

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**SUBJECT: Compliance with Accreditation Requirements****EFFECTIVE DATE: April 14, 2022; Revised October 5, 2026****Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the responsibility of Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”) employees to comply with applicable institutional, programmatic, specialized, and professional accreditation standards, policies, and procedures. Employees must also comply with the requirements of accrediting agencies considering pending accreditation applications and with requirements applicable to maintaining existing accreditation.

Definitions

Accreditation- a quality-assurance status granted by a recognized accrediting organization after evaluation of an institution or program against established standards.

Standards- the requirements, policies, procedures, criteria, and conditions that must be satisfied to obtain or maintain accreditation.

Substantive Change- a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution or program that may require notification to, or approval by, an accrediting agency before implementation.

Accreditation Evidence- accurate, complete, and verifiable records or other documentation used to demonstrate compliance with accreditation requirements.

Policy**General**

Southwest as an institution, as well as certain individual programs and departments, is accredited by recognized accrediting organizations. The College shall maintain and publish current information concerning its accreditation status through appropriate official publications and webpages. The Southwest academic catalog provides a list of many of the College’s accreditations.

Seeking and maintaining accreditation is essential to the continued success of Southwest’s students and the College. Employees shall comply with accreditation standards, policies, procedures, and reporting requirements related to their assigned functions. Employees shall familiarize themselves with applicable requirements and cooperate fully and promptly with accreditation-related reviews, reports, requests for information, and corrective actions.

Institutional and Programmatic Responsibilities

Southwest employees shall comply with the standards, policies, and procedures of its institutional accreditor and all applicable programmatic, specialized, and professional accreditors.

Divisions, departments, schools, programs, and employees shall provide timely, accurate, complete, and verifiable information requested for accreditation applications, reaffirmation, interim reports, monitoring reports, site visits, and other accreditation activities.

Employees responsible for academic programs, student services, administrative services, or College operations shall participate, as applicable, in assessment, institutional effectiveness, planning, and continuous-improvement activities used to demonstrate accreditation compliance. Accreditation-related representations made in official publications, webpages, reports, applications, and communications must be accurate and authorized by the relevant Executive Team member.

Substantive Change

For information regarding requirements for The Commission, previously known as SACSCOC, see Southwest policy [Substantive Change](#) 1:03:04:00/10.

Proposed institutional or program changes that may constitute a substantive change shall be reported through the College's established review process before implementation.

No employee or organizational unit may implement a change requiring accreditor notification or approval until the College has completed the required review and received any required external approval.

The President's designee responsible for accreditation shall coordinate College notification, approval, and documentation requirements associated with substantive change.

Records and Evidence

Accreditation evidence shall be maintained in accordance with applicable accreditation requirements, College records-retention requirements, and legal obligations.

Employees shall preserve records within their areas of responsibility and provide requested evidence in a timely manner. Accreditation records shall be sufficiently organized to provide an appropriate audit and review trail.

Athletics Accreditation and Records

Southwest participates in intercollegiate athletics in affiliation with the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) and the Tennessee Community College Athletic Association (TCCAA), which is part of the Tennessee Board of Regents ("TBR") system. Records related to Southwest's athletics programs are subject to review or audit by TBR and the Comptroller of the State of Tennessee, and the NJCAA may request information concerning the College's athletics

records. These records shall be accurately and appropriately maintained in accordance with applicable standards, regulations, and records-retention requirements.

Accountability

Failure to comply with this policy may result in corrective or disciplinary action, consistent with applicable College and TBR policies and procedures, up to and including termination of employment. Nothing in this policy limits the College's authority to take immediate action necessary to protect accreditation status or correct noncompliance.

Source of Policy: Office of the President

Responsible
Administrator: VP of People & Culture

1:03:10:00/8; 1:03:04:00/10
Related Policy: 5:00:00:00/41; 5:00:00:00/09

TBR Policy/Guideline Reference: _____

Approved: 
President

Date: October 5, 2026