

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Title: SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE	Identification:	2.09
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	Effective Date:	8/30/16
Authority: FS 1001.64; 1001.65	Signature/Approval:	Dr. Ken Atwater

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to establish the requirements and processes necessary to ensure timely coordination and notification of substantive changes involving Hillsborough Community College to its regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The procedures comply with the SACSCOC [Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#) as well as the Commission's policies and guidelines. This procedure provides the operational detail to the corresponding college policy statement, "Substantive Change," as approved by its Board of Trustees.

Failure to report planned substantive changes can result in a loss of federal Title IV funding and institutional accreditation. In addition unreported change may be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction. For those reasons the following procedural guidelines are established.

PROCEDURE

A "substantive change" is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution as defined in the policy statement of [Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#).

SACSCOC is required by the federal government to monitor the compliance of its member colleges and universities with the substantive change policy and to grant permission for major changes to occur. The SACSCOC Board of Trustees requires notification of substantive changes as a condition of accreditation and, in some cases, approval prior to implementation. These procedures address substantive changes identified through federal regulations and those required through SACSCOC Board approval. A 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;

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- 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; 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.

Failure of the president to report these and other planned substantive changes (described in the table below) can result in loss of accreditation.

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Hillsborough Community College's responsibility is:

1. To notify SACSCOC of substantive changes in a timely manner; and
2. As required in select instances seek SACSCOC approval prior to implementing change.

Substantive changes occur at different levels of the college.

Program/Course Levels

- Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved
- Expanding at current degree level or developing a new general education program (*significant departure from current programs*)
- Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice
- Initiating other certificate programs
- Initiating joint or dual degrees with another institution
- Altering significantly the length of a program
- Initiating degree completion programs
- Closing an academic program (requires a teach-out plan)
- Closing an approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution (requires a teach-out plan for any affected programs at the site)

Institutional/Campus Levels

- Initiating a branch campus
- Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution
- Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution
- Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution
- Relocating a main or branch campus
- Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographical area)
- Changing from clock hours to credit hours
- 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
- Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school)
- Initiating distance learning (for the first time)

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- Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium
- Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs

Procedural Steps

Compliance with the following procedural steps is mandatory.

It is the responsibility of academic deans and directors, the vice president of academic affairs, campus presidents, and all other cabinet level officers to 1) possess a level of familiarity with college and SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures; 2) ensure that the accreditation liaison receives early notification when planning for a modification that may prove substantive; and 3) work with the liaison as needed to prepare substantive change documentation and reporting.

1. The liaison meets with the President's Cabinet in July and January of each year to a) review SACSCOC policy on substantive change and any revisions, b) examine the institution's current offerings and operations to ensure the college is in compliance with substantive change policy; and c) identify and discuss any possible changes planned for the college that might be substantive in nature.
2. Proposed changes are reviewed by the liaison to determine if they are substantive per SACSCOC policy and the specific substantive change procedure that applies (see the section below "Types of Substantive Change" and the tables to follow). The liaison consults with SACSCOC staff if there is uncertainty as to a potential substantive change.
3. The liaison and president are responsible for notifying the Commission of any substantive change.
4. If the Commission requires the institution to write a prospectus or prepare additional documentation beyond the letter of notification, the liaison works with the appropriate college administrators to complete these reporting requirements. The liaison works with the president in the submission of the prospectus. For those changes in which prior approval is required the prospectus must be submitted no later than January 1 for implementation between July 1 to December 31 and July 1 for implementation between January 1 to June 30 of the following year.
5. To further monitor changes at the program/course level, the liaison monitors all agenda items that come to the monthly meetings of the Technical Review Committee (TRC). The TRC reviews all agenda items prior to advancement to the Academic Affairs Committee for official consideration.

REVIEW AND DISSEMINATION OF COLLEGE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The accreditation liaison reviews SACSCOC policy, procedures, and related documents every July and January following the meetings of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. The college's substantive change policy and procedures are updated as needed to ensure current information is reflected.

The Hillsborough Community College Substantive Change policy and procedures as well as the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy are posted on the college website. The liaison disseminates the policy and procedures to all appropriate administrators when modifications are made.

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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. Always consult the college accreditation liaison who will have more detailed information regarding substantive change documentation required by SACSCOC.

There are three procedures for addressing different types of substantive changes. They are:

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

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.”](#) They are:

- 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; and
- changes in governance, ownership, means of control or legal status.

Procedures for approval of direct assessment competency-based education programs are in a separate document, [“Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs.”](#)

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.

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved	Procedure 1	No	Yes	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)	Procedure 1	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
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				

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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	<p style="text-align: center;">Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of this document)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation</p> <p>Copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s) involved. See Policy</p>
Initiating dual or joint degree with at least one institution <u>not</u> accredited by SACSCOC	See SACSCOC Policy “ Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards ”	At least 6 months prior to implementation	Yes	<p>Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s). See Policy.</p>
Initiating a direct assessment competency-based program	See SACSCOC Policy “ Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs ”	Yes – Screening Form	Yes	<p>Submit “Screening Form” with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Due dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)</p>
<p>Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution</p> <p>Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution</p> <p>Acquiring any program or site from another institution</p> <p>Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing</p>	See SACSCOC Policy: “ Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status ”	<p>Yes: December 15 (for June review); June 1 (for December review)</p>	Yes	<p style="text-align: center;">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”)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)</p>

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating a certificate program at a new off-campus site at employer's request and on short notice (previously approved program)	Procedure 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	Procedure 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)	Procedure 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	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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				
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)	Procedure 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	Procedure 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)	Procedure 3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement(s) detailing terms included with notification
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				

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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	NA	No	No	NA
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus 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				

History: Adopted 3/05/15