

**Subject: Substantive Change**

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**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Tidewater Community College’s compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Comprehensive Standard 14.2 (Substantive Change) and the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.

**2. Policy**

Tidewater Community College’s accreditation by SACSCOC requires that the college report substantive change in accord with federal policy; therefore, TCC shall fulfill all obligations and processes for reporting substantive changes set forth in the current SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.

**3. Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer (VPAA/CAO), the Vice President for Information Systems and Institutional Effectiveness (VPIS/OIE) and the college’s Institutional Accreditation Liaison (IAL) in consultation with the Pathway Deans and the college’s Substantive Change Committee shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with all applicable policies and procedures of SACSCOC and identifying all possible College substantive changes in advance of implementation.
- 3.2 The VPAA/CAO, VPIS/OIE, and the IAL shall be responsible for ensuring that the Substantive Change Committee meets at least twice a year.
- 3.3 The VPAA/CAO and VPIS/OIE shall be responsible for making final determination on substantive changes requiring notifications or approvals after consultation with the IAL.
- 3.4 The IAL shall be responsible for ensuring that procedures for reporting substantive change comply with the requirements set forth in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.

#### 4. Procedures

- 4.1 In order to monitor the College's compliance with the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and facilitate the necessary information and communication to identify and prepare required notification or approval documents, the VPAA/CAO, VPIS/OIE, and the IAL will convene a Substantive Change Committee at least twice a year. Committee members will include individuals representing the following areas:
- Pathway Deans representing Transfer Programs
  - Pathway Deans representing Career/Technical Programs
  - First College and Dual Enrollment
  - The Office of Institutional Effectiveness
  - The Curriculum Committee
  - Distance Education
  - Financial Aid
  - Workforce
  - Centers for Military and Veterans Education
- 4.2 The Substantive Change Committee shall review the current SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and relevant institutional and academic planning documents and identify all possible areas of substantive change for the following 6-18 months.
- 4.3 The VPAA/CAO and VPIS/OIE shall make the final determination on substantive changes requiring notifications or approvals and their respective timelines in consultation with the IAL and as prescribed by the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.
- 4.4 The IAL in conjunction with the VPAA/CAO, VPIS/OIE, the College President, and any relevant stakeholders will prepare any required letters of notification and/or prospectuses for delivery to SACSCOC within the required timeframe as specified in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.

## 5. Definitions

Substantive changes, including those required by federal regulations, include:

- Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of an institution or its programs.
- Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership of an institution.
- Changing the governance of an institution.
- Merging / consolidating two or more institutions or entities.
- Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution (including a branch campus).
- Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- Adding graduate programs at an institution previously offering only undergraduate programs (including degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other for-credit credential).
- 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.
- Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.
- Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
- Entering into a written arrangement under 34 C.F.R. § 668.5 under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the title IV Higher Education Act (HEA) programs offers less than 25% (notification) or 25-50% (approval) of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs. An agreement offering more than 50% of one or more of an institution's programs is prohibited by federal regulation.
- Substantially increase or decreasing the number of clock hours or credit hours awarded or competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded, for successful completion of one or more programs.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.
- Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location including a branch campus.
- Adding a permanent location at a site at which an institution is conducting a teach-out program for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.
- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.

## 6. References

SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures

## 7. Review Periodicity and Responsibility

The IAL shall review this policy annually and, if necessary, recommend revisions.

## 8. Effective Date and Approval

This policy is effective upon its approval by the College President on October 25, 2021.

Policy Approved:

Procedure Developed:

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Marcia Conston, Ph.D.  
President

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Curtis K. Aasen  
Vice President for Information Systems  
and Institutional Effectiveness

## 9. Review and Revision History

The initial version of this policy was approved July 26, 2012.

- Revision 1
  - Revised to reflect changes made by SACSCOC to the procedures set forth in its Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges Policy Statement.

Approved February 28, 2013 by President Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.

- Revision 2
  - Revised to reflect changes made by SACSCOC to the procedures set forth in its Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges Policy Statement.

Approved February 28, 2019 by Interim President Gregory DeCinque, Ph.D.

- Revision 3
  - Revised to reflect the new SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.

Approved October 25, 2021 by President Marcia Conston, Ph.