

Wallace State Community College

Substantive Change Policy and Procedures

As a member institution of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Wallace State is required to notify the Commission of changes in accordance with the Commission's substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.

A "substantive change" is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Examples, although certainly not all incidences, of a substantive change may include:

- Offering 50% or more of a degree or program at an off-campus location, by instructional method or via distance education.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution.
- Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- 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, prior learning experience, or collaborative agreement.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location.

An institution is required to have a written substantive change policy and procedure. It must be approved through institutional processes and published in institutional documents accessible to those affected and to the public. The purpose of the institution's substantive change policy and procedure is to ensure all substantive changes are reported to SACSCOC in a timely fashion as required by Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. Institutions are responsible for implementing and enforcing their substantive change policy and procedure. Institutional review shall include, as a minimum condition of acceptance, review and approval of the Presidential Cabinet.

If an institution is non-compliant with the Substantive Change Policy and Procedures, its accreditation may be in jeopardy. Non-compliance subjects the institution to monitoring, sanction, or removal from membership. Failure to secure approval, if required, of a substantive change involving programs or locations that qualify for title IV federal funding may place the institution in jeopardy with the U.S. Department of Education, including reimbursement of funds received related to an unreported substantive change.

Procedures for Reporting a Substantive Change

The Wallace State SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison and the President are jointly responsible for notifying SACSCOC of any substantive change-related action or condition in accordance with the reporting protocols and schedules specified in the Commission policy statement “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges.” The President and Accreditation Liaison shall jointly act to consult with the Commission to resolve any questions of interpretation that may arise.

Procedure for Initiating Substantive Change Proposals at WSCC

- **New programs, degrees, certificates, curriculum or significant changes to a program or certificate**
 1. To propose this type of substantive change, the requestor shall follow the guidelines identified in the *Curriculum Development, Review and Approval* section of the Personnel Handbook. This includes submitting the *Substantive Change/Program Modification Form* to the Curriculum Committee as a component of the process.
 2. Should an official prospectus be required by SACSCOC, the Accreditation Liaison will work with the person initiating the change, the appropriate Dean, and Vice President, and President to provide guidance regarding the process.

- **Deactivated and closed programs and certificates**
 1. Responsibility for program deactivation/closure and development of a Teach-Out Plan (required) resides initially with the applicable department head or program coordinator.
 2. All such proposals must be approved by the applicable Dean, Vice President for Learning and President.

- **New instructional sites or campuses or relocation of any site**
 1. Identification of new instructional sites or campuses may be proposed by the Director of Dual Enrollment/Fast Track/Off Campus, the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Director of the Oneonta Center and the Dean of Applied Technologies. The Vice President for Learning is responsible for approval prior to submission to the President.
 2. The appropriate individual(s) and administrators, with guidance from the Accreditation Liaison, shall jointly prepare the required Substantive Change Prospectus.
 3. The SACSCOC review process may require an Extensive Review (must be approved by the board) or a Limited Review (may be approved by SACSCOC staff).
 4. The Prospectus deadline for the Extensive Review Prospectus is March 15 or September 1. The Prospectus deadline for the Limited Review is January 1 for a July 1 – December 31 implementation or July 1 for a January 1 – June 30 implementation date.

