

11.99.99.J0.02 Substantiative Change Notification

Approved: September 16, 2025

Next Scheduled Review: September 16, 2030

Procedure Summary

The procedure explains how Texas A & M University-Victoria (A&M-Victoria) will ensure compliance with substantive change procedures of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Failure to adhere to the Substantive Change policy may result in A&M-Victoria losing Title IV funding or being required to return money received for programs related to the unreported substantive change.

Definitions

SACSCOC – Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, an institutional accrediting agency serving primarily the southeastern United States, including colleges and universities in Texas.

Accreditation Liaison – Administrator or senior faculty member designated by the university president having responsibilities to ensure that compliance with SACSCOC policies is incorporated into institutional planning, to notify SACSCOC of substantive changes within the university, to familiarize the university community with SACSCOC policies, and to serve as the contact person for SACSCOC staff.

Substantive Change – 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.” The substantive change policy includes changes to programs, locations, or other operations as outlined below. These substantive changes must be reported to and receive acknowledgement or approval from SACSCOC prior to implementation of the change. A complete list of substantive changes, including those required by federal regulations, can be found on the SACSCOC website. Some of the more common changes that require a notification or prospectus to be submitted to SACSCOC include:

- (a) Offering classes at a new location
- (b) Ceasing to offer classes at a location
- (c) Creating a new academic program
- (d) Reconceptualizing or changing the length of an academic program
- (e) Ceasing to offer an academic program
- (f) Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized (e.g., associate or doctoral degrees)

- (g) Offering a program in a format not previously offered at University of Houston-Victoria (e.g., correspondence or competency-based programs) or adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program
- (h) Forming a consortial relationship with another degree-granting institution, other than articulation agreements
- (i) Changing the mission, governance, or legal status of the university

Notification – the formal process outlined by SACSCOC whereby institutions (via the President or Institutional Accreditation Liaison) outline the substantive change, providing the requested information as outlined on the SACSCOC website. Because substantive changes vary in scope, some require “notification,” and some require “approval”; these distinctions are clearly outlined in the SACSCOC guidelines regarding substantive change.

Procedure

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 To ensure that all curriculum changes that may require substantive change are identified in a timely fashion, the Provost and/or SACSCOC liaison will review every curriculum change before it is submitted to Faculty Senate for approval. If a substantive change prospectus or letter must be prepared, the Provost and/or SACSCOC liaison will work with the faculty to prepare the documents. This may happen concurrently with the Faculty Senate’s curriculum approval process.
- 1.2 Programmatic changes that require multiple new courses and/or new faculty are probably a change significant enough to require a prospectus. Every new academic program, including concentrations and minors that share a CIP with existing programs, will be recorded in the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, along with the status (date letter/prospectus sent; date approval/acknowledgement received; or date of decision to submit neither).

2. PROCESS FOR SUBSTANTIATIVE CHANGE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SITES OR CONSORTIAL AGREEMENTS

- 2.1 To ensure that prospectuses related to opening and closing instructional sites are submitted in a timely fashion, the Provost and/or SACSCOC liaison will submit a prospectus as soon as the decision is made.
- 2.2 To ensure that consortia relationships that may require substantive change are identified in a timely fashion, the Provost and/or SACSCOC liaison will begin drafting a prospectus as soon as the contract is drafted before the final agreement is signed.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[SACSCOC Substantive Change Policies and Procedures](#)

[SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#)

Contact Office

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