



SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

In accordance with accreditation standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges, a substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Substantive change includes high-impact, high-risk changes and changes that can impact the quality of educational programs and services. Institutions are required to notify or secure SACSCOC approval prior to implementing a substantive change. Depending on the nature of the substantive change, institutions must provide the required information outlined in [SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedures](#). The different types of substantive change, the specific procedure to be used for each, their respective approval/notification requirements, and their reporting time lines are included in the table that follows. Please read the full text under the appropriate procedure for details regarding reporting.

Type of Change	Required Notification and/or Approval	Committee Visit	Substantive Change Restriction	Fee	Required Documentation
Institutional Changes					
Acquisition (sale, exchange, transfer of a component of an institution’s or entity’s assets to a SACSCOC accredited institution)	Notification and Prior Approval of Full Board of Trustees	Required	No	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
Acquisition Types:					
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	Notification required at least 6 months before review date; Prior approval required	Required	No	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
Acquiring assets, including programs and sites, from another institution or entity					
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution					
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution					

<p>Changes in Measure of Student Progress to Completion (includes changes from or to: semester, trimester, or quarterly academic calendars; time-based (i.e., calendar-based) or non-time based (i.e., competency-based) measures; and clock hour-based or credit hour-based measures)</p>	<p>Prior Approval of the Executive Council of the Board required</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)</p>
<p>Competency-based Education by Course/Credit-based Approach – Institutional-level Approval (An institution’s first program in which 50% or more of the program may be earned through the course/credit-based approach to CBE requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation. This approves both the program and approves the institution to offer additional course/credit-based. Additional new Competency-based programs follow new program substantive change policy)</p>	<p>Prior Approval of the Executive Council of the Board required</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)</p>
<p>Distance Education – Institutional Level Approval (An institution’s first program in which 50% or more of the program may be earned by distance education requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation. Additional new</p>	<p>Prior Approval of the Executive Council of the Board required</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)</p>

Distance Education programs follow new program substantive change policy)					
Governance Change (A governance change may include significantly altering governing board bylaws, the board's scope of authority or responsibility, the number of board members, or how board members are selected.)	Notification and Prior Approval Full Board of Trustees required	Required	No	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
Institution Closure	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board required	No	No	No	Teach-out Plan submitted as soon as possible after the closure becomes known or expected.
Institution Relocation	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board required	No	No	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
Institutional Contingency Teach-out Plan Required: if the institution is placed or continued on probation for good cause by SACSCOC; if SACSCOC acts to end the institution's accreditation; if the institution is placed on provisional certification for federal financial aid by USDOE and has been directed by USDOE to submit a teach-out plan as a condition of participation; the institution is on reimbursement for	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board required	No	No	Yes	Contingency Teach-out Plan, as soon as one of the requirements is met. A contingency teach-out plan is created in due diligence as a precaution rather than as an imminent closure plan. Should closure become necessary, the contingency teach-out plan becomes the institution closure plan, subject to revisions as warranted.

<p>federal financial aid by USDOE; the institution is on heightened cash monitoring for federal financial aid by USDOE; the institution is subject to USDOE emergency action to limit, suspend, or terminate the institution's participation in federal financial aid; or, the institution's state authorization is revoked.</p>					
<p>Level Change (Following the approval of a level change by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, the institution may not initiate an additional program(s) at the newly approved level until after the SACSCOC Board of Trustees takes positive action on the institution's continued accreditation following review of the report of the substantive change committee visit authorized at the time of approval.)</p>	<p>Prior Approval Full Board of Trustees required</p>	<p>Required</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Substantive Change Level Application Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)</p>
<p>...Exceptions: Embedded associate degree that is not a significant departure</p>	<p>Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Substantive Change Level Application Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level</p>
<p>...Exceptions: Embedded associate degree that is a significant departure</p>	<p>Prior Approval Full Board of Trustees required</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Substantive Change Level Application Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)</p>

<p>...Exceptions: Embedded Specialist degree</p> <p>(If an institution with an approved Ed.D. program subsequently chooses to combine existing graduate-level coursework already being offered as part of an Ed.D. program into a separate and coherent Ed.S. program curriculum, review of a level change application to authorize awarding the Ed.S. degree may be reviewed by SACSCOC staff and referred to the Executive Committee of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for action.)</p>	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	No	Yes	Substantive Change Level Application Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level
...Exceptions: Level V to Level IV	SACSCOC President	No	No	No	Letter to SACSCOC President
Merger/Consolidation	Notification at least six months prior to Board Meeting, and Prior Approval Full Board of Trustees	Required	No	Yes	<p>Notification six months prior to Board of Trustees Meeting date at which prospectus will be reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the planned change • Intended implementation date • Intended SACSCOC Board of Trustees meeting (June or December) and year for which prospectus will be submitted <p>Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)</p>
Mission Change Significant change in mission that	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	No	Yes	Prospectus

