

## SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

### **Policies and Procedures for the Establishment or Expansion of Extension Center Sites, Program Offerings or Degrees**

#### **Extension Center Sites:**

1. Investigation into a new campus site may be initiated when a church or denominational entity contacts a Regional Associate Dean (of the area wherein the new center will be located), a program Dean, the Provost, or a member of the President's Cabinet. Expansion of programs at an existing site may also be initiated by a Regional Associate Dean, a program Dean, the Provost, or the President's Cabinet.
2. If the initial contact for a new site is made with anyone other than the Regional Associate Dean, that individual or group should communicate with the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) office about the potential center. Should the desire to expand the offerings of an established site originate with anyone other than the Regional Associate Dean, that individual should communicate that desire with the IE office as well.
3. The Regional Associate Dean will be charged with investigating to see whether a new site or new program would be viable. He will also be responsible to coordinate with the stakeholders at the proposed site to secure proper facilities, enlist qualified adjunct instructors (if adjuncts are to be used at the new site), identify which curriculum best fits the needs of the location and to survey the level of interest among potential students.
4. If the Regional Associate Dean feels that a site is viable, he will consult with the appropriate Academic Dean in order to draft a proposal that will provide a rationale for the new site, designate the curriculum to be taught at the site, design a cycle for the delivery of the curriculum at that site, list potential adjunct instructors, report on potential student interest, and designate the funding structure at the proposed site.
5. Upon completion of the proposal, the Academic Dean will forward the proposal to the Provost for his approval. If the Provost approves of the proposal, he will present it to the President's Cabinet for their approval.
6. Once the President's Cabinet has approved the proposal, the Provost will inform the appropriate Academic Dean, Regional Associate Dean, and the IE office.
7. The approved proposal will then be forwarded to the IE office. At that point, the IE office will contact SACSCOC to inform them of the proposed program. Notification of a new center or offering of a new program is to be submitted to SACSCOC **six months prior to implementation.**
8. The proposal will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval.

9. The Regional Associate Dean will provide the Institutional Effectiveness office with a draft of the Substantive Change Prospectus (for submission to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, the respective Petition (for submission to ATS). Prior to drafting the prospectus, the Regional Associate Dean is to consult the SACSCOC website for the current format and requested information. The ATS website is to be consulted for the current petition form and requirements.

The IE office will submit the final Substantive Change Prospectus (to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, respective Petition (to ATS). To meet the accrediting agencies' semi-annual review, the IE office must have the completed documentation at its office as follows:

For SACSCOC:

- a. For implementation between July 1 – December 31: November 1
- b. For implementation between January 1 – June 30: May 1

For ATS:

- a. For Spring Review: February 1
- b. For Winter Review: September 1

10. Having completed these steps, the Regional Associate Dean will then be responsible to implement the proposal.
11. At the conclusion of each semester, the IE office will forward a copy of the *Substantive Change Petition Status* matrix detailing all accreditation/substantive change reports, which were generated during that semester. This document will be forwarded to the Associate Regional Deans, the Graduate Dean, Undergraduate Dean, the Provost, and the Vice President for Institutional Assessment. Should any mistakes or oversights be found on that report by any of the recipients, the IE office is to be notified immediately so that the proper report can be submitted to the appropriate accreditation agency.

**New Programs, Degrees, or Change in Delivery System:**

1. Investigation into a new degree, program, or delivery system may be initiated by a program Dean, the Provost, or a member of the President's Cabinet.
2. The Program Dean will be charged with investigating to see whether a new degree, program, or delivery system would be viable. He will also be responsible to coordinate with the faculty members responsible for curriculum development.
3. If the Program Dean feels that the new program is viable, he will draft a proposal that will provide a rationale for the new program, designate the curriculum to be taught, and oversee the cycle for the delivery of the curriculum.

4. Upon completion of the proposal, the Dean will forward the proposal to the Provost for his approval. If the Provost approves of the proposal, he will present it to the President's Cabinet for its approval.
5. Once the President's Cabinet has approved the proposal, they will inform the Dean and the IE office.
6. The approved proposal will then be forwarded to the IE office. At that point, the IE office will contact SACSCOC and, as appropriate, ATS to inform them of the proposed program. **Notification of a new center or offering of a new program is to be submitted to SACSCOC six months prior to implementation.** For ATS, the IE office needs the draft petition by February 1 (for ATS' April review) and September 1 (for ATS' November review).

Note: SACSCOC does not require notification or is approval needed for an approved program at an approved site.

