



Angelo State University
Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 02.06: Reporting Substantive Changes to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

DATE: September 25, 2020

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to describe the rationale and steps necessary to comply with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) standards related to substantive change.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in May every five years, or as needed, by the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison with recommended revisions forwarded to the president by June 15.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Policy

Angelo State University is responsible to comply with the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy as a condition of continued accreditation by SACSCOC.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement, institutional responsibility for reporting substantive change*, Section 14.2 “*The institution has a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported in accordance with SACSCOC policy. (Substantive Change)*”¹

“A member institution is responsible for following the Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions policy and procedures by notifying or securing approval from SACSCOC, as required, prior to implementation.”² Responsibility for compliance with the Commission’s substantive change procedures and policy requires, as a comprehensive accreditation standard, the notification of SACSCOC regarding substantive changes as they relate to the University’s mission, as defined below.

This policy is applicable to all units, departments and off-campus instructional sites to ensure substantive changes are reported timely.

¹ SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement (December 2017), p. 32.

² SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement (December 2017), p. 10.

2. Definitions

Substantive change is defined by SACSCOC as “a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Angelo State University will strictly follow the Commission’s policy, “[Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#).”

“Under federal regulations, substantive change includes

- Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
- Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the institution was last evaluated
- The addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution’s current accreditation or reaffirmation.
- A change from clock hours to credit hours
- A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program.
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution
- Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution
- Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution’s programs”³

3. Procedure to Assure Compliance

Administrators have the fundamental responsibility to be generally aware of the substantive change policy and inform the SACSCOC Liaison at the earliest onset of planning that there may be a substantive change. Further, providing data and information about the change prior to completing the prospectus as necessary to comply with the SACSCOC policy as requested.

The SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison monitors all substantive changes that require SACSCOC notification and/or approval and prepares correspondence for the president’s approval. As documented below under procedure and policy/responsible person in table “**SACSCOC Reporting Timeline Modified with ASU’s Time Frame for Submissions**” designated responsibility for substantive change reporting is listed. SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison works with administrators to determine whether a proposed change is substantive. At least once each academic year (or as needed), the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison or his/her designee will inform institutional constituents concerning policies and procedures for reporting substantive changes. Refer to [OP 04.05](#) for the approval process for new degree programs.

³ SACSCOC (n.d.). Substantive change for accredited institutions of the commission on colleges: Policy statement. Retrieved from <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>

[Minor Revisions: September 25, 2020]

Procedures for Reporting

- A. Procedure One: Substantive change requiring prior approval and/or notification
- B. Procedure Two: Substantive change requiring only notification prior to implementation
- C. Procedure Three: Closing a program, site, branch campus or institution

Non-compliance with the [Principles of Accreditation](#) or with procedures referred to in the Commission's policy, [Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#), could result in the institution being placed on sanction or being removed from membership.

The [Substantive Change Form](#) must be completed to determine whether or not a planned change is considered substantive.

The timeline for submitting a substantive change prospectus/documentation to the ASU SACSCOC Liaison can be found (fourth column in blue) before timeline guidelines from SACSCOC:

SACSCOC Reporting Timeline Modified with ASU’s Time Frame for Submissions

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy/ Responsible Person	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Date by which Prospectus/ Documentation must be Submitted to ASU’s SACSCOC Liaison	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved	Procedure 1 Provost	No	Yes	<p>Due Dates:</p> <p>October 15 (for March 15 SACSCOC due date)</p> <p>April 15 (for September 1 SACSCOC due date)</p>	<p>Application for Level Change</p> <p>Due Dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)</p>
Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer’s request and not on short notice)	Procedure 1 Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Provost	No	Yes	<p>Due Dates:</p> <p>Implementation Date: 7/1-12/31 August 1 prior year (for January 1 SACSCOC due date)</p> <p>Implementation Date: 1/1-6/30 February 1 prior year (for July 1 SACSCOC due date)</p>	<p>Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy)</p> <p>Due Dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation</p>
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>).					
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site AND at the institution					
Initiating degree completion programs					
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of “branch campus” on p. 3 of the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy)					
Initiating distance learning by offering 50% or more of the first program for the first time					
Relocating a main or branch campus					
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the SACSCOC accredited institution					

