

Auburn University at Montgomery Substantive Change Monitoring Policy

Title: Auburn University at Montgomery Substantive Change Monitoring Policy

Responsible Office: Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation; Provost

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the process and procedures used to ensure that Auburn University at Montgomery complies with the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Substantive Change Policy Statement for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges Policy](#), and the [Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#). SACSCOC must be notified of any substantive change prior to implementation of the change at Auburn University at Montgomery. Depending on the nature of the change, notification and subsequent approval may be required as much as 6 months prior to a change and appropriate documentation must be prepared and submitted to SACSCOC.

Additionally this policy assures approval required for internal and external curriculum alterations.

References:

- a. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges,
The Principles of Accreditation, 3.12
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2012PrinciplesOfAcreditation.pdf>
- b. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges,
Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Substantive%20change%20policy.pdf>
- c. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, *Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policies and Procedures – Policy Statement*.
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/AgreementsInvolvingDualandJointAwards.pdf>
- d. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges,
Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form or Legal Status – Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions.
<http://www.sacscoc.org/subchg/policy/Mergers.pdf>

II. POLICY

Auburn University at Montgomery, including the Chancellor, Provost Vice Chancellors, Deans, Department Heads, and Directors, is required to demonstrate continuing compliance with the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement by adhering to all standards, requirements, policies, and procedures associated with the definition and scope of a substantive change as described in SACSCOC Policy for Substantive Changes for Accredited Institutions.

Notification of any potential change that could be deemed substantive (described in section VI) must be submitted in writing via the applicable reporting line to the Provost. Notification should be submitted prior to any submission to any university-wide curriculum approval committees. Notification will be reviewed by the Provost Office with a copy forwarded to the University's SACSCOC liaison.

All agreements with institutions not eligible for U.S. Department of Education Title IV federal student aid programs (most all international institutions, for example) are to be considered substantive changes requiring procedures described in this section. Further, any agreements signed, other than memorandums of agreement or exchange agreements, such as detailed addendums, must have an implementation date six months out from the signature dates to allow for review by the Provost. Copies of all such agreements shall be maintained by representative of the Office of the Provost.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE
Revised October 1, 2013

IV. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all University officers who can initiate, review, approve, and allocate resources to any changes, both academic and non-academic programs that would be considered a substantive change according to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Within academic areas, such changes may originate with individual faculty members or groups of faculty members, with department committees or Department heads/chairs, Deans, Associate deans, Associate Provosts, with the Provost and any others reporting to the Provost.

In areas outside of Academic Affairs potential substantive changes which impact the education of Auburn University at Montgomery students may originate with individual units, with management teams within Vice-chancellors areas, or the Chancellor or those reporting to the Chancellor. However, all such changes must be initiated or approved for initiation by the Provost.

All individuals in positions described above are required to be familiar and comply with this policy.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Office: SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison
Responsible Executive: University Chancellor
Responsible Officer: Provost

VI. DEFINITIONS

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an Accredited institution (See Table 1, below) Source: SACSCOC.

Under federal regulations, substantive change includes:

- Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
- Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- 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
- 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.
- A change from clock hours to credit hours

- A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program.
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution
- Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution
- 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

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.

Branch campus - a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is:

- permanent in nature
- offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized
- educational credential
- has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization **and**
- has its own budgetary and hiring authority

Contractual Agreement - typically is one in which an institution enters an agreement for receipt of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs (i.e., clinical training internships, etc.) delivered by another institution or service provider.

Consortial Relationship- A consortial relationship typically is one in which two or more institutions share in the responsibility of developing and delivering courses and programs that meet mutually agreed upon standards of academic quality.

Degree completion program – a program typically designed for a non-traditional undergraduate population such as working adults who have completed some college-level course work but have not achieved a baccalaureate degree. Students in such programs may transfer in credit from courses taken previously and may receive credit for experiential learning. Courses in degree completion programs are often offered in an accelerated format or meet during evening and weekend hours, or may be offered via distance learning technologies.

