

E.2.1.1 (Procedure) Substantive Change

Responsible Department: Vice Chancellor for Academic Success

Based on Board Policy: [E.2.1](#) – Substantive Change

Approved: 10-22-13

Last Amended: 3-5-15

As a participating Title IV institution the Alamo Colleges is required to enable compliance with the obligation of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (“SACSCOC”) to the U.S. Department of Education to review and approve changes of a substantive nature, as such; the Alamo Colleges accredited institutions shall follow SACS Policy Statement regarding substantive changes made by member institutions found at <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>.

A *substantive change* is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.

Substantive Change Includes, Without Limitation:

- 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 of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution’s current accreditation or reaffirmation;
- A change from clock hours to credit hours;
- A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program;
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program;
- The establishment of a branch campus;
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution;
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution;
- Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution;
- Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution;
- Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution’s programs.

Certain substantive changes require letters of notification to be sent six (6) months prior to implementation.

A subset of the substantive changes requiring six (6) months of advance written notification also require that that a prospectus be sent to SACSCOC and that approval be obtained from SACSCOC prior to implementation.

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The President for a College, and the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Success for the District support operations and Board of Trustees, will maintain internal approval authority relating to each type of substantive change request sent to the SACSCOC.

The Accreditation Liaison shall inform all responsible individuals at each level of the District, to include Vice presidents, Deans, Directors and Chairs, of the SACS substantive change policy and the institutional substantive change policy on a biannual basis (August and February) and at the same time shall request notification of substantive changes in planning for the next 12-month period at the PVC. The 12-month timeframe will provide a long-range outlook to ensure that notifications can be carried out six months prior to implementation of substantive change. The Accreditation Liaison shall prepare the President's notification and/or request to the SACSCOC regarding the substantive changes that are reported.

If a prospectus is subsequently required by the SACSCOC, the deans or appropriate senior administrators shall coordinate preparation of the prospectus and forward the prospectus to the Accreditation Liaison for final review.

The Accreditation Liaison shall review a required prospectus and obtain approval of the President before preparing the prospectus for submission to SACSCOC by the President.

Each College shall maintain academic program approval procedures and forms that:

1. Recognize substantive changes related to academic and appropriate approval documents, including those related to curriculum review and dual credit agreements. These documents shall accompany any proposal for SACSCOC approval at each step; understanding that a prospectus does not exceed 25 pages plus appendices.
2. Require approval by the appropriate educational unit faculties and also include any recommendations offered by the corresponding department chair, dean, and/or Vice President prior to approval of academic substantive change by the College Academic Council;
3. Provide for timely notification to the Commission on Colleges prior to change implementation, as required by the SACS substantive change policy.

Reference:

SACS Principles of Accreditation 3.12.1 – Substantive Changes