

## **East Georgia State College Substantive Change Notification Policy**

Adopted by President's Cabinet 10/23/18

### **EGSC Policy Statement on Substantive Change Notification**

All substantive changes will be reported to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) on a timely basis consistent with the Commission's policy on substantive changes.

### **Substantive Change Definition and Resources**

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution, as defined in SACSCOC substantive change policy. The Commission on College's substantive change policy may be accessed at <http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp>. A number of SACSCOC substantive change documents and other resources are available on this webpage, including the following on-demand Focused-Topic Webinars:

- Determining Significant Departure
- Dual Enrollment and Instructional Sites
- How to Write a Prospectus
- Managing Off-campus Instructional Sites

SACSCOC substantive change documents may also be accessed at the College's SACSCOC Substantive Change webpage at [http://www.ega.edu/offices/academic\\_affairs/sacscoc-accreditation](http://www.ega.edu/offices/academic_affairs/sacscoc-accreditation)

### **Substantive Change Notification Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all college personnel to be aware of the requirements to notify SACSCOC (and, in some cases, obtain advanced approval) concerning all substantive changes. The determinations about whether a proposed action is a substantive change, what type of notice is required, when that notice is required and whether SACSCOC must give advance approval will often require advance consultation with the college's SACSCOC liaison. This policy establishes procedures to assure that such consultation takes place in advance to enable these discussions about compliance with the SACSCOC substantive change policy to take place on a timely basis.

East Georgia State College's (EGSC) SACSCOC liaison is responsible for coordinating the College's substantive change notification actions. The College's SACSCOC liaison will present an overview of the SACSCOC substantive change policy to the President's Cabinet at the beginning of each academic year and inform the Cabinet of important updates as necessary. The SACSCOC liaison will maintain a link on the College's Website to this substantive change notification policy and a worksheet that will aid in the identification of substantive changes and preparation of required documentation.

In addition, the SACSCOC liaison will consult with the President of the College and the President's Cabinet concerning strategic initiatives that may be classified as substantive changes according to SACSCOC policy.

### **SACSCOC Procedures for Reporting Substantive Changes**

According to the SACSCOC policy, there are three procedures for addressing the different types of substantive change:

- **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.

In recent years, EGSC has made several different types of substantives changes. Some of these changes have been reported to SACSCOC using Procedure One and others using Procedure Two. For example, Procedure Two was used to report to SACSCOC the offering of 10 associate of arts and 5 associate of science degrees with disciplinary distinctions beginning in Fall Semester 2017. Another example of using Procedure Two is the reporting of dual enrollment courses taught by the College at area high schools. In contrast, Procedure One has been followed for reporting each new baccalaureate program and to report the expansion of course offerings at EGSC Augusta beyond 50 percent of credits required to complete an associate degree. In the case of the baccalaureate programs, prior SACSCOC approval was required because new curricula were to be offered by the College. For the EGSC Augusta expansion, prior SACSCOC approval was required because the number of core curriculum course offerings were being expanded at a new location.

### **Timing of Internal Reporting of Potential Substantive Changes**

The due dates for notifying SACSCOC vary according to the type of substantive change being proposed. In some cases, notice must be given to SACSCOC significantly in advance of implementation of the change. Accordingly, proposals which may be substantive changes should be reported by the college personnel initiating that proposal at the time of initial development of the proposal. This would enable the person reporting the potential change and the SACSCOC liaison to determine the appropriate due date.

### **EGSC Internal Process for Reporting Substantive Changes**

#### **1. Academic Changes**

All proposals for curricular modifications, new degree programs, and/or academic work on levels previously not included within the scope of EGSC's SACSCOC accreditation must be reviewed within the context of SACSCOC and EGSC substantive change criteria and policies by the School's Academic Dean and the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs prior to submission to the Academic Policies and Curriculum Committee (APCC).

- a. The dean and VPASA will complete the substantive change checklist and outline forms presented below prior to initiating review of the proposal. The VPASA must send the forms to the SACS liaison and the Cabinet to alert them to any potential substantive change issues that may arise in connection with new academic proposals prior to any submission to the APCC.
- b. Any academic proposal to the APCC must include a section indicating the need (or not) for a substantive change proposal(s) to SACSCOC and must provide sufficient information for the committee to determine whether the institution can meet the SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation deemed to be necessary for substantive change approvals. Proposals to APCC should not be approved if the proposal cannot document that the substantive change involved cannot support and adhere to SACSCOC Principles. Faculty senate reviews should also take into account the substantive change issues documented in the proposal.

2. All other changes

In consultation with the College's SACSCOC liaison and the President's Cabinet, initiatives to be presented to the Cabinet will be reviewed based on SACSCOC substantive change policy criteria prior to presentation to Cabinet.

