

Office of Academic Affairs

Substantive Change Policy Statement Martin Methodist College

Martin Methodist College will be proactive in ensuring that all incidences of substantive changes are reported in a timely manner as required by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools—Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The complete SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy Statement can be found on the SACSCOC webpage.

Definition and Responsibility

According to SACSCOC, a substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. According to their Policy Statement, the following will be considered a substantive change (taken directly from the SACSCOC website):

1. Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
2. Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
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
4. The addition of courses or programs at a degree or credential level above that which is included in institution's current accreditation or reaffirmation
5. A change from clock hours to credit hours
6. A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program
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, and 8. The establishment of a branch campus.

It is the responsibility of the College through the Accreditation Liaison to report all substantive changes based on the commission's policy and follow all procedures and timelines as outlined in the commission's policy statement. Such procedures may include:

1. Notification and approval prior to implementation—in some cases, as much as 12 months prior approval is needed before implementation or,
2. Notification prior to implementation—usually requires a simple letter of notification prior to implementation.

Timelines to be followed

In order to comply with SACSCOC policy on substantive change, the College recognizes the timeline necessary in the reporting process. Taken directly from the SACSCOC Policy, below are examples and timelines of substantive changes most likely to be relevant to the College.

Information on additional types of changes and required timelines can be found on the SACSCOC website or by contacting the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison.

Type of Change	Requires Prior Notification?	Time Frame for Contacting COC	Prior Approval necessary?
<i>Initiating a new program or degree ...at an approved site that is significantly different from current programs</i>	Yes	Prior to implementation	No
<i>Expanding at current degree level (significant departure which may include new faculty, new courses, new equipment or facilities)</i>	Yes	6 months	Yes
<i>Initiating a branch campus</i>	Yes	6 months	Yes
<i>Initiating a certificate program ... at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)...that is a significant departure from previously approved programs</i>	Yes Yes	Approval prior to implementation Approval prior to implementation	Yes Yes
<i>Initiating off campus sites ... in which a student can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward a program</i> <i>... Student can obtain 25-49 percent of credit</i> <i>... Student can obtain 24 percent or less</i>	Yes Yes NA	6 months Prior to implementation NA	Yes No NA
<i>Expanding program offerings ...at previously approved off-campus sites that are significantly different from current programs</i>	Yes	Prior to implementation	No
<i>Initiating programs/courses ...offered through contractual agreement or consortium</i>	Yes	Prior to implementation	No
Relocating a main or branch campus	Yes	6 months	Yes
Relocating an off-campus instructional site	Yes	Prior to implementation	No

Significantly altering the length of a program	Yes	6 months	Yes
Initiating degree completion programs	Yes	6 months	Yes

Ensuring Timely Reporting of Substantive Changes to SACSCOC

The following activities/initiatives are established to ensure the timely reporting of any substantive change. Since the college liaison takes the lead in reporting all substantive changes, this person will have a presence on specific committees and groups to gain awareness of changes occurring on campus. This includes:

1. Actively works with members of the Executive Council. This will address changes related to the mission of the college as well as adding or changing instructional/branch sites.
2. Member of the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee. This will address significant changes related to curriculum issues such as adding new programs or significant changes to current instructional programs; moving programs to a more advanced level, and other issues related to instruction.

Publishing/Awareness of the Substantive Change Policy

In order to make the campus aware of the Substantive Change Policy, the policy is published on the “Effectiveness and Planning” page of the College website. Each fall semester, the policy will be reviewed by the Executive Council and the Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee to ensure proactive reporting and consistency across the institution.

Reporting Substantive Change

Any possible Substantive Change for the College should be immediately reported to the SACSCOC liaison in order to determine if the change fits the definition of a substantive change as required by SACSCOC. The SACSCOC liaison will work with SACSCOC personnel to ensure that the correct procedure is followed. All substantive change activity will be documented in the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison through a database maintained by the liaison.