5. The relocation of any instructional site requires a Prospectus and approval of SACSCOC. Even if a site has been approved and operating for years, should the instructional location be moved to another site that is not geographically contiguous, then instruction must be halted and cannot resume until a Prospectus has been submitted and approved by SACSCOC.
- **Current off-campus sites (including dual enrollment sites) that have reached the 25% threshold and are approaching the 50% threshold**
 1. The Director of Dual Enrollment/Fast Track/Off Campus and the Director of the Oneonta Center are responsible for monitoring instructional sites approaching this threshold and providing written notification of status to the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Learning each fall and spring semester.
 2. When an off-campus site begins to offer 25-49% of any degree or program, the Vice President for Learning will notify the Accreditation Liaison to determine if a Substantive Change Prospectus should be initiated. No more than 49% of a degree or program may be offered without SACSOC approval.
 3. A minimum of six months prior to offering fifty percent or more of academic credits toward a degree at an off-campus site, the Director of Dual Enrollment/Fast Track/Off Campus or the Director of the Oneonta Center, the appropriate Dean and the Vice President for Learning, with guidance from the Accreditation Liaison, shall prepare the requisite prospectus for institutional review and submission to SACSCOC. Deadline dates for the Prospectus are January 1 for a July 1 – December 31 implementation or July 1 for a January 1 – June 30 implementation date.
 - **Distance Learning**
 1. The Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of Applied Technologies will jointly monitor Distance Learning offerings and notify the Vice President of Learning of status (percentage) a minimum of once each fall and spring semester.
 2. Once the institution offers 25-49% of any program via distance learning, the Vice President of Learning will notify the Accreditation Liaison to determine if a Substantive Change Prospectus should be initiated. No more than 49% of a degree or program may be offered without SACSCOC approval.
 3. A minimum of six months prior to offering fifty percent or more of a degree or program through Distance Education, the appropriate Dean, and Vice President of Academic Affairs, with guidance from the Accreditation Liaison shall jointly prepare a prospectus for submission to SACSCOC.

- **Change in Method of Instructional Delivery**

1. A change in the method of instructional delivery may require notification and a Teach Out Plan to SACSCOC.
2. By adding or changing a method of delivery to a program that results in 50% or more of the program being delivered by that method, notification to SACSCOC is required.
3. If a program converts a program from one delivery method to another (i.e., going from completely face-to-face to completely online) then notification to SACSCOC is required as well as a Teach Out Plan for the method of delivery being phased out.
4. The Dean of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Applied Technologies, and the Vice President for Learning will monitor instructional delivery methods a minimum of once each fall and spring semester and consult the Accreditation Liaison regarding the required documentation to be submitted to SACSCOC.

The examples listed above should cover the majority of issues that arise at WSCC requiring Substantive Changes; however, the Substantive Change Checklist form will assist in determining whether notification and approval requirements related to SACSCOC should be pursued. Those submitting the Substantive Change Checklist will be notified if further documentation is required or a formal Prospectus must be submitted to SACSCOC. Contact the Accreditation Liaison should a questionable issue arise.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE CHECKLIST

If you answer "yes" to any of the questions below there is the strong probability that the initiative being proposed will be considered a Substantive Change by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Submit this form and consult the appropriate Dean or Vice President for Learning to discuss the matter. All substantive changes must be reported to SACSCOC and also require a formal Substantive Change Prospectus. Note: this process may take up to a year for approval and implementation.

This initiative.....

- Initiates coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved. __ Yes __ No

- Expands the current degree offerings - significant departure from current programs (no closely- related previously approved programs in the curriculum). __ Yes __ No

- Does the method of instructional delivery change (i.e, face-to-face, hybrid, etc.) __ Yes __ No

- Are 25% or more of the courses new? __ Yes __ No

- Are 50% or more of the courses new? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative require new library or other learning resources? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative require a branch campus or a new off-campus site? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative now allow students to obtain 25-49% of credit toward a degree or program? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative now allow students to obtain 50% or more of credit toward a degree or program at an off-campus site? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative add a significantly different program at an approved site? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative now allow students to obtain 25-49% of credit toward a degree or program through distance learning? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative now allow students to obtain 50% of credit toward a degree or program through distance learning? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative require a contractual or consortia agreement? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative change the number of credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program? __ Yes __ No

- Does the initiative alter the length of a program? __ Yes __ No

- Does it include closing a program and initiating teach-out agreements? __ Yes __ No

Proposed Initiative _____

Department/Division _____ Date of Proposed Change _____

Name of Person Submitting the Form _____ Date _____

If you answered yes to any of these questions, submit this form to the appropriate dean for determination of the need for a Substantive Change

