

Purpose: To establish the requirements, procedures and processes necessary to ensure timely coordination and notification of substantive changes involving Collin College to the college’s institutional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Overview: A substantive change *is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution*. SACSCOC monitors the compliance of its member colleges and universities with the SACSCOC substantive change policy and grants permission for major changes to occur. The SACSCOC Board of Trustees requires notification of substantive changes as a condition of accreditation (14.2) and, in some cases, approval prior to implementation.

All substantive changes must be submitted for approval by or notification to SACSCOC through the institutional SACSCOC Liaison. The SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy is posted under “Substantive Change Policy and Related Policies” on the SACSCOC Substantive Change website at <https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/substantive-changes> and lists the following types of substantive change:

- 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 increasing 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.
- Participating in the federal Prison Education Program providing Pell Grant access to confined or incarcerated student

This list changes as federal regulations change and as other changes to the policy are approved by the SACSCOC Board. Therefore, the SACSCOC Liaison should be notified of all institutional changes as soon as possible.

When notified of institutional changes, it is the responsibility of the SACSCOC Liaison to determine the appropriate SACSCOC notification or approval request, along with the deadline for submission.

If the SACSCOC Liaison determines that an institutional change is not substantive, documentation of the rationale for that determination should be maintained with other accreditation records.

Overall Responsibility

The Vice President of Academic Affairs/SACSCOC Liaison has primary responsibility for reporting substantive changes. The Coordinator of Academic Compliance works closely with the Vice President of Academic Affairs/SACSCOC Liaison to gather information and prepare prospectuses for submission.

The District President, Executive Vice President, Senior Vice President, Vice President/Provosts, Deans, Associate Deans and Directors have a fundamental responsibility to be aware of the College's substantive change policy/procedures and to assure that their staff adhere to this policy.

New/Revised Programs

Academic Compliance works closely with the Curriculum Office in preparing prospectuses for new or revised programs. Most information needed for the SACSCOC prospectus is gathered during the curriculum development process (see *Program and Curriculum Development Guide* on the Curriculum Office CougarWeb site).

After the Board of Trustees approves a new program, the Coordinator of Academic Compliance will contact the designated Dean or Associate Dean to seek additional information and/or clarify the information gathered from the Curriculum Office. Please note that there **must** be a full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials, hired or reassigned for the program, to serve as the Program Director or Discipline Lead **before** the prospectus may be submitted. Failure to do so may result in the prospectus being denied.

In the case of program revisions, the extent of revision will dictate whether notification or prior approval will be necessary for each award in a program that gets revised. Extensive revisions of a program that impacts 50% or more of a program may require a prospectus and prior approval before implementation, whereas

New Off-Campus Instructional Sites

Once a new instructional site is identified, inform the Vice President of Academic Affairs/SACSCOC Liaison with your plan to offer courses at an off-site location. If you are uncertain of what off-campus instructional sites are currently approved and at what level, please refer to the lists of off-campus sites that are approved to offer 25-49% of a program and those that are approved to offer 50% or more of a program at

<https://inside.collin.edu/curriculum/vpaa.html> For sites not listed on one of these lists or if

you anticipate offering more than 25%, or more than 50%, of a program at a site not approved to meet those thresholds, please have the following information available:

- Name and Address of the proposed site
- **ALL** programs to be offered (e.g. AA, AS, AAT, AAS in specific programs, Certificates, etc.)
- Courses to be offered
- Date of first class
- The plan for future offerings
- Note: New off-campus instructional sites initiated through the Master Plan will be initiated by the Board with implementation through the District President

Depending on information provided, the appropriate SACSCOC procedure will be followed.

- For sites teaching less than 25% of a program (i.e. degree, certificate, occupational skill award, etc.), no notification is required
- For sites teaching 25%-49% of a program, notification to SACSCOC is required in advance of offering courses
- For sites teaching 50% or more of a program, a full prospectus must be prepared and SACSCOC must approved the change in advance of offering courses that exceed this threshold for any award Collin College offers.

Time Lines

Substantive changes are review at the SACSCOC Board of Trustees meetings in June and December.

- New Sites and New Programs:
 - For implementation between July and December, prospectuses must be submitted by January 1 of that same year
 - For implementation between January and June, prospectuses must be submitted by July 1 of the previous year
- For other substantive changes, contact your SACSCOC Liaison for the appropriate timeline

Notification of Status of Submitted Substantive Changes

Once the disposition letter of the submitted prospectus or notification is received from SACSCOC, the Coordinator of Academic Compliance scans and uploads the letter to the appropriate J: drive Compliance Documentation folder and distributes a copy of the letter to:

- Executive Vice President– Bill King

- Senior Vice President of Campus Operations – Abe Johnson
- Vice President/Provosts – Mary Barnes-Tilley, Diana Hopes, Mary McRae, Brenden Mesh, Mark Smith
- Vice President of Student & Enrollment Services – Albert Tezeno
- District Dean of Students – Terrence Brennan
- Associate vice President Student and Enrollment Services – Alicia Huppe
- Deans of Student & Enrollment Services – Gregory Forge, Kirk Lee, DeAira Pugh, Traci Ramsey, Doug Willis
- Director of Financial Aid/Veteran Affairs – Alan Pixley
- Dean of Admissions – Laura Isdell
- Registrar – Jennifer Waits
- Dean of Academic Services/Curriculum Office – Wendy Gunderson
- If related to dual credit:
 - Vice President of P-12 Partnerships and Districtwide Scheduling -Craig Leverette
 - Associate Vice President of P-12 Partnerships - Raul Martinez, and
 - Associate Dean of Academic Partnerships, Shawna Chamberlain

Means by Which Institutional Constituents are informed of the Collin College Substantive Change Policy and Procedure

The District President, Executive Vice President, Senior Vice President, Vice President/Provosts, Deans, Associate Deans and Directors have a fundamental responsibility to be aware of the College’s substantive change policy and to assure that their staff adhere to this policy. This policy will be posted on the Vice President for Academic Affairs website at:

<https://inside.collin.edu/curriculum/vpaa.html>.

The Coordinator of Academic Compliance, acting on behalf of the SACSCOC Liaison, will distribute copies of the Collin College Substantive Change Policy and Procedure to the District President, Vice President/Provosts, Deans, Associate Deans, and Directors annually as well as immediately after any change in policy and procedure has been approved. The SACSCOC Liaison will also update the substantive change policy posting on the VPAA website.

In turn, the Vice President/Provosts, Deans, Associate Deans and Directors will distribute copies of the Collin College Substantive Change Policy and Procedure to their constituents and discuss and answer related questions.

Process of Amending and Approving the Collin College Substantive Change Policy and/or Implementation Procedures

The Collin College Vice President for Academic Affairs/SACSCOC Liaison will consider and approve changes to the Collin College Substantive Change Procedures and Guidelines.

Is Compliance with Substantive Change Policy and Procedures Mandatory?

Yes. The District President, Executive Vice President, Senior Vice President, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President/Provosts, Vice Presidents, Deans, Associate Deans and Directors have a fundamental responsibility to be aware of the College's substantive change policy and to assure that their staff adhere to this policy.