

LAMAR STATE COLLEGE ORANGE

Substantive Change Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accredits an entire institution and its programs and services, wherever they are located or however they are delivered. The Commission is responsible for reviewing all substantive changes that occur between an institution's decennial reviews, determining whether the changes have affected the quality of the total institution, and asserting to the public that all aspects of the institution meet the defined accreditation standards.

SACSCOC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an agency whose accreditation enables its member institutions to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV programs. To maintain its recognition with the U.S. Department of Education, SACSCOC has incorporated federal requirements into its **substantive change policy and procedures**.

Institutional Obligations

It is the responsibility of all institutions to adhere to SACSCOC substantive change policies and procedures and inform SACSCOC of substantive changes as specified in these policies and procedures. If an institution cannot determine whether a change is substantive in nature, the SACSCOC liaison should consult with the Commission staff. Failure of an institution to gain prior approval required for substantive changes involving programs that qualify for federal financial assistance could jeopardize funding of such programs and/or necessitate repayment of Title IV program funds disbursed during the interval of noncompliance.

1. Member institutions are required to notify SACSCOC of changes in accordance with the Commission's substantive change policy and, when required, secure approval prior to the implementation of changes.
2. 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 SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. Institutions are responsible for implementing and enforcing their substantive change policy and procedures.

Policy Statement

Lamar State College Orange (LSCO) shall be in full compliance with SACSCOC current Principles of Accreditation of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The Commission accredits the institution in its entirety, including all geographical locations and modes of delivery. LSCO's Substantive Change Policy and Procedures establish the guidelines and requirements and the processes deployed to monitor and report substantive changes occurring at LSCO to the Commission in a timely manner.

The College shall adhere to its Substantive Change Policy using a process deploying the procedures outlined below. These procedures are designed to provide efficient and timely internal mechanisms that will allow the College to report all modifications meeting the definition of a substantive change. In some cases, the College need only notify SACSCOC of a substantive change. In other cases, however, approval from SACSCOC must be secured prior to implementation.

Any changes to LSCO's approved instructional programs, including curricula or their mode(s) or location(s) of instructional delivery, will be presented as proposals to the LSCO Curriculum Council for consideration and approval at least two long semesters (one academic year) prior to anticipated implementation. The Deans shall

work with the Curriculum Council Chairperson to complete and submit all required documentation for review prior to the scheduled meeting.

Questions related to curriculum, modality, or location change should be directed to the LSCO Curriculum Council Chairperson. If necessary, the Chairperson will consult with LSCO's SACSCOC Liaison to ensure adherence to SACSCOC's substantive change policy and procedure. To avoid delays and potential violations of SACSCOC's Substantive Change Policy Statement, compliance regarding the type of change being addressed must be confirmed prior to submission of a proposal. **Always contact the Curriculum Council Chairperson for clarification or guidance.**

Definition

Substantive Change

According to SACSCOC, a substantive change is "a significant modification or expansion of nature and the scope of an accredited institution."

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 to a degree or credential level above that which is included in the institution's current accreditation or reaffirmation.
- A change from clock hours to credit hours.
- 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 an additional method of delivery (face to face, online, or competency-based) to a currently offered program.
- A substantial increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
- The establishment of an additional location, geographically apart from the main campus, at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program.
- 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.
- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.
- Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.

This is not a comprehensive list of all substantive changes, but does list the ones most likely to affect LSCO's programs and delivery of instruction. Deans, program directors, and lead faculty should consult the Institutional Accreditation Liaison before proposing these or any other changes to the institution, its programs, its policies for offering and awarding credit, and its methods and locations of instructional delivery.

Substantive Change Awareness

The following measures have been put in place to facilitate College-wide awareness and training regarding substantive changes. By keeping key people in Primary Pre-Notification Responsible Positions informed and educated on the SACSCOC substantive change policy, the College will be more proactive regarding the proper and timely reporting of qualifying changes to the Commission.