7. The proposal will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval.
8. The Program Dean will provide the IE office with a draft of the Substantive Change Prospectus (for submission to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, the respective Petition (for submission to ATS). Prior to drafting the prospectus, the Program Dean is to consult the SACSCOC website for the current format and requested information. The ATS website is to be consulted for the current petition form and requirements.
9. The IE office will submit the final Substantive Change Prospectus (to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, respective Petition (to ATS). To meet the accrediting agencies' semi-annual review, the IE office must have the completed documentation at their office as follows:

For SACSCOC:

- a. For implementation between July 1 – December 31: November 1
- b. For implementation between January 1 – June 30: May 1

For ATS:

- a. For Spring Review: February 1
- b. For Winter Review: September 1

10. Having completed these steps, the Program Dean will then be responsible to implement the proposal.
11. At the conclusion of each semester, IE office will forward a copy of the *Substantive Change Petition Status* matrix detailing all accreditation/substantive change reports, which were generated during that semester. This document will be forwarded to the Associate Regional Deans, the Deans, the Provost, and the Vice President for Institutional Assessment. Should any mistakes or oversights be found on that report by any of the

recipients, the IE office is to be notified immediately so that the proper report can be submitted to the appropriate accreditation agency.

### **Change in the Degree Credit-Hour Requirements Resulting in a Substantive Change:**

1. Investigation into the change of the credit hour requirements of a degree or program may be initiated by a Program Dean, the Provost, or a member of the President's Cabinet.
2. The Program Dean will be charged with investigating to see whether a change would be viable. He will also be responsible to coordinate with the faculty members responsible for curriculum development.
3. If the Program Dean feels that the credit hour change is viable, he will draft a proposal that will provide a rationale for the change, designate the curriculum to be taught, and oversee the cycle for the delivery of the curriculum.
4. Upon completion of the proposal, the Program Dean will forward the proposal to the Provost for his approval. If the Provost approves of the proposal, he will present it to the President's Cabinet for their approval.
5. Once the President's Cabinet has approved the proposal, they will inform the Program Dean and the IE office.
6. The approved proposal will then be forwarded to the IE office. At that point, the IE office will contact SACSCOC to inform them of the proposed change. **Notification of a new center or offering of a new program is to be submitted to SACSCOC six months prior to implementation.**
7. The proposal will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval.
8. The Program Dean will provide the IE office with a draft of the Substantive Change Prospectus (for submission to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, the respective Petition (for submission to ATS). Prior to drafting the prospectus, the Program Dean is to consult the SACSCOC website for the current format and requested information. The ATS website is to be consulted for the current petition form and requirements.
9. The IE office will submit the final Substantive Change Prospectus (to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, respective Petition (to ATS). To meet the accrediting agencies' semi-annual review, the IE office must have the completed documentation at their office as follows:

#### For SACSCOC:

- a. For implementation between July 1 – December 31: November 1
- b. For implementation between January 1 – June 30: May 1

For ATS:

- a. For Spring Review: February 1
- b. For Winter Review: September 1

10. Having completed these steps, the Program Dean will then be responsible to implement the proposal.
11. At the conclusion of each semester, IE office will forward a copy of the *Substantive Change Petition Status* matrix detailing all accreditation/substantive change reports, which were generated during that semester. This document will be forwarded to the Associate Regional Deans, the Deans, the Provost, and the Vice President for Institutional Assessment. Should any mistakes or oversights be found on that report by any of the recipients, the IE office is to be notified immediately so that the proper report can be submitted to the appropriate accreditation agency.

**Closing of a Site or a Program, not including Certificate Sites:**

1. Investigation into the closing of a site or a program may be initiated by the Regional Associate Dean (of the area wherein the new center will be located), the Academic Dean (for program closure, if related to the main campus), or the Provost. When closing a site or program, the following options are to be considered:
  - a. The institution teaches out currently enrolled students, no longer admits students to programs, and terminates the program or the operations of a site. The institution must submit to SACSCOC a teach-out plan for approval.
  - b. If the institution enters into a contractual teach-out agreement for another institution to teach out the educational program, the teach-out agreement requires SACSCOC approval in advance.
2. The Regional Associate Dean, Academic Dean, or Provost is to communicate the closing of the site or program to the IE office as soon as possible.
3. The Regional Associate Dean or Academic Dean, as the case may be, is to advise the students enrolled at the site/program of the closing of the site/program soon as possible so the students can make the necessary plans. Students who have not completed their program should be advised by the Regional Associate Dean or Academic Dean, as appropriate, of suitable options including transfer to comparable programs.
4. The Regional Associate Dean or Academic Dean, as appropriate, will draft a teach-out plan that will provide date of closure; an explanation of how affected parties will be informed of the impending closure; an explanation of how all affected students will be helped to complete their program of study with minimal disruption; an indication as to whether the teach-out plan will incur additional charges/expenses to the students and, if so, how the students will be notified; copies of signed teach-out agreements with other

institutions, if any; and how faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment.

