

TCSG 2.3.5.1 Policy: SCTC Procedure Substantive Change

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Southern Crescent Technical College is committed to adhering to the policies and standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). SACSCOC has a substantive change policy that is driven by U.S. Department of Education Regulations (34 CFR 602.22). In accordance with this policy, Southern Crescent Technical College will notify and seek approval, when required, from SACSCOC prior to initiating any substantive change.

DEFINITION

A substantive change, as defined by SACSCOC, is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes the following:

- 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 a program or site from another institution;
- adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution; and
- 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.

It is important to note that this list provides a broad overview of examples and is not intended to be exhaustive. Additional substantive changes are identified in the SACSCOC Substantive Change for Accreditation Institutions of the Commission on Colleges Procedures and Policies.

OVERVIEW

It is the responsibility of colleges accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to report any significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of the college to SACSCOC while adhering to the appropriate reporting requirements listed in the most current SACSCOC substantive change policy and its procedures.

From the SACSCOC Substantive Change Website,
<http://sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChangeFAQs.asp>

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges accredits an entire institution, including all of its programs and services, wherever they are located or however they are delivered. The Commission is interested in significant changes that are occurring at member institutions because the scope of accreditation extends to the total college or university. Significant changes are illustrated in the Commission's policy Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions.

The most common substantive changes reported are new off-campus sites where 50% or more of the credits in a program are offered, offering for the first time 50% or more of an educational program delivered via technology-based instruction, and the addition of new site-based programs that are significantly different from current offerings (program expansion at the current level).

Some substantive changes require only prior notification to the Commission, some require prior notification and submission of a prospectus for approval, and some allow for the submission of a prospectus for approval to serve as the only notification of the change. In the Substantive Change Policy, changes requiring submission of a prospectus for prior approval are known as Procedure 1 changes, and those requiring prior notification but not prior approval are Procedure 2 changes. These are detailed in the policy document Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions.

Each college is required to develop and maintain a written procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission on Colleges in a timely fashion.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

To ensure that Southern Crescent Technical College (SCTC) adheres with SACSCOC Substantive Change reporting procedures, the SCTC SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will be consulted prior to the implementation of any change in program, delivery method, and location where coursework is offered. For other changes that may result in the need to notify SACSCOC (note Appendix I, Substantive Change Checklist for SCTC), the SCTC President or the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will report any substantive change to the Commission in accordance with the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy.

If a division or program area is considering a change to a program's length, its structure, its delivery mode, or the location where coursework is delivered, the Program Coordinator, Department Chair, or Dean should submit the proposed change to the Director of Curriculum by way of the Curriculum Management Request Form. The Director of Curriculum and the Curriculum Committee will review the proposed change against the Substantive Change Checklist

and with the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison to determine if the proposed modifications may constitute a substantive change. If the change meets the criteria for any level of change, as documented in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy, then the SCTC Accreditation Liaison will communicate with the SACSCOC Vice President for SCTC to ensure that proper notification procedures/documentation are followed well in advance of the change and within the timeline specified by SACSCOC. SACSCOC often needs notification 6-12 months prior to the implementation of a substantive change. It is important to be working ahead with SACSCOC before SCTC initiates any new changes. A cost for review from SACSCOC is also assigned to the substantive change review; this should be considered when developing budgets to support new programs. The SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will consult with the Dean, the Director of Curriculum and the Curriculum Committee concerning the fee structure that must be incorporated into budgets for program proposals.

If a Prospectus is deemed necessary to request the substantive change, the Dean, Program Coordinator, or Director of Curriculum will work with the Accreditation Liaison to ensure the Substantive Change Prospectus is completed. The Accreditation Liaison will be responsible for consulting with the initiating administrator on the level of the Prospectus (1 - 3), helping to develop the Prospectus, reviewing the Prospectus, and answering related questions. The Accreditation Liaison will make a recommendation to the President when the Prospectus is complete and standards are thoroughly covered. The Accreditation Liaison will then submit the Prospectus to SACSCOC following the guidelines set forth in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy.

Late Notification of Substantive Change: If a substantive change has occurred prior to notifying SACSCOC, the Chief Academic Officer and the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will work with the SACSCOC Vice President to understand how best to address the issue. Not reporting a substantive change can place the institution in jeopardy of its accreditation and ability to award federal financial funds.

Appendix I

Southern Crescent Technical College SACSCOC Substantive Change Checklist

SCTC's Academic Affairs Team (Deans, Director of Curriculum, and Curriculum Committee), Chief Academic Officer, and President are to review this checklist with any program or institutional/administrative change.

If a YES is checked for any entry, or it is not understood whether the change meets the guidelines or not, the SCTC Accreditation Liaison must review the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy at <http://sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf> and speak with the SACSCOC Vice President for SCTC.

Action or Process/Academic Program Change	Yes	No
Is this a new academic program, certificate, or diploma, or degree for SCTC?		
Is the new academic program, certificate, or diploma, or degree made up of a majority of new courses?		
Will SCTC be re-instating a credential-granting program?		
Will SCTC be discontinuing an academic program?		
Will SCTC be initiating distance learning for a program?		
Is this a new location where at least 50% of an educational program, certificate or degree will be offered? (Note some certificate programs have very few hours to the credential.)		
Will SCTC be discontinuing an approved off-campus site?		
Is SCTC moving an off-campus instructional site?		
Is there a substantial change in the number of credit hours required for a program?		
Is SCTC entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes a joint academic program with another institution?		
Is SCTC entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of SCTC's academic programs?		

Institutional/Administrative Change	Yes	No
Is SCTC altering the educational mission of the institution?		
Is SCTC merging with another institution?		
Is SCTC establishing a branch campus (separate budget and hiring authority)?		
Is SCTC changing from clock hours to credit hours?		
Is SCTC adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing?		