



Substantive Change Policy

Area:	Division of Academic Affairs	Number:	426
Applies to:	Division of Academic Affairs	Issued:	December 1, 2012
Sources:	Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions, Policy Statement	Revised:	October 1, 2014
		Reviewed:	August 9, 2018
Policy Owner:	Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs	Page(s):	3

I. Purpose

Georgia Southern University’s Substantive Change Policy follows the policies in effect at our accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) as well as at the University System of Georgia (USG). All campuses need to be aware of both of these policies when submitting curriculum changes; however, the Provost’s Office holds responsibility for communicating all substantive changes to the Board of Regents and SACSCOC on behalf of the President of Georgia Southern University.

II. Policy Statement

Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions, Policy Statement
(<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>)

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion in the nature and scope of an accredited institution. The types of substantive change and the procedures for addressing them appropriately may be found in the Commission’s Policy on Substantive Change. Substantive changes most likely to impact Georgia Southern campuses and units include the following.

- 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.
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program.
- 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.

Prospectuses for new programs of study must include a Faculty Roster (see Faculty Roster Instructions), presenting the qualifications of each faculty member in the program to teach the courses they are assigned.

It is expected that the President, or his or her designated representative, will notify the Commission President of substantive changes. Every institution has an Accreditation Liaison whose charge is to ensure compliance with accreditation requirements. The Accreditation

Liaison should take the time to become familiar with the Commissions' policies and procedures, ensure that substantive changes are recognized and reported in a timely fashion, and consult with the institution's COC staff member about any questions.

Certain types of substantive changes, such as adding branch campuses, level changes, mergers/consolidations, and changes in governance require a visit by a substantive change committee to determine continued compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*. When a committee visit has been authorized by the President of the Commission, the institution will be asked to provide documentation of the impact of the change on selected requirements in the *Principles of Accreditation*.

University System of Georgia Policy

http://www.usg.edu/academic_programs/changes/types_of_substantive_change_program_modification

Substantive change and/or program modification requests may be made on two different levels: curricular change or significant alteration of mission and academic priorities.

Curricular Change (Individual Program)

Curricular changes involve the substantive redirection of an academic program which has been precipitated by national norms, disciplinary norms, accreditation requirements for continued good standing, and other factors attributable to strengthening degrees and majors. Such action requires Board approval and generally depicts how the program has been revised to ensure that students receive content instruction that is conducive to successful outcomes.

The University System of Georgia's Substantive Change form is available at the following website: http://www.usg.edu/academic_programs/changes/ (see Substantive Change Form: Individual Program Curriculum Revision).

III. Exclusions

None.

IV. Procedures

Curriculum Substantive Changes

The Provost's Office reviews agenda items submitted and approved at the Undergraduate Committee and Graduate Committee meetings. This review includes identifying any actions which require the institution to communicate to the University System Office and/or SACSCOC. Working with the applicable unit, the Provost's Office sends this communication forward on the appropriate USG and SACSCOC forms, following institutional approval of the action in question.

Non-Curriculum Substantive Changes

For non-curriculum substantive changes, it is the responsibility of the institution's SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison to advise the Provost's Office of actions that need to be taken to remain in compliance with USG and SACSCOC. Typically, substantive prospectuses are not submitted to SACSCOC until the institution receives USG Board of Regents approval. Securing this approval can take several months. Moreover, most actions need to be submitted to SACSCOC at least 6 months in advance of the implementation date (see SACSCOC policy for specific timeframes). Given these timeframes, it is critical that units begin the process two or three years ahead of the actual implementation date.