

I 06 00 SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

POLICY:

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. The reporting and review of substantive change is required by the SACSCOC to ensure that the scope of programs offered by the institution, as well as the structure and organization of the institution, have undergone appropriate review by SACSCOC.

This policy is applicable to all college units, divisions, centers and campuses. The college's Accreditation Liaison, the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning, and Assessment, has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented; however, all individuals responsible for initiating activities that may be considered within the scope of substantive change are required to be familiar and comply with this policy and Standard 14.2 of the Principles of Accreditation.

Under federal regulations, substantive change includes:

- Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
- Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the institution was last evaluated
- The addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution's current accreditation or reaffirmation.
- A change from clock hours to credit hours
- A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program.
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution

- Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution
- Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution's program.

The SACSCOC Board of Trustees has approved additional substantive changes that require notification and, in some cases, approval prior to implementation. This policy and its procedures address substantive changes identified through Federal regulations and SACSCOC Board approval.

Certain substantive changes require prior notification to the SACSCOC. Other substantive changes require submission of a substantive change prospectus for approval prior to the implementation of the change. Other substantive changes may require on-site committee review by the Commission. The college's Accreditation Liaison, in consultation with SACSCOC policies and staff, determines the applicability of these means of notification, approval, and review to the proposed institutional change activity.

The following policies and procedures are established to ensure timely reporting of substantive changes to the Commission.

1. The responsibilities for reporting substantive change are regularly communicated to all college faculty and staff by means of the President's Cabinet Minutes, Curriculum Committee agendas and Curriculum Committee minutes.
2. The Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning and Assessment serves as an ex-officio member of the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee is the body with primary responsibility for decisions regarding the college curriculum.
3. The form for submission of Curriculum Committee agenda items contains a line item for mandatory review of SACSCOC requirements that may be associated with the submitted action item.
4. All proposals for new and/or revised academic programs submitted to the Tennessee Board of Regents for approval include a line item for mandatory review of SACSCOC requirements that may be associated with the submitted proposal.
5. Each Vice President is responsible for working with their respective divisions and departments to provide information to the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning and Assessment concerning any actions in the areas of academic programming and delivery, off-site expansions, and all other areas falling within the governance of SACSCOC Standard 14.2.
6. To ensure that SACSCOC substantive change policy updates are regularly reviewed by multiple college stakeholders for applicability to college operations, the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning and Assessment will bring all changes to the President's Cabinet.

7. The Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning and Assessment will conduct a comprehensive review of proposed college policy changes, will evaluate the changes for potential impact on college operations and report to SACSCOC as needed.

Failure to comply with the SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures subjects the College to serious consequences, including the possible loss of Title IV funding or the necessity to reimburse the U.S. Department of Education for money received for programs related to unreported substantive change. Additionally, the College may be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction or, in the most serious case, removal from membership.

SACSCOC Source: Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions

VSCC Source: President's Cabinet, July 23, 2018