- a. EGSC personnel responsible for implementing a substantive change will complete the substantive change checklist and outline forms presented below.
  - b. The College's SACSCOC liaison in conjunction with the appropriate Vice President will prepare a timeline for each approved initiative that has been identified as a substantive change, including when the College will submit the initiative to its governing board, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents (USG BOR); when SACSCOC must be notified; and when any supporting documentation needs to be submitted to both agencies.
3. Depending upon the substantive change to be reported, the appropriate academic and institutional committees will take the necessary actions to implement the substantive change. The development of new academic programs will be supported by the work of the APCC and the Faculty Senate.

**EGSC Process for Reporting Substantive Changes to SACSCOC**

1. The SACSCOC liaison, in conjunction with the appropriate Vice President, will prepare any required notification of SACSCOC and any required request for approval by SACSCOC for the President of the College to review, approve, sign. The SACSCOC liaison will then notify SACSCOC of the substantive change in the manner and by the date required by the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy.
2. All required documentation to obtain approval for the substantive change will be prepared under the leadership of the divisional Vice President or Dean of the School in consultation with the EGSC SACSCOC liaison. The documentation must be submitted by the Vice President or Dean in charge of the initiative to the President of the College and the EGSC SACSCOC liaison for review at least one month in advance of any deadlines published by SACSCOC.
3. All communication between EGSC and SACSCOC concerning any notice of a substantive change or request for approval of a substantive change will be carried out by the SACSCOC liaison or the President.

**East Georgia State College  
Substantive Change Checklist and SACSCOC Prospectus Outline**

Substantive change includes the actions cited in Table 1 below. However, this list is not exhaustive.

**Directions Table 1:** Check (X) the appropriate change, then complete Table 2 if necessary.

**Table 1: Substantive Change Checklist**

Check (X)	Substantive Changes /SACSCOC Procedure: (1) Prior notification and approval; (2) Prior notification; (3) Closing site, campus, or institution
	1. Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution (1 – Prospectus required)
	2. Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution (1 – Prospectus required)
	3. The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the institution was last evaluated (1 – Prospectus required)
	4. The addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution’s current accreditation or reaffirmation (1 – Application for Level Change required)
	5. A change from clock hours to credit hours (1 – Prospectus required)
	6. A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program (1 – Prospectus required)
	7. The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program (1 – Prospectus required)
	8. The establishment of a branch campus (1 – Prospectus required)
	9. Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution (3)
	10. Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement such as a dual degree program or a joint degree program with another institution (2)
	11. Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution (1 – Prospectus required)
	12. Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution (1-Prospectus required)
	13. Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution’s programs (1-Prospectus required)
	14. Other initiative that may qualify as a substantive change

**Directions Table 2:** As indicated in table 1, substantive changes often require the completion of a SACSCOC prospectus. If the substantive change identified in Table 1 may require a prospectus, complete Table 2 below. The completed Table 2 will provide an initial outline for the prospectus.

**Table 2: Substantive Change Prospectus Outline (Based on The Substantive Change Prospectus presented below.)**

1. Abstract	
2. Background: nature and purpose	
3. Needs assessment and program planning	
4. Program description and expected outcomes	
5. Faculty qualifications	
6. Library and learning resources	
7. Physical resources	
8. Financial support	
9. Evaluation and assessment	
10. List of appendices	

## The Substantive Change Prospectus

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Use this information to determine the content and process for submitting a prospectus for a “Procedure One” substantive change requiring approval prior to implementation.

The Prospectus must be accompanied with a completed Cover Sheet.

**Do not use this information for**

- mergers, consolidations, change of ownership, acquisitions, and change of governance, control, form, or legal status (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Mergers.pdf>),
  - direct assessment competency-based educational programs (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/DirectAssessmentCompetencyBased.pdf>), or
  - level changes (<http://www.sacscoc.org/subchg/policy/ApplicationLevelChange.docx>).
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Before developing a prospectus, please review all of the information below concerning the content of the prospectus and how to submit the prospectus. When developing a prospectus, respond to all of the applicable requests for information.

**Please remember that the prospectus should address the specific substantive change for which you are requesting approval.** For example, if you are seeking approval for an off-campus site where adult, employed students will be enrolled in a graduate degree program, address specifically only the student support services that those students will need and describe how the support will be provided. Do not describe student support services that those students will not need such as athletic programs, dormitories, cafeterias, and other on-campus services that they cannot access.

