

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 27, 1999

**TO:** Presidents  
Planners

**FROM:** J. Keith Brown

**SUBJECT:** Changes in Institutional Effectiveness Plans and  
Annual Program Review Requirements

Over the past several months, modifications have been made to the institutional effectiveness plan requirements and the Annual Program Review. These modifications have resulted from efforts to streamline accountability requirements and the conversion to the semester system.

**Institutional Effectiveness Plan:** Colleges are no longer required to submit an annual institutional effectiveness plan to the System Office. This does not change the requirement that colleges develop annual institutional effectiveness plans nor does it de-emphasize, from the System Office perspective, the importance of institutional effectiveness planning at the local college. It does, however, provide greater flexibility to each college in developing an annual institutional effectiveness plan that meets the needs of the institution.

Under this new process, colleges are provided the flexibility to develop a planning process that meets the unique needs of the institution. It is expected that colleges will develop sound planning principles and guidelines. The former System guidelines for institutional effectiveness plans can be used, but are not required. However, colleges will be required to address in their institutional effectiveness plans any State Board or legislatively mandated items. Currently, two items must be addressed by colleges in the plan: diversity and technology.

The institutional effectiveness plans will be reviewed for compliance by the program auditors as part of the FTE audit process. The auditors will be trained by the Planning and Research section on what is required in the plans. Specifically, the auditors will certify that colleges do have a current institutional effectiveness plan in place and that the college is addressing any State Board or legislatively mandated items. Issues of plan quality, appropriateness of goals and objectives,

etc., will not be addressed by the program auditors. These issues should be guided by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) guidelines and will be assessed in the reaffirmation process.

The Planning and Research section will continue to support planning at the college level with whatever technical support is requested. If requested by a college, staff will review and provide constructive feedback on a college's institutional effectiveness plan, process, etc. In addition, staff will continue to be available to consult with colleges on issues related to planning, provide workshops to faculty and staff, etc.

Additional information on the institutional effectiveness plan guidelines can be found on the System web page at [www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/planning/plangud.htm](http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/planning/plangud.htm).

**Annual Program Review:** The Annual Program Review (APR) data entry screens are being modified for consistency with the new program codes for the semester system. In addition, the college transfer cohort definition is being modified to be consistent with the UNC Transfer Student Performance Report. The new screens should be available in early summer. The data, which will be based on the 1997-98 year, will be due on October 1, 1999.

As part of the System Office's effort to reduce redundancy in reporting, further changes to the Annual Program Review process are being proposed. These changes would have to be approved by the General Assembly; therefore, it may be the end of the legislative session before the outcome is known. Colleges should anticipate the normal APR requirements to be in effect for 1999-2000. Further discussion of the future of the APR will take place at the Community College Planning and Research Organization (CCPRO) annual meeting in March.

**Non-Completers Definition:** One of the legislatively mandated requirements of the Annual Program Review (APR) is that early leavers/non-completers be surveyed to determine satisfaction and goal completion. Under the quarter system, non-completers were defined as any student who enrolled in fall quarter, did not complete in fall quarter, did not re-enroll in either winter or spring quarter, and had completed a total of 18 or more quarter hours at the college during the previous four (4) years.

After discussions with various groups, the following definitions have been adopted for non-completers.

- A. For programs less than one year in length (certificate and diploma): A non-completer is a student who enrolls fall semester, does not complete the program during the fall semester, does not re-enroll spring semester, and has accumulated 15 semester hours or more during the past four (4) years.
- B. For programs of two years in length (Associate degrees): A non-completer is a student who enrolls fall semester, does not complete the program during the academic year, does not re-enroll the following fall semester, and has accumulated 15 semester hours or more during the past four (4) years.

If you have already surveyed your non-completers for the 1999-2000 APR using the old definition of non-completer (enroll in fall but does not re-enroll during spring semester), you do not have to resurvey your non-completers for this year's APR. Instead you can submit the data that you have already collected. It is expected, however, that in the future, all colleges will use the new definitions cited above.

If you have questions related to any of the information above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

c: Bill Cole  
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Data Coordinators

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