

Texas Tech University Substantive Change Policy

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion in the nature and scope of an accredited institution¹. Texas Tech University complies with the policy statement on Substantive Change for Accredited institutions of the Commission on Colleges by:

1. Notifying SACSCOC of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seeking approval prior to the initiation of changes.
2. Having instituted policy and procedures to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely fashion.

Substantive change requires one of the three following procedures:

Procedure One (1): Review of substantive changes requiring notification and approval prior to implementation

Procedure Two (2): Review of substantive changes requiring only notification prior to implementation

Procedure Three (3): Closing a program, site, branch campus, or institution

NA: Not applicable.

It has been recognized that substantive change may be more interpretable and applicable by institutions of higher education when categorized by organizational level. These organizational levels are: (1) Program/Course level, (2) School/College/Department level, and (3) Institutional level.

Substantive changes considered at the Program/Course level include:

1. Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved;
2. Expanding at current degree level (*significant departure from current programs*);
3. Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice;
4. Initiating other certificate programs;
5. Initiating joint or dual degrees with another institution;
6. Altering significantly the length of a program;
7. Initiating degree completion programs;
8. Closing a program approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution;

Substantive changes considered at the School/College/Department level include:

¹ SACSCOC (n.d.). *Substantive change for accredited institutions of the commission on colleges: Policy statement*. Retrieved from http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Substantive_change_policy.pdf

1. Initiating an off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school):
2. Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites:
3. Initiating distance learning:
4. Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium;
5. Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs;

Substantive changes considered at the Institutional Level changes:

1. Initiating a branch campus;
2. Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution;
3. Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution;
4. Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution;
5. Relocating a main or branch campus;
6. Moving an off-campus instructional site serving the same geographic area;
7. Changing from clock hours to credit hours;
8. Acquiring any program or site from another institution;
9. Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing.

The following matrix has been edited from the original to aid in decision making relative to substantive changes procedures, documentation and timelines, and responsible offices. For more information on substantive change, visit the [SACSCOC substantive change policy site](#) or contact the Texas Tech University SACSCOC Accreditation liaison, Dr. Catherine Parsoneault at catherine.parsoneault@ttu.edu and 806-742-2184.

Texas Tech University Substantive Change Decision Guide

Substantive changes occurring at the Program/Course level					
Type of Change	Procedure	Prior notification required	Prior approval required	Documentation and related dates/timelines	Responsible Offices
Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved	1	NA	Yes	Application for Level Change April 15 or September 15	
Expanding at current degree level (significant departure from current programs)	1	Yes	Yes	Prospectus 6 months in advance	
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice using existing approved courses	NA	NA	NA	None	
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)	1	NA	Yes	Modified prospectus	
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice that is a significant departure from previously approved programs	1	Yes	Yes	Modified prospectus; approval required prior to implementation	
Initiating certificate programs using existing approved courses	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Initiating certificate programs at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)	1	NA	Yes	Modified prospectus	
Initiating joint programs with another SACSCOC accredited institution	2	Yes	NA	Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution prior to	

				implementation	
Initiating joint programs with an institution not accredited by SACSCOC	1	Yes	NA	Prospectus 6 Months in advance	
Initiating dual programs	2	Yes	No	Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution. Prior to implementation	
Altering significantly the length of a program	1	NA	Yes	Prospectus	
Initiating degree completion programs	1	NA	Yes	Prospectus	
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution contracts with another institution to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)	3	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement detailing terms included with notification immediately following decision to close	

Substantive changes occurring at the School/College/Department level					
Type of Change	Procedure	Prior notification required	Prior approval required	Documentation and related dates/timelines	Responsible Offices
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) Student can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward program	1	NA	Yes	Prospectus	
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) Student can obtain 25-49 percent of credit	2	Yes	NA	Letter of notification Prior to implementation	
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) Student can obtain 24 percent or less	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that are significantly different from current programs at the site.	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that are NOT significantly different from current programs at the site.	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Initiating distance learning Offering 50 percent or more of a program for the first time (Adding subsequent	1	NA	Yes	Prospectus	

programs requires advance notification only for programs that are significant departures from the originally approved programs)1					
Initiating distance learning Offering 25-49 percent	2	Yes	No	Letter of notification prior to implementation	
Initiating distance learning Offering 24 percent or less	NA	NA	NA	None	
Initiating distance learning programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	2	Yes	NA	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement prior to implementation	
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 COC accredited institution	1	NA	Yes	Prospectus	
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 accredited institution	2	Yes	NA	Copy of the signed agreement prior to implementation	

Substantive changes occurring at the Institutional level					
Type of Change	Procedure	Prior notification required	Prior approval required	Documentation and related dates/timelines	Responsible Offices
Initiating a branch campus	1	Yes	Yes	Prospectus 6 months	
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution	1	NA	Yes	Contact Commission Staff	
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	***	Yes	Yes	Prospectus must be submitted 6 months in advance by April 15 or September 15, as appropriate	
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution	***	Yes	Yes	Prospectus 6 months in advance by April 15 or September 15, as appropriate	
Relocating a main or branch campus	1	Yes	Yes	Prospectus 6 months in advance	
Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)	2	Yes	NA	Letter of notification prior to implementation	
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	1	NA	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information	
Acquiring any program or site from another institution	***	Yes	Yes	Prospectus 6 months in advance	
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing	***	Yes	Yes	Prospectus 6 months in advance	

*** See specific SACSCOC policy for this particular item.