

H. Council Trenholm State Community College

Policy Name:	SACSCOC - Substantive Change Notification Policy
Effective:	February 3, 2014
Revised:	December 7, 2016
Approved by Policy Committee:	Yes – 12/12-2016
Approved by President’s Cabinet:	March 19, 2014; June 15, 2017

As Standard 3.12.1 of the Compliance Certification document suggests, TSCC must submit a notification of substantive change to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) prior to implementation of the change. This policy establishes a procedure to assist in recognizing what constitutes a substantive change, as well as a procedure to approve the change and notify SACSCOC in a timely manner.

TSCC Policy Statement on Substantive Change Notification

All substantive changes will be reported to the SACSCOC on a timely basis consistent with the Commission's policy on substantive changes.

Definition of Substantive Change

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution, as defined in SACSCOC substantive change policy. 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 programs

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 Board approval.

The Commission on College's substantive change policy may be accessed at <http://sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>.

Substantive Change Notification Responsibilities

Trenholm State Community College's accreditation liaison is responsible for coordinating the College's substantive change notification actions. The College's liaison will present an overview of the Commission on Colleges’

substantive change policy to the President's Cabinet at the beginning of each academic year and inform the Cabinet of important updates as necessary.

In addition, the SACSCOC liaison will consult with the President of the College and the President's Cabinet concerning strategic initiatives that may be classified as substantive changes according to SACSCOC policy. It is the responsibility of the members of the President's Cabinet to inform the College's liaison of any initiatives that could potentially be classified as substantive changes and to present the initiatives to the Cabinet at least eight months prior to implementation. Some initiatives may require earlier notice.

Procedures for Reporting Substantive Changes

1. In consultation with the College's SACSCOC liaison and the President's Cabinet, initiatives presented to the Cabinet will be reviewed based on SACSCOC substantive change policy.
2. The College's SACSCOC liaison will prepare a timeline for each approved initiative that has been identified as a substantive change, including when the College will submit the initiative to its governing board; when SACSCOC must be notified; and when any supporting documentation must be submitted to both agencies.
3. The Matrix of Substantive Change noted below details the different types of substantive changes. There are varied procedures, timelines, and documentation for addressing the different types of changes. Each procedure is detailed in the SACSCOC Policy Statement – “Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions” which is available at: <http://sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>.
4. The President of the College will notify the Commission on Colleges of a substantive change in the form of a letter to the President of the Commission on Colleges summarizing the proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the complete physical address if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site or branch campus.
5. The College's SACSCOC liaison will work with the President's Cabinet in preparing any documentation required by SACSCOC on a timely basis in accordance with the Matrix of Substantive Change noted below.

Procedures for the following types of changes are included in a separate document, “Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status,” located on the SACSCOC website at <http://www.SACSCOC.org/subchg/policy/Mergers.pdf>

- initiating mergers or consolidations
- acquiring any program or site from another institution
- adding as a permanent location any site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that is closing
- changes in governance, ownership, means of control or legal status

The initiation or revision of programs not offered for academic credit and that are not eligible for federal financial aid does not require reporting; however, such programs are subject to review at the time of reaffirmation.

Procedures for Reporting: An Overview

There are three procedures for addressing the different types of substantive changes included in this document:

- Procedure One for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Approval Prior to Implementation (Notification may also be required).
- Procedure Two for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Only Notification Prior to Implementation (some changes also require submission of additional documents).
- Procedure Three for Closing a Program, Site, Branch Campus or Institution.

Reporting the Various Types of Substantive Change

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.

Matrix of Substantive Change

<i>Types of Change</i>	<i>Procedure or Policy</i>	<i>Prior Notification Required</i>	<i>Prior Approval Required</i>	<i>Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC</i>
Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved	1	No	NA	Application for Level Change Due dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)
Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer's request and not on short notice)	1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus See Appendix B Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>)				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site AND at the institution				
Initiating degree completion programs				
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of "branch campus" on p. 3 of this document.)				
Initiating distance learning by offering 50% or more of the first program for the first time				
Relocating a main or branch campus				
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 SACSCOC accredited institution				

<i>Types of Change</i>	<i>Procedure or Policy</i>	<i>Prior Notification Required</i>	<i>Prior Approval Required</i>	<i>Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC</i>
Initiating dual or joint degrees involving program expansion (significant departure) or initiating a new site where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program	See SACSCOC policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards”	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of this document) Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation Copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s) involved. See Policy
Initiating dual or joint degree with at least one institution not accredited by SACSCOC	See SACSCOC Policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards”	At least 6 months prior to implementation	Yes	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s). See Policy.
Initiating a direct assessment competency-based program	See SACSCOC Policy “Direct Assessment Competency Based Educational Programs”	Yes – Screening Form	Yes	Submit “Screening Form” with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required, Due dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)
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: December 15 (for June review); June 1 (for December review)	Yes	Cover Sheet Institutional Summary Form Prospectus (See Appendix in SACSCOC Policy: “Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status”) Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution				
Acquiring any program or site from another institution				
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing				

