



**SOUTHERN**  
WV COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

**ACADEMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
HANDBOOK  
2025-2026**

(Updated 2.16.2026)

The College's mission:

*Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College provides accessible, affordable, quality education and training that promote success for those we serve.*

The College's vision:

*Southern aspires to establish itself as a model of leadership, academic excellence, collaboration, and occupational training, equipping its students with the tools necessary to compete and prosper in the regional and global economies of the twenty-first century.*

Southern's institutional commitments:

*As a comprehensive community and technical college, Southern is committed to providing:*

- *Developmental and pre-college level education for those who lack the necessary academic background for direct entry into college-level courses.*
- *Programs of study leading to the associate in arts and the associate in science degrees, which can be effectively transferred and applied toward the baccalaureate degree.*
- *Programs of study in career and technical fields leading to a skill-set certification, certificate degree and/or the associate in applied science degree for entry into the workforce.*
- *Workforce development, continuing education and training programs that support the needs of employees and employers and serve as a mechanism for economic development.*
- *Support services that assist students in achieving their education and training goals.*
- *Community interest programs and activities that promote personal growth and cultural enrichment.*

Southern's core values:

*We will accomplish our mission by:*

- *Achieving excellence in education and service.*
- *Exhibiting integrity in all that we do.*
- *Collaborating and communicating actively with others.*
- *Imparting passion and compassion to our every task.*
- *Leading by encouragement and support of lifelong learning.*
- *Embracing change through bold actions.*
- *Being creative and innovative at all levels.*

- *Initiating opportunities for the community.*
- *Celebrating success.*

**The following programs have an advisory committee<sup>1</sup>:**

- Business Accounting
- Business Administration
- Criminal Justice
- Early Childhood Development
- Electrical Engineering Technology
- Information Technology
- Medical Laboratory Technology
- Nursing
- Paramedic Science
- Radiologic Technology
- Respiratory Care Technology
- Salon Management Cosmetology
- Surgical Technology
- Welding
- Workforce

**Purpose of a Community Advisory Committee**

The primary purpose of a community advisory committee is to assist Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College’s faculty, staff, and administration in creating, operating, and evaluating academic programs by providing constructive feedback. Individual advisory committees are established for specific professional and technical programs leading to both associate degrees and certificates. Advisory committees are critical in ensuring that the academic program is current, relevant, and adequately preparing students to meet the industry’s needs. Although there may be national standards and licensure requirements, advisory committees provide the College with the expertise to fully understand what knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions employers are looking for in future employees.

**Benefits of Community Advisory Committees to Students and Southern**

- Ensuring program relevance – since industry needs are ever-evolving and changing to stay more competitive, advisory committees are critical in keeping professional and technical programs aligned with students’ preparation and employers’ needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Every program in the Division of Allied Health and Nursing is required by their respective accrediting bodies to have an advisory committee.

- Ensuring program quality – advisory committees provide important information on workplace expectations and needs thereby improving faculty instruction by keeping them current in the field.
- Identifying and engaging partners while developing advocates – advisory committees can help academic programs establish, engage, and maintain relationships with business partners and develop meaningful relationships that benefit all involved.
- Tapping into expertise – advisory committee members possess specific skill-sets that can be useful to improving the academic program.

### **Benefits of Membership in Community Advisory Committees**

- Creating a future workforce - many industries are facing critical shortages of suitable workers. Active participation on an advisory committee is an important investment in maintaining a qualified workforce.
- Networking and the importance of building connections – an advisory committee built on shared interests and goals is an ideal venue for peers to connect and build relationships.

### **Role of Community Advisory Committee Members**

- Review program goals and outcomes.
- Review program curriculum to ensure alignment with workplace standards and employer needs.
- Evaluate Program Reviews and student learning assessment data and make recommendations based on this information.
- Review and recommend equipment need and facility improvements.
  - Identify potential donation sources as it relates to supplies, equipment, or funds needed to enhance program quality.
- Inform Southern about changes and trends in the industry and local workforce, including safety standards, technical expertise, and inform faculty of the needs for new or updated equipment and best practices.
- Assist in promoting the program and identifying work-based learning and job opportunities for students and graduates.
- Act as a communication link between the program and the community it serves.

### **Size and Composition**

In general, community advisory committee membership should ensure adequate representation from pertinent industry and educational feeder programs. See the **Qualifications of Members** section below for more information.

The advisory committee membership for each program in the Division of Allied Health and Nursing contains representatives from all the clinical education centers that partner with Southern to train students. Clinical Education Center participation is essential in

identifying specific needs relative to their institution as well as recognizing the most current skills needed using the latest technologies available.

### **Qualifications of Members**

Ideally, advisory committee members from business, industry, and educational feeder programs will have:

- understanding of the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions required for successful employment in the occupation.
- current and relative occupational experience and expertise in the industry.
- understanding of the economic, regulatory, and educational climates that impact the industry.
- sincere interest in influencing occupational education and training to ensure a skilled workforce.
- influence to offer work-based learning opportunities and to hire graduates.

