

PROCEDURE:

2.3.5p. Substantive Change Reporting

Revised: September 18, 2013; March 19, 2014; March 18, 2015; March 16, 2016; March 15, 2017; March 20, 2019; March 17, 2021; March 16, 2022; March 15, 2023; March 20, 2024

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Adopted: June 19, 2013

I. PURPOSE

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accredits an entire institution and its programs and services, wherever they are located or however they are delivered. SACSCOC does not accredit individual programs, locations, or portions of an institution. However, some new programs, locations, and other institutional changes are subject to notification and/or approval as defined in SACSCOC's Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. 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.

It is the responsibility of Ogeechee Technical College to notify or secure SACSCOC approval prior to implementing a substantive change while adhering to the appropriate reporting requirements listed in the most current SACSCOC substantive change policy and its procedures.

Ogeechee Technical College notifies SACSCOC of changes in accordance with the Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes. SACSCOC is responsible for reviewing and when appropriate, approving all substantive changes that occur between the College's decennial reviews. The College is required to maintain a written procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to SACSCOC in a timely fashion.

II. RELATED AUTHORITY

State Board Policy 2.3.5. Technical College Substantive Change Reporting
SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures
Ogeechee Technical College Program Management Plan

III. APPLICABILITY

This procedure applies to Ogeechee Technical College.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Substantive Change: According to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) a substantive change is defined as a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes:

- Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of an institution or its programs.
- Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership of an institution.
- Changing the governance of an institution.
- Merging/consolidating two or more institutions or entities.
- Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution (including a branch campus).
- Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- Adding graduate programs at an institution previously offering only undergraduate programs (including degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other for-credit credential).
- Changing the way an institution measures student progress, whether in clock hours or credit-hours; semesters, trimesters, or quarters; or time-based or non-time-based methods or measures.
- Adding a program that is a significant departure from the existing programs, or method of delivery, from those offered when the institution was last evaluated.
- Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.
- Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
- Entering into a written arrangement under 34 C.F.R. § 668.5 under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the title IV Higher Education Act (HEA) programs offers less than 25% (notification) or 25-50% (approval) of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs.
- Substantially increasing or decreasing the number of clock hours or credit hours awarded or competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded, for successful completion of one or more programs.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.
- Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location including a branch campus.
- Adding a permanent location at a site at which an institution is conducting a teach-out program for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.
- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.
- Participating in the federal Prison Education Program providing Pell Grant access to confined or incarcerated students.

V. ATTACHMENTS

None.

VI. PROCEDURE

Responsibility for monitoring and reporting the various types of substantive change at Ogeechee Technical College is designated to individuals in their capacity to initiate, review, approve, and allocate resources to substantive changes.

When program/curriculum changes are being considered, the Dean for Academic Affairs is responsible for referring to the Program Management Plan in order to submit a program curriculum update, along with course curriculum updates, to the Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs (EVPASA) and the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness (VPIE) detailing all curriculum revisions. The EVPASA consults with the VPIE to determine the specific type of change and compiles any needed documentation. The EVPASA is responsible for ensuring that substantive changes requiring notification and/or approval prior to implementation are not initiated before SACSCOC notification and/or approval is granted. Once the specific type of substantive change has been determined, and all needed documentation has been compiled and approved, the VPIE follows the appropriate SACSCOC substantive change procedures and informs SACSCOC of substantive changes as specified in those procedures.

For new programs requested in the online Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Program Management System, the percentage of the program offered on a campus and the notification date to SACSCOC are required prior to submission to the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia for approval.

Programs approved for termination by the governing State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia or through the automatic TCSG Purge Process will also be submitted to the VPIE for SACSCOC notification.

The Dean for Academic Affairs is responsible for notifying the Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs immediately when the following type of substantive change is being considered:

- Adding a distance education program that is not currently on the TCSG Approved Program List for the College and not SACSCOC approved for Ogeechee Technical College.

According to the Substantive Change Policy and Procedures, each substantive change (for institutional changes, for program changes, and for off-campus instructional site changes) requires either:

- Notification,
- Approval, or
- Notification and Approval

For a substantive change requiring approval by the full Board of Trustees (which meets biannually), to be implemented after the date of the Board meeting, the submission deadlines are:

- March 15 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in June of the same calendar year, and
- September 1 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in December of the same calendar year.

For a substantive change requiring approval by the Executive Council of the Board of Trustees (which meets year-round)

— OR —

for a substantive change requiring notification only, the submission deadlines are:

- January 1 for changes to be implemented July 1 through December 31 of the same calendar year, and
- July 1 for changes to be implemented January 1 through June 30 of the subsequent calendar year.

Types of Substantive Changes

Institutional Changes

- Change in Measure of Student Progress to Completion
- Competency-based Education by Course/Credit-based Approach – Institutional-level Approval
- Distance Education – Institutional-level Approval
- Governance Change
- Institution Closure
- Institution Relocation
- Institution, Program, or Location Acquisition
- Institutional Contingency Teach-out Plan
- Level Change
- Merger / Consolidation
- Mission Change
- Ownership, Means of Control, or Legal Status Change
- Prison Education Program – Institutional-level Approval

Program Changes

- Clock-Credit Hour Conversion
- Competency-based Education by Direct Assessment – Approval
- Competency-based Education by Direct Assessment – Notification
- Cooperative Academic Arrangement
- Cooperative Academic Arrangement with Non-Title IV Entities – Approval
- Cooperative Academic Arrangement with Non-Title IV Entities – Notification
- Correspondence Education
- Dual Academic Award
- Joint Academic Award with non-SACSCOC Institution(s) or Entity(ies)
- Joint Academic Award with SACSCOC Institution(s)

- Method of Delivery – Approval
- Method of Delivery – Notification
- New Program – Approval
- New Program – Notification
- Program Closure
- Program Designed for Prior Learning – Approval
- Program Designed for Prior Learning – Notification
- Program Length Change
- Program Re-open

Off-campus Instructional Site / Additional Location Changes

- Off-campus Instructional Site Definitions and Guidelines
- Off-campus Instructional Site Notification
- Off-campus Instructional Site Approval (including branch campus)
 - Extensive Review
 - Limited Review
 - Committee Visits
- Off-campus Instructional Site Relocation
 - Non-branch Campus
 - Branch Campus
- Off-campus Instructional Site Name or Address Change
- Off-campus Instructional Site Closure
- Off-campus Instructional Site Re-open

Marketing, advertising, recruitment, and admissions: Substantive changes are subject to SACSCOC's Advertising and Student Recruitment policy. Marketing, advertising, and recruitment may start after a prospectus is submitted and before receiving approval provided the disclaimer statement of pending approval in the Advertising and Student Recruitment policy is clearly included in all marketing information. Admission applications may be taken, but admission offers – including contingent offers – should not be made until the substantive change is approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

The different types of substantive change, the specific procedure to be used for each, their respective approval/notification requirements, and their reporting timelines begin on page 12 of the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.

VII. RECORD RETENTION

All substantive change documentation will be maintained in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.