

University of Houston-Clear Lake Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Monitoring Substantive Change

1. Policy

The policy of the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) is to follow the substantive change procedures of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and to inform SACSCOC of any changes in its programs and activities in accordance with those procedures.

This document establishes guidelines to ensure that UH-Clear Lake remains in compliance with these requirements. Failure to adhere to the Substantive Change policy may result in UHCL losing Title IV funding or being required to return money received for programs related to the unreported substantive change.

2. Procedure

Substantive change requires one of the three following procedures:

- 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**.

Please see [Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#).

Substantive changes may be more interpretable and applicable when categorized by organization level. The following lists are not exhaustive but provide a framework that is expanded in the matrix at the end of this document. The matrix is taken from the SACSCOC Substantive Change document and may be used to make decisions relative to substantive change procedures, documentation, and timelines.

Program/Course level changes would include the following:

1. Expand significantly a current degree program.
2. Add courses or programs that would represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery from those currently offered.
3. Initiate programs or courses offered through a contractual agreement or consortium.
4. Change significantly the length of a program.
5. Initiate degree completion programs.
6. Initiate programs at the associate degree level.

Department or College changes would include the following:

1. Initiating an off-campus site.
2. Initiating distance learning.
3. Adding significant changes in existing technology-based delivery systems in distance learning.

Institutional changes would include the following:

1. Initiating an off-campus site.
2. Initiating distance learning.
3. Adding significant changes in existing technology-based delivery systems in distance learning.

3. Reporting and Monitoring Process

The SACS liaison for UHCL will be responsible for the reporting and monitoring of all substantive changes to SACSCOC.

Substantive Changes in Curriculum

To ensure that all curriculum changes which may require substantive change are identified in a timely fashion, both the Provost and the SACSCOC liaison will review every curriculum change before it is submitted to Faculty Senate for approval. If a substantive change prospectus or letter must be prepared, both the Provost and the SACSCOC liaison will work with the program or college to prepare the documents. This may happen concurrently with the Faculty Senate's curriculum approval process.

Programmatic changes which require new courses and/or new faculty are probably a change significant enough to require a prospectus. Every new academic program will be recorded in the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, along with the status (date letter/prospectus sent; date approval/acknowledgement received; or date of decision to submit neither).

Substantive Changes for Instructional Sites and Consortia Agreements

To ensure that prospectuses related to opening and closing sites are submitted in a timely fashion, the SACSCOC liaison will submit a prospectus as soon as the decision is made. To ensure that consortia relationships which may require substantive change are identified in a timely fashion, the SACSCOC liaison will begin drafting a prospectus as soon as the contract is drafted, before the final agreement is signed.

Distance Education Activities

The Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs will maintain an audit cycle of distance education activities.

1. On May 1, September 1, and December 1, the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVPAA) will issue emails reminding each college of the notification procedure and provide the deadline by which all notifications are due in the office.
2. Each college is to notify the AVPAA for all anticipated distance education activity for the semester, whether online or off-campus.
3. Forms require the signature of the program/division chair and the associate dean.
4. By May 15, September 15, and December 15, the college must forward one form per program and indicate when the college anticipates reaching the 25% mark and the 50% mark for face-to-face off-campus programs and first-time offered online programs.
5. For off-campus programs, the Registrar's Office will not issue location codes to schedule classes until the Office of the AVPAA has received the Academic Table Update form.
6. If a college does not anticipate initiating new distance education activity, the college will notify the Office of the AVPAA in writing.
7. Upon receipt of the forms, the Office of the AVPAA will notify SACSCOC and will confirm via written memorandum to the deans when the prospectus is due in the Office of the AVPAA.
8. All substantive change prospectuses are due in the Office of the AVPAA no later than six months prior to the anticipated date in which the program anticipates offering 50% of its SCHs off-campus.
9. These notification procedures are to be followed at any time during the academic year that a decision is made to expand off-campus offerings.

Substantive Changes Occurring at the Program/Course Level				
Type of Change	Procedure	Prior notification required	Prior approval required	Documentation and related dates/timelines
Altering significantly the length of a program	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Modified prospectus Contact Commission Staff.
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans to teach out its own students	Procedure 3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan included with letter of notification
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>).	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation; July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
Initiating a certificate program (not at employer's request and not on short notice) using existing approved courses and location	NA	No	No	NA
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 at employer's request and on short notice using existing approved courses and location	NA	No	No	NA
Initiating a certificate program that is a significant departure from previously approved programs at employer's request and on short notice	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Modified prospectus Contact Commission Staff.
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 degree completion programs	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation; July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
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 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 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 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.

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Substantive Changes Occurring at the College Level				
Type of Change	Procedure	Prior notification required	Prior approval required	Documentation and related dates/timelines
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	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
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	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site	NA	No	No	NA
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	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation; July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation

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Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site but NOT at the institution	NA	No	No	NA
Initiating distance learning by offering 24% or less of any program for the first time	NA	No	No	NA
Initiating distance learning by offering 25-49 of the first program for the first time	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification including street address and implementation date
Initiating distance learning by offering 50% or more of the first program for the first time	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation; July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) where student can obtain 24% or less of credits toward a program	NA	No	No	NA
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)	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification including street address and implementation date

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<p>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)</p>	<p>Procedure 1</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Cover Sheet Prospectus Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation; July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation</p>
<p>Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium</p>	<p>Procedure 2</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement</p>

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Substantive Changes Occurring at the Institution Level				
Type of Change	Procedure	Prior notification required	Prior approval required	Documentation and related dates/timelines
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Modified prospectus Contact Commission Staff.
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of “branch campus” on p. 3 of this document.)	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
Relocating a main or branch campus	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
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 a merger/consolidation with another institution	See Appendix in 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, and Prospectus 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				