Policy on Larkin University Teach Out Plan

Scope

This policy applies to administration and faculty in all programs of Larkin University.

Purpose

The decision to close a degree or certificate program requires substantial planning and careful consultation with all those affected. Every effort should be made to inform everyone affected as fully as possible about the conditions leading to a decision of such importance, and all available information should be shared. As the immediate interests of current students and faculty are most directly affected, their present and future prospects require sensitive and timely attention and involvement. The university teach-out policy aims to protect the interests of students and faculty and to satisfy the requirements established for the university by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) during this process.

Policy

The decision to close a degree or certificate program requires substantial planning and careful consultation with all those affected. Every effort should be made to inform everyone affected as fully as possible about the conditions leading to a decision of such importance, and all available information should be shared. As the immediate interests of current students and faculty are most directly affected, their present and future prospects require sensitive and timely attention and involvement. The university teach-out policy aims to protect the interests of students and faculty and to satisfy the requirements established for the university by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) during this process.

In accordance with Federal regulations, the University is required to submit a teach-out plan to SACSCOC for approval if any of the following occurs:

1. The institution notifies the Commission that it intends to cease operation entirely.
2. The Commission terminates accreditation or the candidacy of an institution.
3. The USDE notifies the Commission that it has initiated an emergency action against an institution or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV, Higher Education Act program
4. A State Licensing or authorizing agency notifies the Commission that an institutions license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked

More specifically, if the University decides to close an educational program, or the entire institution, one of the following options must be followed:

1. Execute a Teach-Out Plan. The teach-out option occurs when the institution "teaches-out" currently enrolled students; no longer permanently admits students to

programs; and terminates the educational program or the operations of an institution.

2. Develop and implement a Teach-Out Agreement. The teach-out agreement option occurs when the institution enters into a contract with another institution or organization to teach out the educational programs or program.

Both teach-out plans and teach-out agreements must include the following information:

1. Dates of termination and closure;
2. An explanation of how affected parties (students, faculty, staff) will be informed of the impending closure;
3. An explanation of how students will be helped to complete their program of study with minimal disruption or additional expense;
4. How faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment; and
5. If closing an institution: signed copies of teach-out agreements with other institutions, if any; and arrangement for the storing of student records, disposition of final financial resources and other assets.

The teach-out plan should make appropriate distinctions between graduate and professional students as well as between prospective and currently enrolled students. The teach-out period and teach-out plan will vary by academic department and/or program and must be determined and approved in advance at all required levels, as specified under Responsibilities below.

Implementation Date: August 1, 2021

Maintenance and Review of the Policy The CEO, SACSCOC Liaison Officer and Deans are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy in collaboration with CEO Council. This policy will be reviewed every two years for its effectiveness. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department. This policy will be reviewed every two years for its effectiveness.

BOT Approval Date:

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Reference Information Provided for Review:

Definitions

1. *Degree Program.* A degree program is an organized curriculum leading to a degree in an area of study recognized as an academic discipline by the higher education community, as demonstrated by assignment of a Classification in Instructional Programs (CIP) code by the National Center for Educational Statistics or as demonstrated by the existence of similar degree programs at other colleges and universities.