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy/ Responsible Person	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Date by which Prospectus/ Documentation must be Submitted to ASU's SACSCOC Liaison	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating dual or joint degrees involving program expansion (significant departure) or initiating a new site where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program	See SACSCOC policy " Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards " Dean – joint degrees Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management – 50% or greater	No	Yes	Due Dates: Implementation Date: 7/1-12/31 August 1 prior year (for January 1 SACSCOC due date) Implementation Date: 1/1-6/30 February 1 prior year (for July 1 SACSCOC due date)	Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy) Due Dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation Copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s) involved. See Policy.
Initiating dual or joint degree with at least one institution <u>not</u> accredited by SACSCOC	See SACSCOC Policy " Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards " Provost and SACSCOC Liaison	At least 6 months prior to implementation	Yes	Due Dates: At least eleven (11) months prior to implementation	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s). See Policy.
Initiating a direct assessment competency-based program	See SACSCOC Policy " Direct Assessment Competency Based Educational Programs " Provost	Yes – Screening Form	Yes	Due Dates: October 15 (for March 15 SACSCOC due date) April 15 (for September 1 SACSCOC due date)	Submit "Screening Form" with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required, Due Dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	See SACSCOC Policy: " Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status - Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institution Policy Statement "	Yes: December 15 (for June review); June 1 (for December review)	Yes		Cover Sheet Institutional Summary Form Prospectus (See Appendix in SACSCOC Policy: " Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status - Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement ")
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution					Due Dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)
Acquiring an institution or location (including programs) of another institution					
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing	SACSCOC Liaison and President				

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy/ Responsible Person	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Date by which Prospectus/ Documentation must be Submitted to ASU's SACSCOC Liaison	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating a certificate program at a new off-campus site at employer's request and on short notice (previously approved program)	Procedure 1 Provost	No	Yes	Due Dates: Due date will be determined by communication with SACSCOC Liaison	Cover Sheet Modified prospectus Contact Commission Staff
Initiating a certificate program that is a significant departure from previously approved programs at employer's request and on short notice					
Adding a site under a U.S. military contract for a previously approved program					
Altering significantly the length of a program					
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution					
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	Procedure 1 Provost	No	Yes	N/A - ASU uses credit hours	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information
Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)	Procedure 2 Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management	Yes	No	No set date. Letter will be sent upon confirmation of moving the instructional site	Letter of notification with old address, new address, and implementation date
Initiating a dual or joint degree with other SACSCOC accredited institution(s)	See SACSCOC Policy " Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards " Dean	At least 6 months prior to implementation	No	Due Dates: Eight (8) months prior to implementation	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution. See Policy.
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	Procedure 2 Dean or Initiating Administrator	Yes	No	No set date	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the SACSCOC accredited institution					

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy/ Responsible Person	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Date by which Prospectus/ Documentation must be Submitted to ASU's SACSCOC Liaison	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 25-49% of credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer's request and not on short notice)	Procedure 2 Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management	Yes	No	See SACSCOC Liaison	Letter of notification Including street address and implementation date
Initiating distance learning by offering 25-49 of the first program for the first time					
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans to teach out its own students	Procedure 3 Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Provost	Yes	Yes		
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans contracts with another institution(s) to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)	Procedure 3 Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Provost	Yes	Yes		Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement(s) detailing terms included with notification
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice using existing approved courses and location	N/A	No	No	N/A	N/A
Initiating certificate program (not at employer's request and not on short notice) using existing approved courses and location	N/A	No	No	N/A	N/A
Initiating certificate program (not at employer's request and not on short notice) using existing approved courses and location Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) where student can obtain 24% or less of credits toward a program					

<p>Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) where student can obtain 24% or less of credits toward a program</p> <p>Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site</p>	N/A	No	No	N/A	N/A
<p>Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site</p> <p>Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site but NOT at the institution</p>					
<p>Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site but NOT at the institution</p> <p>Initiating distance learning by offering 24% or less of any program for the first time</p>					

Attachment: [Substantive Change Form](#)