

UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE®



SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

FOR THE
SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COMMISSION ON COLLEGES
(SACSCOC)

Submitted - April 15, 2013
Revised – 4.26. 2021

Substantive Change Policy and Procedures

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requires its member institutions to have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely fashion. The University of Louisville as an accredited member institution adheres to the Commission's substantive change policy. The *Principles of Accreditation (2018)* states the requirement for an institution to comply with Standard 14.2 which reads as follows:

The institution has a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported in accordance with SACSCOC policy.

University Policy Statement

The University of Louisville (UofL) will report in writing any actions defined as a substantive change to the Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). This policy and procedure statement sets forth the steps and requirements to monitor and report substantive changes occurring at UofL including changes to programs, where and how programs are offered and institution-level changes. The Office of Academic Planning and Accountability (OAPA), a unit of the Executive Vice President and University Provost, coordinates academic program approval, program reviews and will work with the accreditation liaison to ensure accurate reporting to SACSCOC. This policy statement is published on the university's website; it will be reviewed and updated as needed on an annual basis and distributed widely. <http://louisville.edu/oapa/substantive-change>

Institutional Accreditation Liaison

The accreditation liaison, Bob Goldstein (robert.goldstein@louisville.edu), serves as the gatekeeper and advisor for the substantive change process and will consult as needed with the university's assigned staff representative at SACSCOC. Substantive change submissions are based on the concept of "significant departures" from previously approved programs, off-campus instructional sites or mode of delivery. The current U of L program review processes include review for substantive change items. If you have questions regarding possible substantive change actions, please contact the Office of Academic Planning and Accountability for guidance.

Definition

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion in 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. The Substantive Change Policy can be viewed on the SACSCOC website. <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf>.

Types of Substantive Change

The different types of substantive change and the specific procedure to be used for each, are briefly described in review documents provided through the links that follow. These forms are simply for your awareness and to understand what guidelines OAPA will use to review for potential SACSCOC Substantive Change. The forms are completed by OAPA as part of their program review processes. These documents will assist OAPA to evaluate if additional conversation with a unit is needed to discuss implications of a potential substantive change. Please contact OAPA staff if you have questions regarding substantive change policy or procedures.

Institutional Changes

If any of the substantive changes are at the institutional level, please contact Bob Goldstein at robert.goldstein@louisville.edu or Kay Vetter at kay.vetter@louisville.edu directly for guidance.

Program Level Changes

Academic Program:				
Proposed Implementation Date:				
New Program				
This program will have 25-49% new content*		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
This program will have 50-100% new content*		<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
This program will be at a new instructional level (e.g., moving from bachelor to master level coursework)		<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Percent of new courses being developed for program (not Gen Ed)?			%	
If 50% or more new courses being added, what percent of those courses have NEW CONTENT?			%	
*New content is defined as academic content not previously taught in this program, at the current degree level, or at the University				
Program Length Change				
This program will increase or decrease credit hours by 25% or more		<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
AND	The increase/decrease in program length will change the expected time to completion for students by more than one term		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
New Method of Instructional Delivery				
A new method of instructional delivery* is being added to the existing program * Methods of delivery are Competency-based, distance education, or face-to-face		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Re-Opening a Program		Date program closed:		
Admissions to program closed for less than 5 years		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Admissions to program closed for 5 years or longer Note: Programs closed 5 years or longer are considered NEW programs		<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Closing a Program				
This program is being closed for entry/admissions at all locations and methods of delivery		<i>Approval Required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Cooperative Academic Arrangement – Title IV Entity				
This program will have a cooperative agreement with a title IV certified entity where 50% or more of the program is offered through this arrangement		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
This program is dependent on the entity to deliver this program		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Cooperative Academic Arrangement – NON-Title IV Entity				
This program will have a cooperative agreement with an entity that is not certified for Title IV to deliver less than 25% of the program content		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
This program will have a cooperative agreement with an entity that is not certified for Title IV to deliver 25-50% of the program content		<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Joint Academic Awards				
This program will award a joint degree with another SACSCOC institution		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
This program will award a joint degree with a non-SACSCOC institution or entity		<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Dual Academic Award				
This program allows students to receive instruction and two or more institutions in prescribed curricula leading to each institution granting academic awards at the same credential level		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Program Designed for Prior Learning				
This program will require students to possess prior learning experience as a condition of admission		<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Competency-based Education by Direct Assessment				

Off-Campus Instructional Site/Additional Location Changes

Off-campus Instructional Site:			
Proposed Implementation Date:			
Off-campus Instructional Site Notification – 25-49% Program Delivery			
Off-campus instructional site at which 25-49% of a program's instruction* is delivered *Instruction at a site may cross the 25% notification threshold any time after the institution submits notification	<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Off-campus Instructional Site Approval (Including Branch Campus) – 50% or more Program Delivery			
Off-campus instructional site* at which 50% or more of a program's instruction is delivered *An off-campus instructional site <i>may</i> qualify as a branch campus; refer to definitions	<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Fewer than two off-campus sites already approved under the extensive review criteria AND/OR institution is on substantive change restriction	<i>Approval Path 1: Extensive Review</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Two or more off-campus sites already approved under the extensive review criteria AND institution is NOT on substantive change restriction	<i>Approval Path 2: Limited Review</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Off-campus Instructional Site Relocation*			
Relocating* an off-campus site that is NOT a branch campus	<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Relocating* an off-campus site that IS a branch campus	<i>Approval required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
*Note: To be considered relocation, the new location must serve the same geographic area or same pool of students; instruction cannot overlap at current and new locations; and the change cannot result in a net change in the number of off-campus instructional sites. If the new location is an existing off-campus instructional site, moving is not considered relocation and is instead considered a closure of the current location (see Off-campus Instructional Site Closure section below).			
Off-campus Instructional Site Name or Address Change			
Changing the name (must be unique and can only include "branch" or "branch campus" if the site has been approved as a branch by SACSCOC) or the address when the location remains the same (e.g., renaming a street, changing a zip code) of an off-campus site	<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Off-campus Instructional Site Closure			
All closures (notified sites and approved sites) require SACSCOC approval AND an acceptable teach-out plan. A site is considered closed as of the date the institution stops admitting students to the site (not the date of last instruction).	<i>Approval required, Teach-out Plan required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Off-campus Instructional Site Re-open (Within 5 Years)			
A site previously approved for closure may be re-opened within five years of the closure date (the date the site was closed to admission) by submitting notification.	<i>Notification required</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES

