

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES TO
SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COMMISSION ON COLLEGES (SACSCOC)

Academic deans or those designated by the deans are to notify and provide the University's Accreditation Liaison (Phil Handwerk, handwepg@wfu.edu) a description of any significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of their institution. **It is recommended that this notification occurs nine to twelve months, or more, prior to intended implementation.** The Accreditation Liaison will work with the dean or designee in proceeding with the notification process as required by the SACSCOC *Substantive Change Policy*.

SACSCOC accreditation extends to all programs and services of an institution wherever located and however delivered. SACSCOC does not accredit individual programs, locations, or portions of an institution. However, some new programs, locations, and other institutional changes are subject to notification and/or approval as defined in [Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#).

A substantive change is 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.

Non-Compliance

If an institution is non-compliant with *Substantive Change Policy and Procedures* or Standard 14.2, its accreditation may be in jeopardy. An unreported substantive change may require a review of the institution's substantive change policy and procedures document by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. **Non-compliance subjects the institution to monitoring, sanction, or removal from membership. Failure to secure approval, if required, of a substantive change involving programs or locations that qualify for Title IV federal funding may place the institution in jeopardy with the U.S. Department of Education, including reimbursement of funds received related to an unreported substantive change.**

Timing

For a substantive change requiring approval by the full SACSCOC Board of Trustees (which meets biannually), to be implemented after the date of the Board meeting, the submission deadlines are

- March 15 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in June of the same calendar year, and
- September 1 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in December of the same calendar year.

For a substantive change requiring approval by SACSCOC's Executive Council of the Board of Trustees or for a substantive change requiring notification only, the submission deadlines are

- January 1 for changes to be implemented July 1 through December 31 of the same calendar year, and
- July 1 for changes to be implemented January 1 through June 30 of the subsequent calendar year.

While not exhaustive, substantive changes may include:

- Even though WFU has been approved to offer distance education programs, additional programs in which 50% or more is earned through distance education are subject to:
 - new program approval if it is a significant departure from the institution's existing programs, OR
 - new program notification if it is not a significant departure from the institution's existing programs, OR
 - notification as an additional method of delivery for an existing program.
- Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- 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.
- Adding a new program with 25% or more new content.
- Changing program length by 25% or more or adding one or more terms to expected time to completion.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location including a branch campus or changing the site name or address.

- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.

Office of Institutional Research, Wake Forest University
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