fundamentally alters the character of an institution and its portfolio of academic programs or other mission-driven activities					
Ownership, Means of Control, or Legal Status Change	Notification at least six months prior to Board Meeting, and Prior Approval Full Board of Trustees	Required	No	Yes	Notification six months prior to Board of Trustees Meeting date at which prospectus will be reviewed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the planned change • Intended implementation date • Intended SACSCOC Board of Trustees meeting (June or December) and year for which prospectus will be submitted Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
Prison Education Program – Institutional-level Approval (Federal PEP provides Pell Grant access to confined or incarcerated students. Participation in the federal program is voluntary. To participate, institutions must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter into an agreement with an oversight entity • Secure SACSCOC PEP Institutional-level approval • Secure federal approval 	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	Required	Yes	Yes	Prospectus

Program Changes					
Clock-Credit Hours Conversion	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	No	No	Prospectus
Competency-based Education by Direct Assessment –					
...Approval (50% or more may be earned through direct-assessment approach)	Prior Approval Full Board of Trustees	Required	No	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
....Notification (25-49% may be earned through direct-assessment)	Notification	No	No	No	Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of program • credential, instruction level • affirmative statement that at least 25% but not more than 50% may be earned through direct assessment approach, implementation date
Cooperative Academic Arrangements					
...with Title IV Entities	Notification	No	No	No	Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affirmative statement that institution will record credits under the arrangement on its academic transcripts as awarded by the institution • demonstrate institution's determination that the entity or entities are title IV entities • explanation of conditions met that require arrangement to be submitted as notification

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program(s) for which the credits will apply • copy of signed and dated memorandum explain scope • implementation date
..with Non-Title IV Entities -- Approval	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	Yes	Yes	Prospectus
..with Non-Title IV Entities – Notification	Notification	No	Yes	No	Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affirmative statement that institution will record credits under the arrangement on its academic transcripts as awarded by the institution • name and credential of each program to which credits earned under the arrangement will apply • maximum percentage of the total program requirements that will be earned under the agreement (identify by program) • demonstrate institution’s determination that the entity or entities are non-title IV entities • statement of institution’s intent for students enrolled to be eligible to receive title IV federal financial aid the portion of each program that will be eligible • copy of signed and dated memorandum explain scope

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> names and contact information of the principal parties at the institution and at each participating entity provisions for regular review of agreement intended implementation date
Correspondence Education	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	No	Yes	Submit: Discussion of Mission, Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty, Institutional Effectiveness, Library and Learning Resources, Student Services, and Facilities and Finances
Dual Academic Awards	Notification	No	No	No	Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> name of each participating institution program name (discipline) and credential instructional level copy of signed and dated memorandum of agreement between all participating institutions to include terms, scope, and responsibilities of each names and contact information of the principal parties at the institution and at each participating institution statement affirming the academic award granted by the SACSCOC accredited institution complies with Standard 9.4 or Standard 9.5 intended implementation date

Joint Academic Award					
...with non-SACSCOC Institution(s)	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	No	Yes	Prospectus
...with SACSCOC Institution(s)	Notification	No	No	No	Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copy of signed and dated memorandum of agreement between all participating institutions • name of the program (to clearly indicate the discipline) • credential to be awarded • instruction level • name and contact information for the primary responsible party at each institution • intended implementation date
Method of Delivery					
<p>...Approval</p> <p>Three methods of delivery are: competency-based education, distance education, and face-to-face instruction</p> <p>(A specific method of delivery applies when 50% or more of a program is delivered by that method. A program may be delivered 50% or more by more than one method)</p> <p>Note: applies to an institution on Substantive Change Restriction or an institution with a SACSCOC PEP</p>	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	Yes	No	Prospectus

program – Institution-level adds, for the first time, a method of delivery not previously used in its PEPs					
<p>...Notification</p> <p>Three methods of delivery are: competency-based education, distance education, and face-to-face instruction</p> <p>(A specific method of delivery applies when 50% or more of a program is delivered by that method. A program may be delivered 50% or more by more than one method)</p>	Adding a method of instructional delivery to an existing program requires notification prior to implementation	No	Yes	No	<p>Submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of program (discipline) • credential to be awarded • instructional level • method of delivery to be added • intended implementation date
New Program					
<p>...Approval</p> <p>A new program with 50-100% new content is a significant departure from the institution's existing programs and requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation.</p>	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	Yes	Yes	Prospectus
<p>...Notification</p> <p>A new program with 25-49% new content is a significant departure from the institution's existing programs and requires notification prior to implementation.</p>	Notification	No	Yes	No	<p>Submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of the program (discipline) • credential to be awarded • instructional level • affirmative statement that the new program consists of 25-49% new content not previously offered by the institution at the new program's instructional level • planned method of

