

College Procedure: 703. 6 – Change to Existing Programs, Program Content
Policy Reference: 703 – IE Operational
Responsible Department: Institutional Effectiveness
Approval Authority: Cabinet
Procedure Owner: Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness
Effective Date: 3/9/2022

Version Number: 1
Legal Counsel Reviewed (yes/no): No
Legal Reference(s): N/A
Scope: College-wide

Reason for Procedure

Kirkwood Community College is required to notify our accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), within 30 days when there is an aggregate change of 25 percent or more of clock/credit hours or content of a program since the institution's most-recent accreditation review. This is required to remain compliant with Department of Education Regulation [58834](#) and the Higher Learning Commission Substantive Change Policy [INST.F.20.040](#).

Procedure

Changes to Existing Academic Programs

According to the U.S. Department of Education program content changes include, changes to a programs:

- Curriculum (measured by clock or credit hours)
- Learning objectives
- Competencies
- Required clinical experiences
- This would include changes in the general education courses required for program completion and not merely the courses within the discipline, program or major.

Institutions are required to track and report changes of 25% or more to the content of a program, either in a single change or as the sum total of aggregate changes, since the most recent accreditation review (comprehensive evaluation, Assurance Review, Probation visit or Show-Cause visit).

In compliance with DOE regulation 58834 and HLC policy Substantive Change INST.F.20.040, Kirkwood Community College defines the following as a substantive change to an existing program that counts toward a program's 25% change threshold:

Changes to Existing Programs counted toward 25% change	How the Change is Quantified	Where Change can be Found
New required or main course added to the plan of study that is not replacing another course	Count the number of credit hours of the course that is being added	Comparison of AS28s, annual LOCUS meetings
Removing required or main course from the plan of study that is not be replaced by another course	Count the number of credit hours of the course that is being removed	Comparison of AS28s, annual LOCUS meetings
New required or main course replacing existing required or main course	Count the credit hour difference between the two courses	Comparison of AS28s, rationale information in Course Leaf
New main course that was previously an alternate	Count the number of credit hours of the course that was changed from alternate to main	Comparison of AS28s, annual LOCUS meetings
Main course is removed from the plan of study or changed to an alternate option	Count the number of credit hours of the course that is changed to alternate or removed from the curriculum	Comparison of AS28s, annual LOCUS meetings
Change to the number of clinical credit hours within a course	Count the difference in the number of clinical credit hours within the course	Comparison of AS28s, annual LOCUS meetings
Change in course learning objective or competencies (SLOs)	Count the number of credit hours of the course that had the change	Curriculum Committee minutes, Course Leaf

Kirkwood Community College Tracking

Academic Affairs Leadership, the Registrar and the Accreditation Liaison Officer work together to ensure information is collected, tracked and reported appropriately. Kirkwood Community College uses a [spreadsheet](#) to maintain the tracking of program changes. To determine the percent of change Kirkwood uses the number of credits required to graduate for the program (denominator) and the change in credit hours based on the chart above (numerator).

Higher Learning Commission Reporting

If a program is identified as having a 25% or more change to the content of a program, either in a single change or as the sum total of aggregate changes, since the most recent accreditation review (comprehensive evaluation, Assurance Review, Probation visit or Show-Cause visit), this information needs to be reported to HLC. To report these changes the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) submits the [Screening Form for Changes to Existing Academic Programs](#). The ALO receives a response from HLC regarding next steps, if any. The documentation from HLC is filed on KIN Accreditation Site – [Yearly Program Changes](#) folder.

References

[Higher Learning Commission - Substantive Change General Information](#)

[Department Of Education Policy](#)

[Higher Learning Commission Policy: Substantive Change INST.F.20.40](#)

[Accreditation KIN Site](#)

Definitions

Term	Definition
New Course	Content of the course is new and did not previously exist in the program.
Replacement Course	Content of the course is similar to the content of the course it is replacing.
Main Course	Preferred course in a list of possible courses to fulfill a requirement for a program. Main courses are designated with an “M” on the AS28.
Alternate Course	Course in a list of possible courses to fulfill a requirement for a program and is not the preferred option. Alternate course are designated with an “A” on the AS28.
Educational Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A legally authorized postsecondary program of organized instruction or study that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Leads to an academic, professional, or vocational degree, or certificate, or other recognized educational credential, or is a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program, as described in 34 CFR part 668, subpart O; and ii. May, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, utilize direct assessment of student learning, or recognize the direct assessment of student learning by others, if such assessment is consistent with the accreditation of the institution or program utilizing the results of the assessment and with the provisions of 34 CFR § 668.10. 2. HLC does not consider that an institution provides an educational program if the institution does not provide instruction itself (including a course of independent study) but merely gives credit for one or more of the following: Instruction provided by other institutions or schools; examinations or direct assessments provided by agencies or organizations; or other accomplishments such as “life experience.”

Revision Log

1	3/8/2022	Cabinet	New procedure