- a. Monthly, the SACSCOC Liaison will have a standing appointment at the Provost Leadership Meeting to present and discuss accreditation and potential substantive change- related items.
- b. The SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison acts as an ex-officio member of the Curriculum Council, as well as the Distance Learning Committee, which approves the offering of new online courses, and will gather information and provide necessary inquiries and reminders regarding substantive change requirements. To ensure that appropriate and necessary triggers are in place to pre-notify, the SACSCOC Liaison will provide the Executive Vice President/Provost, the Curriculum Council Chairperson, the Deans, the Associate Deans, and the Program Directors and Lead Faculty with annual training updates about the Commission's substantive change policy and timeline. During these and other sessions, as needed, the SACSCOC Liaison will provide comprehensive training to ensure that the appropriate guidelines are being followed. Faculty and Administrators will follow the requisite SACSCOC deadlines and criteria and will work in concert with the SACSCOC Liaison to meet the requirements. The customized SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedure Table will be distributed to each person at any given training session.
- c. The SACSCOC Liaison will also provide regular inquiry notifications via email to prompt the responsible Deans who oversee the areas where substantive change is most likely to occur.

Substantive Change Procedures

1. Lamar State College Orange uses a substantive change proposal process whereby a proposal for substantive change is submitted and introduced to the Curriculum Council Chairperson. During the Curriculum Council meeting in which the proposed curriculum, delivery mode, and/or location change is considered, the individual submitting the proposal, with assistance from the respective Dean and the SACSCOC Liaison, is to include the Substantive Change Proposal Form in their supporting documentation.
2. Substantive Change Proposal – The individual, with assistance from the respective Dean, shall notify the SACSCOC Liaison when a curriculum or instructional location, mode of delivery, revision, addition, or deletion is first proposed, and will submit to the liaison the documents supporting and describing the change to be submitted for review and consideration by the Curriculum Council. The SACSCOC Liaison will review the documents, determine whether or not notification or prospectus is required, and complete and sign a Substantive Change Proposal Form, and return it to the individual responsible for submitting the proposal to the Curriculum Council. The completed, signed Substantive Change proposal will be submitted with the other descriptive and supporting documents required for consideration of the proposed change by the Curriculum Council.

3. Substantive Change Determination – After the program or location has been considered and voted upon by the Curriculum Council, the SACSCOC Liaison will coordinate and communicate with the appropriate Dean to prepare the notification or prospectus to be sent to the Commission according to SACSCOC’s published deadlines.

The chart below illustrates the procedure that all curriculum or instructional location revisions, additions, or deletions must undergo to determine whether the update meets the threshold for SACSCOC notification or prospectus requirements.



Submission Deadlines

Substantive change prospectus, application, and notification submission deadlines depend on (1) the type of SACSCOC Board of Trustees review, if required (see also the Board review pathways explained below), and (2) the intended implementation date of the substantive change.

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

- March 15 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in June of the same calendar year, and
- September 1 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in December of the same calendar year.

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

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

For a substantive change requiring notification only, it can be submitted at any time before implementation.

Definition of Significant Departure

A significant departure is the addition of courses, programs, or methods of delivery of instruction that represent a 25% or greater change in what or how LSCO students learn, either in terms of the content delivered or the medium via which students can receive instruction, from programs and methods of delivery offered when the institution was last reviewed for reaffirmation of accreditation. In order to qualify as a significant departure according to SACSCOC guidelines, a program must contain at least 25% content not previously taught at the institution, or offer at least 25% of a program's content in a new method of delivery.

*Created by Executive Vice President/Provost and SACSCOC Liaison-FALL 2020
Revised January 2023*

Appendix A: Substantive Change Proposal Form

This form must be prepared for every proposed change (course and/or program revision, addition, or deletion) submitted to the Curriculum Committee for a LSCO program, course, or location, including addition, revision, or removal. ***It should be submitted to the curriculum committee chairperson at least 10 days prior to the regular scheduled meeting. Planning of at least two long semesters is required for any proposed change to an existing or potential LSCO program or site location.***

NOTE: the due dates for implementation are established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on College (SACSCOC) and will be strictly enforced by LSCO in order to remain in compliance with SACSCOC.