### How to Submit the Prospectus

- **Each submission must include the following in the order listed:**
  1. Transmittal letter signed by an institutional representative which briefly explains the submission
  2. “Cover Sheet for Submission of Substantive Changes Requiring Approval” form (available on the Substantive Change webpage at [www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp](http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp)).
  3. Name, telephone number, and email address of the person who may be contacted concerning questions about the prospectus.
  4. A list of degrees and majors which the institution is authorized to grant (photocopy from the catalog is acceptable)
  5. A list of existing **approved** off-campus sites and their addresses. **Note:** an approved site is one for which a prospectus has been submitted and which SACSCOC has approved to offer 50% or more of a program. A site where 25-49% of a program is offered is not considered to be an “approved” site; it is a site for which only notification has been accepted by SACSCOC.
  6. Prospectus (should be no longer than 25 pages plus appendices)
- **Submit only one** copy of the above materials to the President of SACSCOC at the address listed on the Cover Sheet.
- Submit the **Transmittal Letter and Cover Sheet** in hard copy (paper).
- Submit the body of the prospectus itself in hard copy (paper), flash drive, CD or DVD.

**Documents will not be accepted via e-mail.**

**Special Note:** SACSCOC will accept documentation submitted for approval to a system office or to a state coordinating or governing board, provided such documentation includes all the information required in a prospectus as listed below. **However**, the submission must include the completed Cover Sheet and Transmittal Letter and **must contain an index** correlating the documentation submitted to another entity with the corresponding information required in a prospectus.

**Submissions lacking a clear, easily used index will not be accepted and will be returned to the institution without review. Faculty qualifications must be documented using the Faculty Roster Form, utilizing the Faculty Roster instructions. Curriculum vitae submitted in lieu of a faculty roster will not be accepted and will result in the submission being returned to the institution without review.**

**Please note** that SACSCOC reserves the right to make amendments to the requirements outlined below for certain types of changes.

### **Required Components of the Prospectus**

**1. ABSTRACT** (limit to one page or less)

- Describe the proposed change with its date of implementation.
- If a new program, identify where it will be offered.
- If a new off-campus site or branch, list its complete physical address.
- Provide projected number of students, if applicable.
- Indicate the projected life of the program or site, if applicable (single cohort or ongoing).
- Describe the primary target audience.
- Describe the instructional delivery methods to be used.
- Describe strengths of the institution to undertake this change.

**2. DETERMINATION OF NEED FOR THE CHANGE/RELATIONSHIP TO MISSION/PLANNING AND APPROVALS FOR THE CHANGE**

- Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.
- Describe the rationale and need for the program to include how the institution determined need.
- Provide evidence of legal authority for the change if approval is required by the governing board or the state.
- Provide documentation that faculty and appropriate other groups were involved in planning for and approval(s) of the change.

**3. REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR THE SPECIFIC SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE  
(SELECT THE CHANGE RELEVANT TO THE PROSPECTUS AND PROVIDE ALL  
INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR THAT PARTICULAR CHANGE)**

**For a NEW PROGRAM provide the following information:**

- Provide the curriculum for the program and a projected schedule of course offerings.
- Provide specific programmatic goals (objectives) and specific student learning outcomes for the program.
- Describe how the student learning outcomes **for the program** will be assessed.
- Provide course descriptions for all courses in the proposed program.
- Describe admissions and graduation requirements for the program.
- Demonstrate compliance with Standard 10.7 (Policies for awarding credit) of the *Principles of Accreditation*.
- Describe administrative oversight to ensure the quality of the program.
- For a program offered in compressed time frames, describe the methodology for determining that levels of knowledge and competencies comparable to those required in traditional formats have been achieved.

- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach in the program.

**For a NEW OFF-CAMPUS SITE OR BRANCH CAMPUS provide the following information:**

- Identify whether the site is a branch campus or an instructional site. The definitions of “branch campus” and “instructional site” may be found on pages 5-6 of the *Principles of Accreditation*. See also Procedure One in the policy entitled “Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions”. **Note: An institution is required to present itself and its sites to SACSCOC in the exact way it presents itself to the U.S. Department of Education.**
- Describe the educational program(s) to be offered at the site or branch. If a program to be offered at the site or branch is a new program requiring approval, also respond to the requirements for a new program listed above.
- Describe any differences in admission, curriculum, or graduation requirements for students enrolled at the new site or branch or any special arrangements for grading, transcripts, or transfer policies.
- Describe how programs at the new site or branch will be monitored and evaluated and how they will be incorporated into the institutional evaluation and assessment processes.
- Describe the administrative structure for overseeing the site or branch campus.
- Describe how services and operations at the new site or branch will be evaluated.
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach at the site or branch campus.

