

## **Plan to Improve the Timeliness and Accuracy of Data Received from Community Colleges <sup>1</sup>**

Under the special provision, local community colleges must comply with the annual reporting requirements, and by October 30, 1998, the State Board of Community Colleges must develop and implement a plan to improve the timeliness and accuracy of the data to be reported by the colleges. In response to the reporting requirement in the special provisions, the State Board of Community Colleges adopted the following plan.

1. The Information Needs Committee, with representation from each of the System Office's divisions and college representation, will develop a process for receiving and approving requests for the reports and data files required from the colleges. This committee will develop and recommend to senior staff of the System Office an annual reporting plan that will include all reports and files mandated by the General Assembly, the Administrative Code, the State Board of Community Colleges, or the federal government. If external funding for the Department of Community Colleges or one or more of the community colleges is contingent upon a report, then the report or file may be included on the annual reporting plan.
2. The annual reporting plan will list in chronological order by due dates all standard, required reports and files that the colleges must submit to the System Office. The annual reporting plan will be distributed to the colleges by July 1 of each year and will be posted on the Web ([www.ncccs.cc.nc.us](http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us)). The Information Needs Committee will update the annual reporting plan each year for distribution to the college campuses by June 30.
3. The System Office will post on the Web site ([www.ncccs.cc.nc.us](http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us)) the annual schedule for publication of standard reports (Annual Statistical Report, A Matter of Facts, etc.) produced by System Office staff for use by the colleges, the General Assembly and its staff, and others.
4. Each president will designate a data coordinator who will work with campus personnel and the System Office staff to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of reports and data files submitted. The System Office will assign similar responsibilities of data coordination to one person.
5. The Information Services Section will implement a quality improvement plan for IIPS software, which is used by 58 of its 59 institutions for their financial systems and by 56 colleges for their student information systems. Much of the programming to produce the data files and reports is accomplished by System Office staff. Therefore, the programs must be error-free in order for the colleges

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<sup>1</sup>Approved by the State Board of Community Colleges on October 16, 1998; Amended February 19, 1999.

to produce their reports and files. The goal is to reduce errors in new releases of the IIPS software. A key element in improving the software quality and services to the colleges is the new positions requested in the 1998 budget.

6. The System Office will post on the Web site the status of colleges' submission of data and reports that are on the annual reporting plan. It will also post the status of reports listed on the System Office's annual schedule.
7. Campus data coordinators will notify their presidents when reports or files are late, incomplete, or inaccurate. Reports and files are expected to be complete and accurate upon submission to the System Office. A three-day grace period will be given before posting a report or file as past due. After two weeks, the Vice President for Administration will notify the local college president of any report or file on the annual reporting plan that is past due or is incomplete or inaccurate. After thirty calendar days, any report or file that has not been submitted or does not meet quality standards based on edits will be considered delinquent.

Assuming that all data required for the reports have been submitted within the 3-day grace period, System Office reports will be held to the same standard: reports that are more than 30 days late will be considered delinquent.

8. Presidents must submit a report to the president of the North Carolina Community College System for each delinquent report or file. The report must contain the following information: (1) An explanation stating the reasons for the report or file being late, incomplete, or inaccurate; and (2) an action plan for correcting the problem.

System Office staff who are responsible for any report that is classified as delinquent must submit a similar report to the NCCCS president, providing an explanation and an action plan.

9. The Vice President for Administration will review the reports with action plans and discuss recommended actions with senior staff. The president will notify college presidents of any further action.
10. Financial penalties for delinquent reports and files shall be imposed beginning with the 1999-2000 year. Colleges that have one or more reports that are past the due date by 30 or more calendar days will not use State funds to pay the president until all delinquent reports are submitted and meet standards for accuracy. If the college fails to comply, the college's State allotment for June will be reduced by an amount equivalent to the number of months that reports are delinquent multiplied by the monthly salary of the president. The president of the North Carolina Community College System can make exceptions when extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the college president are documented. It is expected that colleges will take corrective actions during the 1998-99 year in order

to avoid punitive measures.

11. An annual report will be presented to the Policy Committee of the State Board of Community Colleges at each July meeting. For each report and file on the Annual Reporting Plan, the number of colleges failing to submit the report within the three-day grace period and in acceptable form (accepted by the System Office within a week of due date or submission date if submitted after the due date) will be reported. Also the report to the Policy Committee will include a list of delinquent reports and files for each college and for the System Office.

The plan for improving the timeliness and accuracy of data and reports may be revised as a result of the Policy Committee reviewing the annual report.

12. The System Office staff will use the analysis to identify areas for improvement and will develop an action plan for 1999-2000 to address concerns of the Policy Committee.
13. The plan will be implemented as a pilot through 1998 and fully implemented January 1, 1999. Delinquent reports or files will be identified beginning January 1, 1999.