

Sweet Briar College Institutional Substantive Change Policy and Procedures

Member institutions are required to have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely fashion, and member institutions are required to notify the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. In addition to federally regulated substantive changes, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees has approved additional substantive changes that require notification and, in some cases, approval prior to implementation. This policy and its procedures address substantive changes identified through Federal regulations and Board approval.

For a complete list of all substantive changes, as well as the types of procedures the College is required to follow, please refer to, [“Reporting the Various Types of Substantive Change.”](#)

There are three procedures for addressing the different types of substantive changes:

- Procedure One for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Approval Prior to Implementation (Notification may also be required).
- Procedure Two for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Only Notification Prior to Implementation (some changes also require submission of additional documents).
- Procedure Three for Closing a Program, Site, Branch Campus or Institution.

Procedures for the following types of changes are included in a separate document, [“Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status.”](#)

- initiating mergers or consolidations
- acquiring any program or site from another institution
- adding as a permanent location any site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that is closing
- changes in governance, ownership, means of control or legal status

Procedures for approval of direct assessment competency-based education programs are in a separate document, [“Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs.”](#)

The initiation or revision of programs not offered for academic credit and that are not eligible for federal financial aid does not require reporting; however, such programs are subject to review at the time of reaffirmation.

It is the responsibility of Sweet Briar College to follow SACSCOC substantive change procedures and inform SACSCOC of substantive changes as specified in those procedures. If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact SACSCOC staff for

consultation. SACSCOC accredits institutions, not systems. While a system may provide SACSCOC with important information regarding changes planned or underway at its institutions, it is expected that each institution will follow the reporting requirements of the substantive change policy. Failure of an institution to gain approval for substantive changes involving programs that qualify for federal financial assistance could result in the institution jeopardizing such funding.

To ensure compliance, the members of the President's Council, particularly the Dean of the College and Vice President for Academic Affairs, are responsible for reporting any proposed change that could possibly meet the criteria for a substantive change to the SACSCOC Liaison for the College. Additionally, the Registrar is responsible for reporting any possible substantive change resulting from discussion and/or actions taken by the Instruction Committee to the SACSCOC Liaison.

When reporting a possible substantive change to the SACSCOC Liaison, the President's Council members and the Registrar should complete the ["SBC Substantive Change Checklist"](#) in the early stages of the proposal. Using the checklist, a determination will be made by way of consensus between the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Registrar, the Vice President for Administration and General Counsel, and the SACSCOC Liaison. Once a determination is made, it is the responsibility of the SACSCOC Liaison to see that the appropriate procedure is followed in accordance with the ["SACSCOC Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions Policy Statement."](#)

At the beginning of each fall semester, the College's SACSCOC Liaison will conduct a training workshop for members of the President's Council, the Registrar, and members of the Faculty Executive and Instruction committees. Each year the SACSCOC Liaison will update workshop materials to include any changes to the policy that may have occurred during the year. The SACSCOC Liaison is also responsible for notifying the President's Council, Registrar, and chairs of the Faculty Executive and Instruction committees by email of changes as they occur throughout the year.

Lastly, it is the responsibility of the SACSCOC Liaison to update the Institutional Change Policy and Procedures as required and maintain all information on the College's Substantive Change Policy website.

Other Important Resources:

[Cover Sheet for Submission of Substantive Changes Requiring Approval](#)

[Procedure One: Substantive Change Prospectus Template \(Appendix B\)](#)

["SACSCOC Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions Policy Statement."](#)

[SACSCOC Substantive Change Web Site](#)