2. *Certificate Program.* A certificate program is a coherent course of study leading to the awarding of a credential. A college credit certificate is not intended as a degree, but as a supplement to a student's specific educational goals or professional career preparation. Completion of a college credit certificate generally is related to a specific field, and usually associated with a limited set of occupations.
3. *Educational Program.* A degree program or college credit certificate program.
4. *Date of program termination.* The date on which the educational program is closed permanently to admission
5. *Date of program closure.* The date on which the last student in teach-out has completed the educational program
6. *Notification.* A letter from an institution's chief executive officer, or his/her designated representative, to the MSCHE President summarizing a proposed change, providing the intended implementation date. The policy and procedures for reporting and review of institutional substantive change are outlined in the document *Substantive Change: Institutional Closure or Institutional Status Requiring a Teach-out Plan.*
7. *SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison Officer.* The individual at the institution who is responsible for ensuring the timely submission of annual institutional profiles and other reports as requested by the Commission in the years between accreditation. With the Chief Academic Officer the Accreditation Liaison Officer is responsible for the accuracy of all information submitted to the Commission and for ensuring ongoing compliance with Commission standards, policies, and procedures beyond reaffirmation. During the Reaffirmation Cycle, the Liaison serves on the MSCHE Self-Study Team and oversees all staffing aspects of the Reaffirmation process.
8. *Teach-Out Plan.* The written plan and subsequent process by which the University provides institutional and academic support services to students enrolled in an educational program that has been discontinued. The teach-out process often extends well beyond the termination date (the date on which the site or program is closed permanently to admissions) to allow time for enrolled students to complete their program in a reasonable amount of time. The plan must provide for the equitable treatment of students in an institution.
9. *Teach-Out Agreement.* A written agreement between accredited institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students if one of those institutions stops offering an educational program before all students enrolled in that program complete the program.

Procedures

Responsibilities

The Dean (and relevant Department Chair) whose scope of authority involves an educational program being considered for termination shall inform and involve affected faculty and staff at the earliest possible stage of consideration. Once the decision to pursue closure of an educational program has been made, the Dean shall forward a proposal to the President. The

proposal should be developed with the involvement of faculty and students as possible and should outline the:

1. Nature of the program,
2. Reason for termination,
3. Number of students currently enrolled,
4. Progression statistics of students in the program,
5. Resources used to offer the program,
6. Financial savings, if any, realized from the termination,
7. Explanation of how any students enrolled in the program will be helped to complete their program,
8. Assessment of whether any faculty will be adversely affected by termination, and
9. Explanation of how affected individuals will be informed of the planned termination.

The Dean should be available to brief the President, and, in the case of the institution closing, the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison Officer of the pending decision. The President will work with the Dean to develop and coordinate presentations on the proposal to the President's Council and the University Board of Trustees.

The Dean and Chairs shall work to develop a teach-out plan (See Appendix A, "Teach-Out Academic Plan"), and implement the notification elements of the plan for students and faculty. Appendix B provides a general summary used to brief faculty and students as "Sample Student and Faculty General Communication Summary." Both current and prospective students should be notified as soon as practicable (See Appendix C and D for sample letters). The Dean is responsible for on-going monitoring and reporting on implementation of the teach-out plan. A monitoring report should be used to provide periodic reports to the President on the status of the teach-out. The monitoring report shall also be used to advise students of their progress in the teach-out. (See Appendix E, "Sample Program Monitoring Report.")

The Faculty Council shall review the initial proposal to terminate an educational program forwarded by a relevant Dean. The Faculty Council will determine whether any faculty will be adversely affected by termination, and act to implement provisions within the scope of the Faculty Handbook. The Faculty Council shall notify the President and help facilitate the President's presentation on the change to the President's Council and the University Board of Trustees.

The President will insure the proposal for termination is brought forward for discussion by the President's Council. The President will develop and coordinate the presentation on the proposal to the University Board of Trustees and work with the relevant Dean to insure all affected parties are notified of the pending decision. The affected parties must include the faculty, students, the Dean of the College impacted, Human Resources, the Registrar, and the Office of Admissions.

Once the President's Council and the University Board of Trustees have approved termination of the program, the President will be updated periodically by the relevant Dean on the notification and approval process, and will receive periodic updates from the relevant Dean on the implementation of the teach-out plan.

Affected Groups

1. Prospective graduate/professional school students are those who have active applications awaiting admission decisions to an affected degree program. As soon as the decision to terminate is made, the appropriate unit, generally an academic department or program, should immediately suspend admission of new students and advise students who have already been offered admission that they must complete the degree program within a teach-out period. The graduate degree must be completed within the teach-out period. Such students must meet the minimum credit hour requirements for the degree.

2. Graduate/professional school students currently enrolled in a terminated degree program should be given an opportunity to complete their degree programs. Departments and programs should work with such students to develop a strategy for completion within the teach-out period. Programs should be as flexible as possible in facilitating and allowing currently enrolled graduate students to complete their degree program. Such students must meet the minimum credit hour requirements for the degree.