DEADLINES

DEADLINES		
Implementation Semester	Full Board of Trustees	Executive Council of Board
Fall	March 15 th	January 1 st
Spring	September 1 st	July 1 st

Date:	Program/Department:
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Program Coordinator:

Does the proposed change include any of the following situations? If so, check the appropriate box/boxes and provide a detailed explanation in the space provided. Additional documentation can be attached to this form.

Type of Change	Explanation of Proposed Change
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in Measure of Student Progress to Completion [Executive Council of Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Competency-based Education by Course/Credit-based Approach or Institutional-level Approach [Executive Council of Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Distance Education – Institutional Level Approval [Executive Council of Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Governance Change [Full Board of Trustees]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Institution Closure [Executive Council of the Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Institution Relocation [Executive Council of the Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional Contingency Teach-out Plan [Executive Council of]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Level Change [Full Board of Trustees]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Merger/Consolidation [Full Board of Trustees]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mission Change [Executive Council of Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ownership, Means of Control, or Legal Status Change [Full Board of Trustees]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Competency Based Education by Direct Assessment Approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 50% or more earned through direct assessment [Full Board of Trustees] <input type="checkbox"/> 25-49% earned through direct assessment [Notification] 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence Education [Executive Council of Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dual Academic Award [Notification]	

<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 50% or more earned through direct assessment [Full Board of Trustees] <input type="checkbox"/> 25-49% earned through direct assessment [Notification] 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Academic Arrangement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> With Title IV Entities [Notification] <input type="checkbox"/> With Non-Title IV Entities [Executive Council of Board] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 25-50% [Executive Council of Board] <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50% [Notification] 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Joint Academic Award <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> With non-SACSCOC Institutions or Entities [Executive Council of Board] <input type="checkbox"/> With SACSCOC Institutions [Notification] 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Method of Delivery [Notification]	
<input type="checkbox"/> New Program Approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 50%-100% New Content [Executive Council of Board] <input type="checkbox"/> 25%-50% New Content [Notification] 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Closure [Executive Council of Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Length Change [Executive Council of Board]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Re-open [Notification]	
<input type="checkbox"/> New Off-Campus Instructional Site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 25%-49% program instruction [Notification] <input type="checkbox"/> 50%+ Extensive [Full Board of Trustees] <input type="checkbox"/> 50%+ Limited [Executive Council of the Board] 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Off-Campus Instructional Site Relocation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Branch Campus [Notification] <input type="checkbox"/> Branch Campus [Executive Council of Board] <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Campus Instructional Site Closure [Executive Council of Board] <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Campus Instructional Site Re-Open [Notification]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site (less than 25%) <input type="checkbox"/> ARE significantly different from current programs at the site but NOT at the institution (25% or more)	

If the proposed change does not include one of the above, please explain the type of proposed change:	
Justification for the request to include a discussion of credit hour equivalency, if applicable:	
How will this change impact other programs at LSCO?	
Expected Semester and Year of Implementation:	
THIS SECTION is to be COMPLETED BY THE SACSCOC LIAISON	
Does the information submitted in the proposal constitute a Substantive Change? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If so, will it require <input type="checkbox"/> Prospectus <input type="checkbox"/> Notification	
Review to be completed by <input type="checkbox"/> Full Board of Trustees <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Council of Board <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Review	
Signature of Director of SACSCOC/Accreditation:	Date:
Signatures for Proposal	
Program Coordinator:	Date:
Associate Dean/Lead Faculty:	Date:
Dean:	Date:
Curriculum Council Committee:	Date:
SACSCOC Institutional Liaison:	Date:
EVP/Provost:	Date:
Signatures for Approval	
Curriculum Council Chairperson:	Date:
EVP/Provost:	Date:
President:	Date:
Date of TSUS Board of Trustees Approval, if applicable:	Date:
Date of THECB Approval, if applicable:	Date:
Date to submit to SACSCOC, if applicable:	Date: