Principles of Accreditation

Compliance Report

Chipola College Compliance Audit Report

SACS Federal Requirement 4.2

4.2 - Program Curriculum

The institution’s curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates or degrees awarded.

Judgment of Compliance

In Compliance

Statement of Rationale for Judgment of Compliance

Chipola College maintains a curriculum that is directly related and appropriate to the mission of the institution. The degrees and certificates awarded are made up of courses of study that follow standards and practices typical of US and Florida institutions of higher learning. The requirements established by the Florida Department of Education and Legislature, the oversight of the Chipola College Curriculum and Courses of Study Committee, and the careful administration of all aspects of the degrees ensure that the institution’s curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the purpose, goals, and certificates/degrees delivered.

Chipola’s degree programs are compatible with its mission which states in part:

Chipola is a comprehensive public college whose mission is to provide accessible, affordable, quality educational opportunities…

Chipola provides the following:

• Educational programs which include general and pre-professional classes leading to the Associate in Arts degree for transfer into baccalaureate degree programs;
• Selected baccalaureate degree programs which produce educated and capable professionals;
• Workforce Development programs leading to Associate in Science degrees, Associate in Applied Science degrees, and Certificates of Training to prepare students for careers; . . .

As detailed in the Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog, the degree programs offered by Chipola are the ones contained in its mission statement (2a; 2b).
Florida Degree Program Requirements

Florida educational statutes, rules, and Department of Education (DOE) policies and procedures mandate that the requirements of **CR 2.7.2** – Program Content be met.

- Florida Statute and Administrative Rules mandate that the minimum semester hour general education requirements are the same at all public community colleges and universities in the state: at least 36 semester hours for AA and BS degrees and at least 15 for AS and AAS degrees ([3]; [4]).
- The Florida system of higher education ensures articulation from the Division of Community Colleges (DCC) to the State University System (SUS) in statute and policy. The Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) is a K-20 advisory body appointed by the Commissioner of Education. The ACC exists to coordinate ways to help students move easily from institution to institution and from one level of education to the next. The ACC works with the DOE to ensure that programs offered in public institutions of higher education in Florida embody a coherent course of study and are appropriate to higher education ([3]; [5]; [6]).
- The State Course Numbering System (SCNS), “created in the 1960s, is a key component of Florida's K-20 seamless system of articulation. The system provides a database of post-secondary courses at public vocational-technical centers, community colleges, universities, and participating nonpublic institutions. The assigned numbers describe course content to improve research, assist program planning, and facilitate the transfer of students” (SCNS webpage). This mandate for the SCNS is in statute and administrative rule. Therefore, all courses offered at community colleges and universities are appropriate to higher education. Information about the SCNS is available on the SCNS website and on pages 88-89 in the Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog ([3]; [7]; [8]).
- Florida Administrative Rule 6A-10.0242 establishes procedures for distinguishing lower division (freshman or sophomore) courses from upper division (junior or senior) courses and identifying the level appropriate to each course. Chipola and all other public institutions of higher education adhere to these classifications. Offering courses that increase in level and complexity as the student progresses helps ensure that degree and certificate programs embody a coherent course of study ([8]; [9]).
- The FDOE places a high priority on providing a seamless transfer for every student from a public community college into a Baccalaureate program at a public college or university. The Common Prerequisite Manual for Public Institutions is published by the DOE and details common lower-level prerequisites for all Baccalaureate degrees offered by public institutions of higher education in the State of Florida. Chipola follows the requirements detailed in the manual thus ensuring that the courses of study for students are coherent and appropriate to higher education. The manual is included on the FACTS.org website and in hard-copy form. (FACTS.org is an acronym for Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students) ([3]; [5];
Chipola College Degree Programs

Chipola College offers Bachelor’s degrees, Associate degrees, and Certificates. Each of these degrees/certificates is made up of coherent courses of study beginning with freshman level work and progressing to higher level work that requires critical thinking and other higher-level skills and understandings. The degree programs strike a coherent balance of general education studies and the study of a specific subject or skill area chosen by the student. The certificate courses of study adhere to state-approved frameworks and prepare students to enter the workforce, typically after one year of study. In all cases, the fields of study have been identified by the FDOE and Chipola’s Curriculum and Courses of Study Committee, faculty and administrators as appropriate to higher education (4).