Distance education - a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVD's, and CD-ROMs if used as part of the distance learning course or program.

Dual degree – separate program completion credentials each of which bears only the name, seal, and signature of the institution awarding the degree to the student.

Joint degree - a single program completion credential bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the two or more institutions awarding the degree to the student.

Significant departure – a program that is not closely related to previously approved programs at the institution or site or for the mode of delivery in question. To determine whether a new program is a “significant departure,” it is helpful to consider the following questions:

- What previously approved programs does the institution offer that is closely related to the new program and how are they related?
- Will significant additional equipment or facilities be needed?
- Will significant additional financial resources be needed?
- Will a significant number of new courses will be required?
- Will a significant number of new faculty members will be required?
- Will significant additional library/learning resources be needed?

Teach-out agreement - a written agreement between institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students and a reasonable opportunity for students to complete their program of study if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50% or more of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. This applies to the closure of an institution, a site, or a program. Such a teach-out agreement requires SACSCOC approval in advance of implementation.

Teach-out plan - a written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50% or more of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between institutions. This applies to the closure of an institution, a site, or a program. Teach-out plans must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation.

VII. PROCEDURES

The actions required by level are included in Table One, section VII. The written descriptions of any administrative and academic substantive changes will be maintained in the SACSCOC liaison's office. The written notification should include: (a) the title of the proposed change; (b) a brief description such as implementing a new program, initiating a new degree level, offering classes at a new off-campus site; (c) contact information for responsible individual;(d) anticipated dates for approval (curriculum committees, ACHE, SACSCOC) including date of implementation. Appendix A

In order to ensure timely notification to SACSCOC, members of Senior Staff and/or Associate Provosts will keep the Provost apprised of the approval process. The Provost and the SACSCOC liaison will oversee the process of preparing appropriate notifications, in conjunction with those involved with the changes.

All agreements with institutions not eligible for DOE Title IV funds should be reviewed as a possible substantive change and are to be reviewed by the Office of the Provost and the SACSCOC Liaison. Additionally any agreement involving a dual or joint degree with such entity must contain the following disclaimer:

“Auburn University at Montgomery is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award bachelor degrees, master’s degrees, and doctorate degrees. [Name of partner institution] is not accredited by SACS Commission on Colleges and the accreditation of Auburn University at Montgomery does not extend to or include [name of partner institution] or its students. Further, although Auburn University at Montgomery agrees to accept certain course work from [name of partner institution] to be applied toward an award from Auburn University at Montgomery that course work may not be accepted by other colleges or universities in transfer, even if it appears on a transcript from Auburn University at Montgomery. The decision to accept course work in transfer from any institution is made by the institution considering the acceptance of credits or course work.”

All responsible University officers and faculty (as identified in IV: Applicability) will be notified of this policy and reminded annually regarding their responsibility for compliance. The policy will be maintained on the Provost Web site as well as in Academic Policies in AUMnet. Description of

Detailed list of SACSCOC Procedures can be viewed at:
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Substantive%20change%20policy.pdf/>

Table One (below) describes actions required at Auburn University at Montgomery to fulfill the purpose of this substantive change policy.

Actions:

- I Initiate,
- AR Approve and recommend approval at next level,
- N Written notification of substantive change,
- INF Information Item only,
- A Approve,
- E Evaluate and determine if documentation is required to SACSCOC,
- L Letter/documentation to SACSCOC if warranted.

