



2.7.3 Substantive Change

Chapter 2 - General	Original Effective Date: March 2013
Section: 2.7 Academic Policies & Procedures	Date Last Reviewed: June 2022
Responsible Entity: Vice President for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs	Date Last Revised: June 2022

I. Purpose

To establish responsibilities and requirements for timely notification of substantive changes to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). This policy complies with the SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement* and the SACSCOC *Substantive Change Policy and Procedures*.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all schools and academic programs offered at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UT Health San Antonio).

III. Policy

UT Health San Antonio's policy on substantive change requires the president or designee to notify the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) of any significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of the institution in a timely manner. The institutional designee to notify SACSCOC is the official identified by UT Health San Antonio as the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison. The vice president for academic, faculty and student affairs has been designated as the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison.

UT Health San Antonio's policy for substantive change may also require notification to a school-specific accrediting agency. The president or designee has the primary responsibility to notify the school-specific accrediting organization on substantive change. The respective school dean has been designated as the responsible party to notify the school-specific accrediting organization.

The notification of substantive change includes the University of Texas System and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The president or the designee has the primary responsibility to notify the respective organizations.

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A. Notification Provisions

Under SACSCOC policy, substantive changes, including those required by federal regulations, includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of the institution or its programs.
2. Changing the legal status, form or control, or ownership of the institution.
3. Changing the governance of an institution.
4. Merging/consolidating two or more institutions or entities.
5. Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
6. Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution (including a branch campus).
7. Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
8. Adding graduate programs at an institution previously offering only undergraduate programs (including degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other for-credit credential).
9. Changing the way an institution measures student progress, whether in clock hours or credit-hours; semesters, trimesters, or quarters; or time-based on non-time-based methods or measures.
10. Adding a program that is a significant departure from the existing programs or methods of delivery, from those offered when the institution was last evaluated;
11. Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.
12. Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
13. Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
14. 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
15. Substantial increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded, for successful completion of one or more programs.
16. Adding competency-based education programs.
17. Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.

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18. Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
19. Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
20. Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
21. Establishing an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program;
22. Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location including a branch campus.
23. Adding a permanent location at a site at which the 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.
24. Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.

B. Special Circumstances

Certain types of substantive change, such as adding a branch campus, degree level changes, or mergers/consolidations, and changes in governances require notification and approval by The University of Texas System; they could also require a visit by a SACSCOC substantive change committee to determine continued compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement*. The president or designee will coordinate with SACSCOC on a required site visit

IV. Definitions

When used in this document, the following words have the meaning set forth below unless a different meaning is required by context.

Substantive Change – a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institutions. Substantive change includes high-impact, high-risk changes and changes that can impact the quality of educational programs and services.

V. Related References

[SACSCOC, Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#)

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VI. Review and Approval History

- A. The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.
- B. The review frequency cycle is set for three years following the last review date, a time period that is not mandated by regulatory, accreditation, or other authority.

Effective Date	Action Taken	Approved By	Date Approved
03/2013	Policy origination		
08/2017	Policy Revision		
05/2022	Policy Revision/ moved & renumbered to new section 2.7 Academic Policies & Procedures	VPAFSA/ICPO	05/31/22