

STATE BOARD FOR TECHNICAL AND COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION

PROCEDURE

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TITLE: INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM EVALUATION
TIMETABLE AND PROCEDURES

**POLICY
REFERENCE NUMBER:** 3-1-301

**DIVISION OF
RESPONSIBILITY:** ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

DATE OF LAST REVISION: September 10, 2009

TIMETABLE AND PROCEDURES

I. Institutional Program Evaluation Timetable

The evaluation guidelines for the continuation of educational programs in the South Carolina Technical College System were adopted by the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education on June 8, 1977. These guidelines provide standards by which specific evaluative criteria and procedures are to be developed and implemented. The purpose of the evaluation is two-fold. First, through the evaluation process the State Board will fulfill its responsibility to ensure the operation of adequate and high quality occupational diploma and degree programs as specified by S.C. Code Annotated §59-53-50. Second, the State Board will ensure the reporting of data to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for the evaluation of associate degree programs for purposes of recommending termination as specified by S.C. Code Annotated §59-53-40.

The institutions in the South Carolina Technical College System will submit annually by the announced deadline to the Vice President of Academic Affairs an evaluation report on associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs. Each college is required to report degree and diploma productivity in terms of enrollment, number of graduates, and the percent of graduates placed on related jobs or continuing their studies. Certificates are evaluated annually based on the percent of graduates placed on related jobs or continuing

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their studies. For programs that do not meet established criteria and standards, college officials must determine whether the programs shall be continued or discontinued. Any college wishing to continue a program that does not meet the minimum productivity standards must provide a written plan to improve the program's performance to the System Office Division of Academic Affairs staff. Diploma and degree programs that do not meet the minimum productivity standards for three consecutive years will be suspended, unless adequate justification to retain the program is made by the college to the Academic Affairs staff.

Upon receiving each institution's evaluation report, the System Office Academic Affairs staff will evaluate individual college reports, develop and analyze system reports, and shall make available on the SC Technical College System website an annual system wide program evaluation report. Reports on associate degree programs will be forwarded to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education on or before August 1 each year.

II. Evaluation Data on Program Completions

Each institution must establish procedures for awarding degrees, diplomas, or certificates for the successful completion of approved programs of study. All awards conferred by an institution should be reported. Colleges should confirm the number of recognized completions by the type of program, level of award, and date conferred. Awards may be conferred based on the approval of a student's application for graduation or administratively by an institution provided the college has reviewed the student's record and confirms that the required course work and related activities have been completed.

The reporting period for program completion data is July 1 through June 30 and is in compliance with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) standard reporting period for completions.

In the program evaluation report, institutions will refer to each program by the curriculum code and title based on the System Office Academic Affairs Program Inventory as approved by the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education.

III. Program Evaluation Guidelines

Program productivity for purposes of the annual statewide program evaluation report is measured in quantitative terms -- enrollment, number of graduates, and job placement.

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Degrees and Diplomas

All degree and diploma programs are subject to review and evaluation once they have graduated three classes.

An approved diploma or degree program is subject to annual review and evaluation based on the following minimum criteria and standards.

1. Number of Graduates: Each diploma or degree program must produce six graduates during the evaluation year or an average of six graduates over the most recent three-year period.
2. Program Enrollment: Each diploma program must have enrolled 12 students who generated 9 full-time equivalents (FTE's) in the most recent fall semester.

Each associate degree program must have enrolled 16 students who generated 12 FTE's in the most recent fall semester.

3. Job Placement: Fifty percent (50%) of the graduates of a diploma or a degree program available for job placement must be placed on a job related to their education or continuing their education on a full-time basis.

Graduates who are deceased, disabled, or not actively seeking employment are excluded from the job placement criterion.

All programs that meet or exceed the minimum criteria and standards receive a good status.

Degree and diploma programs subject to review which do not meet one or more of the minimum productivity standards must be further scrutinized to determine if they should be continued or canceled. To continue a program when it fails to meet one or more of the minimum productivity standards, a specific plan for improvement must be provided

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to the Academic Affairs staff. When a program fails to meet one or more of the minimum productivity standards, and the college has elected to continue the program, the program is placed on probation. A program may continue on a probationary status for a period of three consecutive years.

After a program has been on probation for three consecutive years, the program is placed on a suspended status unless justification is provided to allow for an extended probationary period. The justification must contain documentation indicating that the program will meet minimum productivity standards for the next Program Evaluation cycle. A letter of request for extended probationary status must come from the Chief Academic Officer of the college.

A degree or diploma program may continue on a suspended status for a period of three years. If there is no justification to reinstate the program during that period, the program is canceled.

To reactivate a canceled program, the college must submit a new program proposal to the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education and in the case of an associate degree program, the college also must submit a new program proposal to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

For programs which have been suspended or canceled, the college must discontinue recruiting and enrolling new students, remove references to the programs from all college and public relations documents, and inform all affected parties including students of the suspended or canceled status of the program. For programs which have been CANCELLED, the college will not be permitted to enroll any students since the college is no longer authorized to offer the program. The System President/Executive Director has the authority to approve the awarding of certificates, diplomas and degrees, in exceptional cases, where previously approved curricula have been terminated by the college (SBTCE Policy 3-1-502, Procedure 3-1-502.1).

The following are exceptions for degree and diploma programs:

1. Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree statistics are reported separately by the colleges but are combined by the System Office Division of Academic Affairs staff for determining minimum productivity criteria and standards.

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2. The Associate in Applied Science with a major in Vocational-Technical Education is excluded from all program evaluation criteria.
3. The Associate in Applied Science with a major in General Technology is subject to evaluation, but the only criterion is that fifty percent (50%) of the graduates available must be employed or continuing their studies in a related field. The primary technical specialty for General Technology majors must also be reported.
4. The Associate in Applied Science with a major in General Engineering Technology is subject to evaluation, but the only criterion is that fifty percent (50%) of the graduates available must be employed or continuing their studies in a related field.
5. A diploma which has a "parent" degree program can be termed a "stop-out" and is evaluated as "good-stop-out," even though the diploma may not meet the minimum criteria and standards. However, if the "parent" program is suspended or canceled, the diploma program becomes a "stand-alone" and cannot receive a status of "good-stop-out."

Certificates

Certificate programs are evaluated only if graduates of the programs are produced. If no graduates are produced, and if there is no enrollment in the program, the certificate is maintained in an inactive status. Certificate programs subject to evaluation and review must meet the following minimum criterion and standard.

Job Placement: Fifty percent (50%) of the graduates available for placement must be placed on jobs related to the program of study or continuing their education.

Certificate programs subject to review which do not meet the minimum productivity standard must be further scrutinized by the college to determine if they should be continued.

If a program does not meet the minimum productivity standard of placing fifty percent of the graduates available for placement on jobs related to the area of study, the program is placed on probation for one year. If the certificate program on probation does not

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meet the minimum productivity standard during the next evaluation year, the program is suspended and can no longer accept new students.

If a certificate program is on a suspended status and the college wishes to justify continuing the program, then justification is required based on documented local job needs for the graduates.

Suspended certificate programs are canceled after one year in a suspended category. However, a college may elect to cancel a certificate program at any time provided that there are no students enrolled in the program.

If a certificate program does not enroll students for three consecutive evaluation years, the program is canceled unless the college indicates that it wishes to retain the program.

Supplementary Written Reports

Supplementary written program evaluation reports are required for the 1) General Technology major and 2) degree and diploma programs which do not meet minimum standards. The System Office Division of Academic Affairs will maintain written guidelines for the content of these reports.