3. Graduate/professional school students previously admitted into a terminated educational or degree program who are not currently enrolled shall have their requests for readmission made on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, the decision to readmit shall consider the ability of the department or program to offer needed courses within the teach-out period, and the student's previous performance within the terminated educational program.

4. Faculty should be involved in and informed of plans to terminate a degree program at the earliest possible stage of consideration. Faculty shall be informed of any potential layoff considerations covered by the University Faculty Guidelines at the earliest possible stage of consideration and be kept apprised of recommendations forwarded to the University Board of Trustees regarding plans to terminate a degree program or certificate program.

APPENDIXES

- Sample Teach-Out Academic Plan
- Sample Program Termination
- Sample Current Student Notification
- Sample Not Formally Admitted and Transfer Student Notification Letter
- Sample Program Monitoring Report
- Sample Summary of Implementation Plan for Program Termination

Larkin University
18301 N. Miami Ave.
Miami, FL 33169

Policy on Roles & Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

Purpose: The fundamental purpose of the Board of Trustees (BOT) is to provide sound governance, fiduciary and strategic oversight and direction to the university. It is essential that Trustees understand their role and service to the University. This policy serves as a guide for trustees to understand their roles and responsibilities and how it is distinctive from administration of the college.

Policy: The roles and responsibilities of the BOT are detailed in Article III of the approved By-Laws of Larkin University. To fully comprehend the scope of the role and responsibility of a trustee, reference should be made to that document. John W. Nance identified core responsibilities of a BOT member which are reflected in the Larkin By-Laws. For convenience, they are provided below.

- Appoint, support, and assess the performance of the president/CEO.
- Clarify the institution's mission.
- Approve long-range plans.
- Approve the educational program.
- Ensure the well-being of faculty, students, and staff.
- Ensure strong financial management.
- Ensure adequate financial resources.
- Preserve institutional autonomy.
- Interpret the campus to the community.
- Interpret the needs of society to the campus.
- Assess their own performance.

Implementation: May 1, 2019

Maintenance and Review of the Policy: The Chairman of the Board of Trustees is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy in collaboration with Governance Committee. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

<u>**Document History**</u>
<u>Date adopted by Board of Trustees: April 2019</u>
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Policy on Roles & Responsibility of the CEO

Purpose: The Larkin University Board of Trustees, has identified the "President/Chief Executive Officer" as the singular organizational position that is primarily responsible to carry out the strategic plans and policies as established by the board of directors. In this case, the chief executive reports to the board of directors. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines of the role and responsibility of the President/CEO.

Policy: The President/CEO shall be the chief educational and administrative officer of the University. This individual shall be responsible to the Board of Trustees for the supervision, management, and government of the University, and for interpreting and carrying out the policies of the Board of Trustees. The President/CEO shall have the powers and duties set forth in the Bylaws, and such other powers and duties as the Board of Trustees shall delegate. For further details see Article VI of the Larkin University By-Laws and the job description of the President/CEO.

In general, the President/CEO has 6 major areas of responsibility which are detailed below.

1. **Board Administration and Support**- Supports operations and administration of Board by advising and informing Board members, interfacing between Board and staff, and supporting Board's evaluation of chief executive

2. **Program, Product and Service Delivery** - Oversees design, marketing, promotion, delivery and quality of programs, products and services. The President/CEO must meet or maintain qualifications for a faculty appointment in a department.

3. **Financial, Tax, Risk and Facilities Management** - Recommends yearly budget for Board approval and prudently manages organization's resources within those budget guidelines according to current laws and regulations

4. **Human Resource Management** - Effectively manages the human resources of the organization according to authorized personnel policies and procedures that fully conform to current laws and regulations

5. **Community and Public Relations** - Assures the organization and its mission, programs, products and services are consistently presented in strong, positive image to relevant stakeholders

6. **Fundraising** - Oversees fundraising planning and implementation, including identifying resource requirements, researching funding sources, establishing strategies to approach funders, submitting proposals and administrating fundraising records and documentation.