### **Term of Office**

Membership should be staggered (recommend three-year terms) to allow new members while retaining some experienced representatives thereby ensuring continuity.

### **Meetings of the Committee**

Community Advisory Committees will meet annually during the spring semester. Every effort will be made to have it on the first Friday of March. Additional meetings may be called when special circumstances warrant.

### **Operation of the Committee**

- A quorum shall consist of 50% +1 of the total voting members present at that time. A vote should not occur without a quorum being present.
- Unless the committee requires and approves a controlling operational procedure, consider Robert's Rules of Order as the procedural method and authority.
  - the formality of the Committee operations is at the discretion of the Committee membership as a whole.
- Whenever necessary the Committee Chair may call a special meeting to expedite urgent issues, or to ensure compliance with an internal or external obligation or regulation.

### **Chairperson/Responsibilities**

The community advisory committee will be chaired by a Southern employee who will serve as a liaison between the committee, program/department personnel, and College administration. Responsibilities include:

- Provide leadership and direction to the Committee to advance the work of the academic program and College in pursuing its vision, mission, institutional commitments, and core values.
- Create agendas and conduct meetings.
- Effectively manage Committee meetings.
- Ensure the Committee does not make recommendations outside its advisory powers.
- Provide clerical support, including minutes.

#### Co-Chairperson/Responsibility

The co-chairperson shall be an external community member elected by a majority vote of the committee members and will serve a three-year term. Responsibilities include:

- Be familiar with all duties and responsibilities of the chairperson.
- Assume the above-mentioned duties in the absence of the chairperson.

#### **Committee Member Responsibility**

Responsibilities include:

- Uphold Southern's mission, vision, institutional commitments, and core values. ○  
These statements will drive the activities of the advisory committee.
- Dedicating adequate time and energy to attending, actively engaging in, and respectfully listening in meeting topics.
- Acting with integrity and supporting the best interests of the academic program and College.

#### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

At least once every four (4) years, the advisory committee will perform an analysis of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the program. This analysis is designed as an evaluation tool for use in the preliminary stages of decision-making processes while examining both internal and external factors influencing the program.

**Strengths** are internal things your academic program does particularly well and distinguishes you from others.

**Weaknesses**, like strengths, are internal to your organization, e.g., people, resources, systems, and procedures. Think about what you could improve as well as current practices you should avoid. Also, determine how other people in your discipline view you.

Strengths	Weaknesses

The results of the Analysis should be summarized in an *Analysis Paper* with an introduction including the objective and focus of the analysis. In the next two paragraphs, describe the strengths and weaknesses that you prioritized in your chart.

### **Minutes**

All advisory committee meetings and advisory committee membership lists must be documented in official minutes. The following are suggestions to creating meeting minutes:

- Use and/or modify the attached minutes template (see below).
- Document those who were and were not present at the meeting.
  - Circulate a sign-in sheet.
- Document actions and their sponsors. Clearly articulate any advisory role decisions made and, when applicable, document motions to approve and vote outcomes.
- If plans are established, document responsible parties and timetables for deliverables.
- Do not document discussions.
- Include handouts or images of information presented on a whiteboard or flip chart.
- Write the minutes as soon after the meeting as possible.
- The administrative assistants/program coordinators will complete/retain advisory committee minutes in the Division Dean's Office.

**Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College**

**Date**

**Time/Place**

**Community Advisory Committee Minutes**

**Name of Program**

**Members Present:**

**Members Absent:**

- 1. Verification of Quorum and Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
- 4. Old Business**
- 5. New Business**
- 6. Reports/Updates**
- 7. Other**
- 8. Adjournment and Next Meeting.**

## **Agenda**

Community advisory committee agendas will be prepared by the chairperson. The agenda, list of committee members (including organization and title), and other relevant information will be disseminated by the chairperson via email in advance of the scheduled meeting. Use and/or modify the following agenda template.

**Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College**  
**Date**  
**Time/Place**  
**Community Advisory Committee Agenda**  
**Name of Program**

- I. Introductions
  - All committee members share name and affiliation.
- II. Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes (when applicable)
- III. Program Updates from Current Year
  - Topic examples may include new or updated textbooks, changes to program or course curriculum, work-based learning opportunities, guest speakers, field trips, student projects, new or updated transfer opportunities, trends in student behavior, challenges, etc.
- IV. Industry Trends & Changes
- V. Review of Program Courses and Curriculum
  - How well is Southern's program aligning with workforce expectations, industry standards, labor demands, etc.?
  - Is the program equipped to handle projected changes coming in the next 5 to 10 years?
  - What skills do students need to have upon graduation and do Southern graduates have those skills? Feedback to improve students
- VI. Update of Student Learning Assessment
  - General Education, program, and course assessment results (including action plans and closing the loop results)
  - Program Outcomes: pass rates, completion rates, and job placement rates
- VII. Analysis
  - See pages 6-7 for explanation.
  - Strengths/ Weaknesses