					delivery • intended implementation date
Program Closure (Includes closure at a location, but continues to be offered at other locations), or by method of delivery but continues to be offered by other methods of delivery	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	No	No	Teach-out Plan
Program Designed for Prior Learning					
...Approval This requirement applied to institutions on Substantive Change Restriction	Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board	No	Yes	Yes	Initiating a program requiring students to possess prior learning as a condition of admission requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation only for institutions currently on SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION. For all other institutions, notification is required but approval is not. Prospectus
...Notification	Notification	No	Yes	No	Initiating a program requiring students to possess prior learning as a condition of admission requires notification prior to implementation. Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of program (discipline) • credential to be awarded • instructional level • description of prior learning required as condition of admission • description of how the institution:

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ will assess prior learning ○ award credit, if applicable, for prior learning, ○ how faculty participate in the assessment of prior learning, ○ how the faculty involved in the assessment of prior learning are qualified in the disciplines in which credit for prior learning is awarded, ○ how the institution, with faculty involvement, periodically assess third parties on which it relies for prior learning assessment, if applicable ● intended implementation date
<p>Program Length Change</p> <p>A change in program length – for either an increase or a decrease – requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation if -- program credit hours (or an equivalent or comparable measure of progress such as clock hours or demonstrated competencies) increase or decrease by 25% or more – AND -- students' expected time to completion increases or decreases by more than one term or its equivalent or comparable measure.</p>	<p>Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board</p>	No	Yes	Yes	Prospectus

Program Re-open	Notification	No	No	No	Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of program (discipline) • credential • instructional level • closure date (date of last admission) of the program submitted to SACSCOC for closure approval • Case ID, or if no case ID, a copy of the SACSCOC approval letter • statement of assurance that the institution has adequate instructional space and equipment, financial resources, library and learning/information resources, student, support services appropriate to the programs, and faculty members qualified in the programs discipline to support the re-opening of the program • intended implementation date
Program Changes					
Off-campus Instructional Site/ Additional Location Changes					
Off-campus Instructional Site Notification An off-campus instructional site at which 25-49% of a program's instruction is delivered requires notification prior to implementation.	Notification	No	No	No	Submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site name • physical address or location • intended implementation date

Off-campus Instructional Site Approval (including branch campus)					
<p>Extensive Review – Method One</p> <p>Required if the institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has less than two sites approved under the extensive review process, or has not successfully completed at least one reaffirmation of accreditation, or is on Substantive Change restriction 	Prior Approval by Full Board of Trustees	Contingent	Yes	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
<p>Extensive Review – Method Two</p> <p>Approval by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees based on inclusion and review at reaffirmation: An existing, approved site(s) that was (a) included as an approved site on the Institutional Summary Form submitted as part of the institution's on-site reaffirmation review and (b) reviewed by the on-site reaffirmation committee to include the site- and institutional-level extensive review requirements, will be considered approved by extensive review after the SACSCOC Board of Trustees takes positive action on the institution's reaffirmation.</p>	N/A	N/A		N/A	No action by the institution
Limited Review	Prior Approval of Executive	Contingent	Yes	Yes	Prospectus

<p>Approval of an off-campus instructional site by limited review is required if the institution, at the time a site prospectus is submitted to SACSCOC, has two or more sites approved under the extensive review criteria and process, and has successfully completed at least one reaffirmation of accreditation, and is not on Substantive Change restriction</p>	<p>Council of the Board</p>				
<p>Off-campus Instructional Site Relocation</p>					
<p>...Non-branch Campus</p>	<p>Notification</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name and address of site at current location • name and address of site at its new location • intended implementation date, i.e., effective date of move • statement stipulating that there will be no overlap of instruction at the two locations.
<p>...Branch Campus</p>	<p>Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Prospectus</p>
<p>Off-campus Instructional Site Name or Address Change</p> <p>An off-campus instructional address change differs from an off-campus instructional site relocation: an address change is an update or correction to an address but the</p>	<p>Notification</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current name and address of the site • new name and/or address of the site • intended implementation, effective date of change • statement stipulating the name and/or address change does not include a change