<i>Types of Change</i>	<i>Procedure or Policy</i>	<i>Prior Notification Required</i>	<i>Prior Approval Required</i>	<i>Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC</i>
Initiating a certificate program at a new off-campus site at employer's request and on short notice (previously approved program)	1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Modified prospectus Contact Commission Staff
Initiating a certificate program that is a significant departure from previously approved programs at employer's request and on short notice				
Adding a site under a U.S. military contract for a previously approved program				
Altering significantly the length of a program				
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution				
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	1	No	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information
Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)	2	Yes	No	Letter of notification with old address, new address, and implementation date
Initiating dual or joint degrees with other SACSCOC accredited institution(s)	See SACSCOC Policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards"	At least 6 months prior to implementation	No	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution. See Policy.
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	2	Yes	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the SACSCOC accredited institution				

<i>Types of Change</i>	<i>Procedure or Policy</i>	<i>Prior Notification Required</i>	<i>Prior Approval Required</i>	<i>Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC</i>
Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 25- 49% of credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer's request and not on short notice)	2	Yes	No	Letter of notification Including street address and implementation date
Initiating distance learning by offering 25-49 of the first program for the first time				
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans to teach out its own students	3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan included with letter of notification
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans contracts with another institution(s) to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)	3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement(s) detailing terms included with notification

<i>Types of Change</i>	<i>Procedure or Policy</i>	<i>Prior Notification Required</i>	<i>Prior Approval Required</i>	<i>Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC</i>
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice using existing approved courses and location	NA	No	No	NA
Initiating certificate program (not at employer's request and not on short notice) using existing approved courses and location				
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) where student can obtain 24% or less of credits toward a program				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved offcampus sites by adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved offcampus sites by adding approved programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site but NOT at the institution				
Initiating distance learning by offering 24% or less of any program for the first time				

Directions Table 1: Most substantive changes require the completion of a SACSCOC prospectus. If the substantive change identified in Table 1 requires a prospectus, complete Table 1 below. The completed Table 1 will provide an initial outline for the prospectus.

Table 1: Substantive Change Prospectus Outline

Transmittal Letter	Signed by an institutional representative which briefly explains the submission
“Cover Sheet for Submission of Substantive Changes Requiring Approval” form	http://www.sacscoc.org/forms/principle/subchange/Substantive_Change_Cover_%20Sheet.pdf
Cover Sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes name, phone number, and e-mail address of person to be contacted with questions regarding the prospectus • List degrees that the institution is authorized to grant. As a subset of each degree, list majors available (Photocopy from catalog is acceptable). • List certificate, diploma, and degree programs which are related to the proposed program(s) • A list of existing approved off-campus sites and their addresses. Note: an approved site is one for which a prospectus has been submitted and which SACSCOC has approved to offer 50% or more of a program. A site where 25-49% of a program is offered is not considered to be an “approved” site; it is a site for which only notification has been accepted by SACSCOC.
1. Abstract (limit to one page or less)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the proposed change with its date of implementation. • If a new program, identify where it will be offered. • If a new off-campus site or branch, list its complete physical address. • Provide projected number of students, if applicable. • Indicate the projected life of the program or site, if applicable (single cohort or ongoing). • Describe the primary target audience. • Describe the instructional delivery methods to be used. • Describe strengths of the institution to undertake this change.
2. Determination of Need for the Change/Relationship to Mission/Planning and Approvals for the Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution. • Describe the rationale and need for the program to include how the institution determined need. • Provide evidence of legal authority for the change if approval is required by the governing board or the state. • Provide documentation that faculty and appropriate other groups were involved in planning for and approval(s) of the change.
3. Required Information for the Specific Substantive Change (Select the Change Relevant to the Prospectus and Provide All Information Required for the Particular Change)	<p>For a NEW PROGRAM provide the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the curriculum for the program and a projected schedule of course offerings. • Provide specific programmatic goals (objectives) and specific student learning outcomes for the program. • Describe how the student learning outcomes for the program will be assessed. • Provide course descriptions for all courses in the proposed program. • Describe admissions and graduation requirements for the program. • Demonstrate compliance with FR 4.9 (Definition of Credit Hours) of the Principles of Accreditation.

- Describe administrative oversight to ensure the quality of the program.
- For a program offered in compressed time frames, describe the methodology for determining that levels of knowledge and competencies comparable to those required in traditional formats have been achieved.
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach in the program.

For a NEW OFF-CAMPUS SITE OR BRANCH CAMPUS provide the following information:

- Identify whether the site is a branch campus or an instructional site. The definitions of “branch campus” and “instructional site” may be found on pages 5-6 of the Principles of Accreditation. See also Procedure One in the policy entitled “Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions”. Note: An institution is required to present itself and its sites to SACSCOC in the exact way it presents itself to the U.S. Department of Education.
- Describe the educational program(s) to be offered at the site or branch. If a program to be offered at the site or branch is a new program requiring approval, also respond to the requirements for a new program listed above.
- Describe any differences in admission, curriculum, or graduation requirements for students enrolled at the new site or branch or any special arrangements for grading, transcripts, or transfer policies.
- Describe how programs at the new site or branch will be monitored and evaluated and how they will be incorporated into the institutional evaluation and assessment processes.
- Describe the administrative structure for overseeing the site or branch campus.
- Describe how services and operations at the new site or branch will be evaluated.
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach at the site or branch campus.

