

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SECTION ONE: PURPOSE AND ALIGNMENT

1.01 Purpose:

Angelina College will work to ensure all incidences of substantive change are reported in a timely manner. The College will establish a process for adherence to the policies and guidelines of SACSCOC related to institutional change. In accordance with SACSCOC policies, the College will notify the Commission on Colleges of substantive changes and will seek approval prior to the initiation of changes when appropriate. SACSCOC requires all substantive changes that occur after an institution's decennial review to be submitted in the next Compliance Certification.

1.02 Alignment:

The College's Substantive Change Policy & Procedure is based on the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Policy *Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions* (<http://www.sacscoc.org>)

SECTION TWO: SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY & PROCEDURE

2.01 The SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures¹, "A substantive change is 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."

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 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 student progress is measured, 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

¹ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. (2023). *Substantive change policy and procedures*. <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf>

- 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) program 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 increasing 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 a federal Prison Education Program providing Pell Grant access to confined or incarcerated students.

SECTION THREE: OTHER SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE REQUIREMENTS

3.01 Other substantive change requirements, including those required by federal regulations, include:

- An institution is required to notify or secure SACSCOC approval prior to implementing a substantive change.
- An institution is responsible for maintaining compliance at all times with Standard 14.2 (Substantive change) of the Principles of Accreditation and with the Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and related policies.
- An institution is required to have a written substantive change policy and procedure. It must be approved through institutional processes and published in institutional documents accessible to those affected. The purpose of the institution's substantive change policy and procedure is to ensure all substantive changes are reported to SACSCOC in a timely fashion, as required by Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. Institutions are responsible for implementing and enforcing their

- substantive change policy and procedure.
- An institution's fiscal and administrative capability to operate off-campus instructional sites is assessed when a new site is reviewed for approval and as part of reaffirmation and fifth-year interim reviews.
 - A new off-campus instructional site is subject to a substantive change committee visit. A committee visit, when necessary, is authorized when a site is approved. The committee visit ensures the site has the personnel, facilities, and resources identified by an institution in its application or prospectus and ensures the quality of instructional and support services offered at the site.
 - Different or additional requirements apply to an institution on SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION. Restriction applies if an institution has been placed on Warning, Probation, or Probation for Good Cause over the prior three academic years or if an institution is under provisional certification for participation in federal financial aid programs.
 - An institution is required to submit an institutional contingency teach-out plan to SACSCOC within 30 days of notification if the institution is placed or continued on Probation or Probation for Good Cause or if the institution meets conditions enumerated in the procedures section of this policy originating from the U.S. Department of Education or state authority.
 - Numerous changes: Numerous substantive changes may accelerate an institution's next reaffirmation of accreditation. Accelerated reaffirmation may be triggered by, but not limited to:
 - a significant change in the number of off-campus instructional sites, including branch campuses,
 - a significant change in the number of programs,
 - a significant change in enrollment, and
 - frequent mergers/consolidations or acquisitions.
 - Closing an off-campus site (including dual credit sites) requires prior approval and a teach-out plan, regardless of the percentage of the program offered.

SECTION FOUR: PROCEDURES:

4.01 Responsible parties will notify the SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison (IAL) of proposed changes as soon as they become aware of a need for substantive change to ensure a timely notification or approval request can be submitted to SACSCOC.

4.01.1 The IAL will submit substantive changes in accordance with the submission timeline provided by SACSCOC:

4.01.2 For a substantive change requiring approval by the full Board of Trustees (which meets biannually) to be implemented after the date of the Board meeting, the submission deadlines are

a. March 15 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in June of the same

calendar year and

- b. September 1** for review at the Board's biannual meeting in December of the same calendar year

4.01.3 For a substantive change requiring approval by the Executive Council of the Board of Trustees (which meets year-round), the submission deadlines are:

- a. January 1** for changes to be implemented July 1 through December 31 of the same calendar year, and
- b. July 1** for changes to be implemented January 1 through June 30 of the subsequent calendar year.

SECTION FIVE: DUAL CREDIT OFF-CAMPUS INSTRUCTION SITES

5.01 The Assistant Registrar/Director of Dual Credit will track and report the following information for each dual credit off-campus instructional site:

- Programs offered
- Percentage of each program offered

5.02 The Assistant Registrar/Director of Dual Credit will manage the dual credit site program percentage offered and plan for substantive changes as necessary to include:

- Increase of program offering from 0-24% to 25-49%
- Increase of program offering from 25-49% to 50% or more
- Discontinuance of a dual credit arrangement with the College
- Change of course offerings to a 100% asynchronous online format
- Closure of a location for any reason

SECTION SIX: RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

6.01 The IAL monitors all institutional changes under consideration, oversees substantive change processes, and ensures necessary documentation is prepared.

6.02 The Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) will provide training in September each year to all deans, assistant deans, department chairs, program directors, lead faculty, and curriculum committee voting members on the current requirements for substantive changes.

6.03 The President, Vice Presidents, academic leaders (academic deans, department chairs, program directors, lead instructors), and faculty members report initial campus considerations or stakeholder discussions of future substantive institutional changes to VPAA/Accreditation Liaison.

6.04 The dean and lead faculty in the academic school in which a program resides will present

proposed program closures, award closures, or the creation of new programs to the curriculum committee and program advisory committee, as applicable for approvals. For each proposed substantive change, the VPAA will assign responsibility to appropriate school personnel to work with them to complete the required materials for submission (e.g., prospectus, letters, etc.).

- 6.05** The IAL will send completed substantive change documents to SACSCOC according to the Commission's reporting timeline.

The institutional documentation and submission must comply with the current *Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions* policy for all prior notifications, contact time, and prior approval.

SECTION SEVEN: PUBLICATION, APPROVAL, IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

7.01 Publication

The policy is published in the online Angelina College Policies & Procedures Manual and is available in the Office of the President.

7.02 Implemented & Enforced

The President is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for its enforcement.

- 7.03** The IAL coordinates the review of proposed substantive changes with the appropriate standing committee(s), the President, and other units of the College as necessary.

- 7.04** The Dean and Lead Faculty in the academic school in which a program resides present proposed program closures, award closures, or the creation of new programs to the curriculum committee and program advisory committee, as applicable for approvals. For each proposed substantive change, the VPAA/ Accreditation Liaison will assign responsibility to appropriate School personnel to work with them to complete the required materials for submission (e.g., prospectus, letters, etc.).

- 7.05** The VPAA/Accreditation Liaison will notify the President prior to submission of any related documents to SACSCOC, and the President will notify the Board of Trustees of the substantive change at the next regular meeting of the Board (prior to the college submitting materials to SACSCOC).

The institutional documentation and submission must comply with the current *Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions* policy for all prior notifications, contact time, and prior approval.

- 7.06** The IAL will send completed substantive change documents to SACSCOC according to the Commission's reporting timeline.

SECTION 8: IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

8.01 The President or their designee is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented.

8.02 The Vice President of Academic Affairs/ is responsible for this policy's enforcement.

8.03 Compliance with this policy and the procedures therein is mandatory.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy. Policy reviews are made in accordance with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness Policy Tracking document.