For more information on Substantive Change please visit the OAPA website:

<http://louisville.edu/oapa/substantive-change-1/substantive-change>

Designated Responsibility

The institutional accreditation liaison is responsible for timely reporting of a substantive change to the SACSCOC in accordance with the requirements of the policy. It is the responsibility of the accreditation liaison to keep the institution informed of any changes in the substantive change policy. The UofL accreditation liaison, Bob Goldstein (robert.goldstein@louisville.edu), reports to the Executive Vice President and University Provost.

Each university unit is responsible for informing the accreditation liaison of any potential substantive changes in a manner that ensures the institution can meet the required notification, review and approval processes of the SACSCOC. For academic program activities, the SACSCOC substantive change report may be required in addition to the university's process and the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) process for program approvals. The UofL Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning will work with academic units to determine if online courses or online program proposals require a substantive change report in consultation with the accreditation liaison.

University Procedures

Procedures for Implementation

The academic or administrative officer or unit initiating the substantive change will:

1. Make contact with the accreditation liaison to determine if potential program changes could result in a substantive change report.
2. Prepare and submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) to OAPA staff
3. Collect the necessary documentation for any substantive change request approved by the SACSCOC Liaison and/or the Executive Vice President and University Provost.
4. Once substantive change is approved, and prior to implementing any substantive change, the academic unit works with the accreditation liaison or their designee to prepare and submit the Letter of Notification, and/or the prospectus document.
5. Adhere to timeline set by OAPA staff for document preparation and review to meet required internal and SACSCOC mandated submission deadlines. (**NOTE:** Approval from SACSCOC could take up to six months from time of prospectus submission. Academic units need to be mindful of this when planning the implementation date of their substantive change).
6. Pay the SACSCOC invoice billing for the processing of the prospectus report. The payment is due upon SACSCOC approval of the substantive change (fee varies up to \$500.00).

The SACSCOC accreditation liaison will:

1. Review the Substantive Change Request Form for completeness, appropriateness and consistency with SACSCOC policies and standards. The liaison will work with an initiator as needed to address any deficits. Upon completion of this review, the liaison forwards the substantive change request to the Executive Vice President and University Provost for review and approval.
2. Work with initiators on approved requests to prepare any necessary documentation including a letter of notification and/or prospectus document and compile other documentation to ensure all relevant SACSCOC policies and standards are addressed and submitted in the necessary timeframe.
3. Track changes to the Principles of Accreditation and disseminate changes to the University community and coordinate the reporting and completion of required SACSCOC activities.
4. Update the university's substantive change policy and procedures as needed based on SACSCOC policy.
5. Annually present the substantive change policy and any other SACSCOC accreditation updates

to the Chief Academic Officers (Deans and Associate Deans), Provost Senior Staff, Faculty Senate and other relevant groups to ensure the policy and other accreditation information is disseminated.

The Executive Vice President and University Provost (EVPUP) or designee will:

1. Review the Substantive Change Request Form and, as necessary, consult with Faculty Senate (academic program changes) to make a decision.
2. The EVPUP or designee approves, the substantive change or may request additional information from the initiating unit.
3. With assistance of the accreditation liaison, the initiating unit will prepare the substantive change document (prospectus or letter of notification) and supporting documentation with the.
4. The accreditation liaison will prepare the formal transmission to SACSCOC and send hard copy or upload electronic submissions into the Institution Portal as determined by SACSCOC.
5. All correspondence to SACSCOC is submitted through the SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison or the university President's Office.
6. The accreditation liaison will track SACSCOC actions related to substantive change requests submitted.
7. The liaison will ensure substantive change activity is posted online at:
<http://louisville.edu/oapa/substantive-change>

Annual Review and Dissemination of the Policy

The Office of the Executive Vice President and University Provost (via the accreditation liaison) will distribute (electronic and/or paper) the *University of Louisville Substantive Change Policy and Procedures* statement to academic and administrative officers annually. Additionally, the "Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Policy" will be posted on the university substantive change webpage. The UofL substantive change policy and a list of the university's reports to SACSCOC will also be posted online. <http://louisville.edu/oapa/substantive-change>

The SACSCOC policy, procedures and related documents will be regularly reviewed (annually) by the accreditation liaison. The university's policy statement will be updated as needed to ensure current information is disseminated to maintain continuing compliance with the *Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges*. The accreditation liaison will annually present the university's Substantive Change Policy Procedures statement to university constituencies. If more frequent updates are required, the liaison will inform each constituency group. Each unit head will be asked to verify receipt of the university's substantive change information.

In January 2021 new SACSCOC Policy and Procedures for Substantive Change went into effect. Please consult the revised flowchart below for a quick outline of the current process. Initiators should consult with U of L's Institutional Accreditation Liaison, Bob Goldstein, in the Office of Academic Planning and Accountability (OAPA), before completing the program approval process in the academic unit.

