SUBJECT: Ensuring Access to Student Services

Tactics:

<u>Quality 2.3.1</u>-Ensure that universities use Quality Scorecard or a similar process to confirm that online students, including online students with disabilities, have access to services equivalent to those used by campus-based students.

<u>Access 1.1.6</u> - Retain fully online students by implementing best practice strategies, such as academic coaches, success coaches, analytics, and early alert interventions.

Background: To provide quality online degrees and to meet accreditation requirements, universities need support services for online students that are equivalent to those offered for on-campus students.

Recommendations:

The Student Services Workgroup worked with the Florida Virtual Campus' Access Committee to develop (1) a scorecard to evaluate support services for postsecondary students taking most or all of their courses off campus and (2) an accompanying guidebook.

Institutions can use the results of the scorecard to identify strengths and weaknesses of various services essential to the success of this subset of students. The scorecard has been tied to the Southern Association of College and Schools Commission of Colleges 2012 SACS-COC Edition of the Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement Core Requirements (SACS-COC, 2011). With the close association to the Core Requirements, the Off-campus Student Support Scorecard may be used as supporting documentation for SACS-COC visits.

The scorecard has 44 quality indicators within 11 different categories. Each of the indicators is worth 2 points. The 11 different categories include admissions, financial aid, preenrollment advising, veterans' services, career counseling, orientation, postenrollment services, library, students with disability services, and technology support. Each category has a broad description of the activities. The guidebook gives a description of the areas followed by the indicators used to measure the quality of the service provided. That is followed by a list of suggested practices in meeting the needs of the online students. Examples are then provided from research, as to possible ways to implement services in that area to meeting the needs of off-campus students.

Timeframe for Implementation:

Universities will begin using the Scorecard during summer 2017, with an analysis of results being presented to the Steering Committee in December 2017. The Scorecard will be presented to the Online Learning Consortium Conference in 2018 (the OLC, a consortium of online leaders worldwide, has already expressed interest in reviewing the Scorecard and having it presented during its conference).

Supporting Documentation Included: None

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