Implementation: May 1, 2019

Maintenance and Review of the Policy: The Larkin University BOT is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the policy through its annual President/CEO evaluation. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

Policy on Selection, Evaluation and Dismissal of Administrators

Purpose: The success of Larkin University is dependent on an environment of mutual trust and confidence. The administrative leadership team is critical to the environment and implementation of the mission and strategic plan of the university. This policy provides guidance in the selection, evaluation and dismissal of university administrators.

Policy: The selection of University administrators is a matter of great importance to the University. The President normally seeks advice on such matters through a variety of appropriate channels, individuals, and groups. Participation of faculty and students in the selection of those administrators who significantly affect the academic programs of the University is highly recommended.

Selection

Academic excellence is essential to the educational mission of Larkin University. Such excellence is achieved in an environment of mutual confidence, collegial participation, effective leadership, and strong academic programs. To foster that environment, it is University policy that the faculty are expected to participate in the selection of deans and departmental chairpersons and that the advice of the faculty shall be actively sought concerning possible improvements in academic programs and in administrative leadership of academic divisions and departments. Working in coordination with Human Resources, approval of any open position must have been approved in the budget, have a developed job description, and receive the approval of the CFO and President/CEO. The President/CEO will then initiate the selection process, by establishing a search committee. Working with Human Resources, the President/CEO will monitor the selection and hiring process through to completion. It is the responsibility of the President/CEO to inform the Board of Trustees of administrative appointments.

Evaluation.

It shall be the practice to evaluate all administrators periodically. It is the responsibility of the President/CEO to evaluate all direct reports at the university level, with the respective college Dean evaluating administrators at the college level. Performance reviews will be done annually as a "formative" process for all administrators as an opportunity to identify areas for potential growth and improvement. Reappointment reviews will be completed near the end of the stated contract period and have direct bearing on the question of continuation in the administrative position. This evaluation should be global in nature and

include input from all stakeholders and constituents. The President/CEO or the direct supervisor will have the final decision on the evaluation of administrators.

Dismissal

If it has been determined that an administrator will not be offered a continued contract for the position, they must consult with the President/CEO and Human Resources. The process for dismissal must follow the protocol for faculty/staff dismissal detailed in the Employee Handbook or the specific contract agreement and must include due process for the administrator. The termination should be communicated verbally and in writing. Because Florida employment is "at will", a reason for termination may not be provided. Department leadership is strongly advised to request assistance from Human Resources in all matters dealing with termination including composing the letter of termination.

Implementation: May 1, 2019

Maintenance and Review of the Policy: The President/CEO and Human Resources are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

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Policy on Selection & Evaluation of the President/Chief Executive Officer

Purpose: The Larkin University Board of Trustees, has identified the "President/Chief Executive Officer" as the organizational position that is primarily responsible to carry out the strategic plans and policies as established by the board of trustees. The purpose of this policy is to provide for the selection of a President/CEO as well as mandate an annual evaluation of the President/CEO.

Policy: The *Bylaws of the Larkin University Board of Trustees* specifies that the Board has the power and duty, "to appoint the President/Chief Executive Officer of the University; to delegate his responsibilities, evaluate his performance, provide for his leadership and welfare, and set appropriate conditions of employment, renewal, or termination". The BOT recognizes the President/CEO is the most important role in the management of the organization. The BOT will review and select a President/CEO who is best able to partner with them to execute the strategic plan and policies of Larkin University. The President/CEO must meet or maintain requirements for a faculty appointment in an appropriate department. The BOT, under the leadership of the Governance Committee, will also complete a formal and documented evaluation of the president/CEO which meets standards of fairness and practicality. The goal of the evaluation is to ensure that the President/CEO is meeting responsibilities and effectively leading the organization. The evaluation will be done annually based on the date of hire. In the event, performance issues are perceived, the BOT may initiate an evaluation.

