

NORTHWEST VISTA COLLEGE
PROCEDURE

Procedure Number:	A 002
Procedure Title:	SACSCOC Substantive Change

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to establish the responsibilities and guidelines associated with defining and reporting substantive change at Northwest Vista College to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.
- 1.2 No unit at Northwest Vista College, including those units located off-site, may establish practices or changes that would be considered as any unauthorized change substantive change by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.
- 1.3 Compliance with this procedure is mandatory for all individuals and units.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is the regional accrediting association for Northwest Vista College.
- 2.2 SACSCOC Liaison: University administrator designated by the President who is responsible for ensuring compliance with SACSCOC policies, notifying SACSCOC of substantive changes, training and familiarizing the university with SACSCOC policies, and serving as the contact person for SACSCOC.
- 2.3 Substantive change is defined by the (SACSCOC) as “a significant modification of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” (see “SACSCOC Policy Statement – Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions” at <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf> for further information).
- 2.4 The table at the end of the procedure (excerpt from the “Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions”) includes various types of substantive change, the specific procedure to be used for each, the respective approval/notification requirements, and the reporting timelines.

3. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

- 3.1 While some substantive changes require full approval by SACSCOC, some only require that the Commission be notified. When only a notification is required, the college President or SACSCOC liaison is considered the approving authority with the responsibility for the area undergoing change.
- 3.2 The table at the end of the procedure notes changes requiring only internal authorization and notification to SACSCOC.
- 3.3 Once a substantive change that requires notification only has been approved by the President or designee, the SACSCOC Liaison will notify SACSCOC about the change in writing.

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3.4 The change can only be implemented after SACSCOC has accepted the notification and it has been included in the scope of the institution’s accreditation.

4. APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

4.1 For substantive changes that require SACSCOC approval, the President or SACSCOC liaison must authorize the initiation of the application process.

4.2 The SACSCOC Liaison will coordinate the application process between the unit proposing the change, the college administration, and SACSCOC. The Liaison will assist in the completion of the substantive change prospectus and ensuring it conforms to all SACSCOC standards.

4.3 The President and SACSCOC liaison are responsible for approving the application and prospectus. Once approved, the President or the SACSCOC liaison may submit it to SACSCOC.

4.4 The change can only be implemented after SACSCOC has approved the application for substantive change.

5. MONITORING AND ENSURING COMPLIANCE

5.1 The SACSCOC Liaison will report annually to the university President on the status of university compliance with this procedure.

5.2 Together, the President and the SACSCOC Liaison will continually monitor compliance with SACSCOC policies, principles, and guidance as described in “[The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#).”

5.3 Practices or actions suspected to be out of compliance with SACSCOC policies, core requirements, or comprehensive standards or this procedure will be reported to the SACSCOC Liaison and the appropriate Vice President for immediate resolution.

5.4 The NVC SACSCOC Substantive Change Procedure will be reviewed by the NVC cabinet at least biannually and as needed.

6. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE TABLE

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Application for Level Change Due dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)

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Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer's request and not on short notice)	Procedure 1	No	Yes	<p style="text-align: center;">Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of this document)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation</p>
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>).				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site AND at the institution				
Initiating degree completion programs				
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of "branch campus" on p. 3 of this document.)				
Initiating distance learning by offering 50% or more of the first program for the first time				
Relocating a main or branch campus				
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the SACSCOC accredited institution				

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating dual or joint degrees involving program expansion (significant departure) or initiating a new site where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program	See SACSCOC policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards”	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of this document) Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation Copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s) involved. See Policy
Initiating dual or joint degree with at least one institution <u>not</u> accredited by SACSCOC	See SACSCOC Policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards”	At least 6 months prior to implementation	Yes	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s). See Policy.
Initiating a direct assessment competency-based program	See SACSCOC Policy “Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs”	Yes – Screening Form	Yes	Submit “Screening Form” with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required, Due dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	See SACSCOC Policy: “Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status”	Yes: December 15 (for June review); June 1 (for December review)	Yes	Cover Sheet Institutional Summary Form Prospectus (See Appendix in SACSCOC Policy: “Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status”) Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution				
Acquiring any program or site from another institution				
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing				

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating a certificate program at a new off- campus site at employer’s request and on short notice (previously approved program)	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Modified prospectus Contact Commission Staff.
Initiating a certificate program that is a significant departure from previously approved programs at employer’s request and on short notice				
Adding a site under a U.S. military contract for a previously approved program				
Altering significantly the length of a program				
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution				
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information
Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification with old address, new address, and implementation date
Initiating dual or joint degrees with other SACSCOC accredited institution(s)	See SACSCOC Policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards”	At least 6 months prior to implementation	No	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution. See Policy.
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the SACSCOC accredited institution				

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<p>Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 25-49% of credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer's request and not on short notice)</p> <p>Initiating distance learning by offering 25-49 of the first program for the first time</p>	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification Including street address and implementation date
<p>Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans to teach out its own students</p>	Procedure 3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan included with letter of notification
<p>Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans contracts with another institution(s) to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)</p>	Procedure 3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement(s) detailing terms included with notification

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Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice using existing approved courses and location				

Contact for Interpretation: *Vice President for College Services*

Relevant Board Policy:	E.2.1 (Policy) Accreditation and Substantive Change
Relevant SACSCOC Documents:	SACSCOC Policy Statement: Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions <i>Principles of Accreditation</i> Section 14.2 Transparency and Institutional Representation (<i>Substantive Change</i>)
Originating Unit:	College Services
Maintenance Unit:	SACSCOC Liaison (Vice President for College Services)
Implementation Date:	September 11, 2016
Revision Date:	September 24, 2019
Approved (Signature):	