



SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

In accordance with accreditation standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), a [substantive change](#) is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Substantive changes require timely notification to the President of the Commission. Notifications must summarize the proposed substantive change, and depending on the nature of the substantive change, 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.

Types of Change	Procedure	Prior Notification Required	Time Frame for Contacting COC	Prior Approval Required	Documentation
Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved	1	NA	NA	Yes	Application for Level Change Due dates: April 8 or September 15
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>)	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of "branch campus" on p. 3 of this document.)	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Relocating a main or branch campus	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Letter of notification with new address and starting date
Initiating degree completion programs	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice					
...using existing approved courses	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
...at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)	1	NA	NA	Yes	Modified prospectus
...that is a significant departure from previously approved programs	1	Yes	Approval required prior to implementation	Yes	Modified prospectus

Types of Change	Procedure	Prior Notification Required	Time Frame for Contacting COC	Prior Approval Required	Documentation
Initiating other certificate programs					
...using existing approved courses	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
...at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus
...that is a significant departure from previously approved programs	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution	1	NA	NA	Yes	Contact Commission Staff
Initiating joint or dual degrees with another institution: (See "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards" policy")					
Joint Programs: with another SACSCOC accredited institution	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution
Joint Programs: with an institution not accredited by SACSCOC	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Dual Programs	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school)					
Student can obtain 50% or more credits toward program	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus
... Student can obtain 25-49% of credit	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Letter of notification
... Student can obtain 24% or less	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Types of Change	Procedure	Prior Notification Required	Time Frame for Contacting COC	Prior Approval Required	Documentation
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites					
...Adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
...Adding approved programs that ARE significantly different from current programs <u>at the site but NOT at the institution</u>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs <u>at the site AND at the institution</u>	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Altering significantly the length of a program	1	NA	NA	Yes	Modified Prospectus
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	1	NA	NA	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information
Initiating a direct assessment competency-based program	See SACSCOC Policy "Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs"	Yes	6 months	Yes	Submit "Screening Form" with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required, due dates: April 8 or September 15.
Initiating distance learning...					
Offering 50% or more of a program <u>for the first time</u>	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus
...Offering 25-49%	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification
...Offering 24% or less	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement

Types of Change	Procedure	Prior Notification Required	Time Frame for Contacting COC	Prior Approval Required	Documentation
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs					
...if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the COC accredited institution	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus
...if the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the COC accredited institution	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Copy of the signed agreement
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	See SACSCOC policy "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status"	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: April 8 or September 15
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution	See SACSCOC policy "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status"	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: April 8 or September 15
Acquiring any program or site from another institution	See SACSCOC policy "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status"	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing	See SACSCOC policy "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status"	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus

Types of Change	Procedure	Prior Notification Required	Time Frame for Contacting COC	Prior Approval Required	Documentation
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution					
...Institution to teach out its own students	3	Yes	Immediately following decision to close	Yes	Description of teach-out plan included with letter of notification
...Institution contracts with another institution to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)	3	Yes	Immediately following decision to close	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement detailing terms included with notification

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 and Student Affairs.
- B. The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student 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 and Student 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 and Student Affairs.

- B. The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student 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 and Student 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 and Student 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