

College Operating Procedures (COP)



Procedure Title: SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedure
Procedure Number: 03-1604
Originating Department: Provost

Specific Authority:

Board Policy N/A
Florida Statute N/A
Florida Administrative Code N/A

Procedure Actions: Adopted: 02/11/2019; 01/11/2021;03/25/2022

Purpose Statement: The purpose is to ensure all substantive changes are reported to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in accordance with SACSCOC Policy.

Florida SouthWestern State College (College) is dedicated to the expansion of academic opportunities through the development and offering of programs and courses, in support of the College's mission. The College's SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will be consulted prior to beginning a process that results in a substantive change. Accordingly, the College's Accreditation Liaison is responsible for reporting any substantive changes to SACSCOC.

Substantive changes as defined by SACSCOC (December 2020) include but are not limited to:

- 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 increase 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.

Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of an institution to follow SACSCOC substantive change procedures and inform SACSCOC of substantive changes as specified in those procedures. Failure of an institution to gain approval for substantive changes involving programs that qualify for federal financial assistance could result in jeopardizing such funding.
2. It is expected that the College President or a designated representative will notify the SACSCOC President of substantive changes at the institution.
3. The College's Accreditation Liaison is responsible for ensuring compliance with substantive change requirements and notifying the Commission in advance of substantive changes and program developments in accordance with the substantive change policies of the Commission, overseeing the development of a substantive change notification letter, educating faculty/staff on the substantive change policy and procedure, working with related administrators on substantive change requirements, and serving as a point of contact between SACSCOC staff and the College.

Procedure:

1. Departments or divisions of the College proposing a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of FSW must first consult with the College's Accreditation Liaison who is responsible for reporting any substantive changes to SACSCOC.
2. Curriculum and Program change related program proposals are submitted to the department chair or program coordinator/director for endorsement following review of the proposal for accuracy and complete information.
3. Curriculum and Program change proposals are reviewed by the Registrar's Office, Team AASPIRE (Accountability, Assessment, Sponsored Programs, Institutional Research, and Effectiveness Team), Deans, and Curriculum Committee, with final approval by the Provost.
4. Any Curriculum and Program Change proposals requiring SACSCOC notification and/or approval are documented by Team AASPIRE who supports the Provost and SACSCOC Liaison in preparing the substantive change documents during the aforementioned process.
5. When considering a change, refer to the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policies and Procedures document located at:
<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf>
6. Updates to all Substantive Change policies, procedures and coversheets are available on the SACSCOC Web page <https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/substantive-changes/>. These approved SACSCOC guidelines supersede the information above and

the most recent guidelines must be reviewed and followed before submitting any Substantive Change notifications to SACSCOC.