Implementation: May 1, 2019

Maintenance and Review of the Policy: The Larkin University BOT is responsible for implementation and monitoring of this mandatory policy through its annual President/CEO evaluation. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

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Policy on Selection of Board Members

Purpose: Larkin University recognizes that the University and the Board are best served by having a Board comprised of members with complementary skills and experience. Below are characteristics that help to determine whether a potential candidate satisfies the criteria for trusteeship.

- Financial acumen
- Knowledge of nonprofit organizations
- Experience in higher education
- Appreciation of the diverse constituencies of the University
- Familiarity with the regulatory and political processes
- Fundraising, and
- Familiarity with the needs of the community and the state.

Not all trustees will have each of these skills, but as a collective they provide the skills needed to implement the mission of the university. The University By-Laws define the number and officers of the BOT whereas, this policy serves as a guide when evaluating and selecting members.

Policy: The Governance Committee of the BOT leads recruitment and orientation of all Board Members working together with the President/CEO to provide information and support. Referrals of potential trustees can be made through the President/CEO for consideration by the Governance Committee. In determining its selection of new Trustees, the Board will consider criteria to complement and strengthen the composition of the current Board, such as diversity and areas of expertise. Any vacancy which occurs on the BOT should follow the procedures outlined in the University By-Laws Article III.

Implementation: May 1, 2019

Maintenance and Review of the Policy: The Chair of the BOT working with the Governance Committee is responsible for implementing and monitoring this policy. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

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Policy on Substantive Change

Purpose:

To obtain and maintain SACSCOC accreditation, Larkin University must obligate itself to follow the policies and procedures required by SACSCOC which includes any substantive changes. Larkin University obligates itself to the policy and procedures required for substantive change.

Policy:

As a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Larkin University is committed to accreditation by ensuring that it meets its mission in accordance with all policies and procedures required by the SACSCOC, including the requirement to notify the SACSCOC of substantive changes, and, when required, to seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.

Procedure:

1. Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution and includes, among   others, the following:

- 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 programs or courses 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 percent 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 such as a dual degree program or a joint degree 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 SACSOC 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.

Note: The following link (http://sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp) will provide a more complete list of possible substantive changes with applicable time frames.

2. All questions and/or proposed recommendations regarding changes which may be classified as substantive should be referred to the President/CEO. It is the responsibility of the President/CEO and the designated SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison (SAL) to track and report all substantive changes across the University to SACSCOC. Please direct any comments or concerns directly to them.

3. The following internal steps are used to review proposals: 1. Proposals regarding potential substantive changes on the college level are submitted to Dean of the respective college. 2. The Dean of the college will determine if a substantive change exists or could potentially exist. 3. The Dean will bring the proposal forward as an agenda item to the Provost Council meeting where it will be discussed and determined if a substantive change exists. 4. Proposals regarding substantive changes on the University level are submitted to the President/CEO who will bring the proposal forward as an agenda item to the Provost Council meeting where it will be discussed and determined if a substantive change exists. 5. If a substantive change is determined, the item will go forward on the agenda for the upcoming Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting for review and discussion. 5. If the BOT approves the substantive change, the President/CEO will notify the SAL for required notification and/or approval from the Florida Commission on Independent Education (CIE), Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) if applicable, and SACSCOC. The SAL communicates to the respective unit the outcome of the approval process and monitors the implementation. The SAL will be responsible for developing a spreadsheet to appropriately monitor, report and track the substantive change throughout the approval and implementation phase of the approved substantive change.

Maintenance and Review of the Policy:

This mandatory policy is implemented and monitored by the President/CEO of Larkin University through the Provost Council and Board of Trustees. Compliance is confirmed annually through the review of the Strategic Plan. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness.

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
CEO	Rudi Ettrich: President	Pending
Dean COB	Marti Echols: Dean	06/2022
Owner	Rudi Ettrich: President	06/2022

SACS COC™

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Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE FOR SACSCOC ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS

Policy Statement

Institutional Obligations:

1. Member institutions are required to notify the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (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.

Definition: Substantive change is 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.
- 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.

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Glossary of Terms

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.

Correspondence education - a formal educational process under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student; courses are typically self-paced.

