) Any other group particularly affected by the change.
2. Revisions to Certificates. Following are the procedures to use when making revisions to approved certificates.
 - a. The Division Dean, in conjunction with the department chair, the advisory committee, and other relevant parties, will recommend needed changes to the currently approved certificate. The changes, along with a rationale, will be forwarded to the Office of ID.
 - b. The Office of ID will review the requests for consistency with state and college policies, will complete the needed documentation, and will forward it to the Chief Educational Officer.
 - c. The Chief Educational Officer will review and approve the request, and will forward it to the President for approval. If the changes are major, the Chief Educational Officer may recommend that they be submitted to the Area Commission; otherwise, they will be dealt with as matters for administrative approval.
 - d. Upon the President's approval, the Chief Educational Officer will forward the information to the SBTCE only if needed, with copy to the Office of ID.
 - e. Upon receipt of the approved request, the Office of Educational Affairs will notify the following college groups of the certificate change so that they can take appropriate action:
 - (1) The relevant department chair and Division Dean (for implementation).
 - (2) The Student Development Division (for admissions, advising, and financial aid)
 - (3) The Academic Leadership Team and Council of Deans (for information).
 - (4) College Communications (for Catalog action).
 - (5) Any other group particularly affected by the change.
- C. Academic Courses
1. New Courses. Following are the procedures for obtaining approval for new academic courses.
 - a. The Division Dean, in conjunction with the department chair, will recommend any needed new courses, including title, suggested number, description, and rationale (for the need, and why no existing course in the CAC is suitable). The Dean will forward this to the Office of ID.
 - b. The Office of ID will review the request for consistency with state and college policies and with current CAC offerings, will discuss any relevant issues with the initiator, will complete the needed documentation, and will forward it with a recommendation to the Chief Educational Officer.
 - c. The Chief Educational Officer will review and decide upon the request, and will inform the President.

- d. The Chief Educational Officer will forward the request to the SBTCE, with a copy to the Office of ID.
 - e. Upon receipt of approval by the SBTCE, the Chief Educational Officer will retain the formal approval and will forward a copy to the Office of ID.
 - f. Upon receipt of the approved request, the Office of Educational Affairs will notify the following college groups of the new curriculum change so that they can take appropriate action:
 - (1) The relevant department chair and Division Dean (for implementation).
 - (2) The Student Development Division (for admissions, advising and financial aid).
 - (3) The Academic Leadership Team (for information).
 - (4) College Communications (for catalog action).
 - (5) Associate Dean for Academic Services (for computer updating).
 - (6) Any other group particularly affected by the change.
2. Course Revisions. Following are the procedures to use when seeking changes to existing courses.
- a. The Division Dean, in conjunction with the department chair, will recommend any needed changes to an approved course. The changes, along with a rationale, will be forwarded to the Office of ID.
 - b. The Office of ID will review the request for consistency with state and college policies, will complete the needed documentation, and will forward it to the Chief Educational Officer.
 - c. The Chief Educational Officer will review and decide on the request and will inform the President.
 - d. The Chief Educational Officer will forward the request to the SBTCE, with a copy to the Office of ID.
 - e. Upon receipt of approval by the SBTCE, the Chief Educational Officer will retain the formal approval and will forward a copy to the Office of ID.
 - f. Upon receipt of the approved request, the Office of Educational Affairs will notify the following college groups of the course change so that they can take appropriate action:
 - (1) The relevant department chair and division dean (for implementation).
 - (2) The Student Development Division (for admissions, advising and financial aid)
 - (3) The Academic Leadership Team (for information).
 - (4) College Communications (for catalog action).
 - (5) Any other group particularly affected by the change.
- D. Periodic Program Reviews
- 1. Annual SBTCE Program Status Evaluation. Annually the college will participate in the SBTCE process to establish the status of each approved program of study, based on graduates, placement rates, and enrollment.

- a. The Chief Educational Officer receives the letter of initiation of the review process from the SBTCE.
 - b. The Office of Educational Affairs and the counseling center meet to plan and schedule their activities related to this process.
 - c. The counseling center enters the graduation and placement data into the data base.
 - d. The Office of Educational Affairs analyzes the results to identify any changes in program status and/or any continuing problems with program status. The Chief Educational Officer, will determine if any action is necessary.
 - e. The Office of Educational Affairs then notifies all pertinent parties concerning the results of the evaluation and any necessary resulting activities, including:
 - (1) The division deans and department heads (for information and needed letters).
 - (2) The Student Development Division (for admissions, and other purposes).
 - (3) The Director of Financial Aid (for VA and financial aid).
 - (4) College Communications (for any needed catalog changes).
 - (5) Any other affected parties.
2. Internal Periodic Program Review Process. Every three years, each department in the college (including AA/AS) will formally review and refine each of its certificate, diploma, and degree programs. This will occur on a staggered basis, so that one-third of the departments are going through this process each year. The procedures to be used are as follow.
- a. At the beginning of each academic year, the Chief Educational Officer and division deans will confirm which departments are to undertake the program review process that year. The processes and timetables for completing the process will be reviewed with all relevant department heads and faculty by the division deans, with the help of the Office of ID.
 - b. Each department will assemble and review the basic program data which can help assess the quality of that program. This data should include, but not be limited to: employer surveys, alumni surveys, graduation rates, FTE's generated, placement rates, locations, salaries, and retention rates. The division dean, department chair, and advisory council will all review this data and its implications.
 - c. Based on this data and its analysis, the department will prepare a program improvement action plan which outlines:
 - (1) The strengths of the program
 - (2) The weaknesses of the program
 - (3) The constraints on the program (e.g. equipment needs, faculty)
 - (4) Recommendations for improving the program.
 - d. The department will use its advisory council, other experts, available research, curriculum guides, and the like to review, validate, and if

necessary, refine its program competencies (technical, core, and general education) based on the results of the two steps above.

- e. The department will correlate each identified competency with its program of study to identify the specific course(s) in which that competency is taught, reinforced, and assessed. In conducting this activity, the department will draw upon the written descriptions of the competencies, content, and methods of each support course, though in some cases there may need to be discussions with the department heads responsible for those courses. As part of this process, the department will identify the ways in which student proficiency will be assessed.
- f. Once the analysis and correlation in “step e” is completed, the department will implement necessary changes in its technical courses to assure that each competency is still adequately developed. The department and the chair of some support courses will similarly agree on any changes needed in those courses.
- g. Once these changes are made, the department(s) will make necessary changes in the affected Course Guides (see specifications in Directive 8-2).
- h. During this curriculum review process, the department will also implement any other (e.g. non-curricular) changes set forth in the action plan (step c above).
- i. By the end of the academic year, the department will prepare and submit a comprehensive report which outlines the results of all steps above and which identifies any further improvements needed but not completed during the year. This report, once reviewed and approved by the Chief Educational Officer, will be permanently filed in the divisional offices (with a copy to the Office of ID).
- j. As part of this program review and improvement process, the relevant department chair of each support course will formally review, and if necessary, revise the content and methods of that course once every two years in conjunction with relevant department chairs.

E. Contingency Plan

The academic divisions of the college will develop and maintain a contingency plan for the college’s curriculum, in conjunction with other supporting groups, which provides reasonable accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

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