

COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Name:	Substantive Change Policy
Policy Owner:	SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison
Responsible University Office:	Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President
Approval Date:	April 2010
Effective Date:	January 4, 2024
Revisions:	2011, 2015, 2024
Related Policies:	<p>SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy</p> <p>BOR Policy Manual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3.3.2 Academic Approval for Off-Campus Instructional Sites• 3.3.3 Distance Education• 3.3.6 Academic Credit Earned Through Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning• 3.6.1 Creation of Academic Programs• 3.6.2 Termination of Academic Programs• 9.3 Facilities Approval for Off-Campus Instructional Sites <p>USG Academic and Student Affairs Handbook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.3.2 New Academic Programs• 2.3.3 Deactivation and Termination of Academic Programs• 2.3.7 External Degrees: Off-Campus & Online Instructional Delivery• 2.3.8 Certificates• 2.3.10 Joint Degrees

I. PURPOSE OF POLICY

Columbus State University's Substantive Change Policy addresses the responsibility of the institution to request approval or report implementation of any significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of the institution or any of its constituent academic programs to both the USG Board of Regents and our institutional accreditor, SACSCOC.

II. DEFINITIONS

CSU uses the definitions in the current SACSCOC's Substantive Change Policy and Procedures (SCPP) found online at <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf>. The SCPP defines the following events to be Substantive Changes.

- 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 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) programs 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.

III. POLICY

CSU will notify SACSCOC and the University System of Georgia in advance of Substantive Changes and program developments in accord with the Commission’s Substantive Change Policy and Procedures, USG Board of Regents Policy, and policies in the USG Academic and Student Affairs Handbook. CSU’s SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison (IAL) is responsible for submitting the notifications to SACSCOC and seeking necessary approvals prior to implementation, so the university President and Provost and Executive Vice President will consult the IAL before approving any potential substantive changes. The Office of the Provost will submit notifications and approval requests to the University System of Georgia and the USG Board of Regents. Deans, department chairs, and program directors are responsible for delivering academic courses and programs in accordance with the substantive change policies of CSU, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents, and SACSCOC. The IAL will educate the Executive Leadership Team, deans, department chairs, faculty, and Registrar’s Office staff about what constitutes a Substantive Change.

IV. PROCEDURES

Since the most commonly occurring Substantive Changes involve establishing, delivering, and closing educational programs, the IAL will serve as an ex officio member of the University Curriculum Committee. The IAL will be responsible for the review of all proposals to add, modify, or close educational programs and all proposals to change program delivery methods. The IAL will also be available to consult with faculty members, directors, chairs, and deans when potential substantive changes are being considered.

A Substantive Change Action Table follows in the Appendix to summarize BOR and SACSCOC notifications and approvals required according to the kind of Substantive Change that occurs.

APPROVED: Stuart Rayfield
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President

Date: 03/15/2024 22:00 UTC

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE TYPE	SACSCOC			USG BOR		
	Notification	Approval: Exec Council	Approval: Full Board	Notification	Approval: Admin	Approval: Board
INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES						
Acquisition	✓		✓			✓
Change Measure Progress to Completion		✓				✓
CBE Course-Credit Approach-Institutional Approval		✓				✓
Distance Ed-Institutional-level Approval (already granted to CSU)		✓				✓
Governance Change	✓		✓			✓
Institution Closure		✓				✓
Institution Relocation		✓				✓
Institutional Contingency Teach-out Plan		✓				✓
Level Change (application not required for Level V to Level VI. Request reclassification after 4 th doctoral prog enrolls its first students.)			✓			✓
Merger / Consolidation	✓		✓			✓
Mission Change		✓				✓
Ownership, Means of Control, or Legal Status Change	✓		✓			✓
Prison Education Program – Institutional-level Approval		✓	✓			✓
OFF-CAMPUS INSTRUCTIONAL SITE (OCIS) CHANGES						
OCIS Notification (25-49% of a program's instruction is delivered at an OCIS)	✓				✓ or ⁱ	✓
OCIS Approval — Extensive Review (≥50% of prog at an OCIS; required until 2 sites approved via extensive review)			✓		✓ or ⁱ	✓
OCIS Approval — Limited Review (≥50% of prog at an OCIS and 2 sites approved via extensive review)		✓			✓ or ⁱ	✓
OCIS Relocation — Non-Branch	✓				✓ or ⁱ	✓
OCIS Relocation — Branch		✓			✓ or ⁱ	✓
OCIS Name or Address Change	✓			✓		
OCIS Closure		✓			✓ or ⁱ	✓
OCIS Re-open	✓				✓ or ⁱ	✓
PROGRAM CHANGES						
Clock-Credit Hour Conversion		✓				✓
Competency-Based Education by Direct Assessment — Approval ⁱⁱ			✓		N/A	
Competency-Based Education by Direct Assessment — Notification ⁱⁱⁱ	✓				N/A	
Cooperative Academic Arrangement with Title IV Entities	✓			✓		
Cooperative Academic Arrangement with Non-Title IV Entities — Approval ^{iv}		✓		✓		
Cooperative Academic Arrangement with Non-Title IV Entities – Notification ^v	✓			✓		
Correspondence Education		✓		✓		
Dual Academic Award	✓			✓		