<p>physical location at which instruction is delivered is unchanged, whereas a relocation is moving instruction to a new location geographically separate from – i.e., non-contiguous to – the current location</p>					<p>of instructional location</p> <p><i>Alternate Method:</i> Site name and address changes may be directly made in the SACSCOC Institutional Portal without creating a substantive change submission. This alternate method applies to site name and address changes only; it is not an option for a site relocation.</p>
<p>Off-campus Instructional Site Closure</p>	<p>Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Teach-out Plan</p> <p>Submit as soon as possible after the institution decides to close a site.</p>
<p>Off-campus Instructional Site Re-open</p>	<p>Notification</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name and address of site as it appears on the SACSCOC letter approving the site’s closure • The date SACSCOC approve the site’s closure and either the Case ID or a copy of the approval letter • Name of site upon its re-opening • Intended implementation date of reopening • Statement: assuring the site remains appropriate for instruction and conducive for the specific type of instruction to be delivered at the site, including any specialized instructional equipment, materials, laboratories and supplies, and instructional support

					materials necessary; and assuring students at the site will have adequate access to student support services and library and learning/information resources appropriate to the instruction offered at the site.
<p>Implementation Extension</p> <p>An institution may request an implementation extension for cause for a previously approved substantive change. Except for substantive changes that must be implemented within 30 days as defined in policy, approved substantive change must be implemented within two years of approval. An implementation extension may be approved for a maximum of one year (365 days) beyond the policy-defined two year implementation limit commencing with the date the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approval of the substantive change. If the substantive change is not implemented by the end of the approved extension but the institution still wants to implement, then the institution must re-submit a prospectus for approval prior to implementation.</p>	<p>Prior Approval of Executive Council of the Board</p>	No	No	No	<p>Substantive Change Request: Implementation Extension</p>

The following process is used to ensure that the College timely and sufficiently notifies the Commission regarding forthcoming substantive changes.

1. Additions, Deletions or Changes in Programs or Courses

- A. In accordance with the [College Curriculum policy](#), the Curriculum and Program Development Office is responsible for the operational management of the curriculum review and development process. When a proposed new program or course represents a significant departure in content since last evaluated by SACSCOC, the Director of Curriculum and Program Development completes a [Substantive Change Review Form \(Form 1510/002\)](#) and submits it to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- B. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs reviews the Substantive Change Review Form to determine if the proposed program/course addition, deletion or change constitutes a substantive change as defined by SACSCOC.
- C. If the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs determines that a substantive change notification is necessary, he or she documents this on the form, and ensures SACSCOC is immediately notified in accordance with the notification requirements outlined in [SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedures](#).

2. Program Location Changes

- A. The [Deans' Council](#) is a college-wide planning group and advisory group composed of all Deans of academic divisions across the College. The Deans' Council addresses consistency in academic offerings, which includes any location change affecting a program. When the Deans' Council addresses the change, the Chair of the Deans' Council completes a [Substantive Change Review Form \(Form 1510/002\)](#) and submits it to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- B. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs reviews the Substantive Change Review Form to determine if the change constitutes a substantive change as defined by SACSCOC.
- C. If the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs determines that a substantive change notification is necessary, he or she documents this on the form, and upon approval by the Chancellor, ensures SACSCOC is immediately notified in accordance with the notification requirements outlined in [SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedures](#).

3. Substantive Institutional Changes

In the event that there are any changes at the institution that are significant, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs is responsible for documenting the change on the [Substantive Change Review Form \(Form 1510/002\)](#) and, upon approval by the Chancellor, ensuring that SACSCOC is immediately notified in accordance with the notification requirements outlined in [SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedures](#).

4. The State's Coordinating Board, the Board of Regents for Louisiana Higher Education, in their [Academic Affairs Policy 2.13](#), notes that "*an institution must report all disciplinary actions, such as warning, probation, or withdrawal of accredited status, and a brief explanation of the conditions and/or deficiencies that resulted in the action to the Board of Regents upon receipt of the official notification of the action by the agency.*" In addition to notifying SACSCOC and the Board of Regents, the College must notify all federally recognized programmatic accreditors of any change of accreditation status, including the imposition of public sanctions, imposed by SACSCOC or another accrediting agency.

Form Attachment:

[Substantive Change Review Form \(Form 1510/002\)](#)

Cancellation:

Academic Procedures - SACSCOC Substantive Change Notification Procedures,
Procedural Update dated 2/9/15

Policy Reference:

[Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges Substantive Change Procedures](#)

Board of Regents for Louisiana Higher Education [Academic Affairs Policy 2.13](#)
Delgado Policy and Procedures Memorandum 1510.1A, [The College Curriculum](#)

Policy Review:

Academic Affairs Council 9/15/10

Vice Chancellor for Learning and Student Development 9/27/10

SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedural Update Approved by Vice Chancellor for
Academic Affairs 2/9/15

SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedural Update Approved by Vice Chancellor for
Academic and Student Affairs 8/11/21

SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedural Update Approved by Vice Chancellor for
Academic Affairs 11/20/24