

Academic Policy Revisions and Development

Published 6/1/2018 by [Ashley Ribbel](#)

in the **June 2018 issue**

One of the key projects for Academic College Council (ACC) over the 2017-2018 academic year has been revising the existing academic policies and developing new policies to fill gaps.

Seneca's current Academic Policy document has developed over several decades. Our approach in the past was to have it in one comprehensive document (now existing only as a web-based document) consisting of both policy and procedural elements and a number of appendices. Over the years, changes to the policy document have been driven by changes to systems, issues identified by various groups, or issues identified by regulatory requirements, to name a few.

The recent College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) audit identified policy review and audit trail, as well as gaps in policy, as areas for improvement. Since then, Seneca has moved to transferring all college policies to a new policy template. This new template ensures that we have a revision history, a review timeline, definitions, and a clear separation of policy and procedure for each policy. ACC discussed the current academic policy document and recommended that Seneca begin the process of uncoupling the academic policy document into several distinct policies with associated procedures.

It started with an environmental scan and analysis to benchmark Seneca's existing policy elements against a selection of colleges and universities for the purposes of identifying similarities, differences, and gaps. ACC then began its comprehensive review of the academic policy document. They examined each element of the document and determined which ones were policies and should be converted to the policy template. The review revealed that many of the articles in the current academic policy document are informational or procedural pieces that belong in other documents. Once the policies were separated and put into the policy template, ACC could better identify which policies needed to be revised and which new policies needed to be developed.

The following sections of academic policy were revised as individual policies:

- Admissions
- Transfer Credit
- Prior Learning Assessment Recognition
- Course Outlines
- Residency Requirement
- Libraries
- Copyright
- Full Disclosure on Transcripts

A few policies are still being revised: Attendance and Participation, Academic Integrity, Academic Appeals, and Grades and Examinations.

And two policies have been developed to fill a gap identified in the CQAAP audit: the Employee Academic and Professional Credential policy, and the Student Assessment policy.

These new and revised policies will be available when Seneca's new policy portal launches (end of July 2018) and will be effective September 2018. In the meantime, these policies are posted on the website.

One of the new policies developed this year is the Student Assessment policy. The CQAAP audit panel recommended Seneca develop an institution-wide student assessment policy that outlines the expectations of assessment practices for:

- Relative weighting of assessments
- Adequate assessment and feedback by certain points of the course (e.g., before the withdrawal deadline)
- Variety of assessment methods
- Promptness of communicating assessment marks
- Provision of constructive, developmental feedback

This policy provides a framework for student assessment and supports consistent assessment and evaluation practices across Seneca.

View the [June 2018 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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tags : academic-policy, committees, june-2018