Chipola’s Student Services Department maintains and updates Curriculum Guides for all of Chipola’s programs. These guides clearly show the recommended coherent sequence of courses for each Chipola program, beginning with the first semester of the freshman year. In addition, for many of the Baccalaureate degrees offered at the five universities to which most Chipola students transfer, there are university-specific curriculum guides showing the sequence of courses to be taken the first two years at Chipola (11).

Chipola College offers four BS degrees: Mathematics Education (6 – 12), Biology Education (6 – 12), Middle School Mathematics Education (5 – 9), and Middle School Science Education (5 – 9). The State of Florida has established very specific and rigorous guidelines and standards for all teacher education programs (TEP). All public TEPs must go through a stringent application process to receive state approval. (All of Chipola’s TEPs are state approved.) The application requires demonstration of a coherent and appropriate course of study for each teacher education degree. Much of the upper level courses of study is prescribed by the State, thus ensuring consistency among TEPs across all public institutions of higher education (12).

In accordance with State requirements, Chipola’s BS degrees require satisfactory completion of at least 36 general education courses in the areas of Communications, Humanities, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Social Science, nine hours of prerequisite teacher education courses, and appropriate subject area courses to equal 60 semester hours. In the junior and senior years students must complete 60 semesters hours of state-mandated professional education, methods and subject area courses. The course of study ends with a semester-long student teaching experience in which students apply all they have learned before in a real teaching situation. The length of each BS program is 120 semester hours. Curriculum guides for the BS teacher education degrees are available on the Chipola website and on pages 60 – 65 in the Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog (3; 11; 13).
In addition to the four Bachelor in Science degrees, Chipola College also offers Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Applied Science degrees and Certificates in several Workforce Development fields.

The Associate in Arts degree requires at least 36 semester hours of general education credit in the areas of Communications, Humanities, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Social Science. Students must take additional courses, to total at least 60 semester hours, required for their major when they transfer. For any given major or degree, these prerequisites are the same across all Florida community colleges and universities as detailed above. Information about the AA degree requirements is detailed on pages 66 – 72 of the Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog. Curriculum guides detailing these prerequisites are available on Chipola’s website ([1]; [15]).

The courses of study in all Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degrees, Associate in Science (AS) degrees and Certificates are based on state approved curriculum frameworks that have been established for all Workforce Development program areas. Chipola and all other community colleges in Florida develop their AS/AAS degree and certificate program content based on these frameworks which have been carefully formulated to embody coherent courses of study that are appropriate to higher education as well as satisfy employment credentialing ([16]).

The AS and AAS degrees and certificate programs prepare students to enter specific occupations upon graduation. The degree requires the successful completion of at least 15 semester hours of general education credit in the areas of Communications, Humanities/Fine Arts, Social/Behavioral Sciences, and Natural Science/Mathematics. Students must take additional courses, to total at least 60 semester hours, in courses required for the degree ([3]).

In accordance with state statutes and professional standards and requirements, Certificate programs in Florida community colleges do not have a general education component. The Certificate programs are both credit and clock-hour and teach the skills that individuals will need to enter the workforce.

Curriculum guides detailing the sequence of courses for each AS, AAS, and Certificate program are available on the website and on pages 72 – 84 and 114 – 134 in the Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog ([1]; [17a]; [17b]).

Documentation:

[1] Chipola College Mission Statement
[2a] Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog, pp. 60-84
Florida Statutes, Section 1007.25. General Education Courses; Common Prerequisites; and Other Degree Requirements

Chipola College Board Policy Number 2.050: General Education

Rule 6A-10.024 - Articulation Between and Among Universities, Community Colleges, and School Districts

Articulation Coordinating Committee website

State Course Numbering System website

Florida Statutes, Section 1007.24. Statewide Course Numbering System

Rule 6A-10.0242 - Procedures for Determining the Level at which Courses Shall be Classified

Common Prerequisite website

Chipola College website - Curriculum Guides

Rule 6A-5.066 – Approval of Educator Preparation Programs

Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog, pp. 60-65

Standard Length for Associate and Certificate Programs

Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog, pp. 66-72

Curriculum Frameworks website

Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog, pp. 72-84

Chipola College 2006-2007 Catalog, pp. 114-134