



POLICY TITLE

Substantive Change Policy and Procedures

POLICY NUMBER

2-001

Responsible Unit: <i>Academic Affairs</i>	Effective Date: 02-21-2019
Responsible Official: <i>Vice Chancellor for Academic and Evening & Weekend Affairs/Accreditation Liaison</i>	Last Reviewed Date: 01-30-2019
Policy Classification: <i>Accreditation</i>	

Revised to align with December 2018 version of SACSCOC Policy on Substantive Change.

I. Policy Statement and Rationale

Southern University at New Orleans is accredited by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). SACSCOC Standard 14.2 requires that ***“The institution has a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported according to SACSCOC policy.”*** According to ***“Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement”***, institutional obligations are two-fold:

1. ***Member institutions are required to notify SACSCOC of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.***
2. ***Member institutions are required to have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely fashion.***

The purpose of this policy, therefore, is to make available to stakeholders a document that outlines clearly SACSCOC requirements regarding the reporting processes of the various changes that may occur in the day to day operations of the University.

II. Statement of Compliance with SACSCOC Policy

The Southern University at New Orleans Substantive Change Policy and Procedures complies with SACSCOC Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions. This internal Substantive Change Policy provides a description of the processes and procedures for intended substantive changes at Southern University at New Orleans. The policy is not intended to replace the SACSCOC's policy on Substantive Change. It seeks to supplement the SACSCOC policy and explain the processes and procedures used specifically at Southern University at New Orleans to keep the institution compliant with SACSCOC Standard 14.2 (Substantive Change).

III. Responsible Officer

The Accreditation Liaison for Southern University at New Orleans, who is also the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Evening & Weekend Affairs, is responsible for identifying when a substantive change action is required and ensuring that the appropriate documentation, a notification or a prospectus, is submitted to SACSCOC by the University. The Accreditation Liaison ensures that all documents submitted to SACSCOC receive approval at each internal review level which includes the University Curriculum Committee, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Evening & Weekend Affairs and Chancellor, as well as by the Southern University A&M Board of Supervisors and, ultimately, the Louisiana Board of Regents. The Accreditation Liaison shall develop a good working relationship with the institution's Commission Staff and seek advice as necessary on substantive change matters as well as other accreditation-related matters. The Accreditation Liaison shall be the custodian of all Substantive Change submissions to SACSCOC and approvals granted by SACSCOC.

IV. Policy Definitions

Definitions pertinent to this policy include:

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 consortia 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.

Educational program - a coherent course of study leading to the awarding of a credential (i.e., a degree, diploma or certificate).

Geographically separate - an instructional site or branch campus that is located physically apart from the main campus of the institution.

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.

Notification - a letter from an institution's chief executive officer, or his/her designated representative, to SACSCOC President summarizing a proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the complete physical address if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site or branch campus. The policy and procedures for reporting and review of institutional substantive change are outlined in the document "*Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges.*"

Substantive Change - a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.

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 are 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 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.

V. Policy Scope

Consistent with Federal regulations, SACSCOC policy on substantive change stipulates that 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

VI. Policy Implementation Processes

Substantive Change application or notification shall be made only after a basis for the modification or expansion warranting the request has been established and approval granted by all required entities at Southern University at New Orleans, the SUS Board of Supervisors, and the Louisiana Board of Regents. Southern University at New Orleans has 'new program' approval or 'program revision' policy entrenched in the Faculty Handbook. Changes that may warrant substantive changes outlined above most often emanate at the departmental level. Faculty recommendation at the departmental level is conveyed in writing by Departmental Chair to the College Dean who submits a recommendation to the University Curriculum Committee. The recommendation of the committee is conveyed in writing by the committee chair to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs who likewise makes a recommendation to the Chancellor. Certain proposals such as the addition of new academic program, program termination, program mergers, application for Level Change, etc. require approval by the Southern University System Board of Supervisors and subsequently by the Louisiana Board of Regents. The latter publishes all final approvals granted an institution under a Database Tracking System (www.regents.louisiana.gov/data-and-publications). Following approval by the Louisiana Board of Regents, final approval by SACSCOC is sought via appropriate substantive change request to SACSCOC, which could be a notification only or a formal application.

a. Substantive Change Notification or Prospectus Submission Process

The Accreditation Liaison, in consultation with the Chancellor, determines the appropriate action to take on any approved changes, which could fall under three procedures per SACSCOC's "*Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions-Policy Statement*," as follows:

- **Procedure One** - Review of Substantive Changes Requiring *Approval Prior to implementation*.
- **Procedure Two** - Review of Substantive Changes Requiring *Only Notification Prior to Implementation*.
- **Procedure Three** - Closing a Program, Site, Branch Campus or Institution.

Procedures for certain changes are included in a separate SACSCOC document, ***“Mergers, Consolidations, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status.”***

Procedures for approval of direct assessment competency-based education programs are in a separate SACSCOC document, ***“Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs.”***

The initiation or revision of programs not offered for academic credit and that are not eligible for federal financial aid does not require reporting; however, such programs are subject to review at the time of reaffirmation.

The substantive change request is signed by the Chancellor and addressed to Dr. Belle S. Wheelan, SACSCOC President. The Committee on Colleges’ staff assigned to Southern University at New Orleans is copied. SACSCOC’s response and any follow-up actions are addressed appropriately by the Accreditation Liaison and the Chancellor. The goal is to ensure that the institution remains compliant with SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 14.2.

b. Monitoring the Extent of Online or Distance Learning Course Offering

The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Evening & Weekend Affairs, in consultation with departmental Chairs, College Deans, and the Director of E-Learning shall regularly monitor the extent of Online course offering proposed by each degree program each semester as published in the Course Schedule. This is to ensure that the institution is in compliance with SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy regarding exceeding 25% total Online course offering which requires a notification, or exceeding 50% threshold which requires prior approval.

In addition to monitoring the extent of Online course offering as stated above, Southern University at New Orleans will, through this policy, strive to be in compliance with SACSCOC Policies on Distance Education as mandated through SACSCOC Standard 14.3 (Comprehensive institutional review).

VII. Policy Revision

This policy shall be revised as frequently as necessary to remain current with whatever changes might occur in the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy.

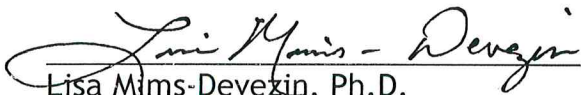
VIII. Policy Accessibility

This policy shall be published on Southern University at New Orleans web site, www.suno.edu, under Accreditation link, for accessibility to all stakeholders and other interested parties.

IX. Policy Approval

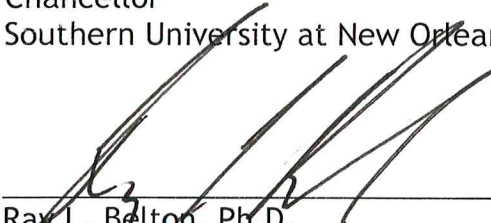
Appropriate approval officials of this policy are as follows;

APPROVED:



Lisa Mims-Devezin, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Southern University at New Orleans

1/31/19
Date



Ray L. Belton, Ph.D.
President-Chancellor
Southern University A&M College System

2/21/2019
Date



Atty. Dondine D. Rutledge
Chair, Southern University System
Board of Supervisors

2/21/2019
Date