

6.2.c For each of its educational programs, the institution assigns appropriate responsibility for program coordination. (*Program coordination*)

Rationale and Notes

Because student learning is central to the institution's mission and educational degrees, the faculty has responsibility for directing the learning enterprise, including overseeing and coordinating educational programs to assure that each contains essential curricular components, has appropriate content and pedagogy, and maintains discipline currency.

The definition of an academic program under this standard should parallel that found in Standard 6.2.b (*Program faculty*). To repeat:

For purposes of this standard, an academic program is a credential as defined by the institution. A degree with a defined major is clearly a program. The [Institutional Summary Form Prepared for SACSCOC Reviews](#) should be consistent with how programs are defined within this standard. Academic organizational structures do not always follow academic program structures, although in many cases they will overlap significantly.

By requiring that “the institution assigns appropriate responsibility,” there is an expectation that persons responsible for overseeing the curricular content aspects of program coordination are qualified in fields appropriate to the curricular content (and degree level) of the program. The importance of ensuring the quality of educational programs is the essence of this standard.

Thus the assignment of responsibility does not necessarily imply the department chair or the dean of a division is the person with the responsibility. Consider the example in Standard 6.2.b of a technical studies division including programs in welding, automotive repair, and web design. Who is responsible for curricular coordination in welding? Who is responsible for curricular coordination in automotive repair? Who is responsible for web design? The division chair is responsible for many aspects of program management—scheduling classes, for example. But unless that chair is an extremely broadly educated and trained person, it is doubtful the chair can serve the program coordination function in its entirety. In such cases, there may be faculty (not the chair) who have such curricular responsibilities. If responsibility for coordinating curriculum development and review are assigned to persons other than faculty with qualifications in fields related to the content, the institution would need to provide appropriate documentation and explanation as to how the quality of the educational program can be maintained. The institution also should describe program coordination for interdisciplinary programs, specifically related to curriculum development and review by representative faculty with appropriate expertise.

Questions to Consider

- How does the organizational structure of academic units affect the assignment of appropriate responsibility for program coordination?
- If the organizational structure does not track the content of curricula, how is appropriate input gained from those with expertise in the field?

- Do coordinators have qualifications appropriate for the degree level of the program (e.g., undergraduate, master's, doctoral)?
- In what sense are these responsibilities “assigned”?

Sample Documentation

- Roster of program coordinators, their area or areas of responsibility, and their qualifications for coordinating the designated program(s).
- Description of coordinator responsibilities.
- Wording in contracts, faculty handbooks, or other documents that outline program coordination responsibilities.
- Academic organization charts and narrative that clarify coordination responsibilities.
- Examples of appropriate coordination of curricular content, especially when it does not fit the organizational charts.

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

SACSCOC document: [Institutional Summary Form Prepared for SACSCOC Reviews](#)
[Full Time Faculty Guideline](#)

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

Standard 6.2.a (*Faculty qualifications*)

Standard 6.2.b (*Program faculty*)

- 6.3** The institution publishes and implements policies regarding the appointment, employment, and regular evaluation of faculty members, regardless of contract or tenure status. (*Faculty employment and evaluation*)

Rationale and Notes

Since the members of the faculty direct the learning enterprise of an academic institution and are responsible for assuring the quality of the academic programs, it is imperative that the institution maintains an effective system of appointing faculty members, continuing faculty members in employment, evaluating the quality of their work, and if necessary, discontinuing faculty. Appropriately approved processes should be in place and the institution should be able to show it consistently follows its own policies and procedures.

Policies relating to appointment of faculty would entail areas such as search processes, who has authority to make offers of employment, and how contractual relationships are established. Policies