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.

Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs - Federal regulations define a direct assessment competency-based educational program as an instructional program that, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, uses direct assessment of student learning relying solely on the attainment of defined competencies, or recognizes the direct assessment of student learning by others. The assessment must be consistent with the accreditation of the institution or program using the results of the assessment.

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.

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.

Modified prospectus - a prospectus submitted in lieu of a full prospectus for certain designated substantive changes. When a modified prospectus is acceptable, the Commission specifies requested information from the institution.

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."

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 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.

The Policy

Commission Responsibilities

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accredits an entire institution and its programs and services, wherever they are located or however they are delivered. It is responsible for reviewing all substantive changes that occur between an institution's decennial reviews, determining whether the changes have affected the quality of the total institution, and assuring the public that all aspects of the institution continue to meet defined standards.

SACSCOC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an agency whose accreditation enables its member institutions to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV programs. To maintain its recognition with the U.S. Department of Education, SACSCOC has incorporated federal requirements into its substantive change policy and procedures. Some of those requirements specify that an institution seek and receive approval prior to the initiation of a substantive change so that the change can be included in the institution's scope of accreditation.

Institutional Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of an institution to follow SACSCOC substantive change procedures and inform SACSCOC of substantive changes as specified in those procedures. If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact SACSCOC staff for consultation. SACSCOC accredits institutions, not systems. While a system may provide SACSCOC with important information regarding changes planned or underway at its institutions, **it is expected that each institution will follow the reporting requirements of the substantive change policy. Failure of an institution to gain approval for substantive changes involving programs that qualify for federal financial assistance could result in the institution jeopardizing such funding.**

Procedures for Reporting: An Overview

There are three procedures for addressing the different types of substantive changes included in this document:

- Procedure One for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring *Approval Prior to Implementation* (Notification may also be required).

- Procedure Two for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring *Only Notification Prior to Implementation* (some changes also require submission of additional documents).

- Procedure Three for Closing a Program, Site, Branch Campus or Institution.

Procedures for the following types of changes are included in a separate document, "Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status – Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement" --
- initiating a merger or consolidation;
- acquiring an institution or location (including programs) of another institution;
- initiating a change of ownership;
- initiating a change of governance, control, form, or legal status; and
- adding as a permanent off-campus instructional site a location at which the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution;

Procedures for approval of direct assessment competency-based education programs are in a separate 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.

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	<u>Application for Level Change</u> **Due dates**: March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)
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 <u>Prospectus</u> <u>(See Appendix B of this document)</u> **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 policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards"	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 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 Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution Acquiring an institution or location (including programs) of 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	See SACSCOC Policy: "Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status – Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement"	Yes: December 15 (for June review); June 1 (for December review)	Yes	Cover Sheet Institutional Summary Form Prospectus (See Appendix in SACSCOC Policy: "Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status – Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement") **Due dates:** March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)

Types of Change	Procedure or Policy	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC
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
Initiating distance learning by offering 25-49 of the first program for the first time				
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				
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	NA	No	No	NA
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				

Required Committee Visits

The following six types of substantive changes require on-site committee reviews within six months after implementation. The President of SACSCOC also is authorized to appoint a Substantive Change Committee to review an institution for any change requiring a more in-depth evaluation beyond the prospectus submitted by the institution. In all cases, the ensuing Report of the Substantive Change Committee will be used by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees to determine the ongoing accreditation status of an institution.

1. The initiation of an additional off-campus site/location at which a student can earn at least 50% of the credit toward an educational program, if any of the following applies: (a) the institution has a total of three or fewer additional locations, or (b) the institution has not demonstrated, to the satisfaction of SACSCOC, that it has a proven record of effective educational oversight of additional locations, or (c) the institution has been placed on sanction by SACSCOC or is subject to some limitation on its accreditation, or (d) the institution has been accredited by SACSCOC for less than ten years.

   SACSCOC will conduct visits to the first three off-campus locations initiated by an institution that offer 50% or more of the credit for at least one program.

