



## STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

### 11.99.99.M0.02 Substantive Change

*Approved May 4, 2018*

*Revised May 21, 2021*

*Next scheduled review: May 21, 2026*

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#### Standard Administrative Procedure Statement

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Texas A&M University's national accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), is required by the U.S. Department of Education to consider and evaluate substantive changes to member institutions. Each member institution is required by SACSCOC to establish a policy and procedures for monitoring and reporting substantive changes. This procedure is designed to ensure compliance with SACSCOC's substantive change rule by:

- a) defining substantive change,
- b) identifying responsible parties, and
- c) specifying processes for submitting substantive changes to SACSCOC.

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#### Official Procedure/ Responsibilities/ Process

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##### 1. DEFINITION OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

Substantive change refers to a modification or expansion to the nature or scope of the institution. Specifically, as indicated by SACSCOC, substantive changes 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 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.
- 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.

## 2. RESPONSIBLE PARTY

Texas A&M University's SACSCOC accreditation liaison in the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President is responsible for:

- 2.1 reporting substantive changes to SACSCOC;

- 2.2 monitoring Texas A&M University's compliance with the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy;
  - 2.3 reviewing proposed changes to determine if the proposed change falls under SACSCOC's substantive change policy;
  - 2.4 providing guidance to the academic officers and offices requesting the change;
  - 2.5 submitting the appropriate substantive change paperwork to SACSCOC; and
  - 2.6 notifying the affected academic officers when the institution is notified by SACSCOC that the change has been approved, denied, or if additional materials are necessary.
3. PROCESSES FOR SUBMITTING SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES TO SACSCOC
- 3.1 SACSCOC procedures distinguish between those changes which require only notification prior to implementation and those which require notification and approval prior to implementation. In some cases, substantive changes require submission of required information by a specified date in order to be implemented in a certain time frame. In some cases, advance notification of at least six months is required. The SACSCOC accreditation liaison will determine which SACSCOC process applies to a potential substantive change.
  - 3.2 The proposed change may require routing and approval through the institution's curricular approval process prior to submitting the item to SACSCOC. If routing and approval through the curricular process is not required, the unit requesting the change is responsible for notifying the SACSCOC accreditation liaison of the potential substantive change at the earliest opportunity.
  - 3.3 The SACSCOC accreditation liaison will work closely with the requesting unit(s) to write a notification or prospectus that meets SACSCOC requirements. The SACSCOC accreditation liaison will submit the required documentation to SACSCOC and communicate the SACSCOC decision or approval to the relevant unit(s) upon receipt.

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### Contact Office

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For information on clarification on this procedure, call (979) 845-4016 or use email <http://provost.tamu.edu>.

**OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY:**  
Provost and Executive Vice President