|

TABLE ONE

Type of Change								
	Faculty/ Departmental Head or Director	Dean/Internal Curriculum Councils	Curriculum Approval Councils (UG, Grad	Provost, Chancellor's Leadership	SACSCOC Liaison	AU CEO/Board of Trustees	Chancellor	SACSCOC Procedure
Academic								
Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved (i.e. associates degree)	I	AR &N	AR	AR	EL	A	L	1
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>)	I	AR &N	AR	AR	EL	A	L	1
Initiating certificate programs 1.at new off-campus site or 2.significant departure from existing programs or 3.at employers request	I	AR &N	AR	AR	EL	A	L	1, possible modified or full Prospectus
Initiating joint or dual degrees with another institution: (See: "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards.")	I	AR &N	AR	AR	EL		L	Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution, possible prospectus
Initiating courses/programs at off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school)	I	AR &N	INF	AR	EL		L	1, possible prospectus
Altering significantly the length of a program	I	AR & N	AR	AR	EL	A	L	1, with prospectus

Type of Change								
	Faculty/ Departmental Head or Director	Dean/Internal Curriculum Councils	Curriculum Approval Councils (UG, Grad)	Provost, Chancellor's Leadership	SACSCOC Liaison	AU CEO/Board of Trustees	Chancellor	SACSCOC Procedure
Academic, Cont.								
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	I	AR & N	AR	AR	EL		L	2, with copy of contract
Administrative								
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of "branch campus")				I & N *	EL	A	L	1, with Prospectus
Moving an off-campus instructional site				I & N *	EL		L	2
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus				I & N *	EL		L	3
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs ... International Institutions, for example				I & N **	EL		L	1 may require prospectus if AUM courses are taught by the faculty from entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV Programs
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution				I & N *	EL	A	L	1 Contact SACSCOC Staff
Other Changes Requiring Institutional or External Approval								
Initiating certificate programs * using existing approved courses or * at an approved off-campus site	I	AR & N	INF	AR	EL			

Type of Change								
	Faculty/ Departmental Head or Director	Dean/Internal Curriculum Councils	Curriculum Approval Councils (UG, Grad)	Provost, Chancellor's Leadership	SACSCOC Liaison	AU CEO/Board of Trustees	Chancellor	SACSCOC Procedure
Other Changes Requiring Institutional or External Approval, Cont.								
Expanding program offerings not a significant departure from existing programs at previously approved off-campus sites	I	AR & N	INF	AR	EL			
Changing department name	I	AR & N	INF	AR	EL	A		
Changing program name or degree nomenclature	I	AR & N	INF	AR	EL	A		

* Provost or Member of Chancellor's leadership will provide information item to curriculum committee.

** Applies to Memorandums of Agreement or Exchange Agreements only. Further development of such agreements must occur with input from departmental deans and/or faculty and information item to University curriculum committees.

VIII. SANCTIONS

If Auburn University at Montgomery fails to follow SACSCOC procedures for notification and approval of substantive changes, its total accreditation may be placed in jeopardy. If an academic program, unit or officer initiates a substantive change without following the procedures outlined in this policy, The President or Provost may direct the immediate cancellation or cessation of that change, with due regard for the educational welfare of students, when it is discovered. In areas outside of Academic Affairs, the same sanction may be applied by the Chancellor or relevant Vice-chancellor.

IX. EXCLUSIONS

There are no exclusions to the University Policy.

X. INTERPRETATION

Questions about the interpretation of this policy should be directed to the University's SACSCOC liaison, Assistant Provost for Institutional Effectiveness. In doubtful and questionable interpretation of this policy, SACSCOC liaison will consult with the appropriate Associate Provost, Provost, Vice Chancellor, Chancellor and the assigned SACSCOC Vice President before rendering an opinion.

APPROVAL TO PROCEED: _____ **DATE:** _____

Appendix A

Substantive Change Notification

Proposed Change: _____

Brief description of the change:

Does this proposed change involve an agreement with any institution which his not eligible for DOE Title IV funds. _____Y _____N

Contact information for the responsible individual: _____

Tentative timeline for approval:

Anticipated presentation curriculum approval process _____

Anticipated presentation Board of Trustees _____

Anticipated presentation Alabama Commission on Higher Education _____

Anticipated presentation to SACSCOC _____

Anticipated implementation Date _____

Reviewed by _____
Provost/Chancellor

Reviewed by _____
SACSCOC Liaison