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE/PROGRAM MODIFICATION FORM
Curricular Change to an Existing Program

Steps prior to completing this form:

1. Complete the Substantive Change Checklist Form (attach copy to this form)
2. Discuss the matter with the appropriate Dean
3. Complete this form only if it was determined that the proposed change requires a SACSCOC Substantive Change

Note: All substantive changes must be reported to SACSCOC and also require a formal Substantive Change Prospectus. This requires a six-month lead time with the following deadlines: Limited Review Prospectus due January 1 for 7/1 – 12/31 implementation date or due July 1 for 1/1 – 6/30 implementation date; Extensive Review Prospectus due March 15 or September 1.

Date:

Person Initiating Notification:

Department and Name of Department Head:

Division Dean:

Name of Degree or Certificate:

Hours currently required for completion: _____ Hours required for completion with change: _____

Anticipated start date for curricular changes:

Rationale for curriculum modifications (attach curriculum changes):

Why does this change require SACSCOC notification?

Signatures required:

Person Submitting Form _____ Date _____

Division Dean _____ Date _____

Vice President for Learning _____ Date _____

President _____ Date _____

Date received by Accreditation Liaison _____ Requires Prospectus ___ Yes ___ No

Signature _____ Date _____

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE/PROGRAM MODIFICATION FORM
50% or More of Degree Offering

Steps prior to completing this form:

1. Complete the Substantive Change Checklist Form (attach copy to this form)
2. Discuss the matter with the appropriate Dean
3. Complete this form only if it was determined that the proposed change requires a Substantive Change

Note: All substantive changes must be reported to SACSCOC and also require a formal Substantive Change Prospectus. This requires a six-month lead time with the following deadlines: Limited Review Prospectus due January 1 for 7/1 – 12/31 implementation date or due July 1 for 1/1 – 6/30 implementation date; Extensive Review Prospectus due March 15 or September 1.

Date:

Off-campus site Dual Enrollment site Distance Learning
 Change in Instructional Delivery Method

Location of Off-campus or Dual Enrollment Site:

Person Initiating Notification:

Division Dean:

Degree(s) or Program(s) to offer 50% of degree:

Percentage of degree currently being offered (you must include general education hours as well as degree specific hours):

Anticipated start date for 50% or more of degree:

Rationale for offering 50% or more of degree at this location or via distance education (attach list of all proposed courses to be offered):

Signatures required:

Person Submitting Form _____ Date _____

Division Dean _____ Date _____

Vice President for Learning _____ Date _____

President _____ Date _____

Date received by Accreditation Liaison _____ Requires Prospectus Yes No

Signature _____ Date _____

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE/PROGRAM MODIFICATION FORM
Addition of an Off-campus or Dual Enrollment Site

Steps prior to completing this form:

1. Complete the Substantive Change Checklist Form (attach copy to this form)
2. Discuss the matter with the appropriate Dean
3. Complete this form only if it was determined that the proposed change requires a Substantive Change

Note: All substantive changes must be reported to SACSCOC and also require a formal Substantive Change Prospectus. This requires a six-month lead time with the following deadlines: Limited Review Prospectus due January 1 for 7/1 – 12/31 implementation date or due July 1 for 1/1 – 6/30 implementation date; Extensive Review Prospectus due March 15 or September 1.

Date:

___ Off-campus site ___ Dual Enrollment Site In WSCC Service Area: ___ Yes ___ No

Location of Off-campus or Dual Enrollment Site:

Person Initiating Notification:

Division Dean:

Degree(s)/Program(s)/Courses(s) to be offered at site:

Percentage of degree that will be offered at site:

Anticipated start date for site:

Rationale for opening this site:

Signatures required:

Person Submitting Form _____ Date _____

Division Dean _____ Date _____

Vice President for Learning _____ Date _____

President _____ Date _____

Date received by Accreditation Liaison _____ Requires Prospectus ___ Yes ___ No

Signature _____ Date _____