

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Originally approved by Provost and Accreditation Liaison in March 2016.

Most recent amendment approved by Provost and Accreditation Liaison in August 2021.

GOAL:

The goal of this policy is to ensure that Columbia College is compliant with the SACSCOC substantive change policy and that all substantive changes are appropriately acted upon in a timely manner.

POLICY:

The Registrar and Provost are responsible for notifying the Accreditation Liaison as soon as they are aware of any proposed change to academic programs or the college that is significant enough to be a potential substantive change. See Summary List of Potential Substantive Changes (appended).

The Accreditation Liaison then becomes responsible for promptly reviewing the proposal and determining what action, if any, is needed according to the SACSCOC substantive change policy. The Accreditation Liaison is then responsible for notifying the provost of that determination.

If action is needed, the Provost and Accreditation Liaison are together responsible for the development of the appropriate documentation (notification, prospectus, teach-out plan, or other) needed for SACSCOC.

As each proposed change works through the planning and approval processes, the Provost, Registrar (if appropriate), and the Accreditation Liaison are responsible for monitoring the proposal for amendments that may affect the substantive change action required and for adjusting the action being taken as necessary.

The Provost and Accreditation Liaison are jointly responsible for developing a procedure or mechanism for tracking proposals, actions needed, and actions taken for potential substantive changes.

The Provost, Registrar, and Accreditation Liaison are individually responsible for obtaining training for themselves on the SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedure especially what constitutes a substantive change.

Summary List of Potential Substantive Changes

- New program
 - At least 25% is new content
 - New degree level needs much more lead time than a new program at existing levels
- Change to existing program curriculum
 - At least 25% is new content
- Addition/Change/Termination of a mode of delivery of a program
 - Modes are face-to-face and distance learning
- Termination of a program
- Introduction of competency-based programs or direct assessment
- Off-campus site (including dual enrollment high schools)
 - NEW where at least 20% of a program can be earned there
 - Increase to 40% of a program available at an off-campus site
 - Relocating an off-campus site
 - Terminating a program at a campus site
 - Closing an off-campus site
- Making a formal agreement with another institution regarding credit or degrees
 - Unless it is obviously only a transfer/articulation agreement
- Rare and unlikely, but important if they happen
 - Substantially changing the established mission or objectives
 - Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership
 - Changing the governance structure
 - Merging / consolidating with at least one more institution
 - Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
 - Relocating the College
 - Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
 - Changing the way student progress is measured: clock hours vs. credit-hours; semesters, trimesters, or quarters; or time-based or non-time-based methods
 - 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.
- This is not an exclusive list. Any other significant changes should be notified to the accreditation liaison.