

Adding some methods of delivery may require approval as a separate type of substantive change:

- Adding a direct assessment competency-based education delivery of a program requires SACSCOC approval if 50% or more of the program can be earned by direct assessment
- Adding a course/credit-based competency-based education delivery of a program requires SACSCOC approval if 50% or more of the program can be earned by course/credit-based competency-based education *and* if the institution has not been previously approved to offer 50% or more of a program by course/credit-based competency-based education.
- Adding a distance education delivery of a program requires SACSCOC approval if 50% or more of the program can be earned by distance education *and* if the institution has not been previously approved to offer 50% or more of a program by distance education.

An institution on SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION adding a method of instructional delivery to an existing program requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation; notification is not an option (see also Method of Delivery–Approval).



What to submit

1. A completed Substantive Change Cover Sheet [[PDF](#)].
2. The name of the program (to indicate the discipline).
3. The credential to be awarded (e.g., Associate of Arts, Master of Accounting).
4. The instructional level (undergraduate or graduate, if not obvious from the credential).
5. The method of delivery to be added: competency-based education, distance education, or face-to-face instruction.
6. The implementation date.

New Program – Approval

Subject to SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION

REQUIRES	Approval
	Exec Council of the Board
COMMITTEE VISIT	No
FEE	Yes
Yes	SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION

A new program with 50-100% new content is a significant departure from the institution’s existing programs and requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation.

For an institution on SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION, a new program with 25-100% new content is a significant departure from the institution’s existing programs and requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation.

- Content is new if it is not currently offered by the institution at the new program’s instructional level (associate, baccalaureate, master’s, education specialist, or doctoral).
- A determination of the percentage of new content is made by the institution, not SACSCOC.
- New program approval equally applies to a degree, diploma, certificate, or other for-credit credential.
- If the institution is not currently approved to offer courses or programs at the new program’s instructional level, a level change approval is required (e.g., the institution’s first courses or programs at the baccalaureate degree level).
- Increasing the level of a program, i.e., offering a new program in a discipline at a higher instructional level than a currently offered program, is by definition a significant departure. For example, if an institution offers a baccalaureate degree program in a discipline and begins a new program in the same discipline at the master’s degree level, then the new program is a significant departure and requires approval prior to implementation. This applies across all instructional levels.



What to submit

A prospectus: Submit a substantive change prospectus using the outline provided in Appendix A for new program approval.

New Program – Notification

Subject to SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION

REQUIRES	Notification
COMMITTEE VISIT	No
FEE	No
Yes	SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION

A new program with 25-49% new content is a significant departure from the institution’s existing programs and requires notification prior to implementation.

For an institution on SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION, a new program with 25-49% new content is a significant departure from the institution’s existing programs and requires SACSCOC approval prior to implementation (see also New Program – Approval).

- Content is new if it is not currently offered by the institution at the new program’s instructional level (associate, baccalaureate, master’s, education specialist, or doctoral).
- A determination of the percentage of new content is made by the institution, not SACSCOC.
- New program notification equally applies to a degree, diploma, certificate, or other for-credit credential.
- If the institution is not currently approved to offer courses or programs at the new program’s instructional level, a level change approval is required (e.g., the institution’s first courses or programs at the baccalaureate degree level).

What to submit

1. A completed Substantive Change Cover Sheet [\[PDF\]](#).
2. The name of the program (to indicate the discipline).
3. The credential to be awarded (e.g., Associate of Applied Science, Bachelor of Music, Master of Science, etc.).
4. The instructional level (undergraduate or graduate, if not obvious from the credential).
5. The method(s) of delivery: competency-based education, distance education, or face-to-face instruction.
6. The implementation date.

Program Closure

REQUIRES	Approval Exec Council of the Board
COMMITTEE VISIT	No
FEE	No
No	SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION

Closing a program requires SACSCOC approval. Approval requires a teach-out plan.

Closure is defined as closed to admission or entry, not the cessation of instruction; i.e., closure date is when students can no longer start, not the date instruction ends. Closure approval ensures the institution has a plan and process to provide students reasonable completion options that minimize disruption and additional costs. Because closure approval is approval of the teach-out process, not the closure per se (i.e., not after the fact), a teach-out plan should be submitted as soon as possible after the decision is made to close.

Program closure includes ending a program at all locations or by all methods of delivery, but also includes ending a student's completion option at a specific location or by a specific method of delivery. Therefore, program closure approval is required if a program closes

- at a location (on-campus or off-campus instructional site) but continues to be offered at other locations, or
- by a method of delivery but continues to be offered by other methods of delivery.

Program closure is not required for a specialization embedded *within* a discipline-specific program. Depending on an institution's terminology, a specialization within a program may be called a minor, concentration, cognate, or other similar term.

What to submit

A teach-out plan: Submit a teach-out plan using the outline provided in Appendix A for a program closure.