

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE REVIEW, APPROVAL, AND REPORTING PROCESS



Texas A&M University-Texarkana (A&M-Texarkana) adheres to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Substantive Change Policy. A&M-Texarkana is responsible for notifying and, when necessary, seeking approval for substantive changes from SACSCOC in accordance with policy.

DEFINITION

A substantive change is defined by SACSCOC as a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Substantive change includes high-impact, high-risk changes and changes that can impact the quality of educational programs and services.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

SACSCOC accredits an entire institution. Accreditation extends to all programs and services of an institution wherever located and however delivered. This procedure applies to all university programs, modes of instruction, and locations (Off-Campus Instructional Sites).

PROCEDURE

A&M-Texarkana is required to notify the THECB and SACSCOC of substantive changes and request approval, when necessary, prior to the implementation of the change. The Office of Institutional, Effectiveness, Research, and Planning (IERP) is responsible for the coordination of the substantive change process and required forms. The Institutional Accreditation Liaison (IAL) is responsible for the submission of substantive change requests to the SACSCOC.

Compliance

Substantive changes, including those required by federal regulations, include:

- Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of an institution or its programs.
- Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership of an institution.
- Changing the governance of an institution.
- Merging/consolidating two or more institutions or entities.
- Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution (including a branch campus).
- Offering courses or programs (i.e., credentials) at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- Adding graduate programs at an institution previously offering only undergraduate programs (including degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other for-credit credential).
- Changing the way an institution measures student progress, whether in clock hours or credit-hours; semesters, trimesters, or quarters; or time-based or non-time-based methods or measures.
- 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 or correspondence courses.
- Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.

- Entering into a written arrangement under 34 C.F.R. § 668.5 under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the title IV Higher Education Act (HEA) offers less than 25% (notification) or 25-50% (approval) of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs. An agreement offering more than 50% of one or more of an institution's programs is prohibited by federal regulation.
- Substantially increase or decreasing the number of clock hours or credit hours awarded or competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded, for successful completion of one or more programs.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.
- Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location including a branch campus.
- Adding a permanent location at a site at which an institution is conducting a teach-out program for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.
- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.
- Participating in the federal Prison Education Program providing Pell Grant access to confined or incarcerated students.

IMPLEMENTATION

All proposed curricular changes (to include new programs, program/site closures) begin with an initial consultation with IERP to determine if there is a substantive change, and if so, determine whether notification or approval is required.

IERP uses a ticketing system to identify substantive changes related to the addition, deletion, or modification of courses, degree programs, certificate programs, distance education, and off-campus locations. When appropriate, IERP facilitates the preparation of a prospectus in accordance with the requirements outlined in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and the THECB Substantive Change Guidelines.

Additionally, IERP coordinates all substantive change education and review activities to align with and satisfy THECB and SACSCOC reporting and approvals. The institution adheres to the reporting times as specified in THECB guidelines and in the Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions policy statement.

This process, maintained by the IERP Office in collaboration with Academic Affairs, is posted on the IERP webpage.

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