

Title 9- Education- Mississippi Community College Board

Part 3- Programs

Part 3 Chapter 2: Standards for Quality and Accountability

Rule 2.1 Standards for Quality and Accountability. The Mississippi Community College Board's standards for quality and accountability are as follows:

1. It is the policy of the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB) to accept the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' (SACS) Criteria for Accreditation as the basic standards for quality and accountability for the state's public community and junior colleges.
2. The MCCB also accepts the Criteria for Accreditation of SACS as the standards for assuring financial adequacy for all state community and junior colleges.
3. Although direct governance of the state's community and junior colleges is the responsibility of the local boards of trustees, the MCCB, through the authority established in Section 37-4-3 of the Mississippi Code, may request any such reports as the Board deems necessary to provide such information as needed to verify the fiscal condition of any of the state's community and junior colleges.
4. Pursuant to Section 37-4-3, 6(1), the MCCB will fix standards for community and junior colleges to qualify for state appropriations. (See attachment for current guidelines.)

At its October 19, 1995, regular board meeting, the Mississippi Community College Board officially adopted the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' Criteria for Accreditation as the basic standards for quality and accountability for the state's public community and junior colleges.

The Mississippi Community College Board further accepted the Criteria for Accreditation of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) as the standards for assuring financial adequacy for all state community and junior colleges. In addition, the Mississippi Community College Board recognizes that all of the state's community and junior colleges must abide by all appertaining state and federal regulations regarding the receipt, management, and expenditure of funds. Direct governance of the state's community and junior colleges with regard to fiscal and other areas of function is the responsibility of the local boards of trustees. However, through the authority established in Section 37-4-3 of the Mississippi Code, the Mississippi Community College Board may request any such reports as the Board deems advisable to provide such information as needed to verify the fiscal condition of any of the state's community and junior colleges.

In addition, the Mississippi Community College Board, at its October 19, 1995, regular board meeting, officially adopted the following operational guidelines for distance learning.

1. Faculty teaching via distance learning (cable, CCN, ITFS, PBS, satellite, etc.) will be compensated within the existing compensation policies of the institution. Where travel is involved, the existing travel policies of the institution will be applied.
2. Receive Sites must be supervised by monitors. Monitors must be staff-level personnel. Credentials do not need to be instructor-level for purposes of monitoring classes. Compensation for the monitors should be compatible with the institution's compensation policies for staff-level personnel. (Student workers are not staff-level personnel.)
3. The Receive Sites will pay a per-student fee to the originating site. This amount will be determined by the source of the programming in the case of satellite or PBS telecourses.
4. Students enrolled in courses where instruction is delivered via distance learning technologies will be counted for audit purposes, the same as that for students enrolled via traditional delivery methods, with the following stipulation. State appropriations will be awarded only for Internet (on-line) courses that are offered through the Mississippi Virtual Community College using the common software platform. Internet courses may be defined as those that are not classroom based, content is delivered on-line, do not require regular campus attendance, can be accomplished from a remote site, and are distinguished from hybrid courses, which are merely Internet enhanced. Colleges will be compensated according to their roles as host and/or provider institutions for students and courses.
5. To evaluate properly the institution's distance learning activities, a separate and distinct budget should be maintained. Costs related to distance learning can then be evaluated in terms of institutional mission and goals. Further, accountability can be established more easily when one office has budget responsibility.
6. Grades will be assigned by the Originating Site instructor of record who is also considered an adjunct instructor at the Receive Site. The originating institution will provide the Receive Site with a copy of the faculty member's credentials, verified by the Originating Site institution and so stated in the file at the Receive Site.
7. Institutions should make appropriate plans to budget sufficient amounts to cover maintenance and operational costs. User fees for community service activities should be set at a level to cover the costs associated with community service programs. Also, if state and/or federal funds are not appropriated for distance-learning activities, an institutional assessment may be required to cover state-wide system costs.
8. Priority for scheduling on CCN is as follows:
 - a. Rural Health (First priority based on requirements of the funding source)
 - b. Community College Credit Instruction
 - c. Workforce Act activities and other non-credit business and industry training
 - d. Other training activities and institutional needs
 - e. State agencies

CCN must be used solely for educational/training purposes to maintain the \$7 per mile educational tariff. Within that constraint, time frames should be established by priority groups. If the priority group does not utilize the time completely, the schedule should be opened to the next priority group. Displacing must be avoided except under unavoidable circumstances.

9. Instructors of record will be responsible for evaluating students in the same way that instructors are responsible for evaluating on-campus students receiving instruction by traditional delivery methods. Institutional policies at the Originating Site institution will govern grading. All details will be approved by and course materials sent to the instructional deans of the institutions. The instructors of record will provide official grades for the students to Receive Site registrars. Receive Site registrars will provide the instructors of record a copy of the class rolls for the courses.
10. Notification to all instructional deans will be given by the Originating Site as soon as it is determined that a course will be offered.
11. Institutions offering courses for credit through distance learning activities and programs must meet all SACS criteria related to faculty. Whether through direct contact or other appropriate means, institutions offering distance learning programs must provide students with structured access to and interaction with full-time faculty members.