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE TYPE	SACSCOC			USG BOR		
	Notification	Approval: Exec Council	Approval: Full Board	Notification	Approval: Admin	Approval: Board
Joint Academic Award with Non-SACSCOC Accredited Institution(s) or Entity(ies)		✓				✓
Joint Academic Award with SACSCOC Institution(s)	✓			✓		
Method of Delivery — Approval ^{vi}		✓				✓
Method of Delivery — Notification	✓			✓		
New Program — Approval (≥50% new content)		✓		✓ ^{vii}		✓
New Program — Notification (25-49% new content)	✓			✓ ^{vii}		✓
Program Closure ^{viii}		✓		✓		✓
Program Designed for Prior Learning — Approval (if under Substantive Change Restriction)		✓		Considered Program Modification / Curriculum Revision		
Program Designed for Prior Learning — Notification (if not under Substantive Change Restriction)	✓			Considered Program Modification / Curriculum Revision		
Program Length Change (credit hours change by 25% or more <u>and</u> students' expected completion time changes by more than one term)		✓		Considered Program Modification / Curriculum Revision		
Program Re-open	✓			Considered Program Modification / Curriculum Revision		
Program Modification / Curriculum Revision					✓	
Program Name Change					✓	

ⁱ Institutions may also seek to offer 50% or more of any of their existing approved programs at a location that is not a Board-approved instructional campus, center, or consortium (e.g., a public school, a company, or an agency). Such program delivery arrangements do not involve the naming of this location as an official institutional instructional site and are usually contractual and time-limited. Institutions seeking to deliver 50% or more of any existing degree program at such a site must obtain administrative approval through the Office of Academic Affairs at least 60 days prior to the implementation of the program(s) at the site.

ⁱⁱ A program in which 50% or more of the program may be earned through the direct assessment approach to competency-based education (CBE) requires SACSCOC approval.

ⁱⁱⁱ A program in which 25-49% of the program may be earned through the direct-assessment approach to competency-based education (CBE) requires SACSCOC notification.

^{iv} An agreement with an entity (or entities) not certified to participate in Title IV programs to deliver 25-50% of a program's content recorded on the SACSCOC institution's transcript as its own requires SACSCOC approval.

^v An agreement with an entity (or entities) not certified to participate in Title IV programs to deliver less than 25% of a program's content recorded on the SACSCOC institution's transcript as its own requires SACSCOC notification.

^{vi} Adding a method of instructional delivery requires SACSCOC approval only if the institution is on Substantive Change Restriction or is adding a previously unused method in its Prison Education Program. All other additions of a method of delivery require SACSCOC notification.

^{vii} The USG requires notification when establishing a new certificate program (see USG Academic and Student Affairs Handbook Section 2.3.8 Certificates). New degree programs require BOR approval.

^{viii} The SACSCOC definition of "closure" is different than the BOR's definition. SACSCOC considers a closure to occur when the institution stops accepting students into the program, which the BOR calls "deactivation"; the BOR approves a program termination, which occurs when the institution gives up its authority to award the credential. Within BOR policy, a program teach-out occurs between the deactivation and termination. SACSCOC approves the teach-out plan but there is no follow-up required with SACSCOC at the conclusion of the teach-out.