**For the OFFERING OF PROGRAM(S) VIA DISTANCE METHODOLOGY (ELECTRONIC OR CORRESPONDENCE) DELIVERY FOR THE FIRST TIME provide the following information:**

- Describe the infrastructure to support distance delivery methods to include the learning management system and administrative structure for electronic delivery.
- Describe how faculty members will be trained in distance delivery methodology and how courses will be developed.
- Describe technical support for students enrolled in courses delivered by distance methods and technical support for faculty members.
- Describe how effectiveness of programs offered via distance delivery will be assessed.
- Document compliance with Standard 10.6 (Distance and correspondence education).
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach courses provided by distance methodology.
- Describe processes in place to ensure that students have structured access to faculty members.

**For the INITIATION OF DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAMS provide the following information:**

- Describe the degree completion program to include a description of how the degree completion program differs from the same program offered in traditional format.
- Describe how the institution ensures that student learning outcomes are the same for the program offered as a degree completion program as those for the program offered in traditional format.
- Describe assessment methods for determining achievement of student learning outcomes for the degree completion program.
- Describe admission requirements for students entering the degree completion program.
- Describe the format for offering the degree completion program (for example, compressed format, accelerated format, etc.).
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty members scheduled to teach in the degree completion program.

#### 4. FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

- Complete the Faculty Roster Form for faculty members scheduled to teach in the new program, in a degree completion program, at a new site or branch campus, or in programs to be offered by distance

- methodology for the first time. Follow directions for completing the form which requires that the institution present the qualifications of each faculty member to teach the courses assigned to them. The form and instructions may be accessed at [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org) under [Institutional Resources](#) or from a link on the [Substantive Change](#) page.
- For a **new program**, the institution must demonstrate that it has at least one qualified faculty member to develop and/or teach discipline courses in the new program. Refer to Standard 6.2.a in the *Principles* concerning the determination of appropriate qualifications.
  - Provide narrative with supporting evidence that the number of full-time faculty members will be adequate to support the initiative and describe the impact on faculty workload of the new program, new site, or distance delivery.
  - Document scholarship and research capability of faculty members teaching in graduate programs and document faculty experience in directing student research.

## 5. LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

- List and describe discipline-specific learning resources to support a new program. Please do not list all resources located in the library if they do not relate to the specific change.
- Document discipline-specific refereed journals and primary source materials.
- If the institution is reliant on agreements with other libraries, provide a signed copy of each formal agreement and describe how the collections support the program(s).
- Describe specifically how students enrolled in a new program and/or enrolled in a program at an off-campus location and/or enrolled in a distance education program access these discipline-specific learning resources.
- Describe how students and faculty members will access information electronically.
- Describe how faculty and students are instructed in the use of online resources as well as on site library resources.
- Describe resources to support students in access to and use of learning resources.

**Note:** If electronic databases are listed, describe the discipline-specific suites of resources and not just the name of the database or the consortium through which it is accessed (such as Viva, TexShare, Galileo, Louis, etc.).

## 6. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

- Describe specific programs, services, and activities which will support students enrolled in the new program and/or enrolled at a new off-campus site and/or enrolled in distance education programs. Do not list student support services which are not relevant to the specific change.

## 7. PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- Describe the adequacy of physical facilities which will support the change.
- Describe equipment which will be available for a new program or available at a new site.
- Describe the impact that the proposed change will have on physical facilities and equipment for existing programs and services.

## 8. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Provide a business plan that includes all of the following (**NOTE: This applies to ALL submissions**)
  - (a) a description of financial resources available to support the proposed change, **including a budget** for the first year of the proposed change (**a three-year budget is required for a new branch campus**). Do not send a copy of the entire institutional budget.

- (b) projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow for the proposed change
  - (c) the amount of resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services for the proposed change
  - (d) the operational, management, and physical resources available for the change.
- Provide contingency plans in the event that required resources do not materialize.

**The institution must disclose if it is currently on reimbursement for Title IV funding.**

**Institutions currently on sanction with SACSCOC for financial reasons must provide a copy of the audit for the most recently completed fiscal year.**

## **9. DESCRIPTION OF INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESSES FOR THE CHANGE**

- Provide a brief description of institutional assessment processes.
- Describe how the institution will incorporate the change (program, site, distance education or other change) into the institution-wide review and assessment processes.

## **10. APPENDICES**

- Appendices may be used in hard copy (print) submissions to provide documentation supporting the narrative in the prospectus.
- **NOTE: In hard copy submission tabs must be provided identifying each appendix (by name or number) referenced in the narrative.**
- Links may be provided in electronic submissions to link to documentation supporting the narrative in the prospectus. **Be sure links allow reviewers to return to the narrative.**

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