Finally, the Mississippi Community College Board adopted the following operational guidelines as additional quantitative requirements:

1. A semester credit hour is defined as a minimum student-teacher contact of 750 minutes for lecture and 1500 minutes for laboratory. (This does not include time for passing between classes, registration, nor final examinations.)
2. The minimum load for a full-time student is 12 semester credit hours per semester.
3. The normal load for a full-time ~~vocational~~ career student shall be 25 clock hours per week. (Some specific programs may require more hours as approved by the Mississippi Community College Board.)
4. The standard teaching load in semester credit hours is recognized to be 16. The maximum teaching load is generally recognized to be 18 semester credit hours. The teaching schedule of each instructor should ordinarily be arranged so that a typical teaching load per week may vary from 450 to 600 student clock hours, depending on the type of class. A minimum of two hours of laboratory work shall be counted as one semester credit hour.
5. The Board recognizes only those academic courses included in the Uniform Course Numbering System for allocation of state funds.

Some appropriate guidelines, i.e. ALA-ACRL STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES, should be used as a reference point with regard to measuring the various aspects of the library/learning resource center activities.

6. Pursuant to Section 37-4-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, the Legislature has determined that the social, cultural and economic well being of the people of Mississippi, and hence the state, are enhanced by various educational experiences beyond the elementary and secondary school years. The Legislature thereby provided a means for the continuation of a system of community and junior colleges by the creation of the Mississippi Community College Board; and one of its powers and duties, Section 37-4-3, (6)(I), is to fix standards for community and junior colleges to qualify for appropriations. Therefore, for the purpose of allocating state funds based on enrollment.

Academic and Technical students must meet one of the following criteria for admissions:

- a. The completion of at least one unit less than the minimum acceptable high school units as prescribed by law, i.e. if the state requires 21 high school units to graduate, a student can be admitted into a community/junior college with 20 high school units; or,
- b. A General Educational Development (GED) certificate; or,
- c. A High school diploma;
- d. Mississippi Occupational Diploma; or
- e. A state-approved career Certificate from a Mississippi community or junior college; or
- f. An official transcript from an accredited college or university.

Career students must meet one of the following criteria for admissions:

- a. The completion of at least one unit less than the minimum acceptable high school units as prescribed by law, i.e. if the state requires 21 high school units to graduate, a student can be admitted into a community/junior college with 20 high school units; or,
- b. A General Educational Development (GED) certificate; or,
- c. A High school diploma;
- d. Mississippi Occupational Diploma; or
- e. An official transcript from an accredited college or university; or
- f. The completion of a federally approved ability-to-benefit test.

A student not meeting the requirement stated above may be admitted as non-degree seeking under the following conditions:

- a. Meets the requirement to enroll in dual enrollment/dual credit Academic, Career or Technical classes; or
- b. Meets the requirements to enroll in an approved career-pathway program that integrates Adult Basic Education (ABE) with skills training (Career or Technical).

By law, in addition to meeting the admissions requirements, all students must meet attendance requirements. The following requirements must be met by all students to be considered “in attendance.”

- a. A student whose last day of attendance occurred on or after the last class meeting of the sixth week in a 15-week term or its equivalent shall be deemed in attendance, provided that the student did not exceed the maximum allowed absences within the first six weeks (or its equivalent).
- b. The following chart illustrates the maximum number of allowed absences within the first six week (or equivalent) period for various term lengths (regardless of course credit hours) by the number of class meetings per week.

Term Length (weeks)	Class Meetings Per Wk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Maximum number of allowed absences							
1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
2	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
3	0	1	1	2	2	2	3	3
4	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4
5	1	1	2	3	3	4	5	5
6	1	2	2	3	4	5	6	6
7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7
8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	1	2	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	1	3	4	5	7	8	9	10
11	1	3	4	6	7	9	10	11
12	2	3	5	6	8	10	11	12
13	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	13
14	2	4	6	7	9	11	13	14
15	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	15
16	2	4	6	9	11	13	15	16
17	2	5	7	9	11	14	16	17
18	2	5	7	10	12	14	17	18

- c. A student who withdraws is subsequently reinstated before the sixth week (or its equivalent) and has not missed more than the maximum allowed absences described above shall be deemed in attendance.

The above requirements for allocating state appropriations are not to be misconstrued as student admission requirements. Section 37-29-1 refers to the types of instruction community and junior colleges can offer and to whom. General admission policies, according to SACS, Criteria for Accreditation, 4.2.1, may be established by the governing board on recommendation of the administration. Implementation of specific admission policies, however, is the responsibility of the administration and faculty of each institution.

Sources: *Miss. Code Ann.* §37-4-3 and 37-29-1.