



# PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

## PROCEDURE

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**TITLE:** Accreditation

**RELATED POLICY AND PROCEDURES:** 1-1-2010 Accreditation and Substantive Change Policy

**DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY:** Academic Affairs

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June 24, 2013

October 26, 2016

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**Date Approved by President**

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**Date of Last Review**

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**Date of Last Revision**

### **Administrative Responsibilities**

- A. It is the joint responsibility of the President of the College, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Liaison and the Institutional Officers to review and revise this procedure to assure that the College is in compliance with the current policies and procedures of the SACSCOC including those regarding substantive changes.
  
- B. It is the responsibility of each Institutional Officer to monitor institutional and divisional compliance with the SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation*, the need for potential substantive changes within his/her area of responsibility, and to communicate these changes to the institutional SACSCOC Liaison for consideration.

### **Procedure**

#### **A. Institutional Responsibility for Commission Policies**

Piedmont Technical College develops and maintains written policies and procedures mandated by the SACSCOC core requirements, comprehensive standards, and federal requirements. All policies and procedures are approved through the appropriate institutional process, published in the appropriate institutional document accessible to those affected by the policy or procedure, and implemented and enforced by the institution.



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#### **B. Substantive Change**

The SACSCOC Liaison and the Institutional Officers keeps abreast of SACSCOC substantive changes in policy and procedures. The SACS Liaison notifies the Commission of changes, and when required, seeks approval for institutional substantive changes from the Commission prior to the initiation of changes and maintains a log of substantive change submissions that includes the nature of the change, date submitted, and date approved by the Commission.

#### **C. Institutional Mission, Governance, and Effectiveness**

The SACSCOC Liaison's responsibilities include the monitoring of SACSCOC policy and procedural requirements in the areas of Institutional Mission, Governance, and Effectiveness, communicating these requirements to the President and Institutional Officers, and assisting with policy and procedural development.

#### **D. Programs**

The SACSCOC Liaison's responsibilities include assisting the President and Institutional Officers with policy development and compliance monitoring of SACSCOC policy requirements in the areas of academic programs, faculty, library and learning resources, student affairs and services, financial resources, and physical resources.

#### **E. Federal Requirements**

1. The U.S. Secretary of Education recognizes accreditation by SACSCOC in establishing the eligibility of higher education institutions to participate in programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, as amended, and other federal programs. As such, the federal statute mandates that the Commission review an institution in accordance with criteria outlined in the federal regulations. Implicit in all Federal Requirements mandating a policy or procedure is the expectation that the policy or procedure is in writing and has been approved through appropriate institutional processes, published in appropriate institutional documents accessible to those affected by the policy or procedure, and implemented and enforced by the institution.
2. Institutions are required to document compliance with those criteria when reviewed for initial or continued accreditation. The SACSCOC Liaison's responsibilities include keeping abreast of SACSCOC policy requirements related to these federally mandated criteria, to communicate these requirements to the President and Institutional Officers, and to assist with monitoring compliance with the SACSCOC policy requirements related to federal requirements.



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#### **F. College SACSCOC Liaison's Responsibilities**

The College Liaison to the SACSCOC is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that compliance with accreditation requirements is incorporated into the planning and evaluation process of the institution.
2. Notifying the Commission in advance of substantive changes and program developments in accord with the substantive change policies of the Commission.
3. Familiarizing faculty, staff, and students with the Commission's accrediting policies and procedures, and with particular sections of the accrediting standards and Commission policies that have application to certain aspects of the campus (e.g., library, continuing education) especially when such documents are adopted or revised.
4. Serving as a contact person for Commission staff. This includes encouraging institutional staff to route routine inquiries about the *Principles of Accreditation* and accreditation policies and processes through the Accreditation Liaison, who will contact Commission staff, if necessary, and ensuring that email from the Commission office does not get trapped in the institution's spam filter.
5. Coordinating the preparation of the annual profiles and any other reports requested by the Commission.
6. Serving as a resource person during the decennial review process and helping prepare for and coordinating reaffirmation and other accrediting visits.
7. Ensuring that electronic institutional data collected for the Commission is accurate and timely.
8. Maintaining a file of all accreditation materials, such as, reports related to the decennial review; accreditation committee reports; accreditation manuals, standards, and policies; schedules of all visits; and correspondence from accrediting offices.

#### **G. College Reaffirmation and Program Reaffirmation**

##### 1. College Reaffirmation

In order to maintain accreditation status, the College participates in the SACSCOC decennial review process that includes the preparation and submission



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of a Compliance Certification document and the development of a Quality Enhancement Plan along with a three-day on site visit. Further, in response to the U.S. Department of Education's requirements that accrediting bodies continuously monitor institutions to ensure compliance and that accrediting bodies have a mechanism for reviewing multiple sites initiated since the last reaffirmation, the College participates in the SACSCOC Fifth-Year Interim Review Process that includes the preparation and submission of an abbreviated compliance certification and Quality Enhancement Plan Impact Report and possible site visit if new off-campus sites were added since the last reaffirmation.

#### 2. Program Reaffirmation

- a. Accredited programs at Piedmont Technical College seek to maintain program accreditation by participation in the accrediting agency's reaffirmation process. Programs may seek assistance from the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (OIRPE) and other areas of the College with the preparation of reaffirmation documents.
- b. The Department Head/Academic Program Director provides the date of the latest program accreditation review and indicates if negative actions were taken by the agency and the reason for such action to the SACS Liaison who maintains a log of all program accreditations. If accreditation is terminated by the accrediting agency or voluntarily withdrawn by the program, the Department Head/ Academic Program Director provides the date and the reason for the termination or voluntary withdrawal.