   When an institution initiates its fourth off-campus site/location where 50% or more of a program's credits are offered, SACSCOC may, at its discretion, choose not to conduct visits to any of these additional sites at the times of their initiation if the institution has previously demonstrated a record of effective oversight of its off-campus educational locations and has not been placed on sanction. However, SACSCOC will require visits to a representative sample of sites at the fifth-year interval between scheduled reaffirmations if (1) the additional sites have been initiated since the last scheduled reaffirmation and (2) the sites have not been visited.

   At any time, SACSCOC may choose to authorize visits to new sites developed between the fifth-year review and the next scheduled reaffirmation of accreditation.

   At the time of reaffirmation, SACSCOC will conduct a thorough review of a representative sample of additional locations/sites where a student can obtain 50% or more of course work toward an educational program. The extent of the review will depend, in part, on whether there has been a recent review of the site(s).

2. The initiation of a branch campus. A branch campus is defined as 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

   If it is determined that a branch campus has sufficient autonomy, the institution may be directed to seek separate accreditation for the unit. (See SACSCOC policy "Separate Accreditation for Units of a Member Institution."

3. The initiation of a change in governance/ownership with a change in control. (See SACSCOC policy "Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status – Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement")

4. The initiation of mergers/consolidations. (See SACSCOC policy "Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status – Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement")

5. The initiation of coursework, credit certificates, or degree programs at a different level than currently approved by SACSCOC. (Depending on the existing related programs offered by an institution, a committee visit may not be required for institutions moving from Levels III to IV or from Levels V to VI. See level classifications on page 14 of this document.)

6. The initiation of a direct assessment competency-based education program (at least 50% direct assessment)

Policy Statements Regarding Substantive Change

1. The *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* applies to all programs and services of SACSCOC-accredited institutions wherever they are located or however they are delivered. Failure to comply with the *Principles* or with procedures referred to in this policy could result in the institution being placed on sanction or being removed from membership.

2. Denial of approval of substantive change is not appealable. An institution that fails to gain approval of the substantive change may resubmit a revised prospectus or application following the guidelines and time frames described in the Table on pages 6-10 of this document.

3. An accredited institution in the appeals process or in litigation with SACSCOC is not eligible for consideration of substantive change.

4. The SACSCOC substantive change policy applies only to SACSCOC-accredited institutions. Applicant and candidate institutions may not initiate substantive change.

5. Procedures One, Two, and Three may not address all substantive changes that SACSCOC will review in the interim between an institution's reaffirmation cycles. Therefore, the SACSCOC reserves the right to classify significant changes other than those described above as substantive in nature and to follow up accordingly. The follow-up procedure may include a committee visit.

6. An institution may withdraw its prospectus/application or may discontinue substantive change at any time during the review process by submitting a formal letter of withdrawal to the President of SACSCOC.

7. Once an institution submits its prospectus or application and the document is reviewed by either the Committee on Compliance and Reports or by SACSCOC staff, any information included therein that indicates possible non-compliance with any of the *Principles of Accreditation* may lead SACSCOC to further review the institution, even if the prospectus is withdrawn or approval of the change is denied.

8. SACSCOC staff review all substantive changes requiring notification prior to implementation and conduct a preliminary review of all changes requiring approval. All substantive changes described in Procedure One require approval. If there is a favorable staff review, the staff makes recommendations to the SACSCOC Executive Council for action between dates of SACCOC Board of Trustee meetings. SACSCOC staff may also refer a case to the full Board of Trustees for review at the June or December Board meeting. The following cases require review by the full Board in June or December:

   - a proposed substantive change requiring prior approval submitted by an institution currently on sanction. Proposals to close a program or an off-site instructional site by an institution on sanction will be reviewed and, if appropriate, approved by Commission staff

   - a proposed substantive change submitted by an institution recently removed from sanction with particular attention to those involving non-compliance with Standards 13.1 (Financial resources), 13.2 (Financial documents), or 13.3 (Financial responsibility)

   - a proposed substantive change submitted by an institution currently on reimbursement for Title IV federal funding

   - the prospectus of an institution planning a merger/consolidation, change of legal status, governance, ownership or form of control. (See SACSCOC Policy "Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status – Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement")

   - the prospectus for approval of a direct assessment competency-based educational program (50% or more of a program) (See SACSCOC Policy "Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs.")

