



## POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

NUMBER: 1.3034<sup>2</sup>

DIVISION: Academic Affairs

TITLE: Student Recruitment Materials Review

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REVISED: November 1, 2015, September 30, 2016

AUTHORIZED: David D. Lee, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

### I. Purpose and Scope

Federal **and SACSCOC** requirements stipulate that recruitment materials, **web site**, and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices and policies. **Additionally, all members of the WKU campus share a collective responsibility to ensure the standards outlined in Policy 8.104V are followed.** It is particularly important that materials designed for prospective students be factual and clear regarding important issues such as admissions policies, curricular offerings, degree requirements, and tuition, fees, and other expenses.

### II. Policy

**Units who produce marketing materials are responsible for ensuring their materials are accurate, consistent, and current.** All student recruitment materials shall be reviewed for accuracy and consistency with university policies before release, including posting to a university web site. This includes information contained in brochures, flyers, compact disks, videos, web pages, or any other print or electronic medium.

### III. Procedure

General admissions/recruitment materials such as those developed by the Office of Admissions, **International Enrollment Management**, and the Financial Aid/Scholarship Office **shall be reviewed by the Office of Enrollment Management are the responsibility of Chief Enrollment and Graduation Officer (or designee), and/or the Dean of the Graduate School** in consultation with the appropriate college dean as necessary. Materials developed at the program/department level **shall be reviewed in the office are the responsibility** of the appropriate college dean. ~~General admissions/recruitment materials such as those developed by the Office of Admissions, and the Financial Aid/Scholarship Office shall be reviewed by the Office of Enrollment Management in consultation with the appropriate college dean as necessary.~~ Materials

describing ~~graduate programs and/or~~ distance/distributed learning shall be reviewed by the ~~Dean of the Graduate School and~~ the Associate VP for Extended Learning and Outreach (or designees). All materials shall comply with branding standards set forth in WKU Policy 8.104V, and are subject to approval by the Chief Marketing Officer.

Materials developed by external partners on behalf of WKU shall also fall under this policy, and be similarly reviewed prior to release.

A file of approved materials indicating approval date shall be maintained in each dean's office or in the Office of Enrollment Management for a period of three years. In keeping with best practices, program/departamental web sites shall should be periodically reviewed at the departmental level at least annually to assure that the most current information is reflected.

#### IV. Reason for Revision

November, 2015

Non-substantive changes as part of the five year policy review per Policy 0.000V Policy on Policies.

September, 2016

Clarify scope and approval chain of materials falling under this policy, and include reference to related policies.

#### V. Related Policies

8.104V WKU Logo Usage; Communication, and Branding

SACSCOC Recruitment Materials Requirement 4.6

#### Appendix

SACSCOC Policy Statement - Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status



*Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
Commission on Colleges  
1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097*

## **ADVERTISING, STUDENT RECRUITMENT, AND REPRESENTATION OF ACCREDITED STATUS**

### **Policy Statement**

All accredited higher education institutions, or individuals acting on their behalf, must exhibit integrity and responsibility in advertising, student recruitment, and representation of accredited status. Responsible self-regulation requires rigorous attention to principles of good practice.

#### **Advertising, Publications, Promotional Literature**

1. Educational programs and services offered by the institution are the primary emphasis of all advertisements, publications, promotional literature, and recruitment activities.
2. All statements and representations are clear, factually accurate, and current. Supporting information is kept on file and readily available for review. In the case of programs that are awaiting SACSCOC approval and inclusion in the institution's accreditation, the institution's communication with both external and internal constituencies clearly and consistently represent the program(s) as "pending approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges."
3. An institution may choose to maintain its official publications electronically. If that is the case, the institution clearly designates the electronic version of these documents as official and develops policies and procedures for revising and archiving these documents.
4. Official publications are readily available and, where appropriate, accurately depict:
  - institutional purposes and goals
  - admission and enrollment requirements and procedures for all types of students (e.g., first-year, transfer students, dual enrollment, transient, etc.) and basic information on programs and courses, with required sequences and frequency of course offerings explicitly stated
  - general education requirements demonstrating that the general education component is at the collegiate level and (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. Publications incorporate the specific general education courses included in the three areas of knowledge: humanities and fine arts, social and behavioral sciences, and natural sciences and mathematics. Publications include student options for selecting general education courses and, in particular, those considered pure humanities/fine arts to assure the courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification if it allows for fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit of general education courses. degree and program completion requirements, including length of time required to obtain a degree or certificate of completion

- special programs, including international study, credit by examination or advanced placement
  - institutional facilities readily available for educational use
  - rules and regulations for conduct
  - tuition, fees, and other program costs, including any fees associated with verification of student identity related to distance or correspondence education
  - opportunities and requirements for financial aid
  - policies and procedures for refunding fees and charges to students who withdraw
  - current academic calendars and grading policies
5. In official publications describing career opportunities, clear and accurate information is provided on any unique requirements for career paths, or for employment and advancement opportunities in the profession or occupation described.

### **Student Recruitment for Admissions**

1. Student recruitment is conducted by well-qualified admissions officers and trained volunteers whose credentials, purposes, and position or affiliation with the institution is clearly specified.
2. Independent contractors or agents used by the institution for recruiting purposes are governed by the same principles as institutional employees.
3. Institutions are required to follow federal guidelines regarding compensation for student recruitment and admission activities.
4. Institutions avoid the following recruitment practices in order to comply with the *Principles of Accreditation* and U.S. Department of Education regulations:
  - a. assuring employment unless employment arrangements have been made and can be verified,
  - b. misrepresenting job placement and employment opportunities for graduates,
  - c. misrepresenting program costs,
  - d. disparaging comparisons of secondary or postsecondary institutions,
  - e. misrepresenting abilities required to complete intended program, and
  - f. offering money or inducements other than educational services of the institution in exchange for student enrollment. (Except for awards of privately endowed restricted funds, grants or scholarships are to be offered only on the basis of specific criteria related to merit or financial need.)

### **Representation of Accredited Status**

1. The term “accreditation” is used only when accredited status is conferred by an accrediting body.
2. No statement is made about possible future accreditation status or qualification not yet conferred by the accrediting body. Statements like the following are not permissible: “(Name of institution) has applied for candidacy with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges;” OR “The (program name) is being evaluated by the National Association of \_\_\_\_\_ and it is anticipated that accreditation will be granted in the near future.”
3. Any reference to state approval is limited to a brief statement concerning the actual charter, incorporation, license, or registration given.

4. The phrase “fully accredited” is not used, since partial accreditation is not possible.
5. When accredited status is affirmed in institutional catalogs and other official publications, it is stated accurately and fully in a comprehensive statement. (See Comprehensive Standard 3.14.1 in the *Principles of Accreditation*.)
6. The accredited status of a program is not misrepresented.
  - a. Accreditation granted by an institutional accrediting body has reference to the quality of the institution as a whole. Since institutional accreditation does not imply specific accreditation of any particular program in the institution, statements like “this program is accredited,” or “this degree is accredited,” are incorrect and misleading.
  - b. “Free-standing” institutions offering programs in a single field (e.g., a school of art, engineering, or theology) and granted accreditation by a regional or national institutional accrediting body alone, clearly state that this accreditation does not imply specialized accreditation of the programs offered.

**Document History**

*Approved as a Guideline: Executive Council, June 1985*

*Edited in accordance with the Principles of Accreditation: June 2004*

*Updated in accord with the revised Principles: December 2006*

*Approved Revision as a Policy: SACSCOC Board of Trustees, June 2014*