

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

SRSU Policy: Substantive Change Policy and Procedures

SRSU Policy ID: APM 1.13

Policy Reviewed by: Assistant Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness

Approval Authority: Executive Vice President and Provost

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Sul Ross State University's Substantive Change Policy and Procedures is to outline the requirements, procedures and processes for coordinating timely and complete notification of substantive changes to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commissions on Colleges (SACSCOC).

POLICY STATEMENT

The University 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 stated in SACSCOC Policy for Substantive Changes for Accredited Institutions.

Any potential change that could be deemed substantive must be submitted in writing via the applicable reporting line to the appropriate Provost/Vice President/Executive Director or the President as documented in the SCOPE and PROCEDURES sections below. The Provost will subsequently notify the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison as to the nature, scope, and proposed date of the potential change. SACSCOC defines a substantive change as "a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution." 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.

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

- 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 Provost and the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will oversee the process of preparing appropriate notification, in conjunction with those involved with the change, according to the requirements in SACSCOC Policy Substantive Changes for Accredited Institutions and other related policy and accreditation documents maintained by SACSCOC.

All responsible University officers and faculty (as identified in the SCOPE section) will be notified of this policy and reminded each fall and spring semester regarding their responsibility for compliance. The President, Provost and Vice Presidents are responsible for bringing forward any potential substantive changes from their areas under this policy. The Provost and SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will ensure that information regarding this policy, associated resources available from SACSCOC, and answers to frequently asked questions are made available on the "Institutional Research and Effectiveness" web page.

Compliance with the university's Substantive Change Policy and Procedures is mandatory.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all University officers who can initiate, review, approve, and allocate resources to any changes, including those to academic and non-academic programs and activities that may be considered a substantive change according to SACSCOC Policy for Substantive Changes for Accredited Institutions. Within academic areas, such changes can originate with individual or groups of faculty members, department committees, Department Chairs, Deans and Associate Deans, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Academic Committee, or any other area reporting to the Provost.

In non-academic areas, potential substantive changes may arise in individual units, among supervisors in each area, executive management teams within Vice Presidential or Director areas, or with the Vice Presidents/ Directors themselves. Further, the need for a potential substantive change may come to the attention of the President or those in his direct reporting line.

Each individual hereby designated is required to be familiar and comply with this policy.

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

PROCEDURES

Any proposed change that could be deemed substantive according to SACSCOC policy must be submitted in writing to the Provost, appropriate Vice President, or President, as outlined in the **POLICY STATEMENT** section. These notifications must include: (a) title of the proposed change; (b) a brief description of the change including its scope; (c) responsible individual to act as contact; (d) tentative timeline for approval; and (e) earliest date possible for implementation.

The definition of Substantive Change and the applicable institutional notifications are codified in SACSCOC Policy for Substantive Changes for Accredited Institutions. Table 1 below lists the different types of substantive change, the specific procedure to be used for each, their respective approval/notification requirements, and their reporting time lines.

REVIEW

1. The SRSU Substantive Change Policy and Procedure document will be reviewed regularly by the Executive Cabinet, to ensure that it complies with the SACSCOC Policy for Substantive Changes for Accredited Institutions.
2. Following review of the “Substantive Change Policy and Procedures” document by the Executive Cabinet, members of the Executive Cabinet will inform all responsible University officers and faculty (as identified in SCOPE) in their respective areas of any changes in the policy or procedures regarding substantive change. These University officers and faculty will inform all staff and faculty in their respective areas of these changes.
3. Revisions to the SRSU Substantive Change Policy and Procedures document will be included in the most recent revisions of the Faculty Handbook and the Administrative Policy Manual posted on the web site, SRSU.

Reporting the Various Types of Substantive Change

The different types of substantive change, the specific procedure to be used for each, their respective approval/notification requirements, and their reporting time lines are included in the table that follows. Please read the full text under the appropriate procedure for details regarding reporting.

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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)

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

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)	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of this document) Due dates: January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation
Expanding at current degree level (significant departure from current programs).				
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				
Initiating degree completion programs				
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of "branch campus" on p. 3 of this document.)				
Initiating distance learning by offering 50% or more of the first program for the first time				
Relocating a main or branch campus				
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				

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Prospectus (See Appendix B of this document)

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

	policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards			Due dates: 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 degree with at least one institution not 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 a direct assessment competency-based program	See SACSCOC Policy “Direct Assessment Competency - Based Educational Programs”	Yes – Screening Form	Yes	Submit “Screening Form” with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required, Due dates: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	See 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 Prospectus (See Appendix in SACSCOC Policy: “Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status”) 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				

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

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 that is a significant departure from previously approved programs at employer's request and on short notice				
Adding a site under a U.S. military contract for a previously approved program				
Altering significantly the length of a program				
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution				
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	Procedure 1	No	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information
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 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.
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	Procedure 2	Yes	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement
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				

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

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
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
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans contracts with another institution(s) to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)	Procedure 3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement(s) detailing terms included with notification

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice using existing approved courses and location	NA	No	No	NA
Initiating certificate program (not at employer's request and not on short notice) using existing approved courses and location				
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				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off- campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site				
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				
Initiating distance learning by offering 24% or less of any program for the first time				