For the OFFERING OF PROGRAM(S) VIA DISTANCE METHODOLOGY (ELECTRONIC OR CORRESPONDENCE) DELIVERY FOR THE FIRST TIME provide the following information:

- Describe the infrastructure to support distance delivery methods to include the learning management system and administrative structure for electronic delivery.
- Describe how faculty members will be trained in distance delivery methodology and how courses will be developed.
- Describe technical support for students enrolled in courses delivered by distance methods and technical support for faculty members.
- Describe how effectiveness of programs offered via distance delivery will be assessed.
- Document compliance with Comprehensive Standards 4.8.1, 4.8.2, and 4.8.3.
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach courses provided by distance methodology.
- Describe processes in place to ensure that students have structured access to faculty members.

For the INITIATION OF DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAMS provide the following information:

- Describe the degree completion program to include a description of how the degree completion program differs from the same program offered in traditional format.
- Describe how the institution ensures that student learning outcomes are the same for the program offered as a degree completion program as those for the program offered in traditional format.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe assessment methods for determining achievement of student learning outcomes for the degree completion program. • Describe admission requirements for students entering the degree completion program. • Describe the format for offering the degree completion program (for example, compressed format, accelerated format, etc.). • Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty members scheduled to teach in the degree completion program.
4. Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Faculty Roster Form for faculty members scheduled to teach in the new program, in a degree completion program, at a new site or branch campus, or in programs to be offered by distance methodology for the first time. Follow directions for completing the form which requires that the institution present the qualifications of each faculty member to teach the courses assigned to them. The form and instructions may be accessed at www.sacscoc.org under Institutional Resources or from a link on the Substantive Change page. • For a new program, the institution must demonstrate that it has at least one qualified faculty member to develop and/or teach discipline courses in the new program. Refer to Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 in the Principles concerning the determination of appropriate qualifications. • Provide narrative with supporting evidence that the number of full-time faculty members will be adequate to support the initiative and describe the impact on faculty workload of the new program, new site, or distance delivery. • Document scholarship and research capability of faculty members teaching in graduate programs and document faculty experience in directing student research.
5. Library and Learning Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List and describe discipline-specific learning resources to support a new program. Please do not list all resources located in the library if they do not relate to the specific change. • Document discipline-specific refereed journals and primary source materials. • If the institution is reliant on agreements with other libraries, provide a signed copy of each formal agreement and describe how the collections support the program(s). • Describe specifically how students enrolled in a new program and/or enrolled in a program at an off-campus location and/or enrolled in a distance education program access these discipline-specific learning resources. • Describe how students and faculty members will access information electronically. • Describe how faculty and students are instructed in the use of online resources as well as on site library resources. • Describe resources to support students in access to and use of learning resources. <p>Note: If electronic databases are listed, describe the discipline-specific suites of resources and not just the name of the database or the consortium through which it is accessed (such as Viva, TexShare, Galileo, Louis, etc.).</p>
6. Student Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe specific programs, services, and activities which will support students enrolled in the new program and/or enrolled at a new off-campus site and/or enrolled in distance education programs. Do not list student support services which are not relevant to the specific change.
7. Physical Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the adequacy of physical facilities which will support the change. • Describe equipment which will be available for a new program or available at a new site. • Describe the impact that the proposed change will have on physical facilities and equipment for existing programs

	and services.
8. Financial Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a business plan that includes all of the following (NOTE: This applies to ALL submissions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a description of financial resources available to support the proposed change, including a budget for the first year of the proposed change (a three-year budget is required for a new branch campus). Do not send a copy of the entire institutional budget. (b) projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow for the proposed change (c) the amount of resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services for the proposed change (d) the operational, management, and physical resources available for the change. • Provide contingency plans in the event that required resources do not materialize. <p>The institution must disclose if it is currently on reimbursement for Title IV funding.</p> <p>Institutions currently on sanction with SACSCOC for financial reasons must provide a copy of the audit for the most recently completed fiscal year.</p>
9. Description of Institutional Evaluation and Assessment Processes for the Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a brief description of institutional assessment processes. • Describe how the institution will incorporate the change (program, site, distance education or other change) into the institution-wide review and assessment processes.
10. Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendices may be used in hard copy (print) submissions to provide documentation supporting the narrative in the prospectus. • NOTE: In hard copy submission tabs must be provided identifying each appendix (by name or number) referenced in the narrative. • Links may be provided in electronic submissions to link to documentation supporting the narrative in the prospectus. Be sure links allow reviewers to return to the narrative.