5. Upon completion of the teach-out plan, the Regional Associate Dean or Academic Dean, as appropriate, will forward the plan to the Provost for his approval. If the Provost approves of the plan, he will present it to the President's Cabinet for their approval.
6. Once the President's Cabinet has approved the teach-out plan, the desired action will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval.
7. The Provost will inform the Regional Associate Dean and the IE office of the decision.
8. The Regional Associate Dean will provide the IE office with a copy of the approved teach-out plan. At that point, the IE office will contact SACSCOC and ATS to inform them of the closing of the site or program. Notification of the closing of a site or program is to be submitted to SACSCOC and appropriate ATS, **as soon as the decision to close is made.**
9. The Regional Associate Dean will provide the IE office with a draft of the teach-out plan (for submission to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, the respective petition for closing (for submission to ATS). \* Prior to drafting the teach-out plan, the Regional Associate Dean is to consult the SACSCOC website for the current format and requested information. The ATS website is to be consulted for the current petition form and requirements as well.  
  
\*ATS requires a petition for closing a site if the site offers a complete degree. Closing a site that offers less than a complete degree requires only e-mail notification.
10. The IE office will submit the final teach-out plan (to SACSCOC) and, as appropriate, respective petition or e-mail notification (to ATS).
11. Having completed these steps, the Regional Associate Dean or Academic Dean, as appropriate, will be responsible to implement the closure.
12. At the conclusion of each semester, the IE office will forward a copy of the *Substantive Change Petition Status* matrix detailing all accreditation/substantive change reports, which were generated during that semester. This document will be forwarded to the Associate Regional Deans, the Graduate Dean, Undergraduate Dean, the Provost, and the Vice President for Institutional Assessment. Should any mistakes or oversights be found on that report by any of the recipients, the IE office is to be notified immediately so that the proper report can be submitted to the appropriate accreditation agency.

## **Closing of a Certificate Site:**

### *Review of Existing Certificate Sites*

1. The Senior Regional Associate Dean will review the status of an existing certificate site by:
  - a. Checking the student enrollment per certificate site once a semester.
  - b. Identifying the certificate sites that are to be closed based upon enrollment numbers signifying the cohort is completing/has completed the certificate and, as such, the certificate cycle has been exhausted.
  - c. Advising the Provost, Academic Dean, and IE office of student enrollment at the certificate sites as well highlighting the certificate sites to be closed.
2. The IE office will review the list of active certificate centers as identified on the SACSCOC Institutional Portal once a semester. Discrepancies will be brought to the attention of the Senior Regional Associate Dean, who will work with the IE office and the Regional Associate Dean to address.
3. The Senior Regional Associate Dean and members of the IE office will meet with the Regional Associate Deans annually to review the list of current certificate sites.

### *Closure of Certificate Sites*

1. As certificate sites are designed for a modified cohort model and run their course in a few cycles, all students will, most likely, complete the program prior to the closing of the site. In the rare case of students not having completed the certificate program, the Regional Associate Dean will advise the students of the closing of the site. The Regional Associate Dean will advise any students who have not completed the certificate program of suitable options including transfer to comparable programs.
2. As necessary, the IE office will work with the Regional Associate Dean to draft a teach-out plan that will provide date of closure; an explanation of how affected parties will be informed of the impending closure; an explanation of how all affected students will be helped to complete their program of study with minimal disruption; an indication as to whether the teach-out plan will incur additional charges/expenses to the students and, if so, how the students will be notified; and how faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment.
3. Upon completion of the teach-out plan, the Regional Associate Dean will forward the plan to the Provost for his approval. If the Provost approves of the plan, he will present it to the President's Cabinet for their approval.

4. Once the President’s Cabinet has approved the closing of the certificate site and teach-out plan, the desired action will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval.
5. The Provost will inform the Academic Dean, Senior Regional Associate Dean, Regional Associate Dean, and the IE office of the decision.
  - a. For implementation between July 1 – December 31: Notify IE office by November 1
  - b. For implementation between January 1 – June 30: Notify IE office by May 1
6. The IE office will advise SACSCOC of the institution’s intention to close the site. Notification of the closing of a site is to be submitted to SACSCOC **as soon as the decision to close is made.**
7. Having completed these steps, the Senior Regional Associate Dean will be responsible to implement the closure.
8. At the conclusion of each semester, the IE office will forward a copy of the *Substantive Change Petition Status* matrix detailing all accreditation/substantive change reports, which were generated during that semester. This document will be forwarded to the Associate Regional Deans, the Graduate Dean, Undergraduate Dean, the Provost, and the Vice President for Institutional Assessment. Should any mistakes or oversights be found on that report by any of the recipients, the IE office is to be notified immediately so that the proper report can be submitted to the appropriate accreditation agency.

At its meeting in June 2018, the Board of Trustees approved modification of the “Substantive Change Policy for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement,” for any type of substantive change requiring approval. If an approved substantive change has not been implemented within two years of action by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, the institution will need to submit a new prospectus for the change or application for a level change.