9. If an institution fails to report or to gain approval of a substantive change prior to its implementation and the nature of that change is not described in the list in item 8 above or those listed under Procedure One, the substantive change will be reviewed and, if possible, acted upon by staff. The issue of late submission, however, will be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for action. If an institution fails to report or to gain approval of a substantive change prior to its implementation and the proposed change is among those included in the list in item 8 above or those listed under Procedure One, both the prospectus/application and the issue of late submission will be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for action.

10. All final decisions regarding the accreditation status of an institution are made by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Denial of substantive change and the imposition of sanctions are not appealable actions.

11. Substantive changes of the types described in Procedures One and Two normally will not affect an institution's cycle of reaffirmation of accreditation

12. Following the approval of a degree level change by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, an institution may not initiate additional programs at the new degree level until after the Board takes positive action on its continued accreditation following the Substantive Change Committee visit authorized at the time of approval.

13. The date of the letter of approval of a substantive change is considered the date on which the change is included as part of the institution's accreditation.

14. Substantive changes must be implemented within two years of approval. If an institution does not implement within two years of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approval date, then a new prospectus or application must be submitted and approved by the Board prior to implementation.

15. Extensive substantive changes by an institution may accelerate the date for the institution's next reaffirmation. Examples of triggers for an accelerated reaffirmation include the following changes: proliferation of branches or off-campus sites, frequent mergers or consolidations with other institutions, significant increases in enrollments, or rapid proliferation of new educational programs.

16. If an institution fails to follow SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures, it may lose its Title IV funding or be required by the U.S. Department of Education to reimburse it for money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution's case may be referred to SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction or for removal from membership. (See also Appendix A regarding standards and policies addressing unreported substantive change.)

17. If an institution has educational programs and off-campus instructional sites that are inactive but not closed, the following applies:

    • If an institution does not enroll students in an educational program for five years, then after five years of no students enrolled and no major course offered for the educational program (if that educational program is a significant departure from other educational programs currently offered by the institution), the institution must submit a prospectus to reinstate the educational program prior to admitting students into and offering major courses for the educational program.

    • If an institution does not offer courses or programs at an approved off-campus instructional site for five years, then, after five years of no students enrolled and no courses offered at the off-campus instructional site, the institution must submit a prospectus for approval of the off-campus instructional site to reinstate any educational program at the off-campus instructional site whereby a student can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward any educational program offered by the institution.

The Commission will use information collected on the institution's completed "Institutional Summary Form Prepared for Commission Review," submitted as part of the fifth and decennial year reviews, as the mechanism for reporting the above educational programs and instructional sites that are deemed by the institution to be inactive but not closed.

Fees and Expenses

1. The following fees will be assessed to institutions for the review of an application or prospectus::

   $500   For an institution seeking review of a substantive change prospectus or application for level change

   An institution may submit a single prospectus covering up to 10 off-campus sites that offer dual enrollment programs as long as the program offerings are identical. The assessment for the prospectus will be the same $500 as for a prospectus for a single site. Additional sites would need to be submitted individually unless the program offerings at the additional sites are identical (again, up to 10 sites).

   $500   Per SACSCOC member institution for a substantive change involving multiple institutions (e.g., merger/consolidation, acquisition, change of ownership, or collaborative program)

   $7,500   Per non-SACSCOC member institution for a substantive change involving multiple institutions (e.g., merger/consolidation, acquisition, change of ownership, or collaborative program). The SACSCOC accredited institution(s) are responsible for ensuring payment.

2. Fees related to Substantive Change Committee visits

   In addition to the fee assessed for reviewing the substantive change prospectus, the following total cost will be assessed to an institution hosting a Substantive Change Committee visit:

   The actual cost of the committee
   (Includes travel, lodging, food, Incidental Fee for each reviewer, and related expenses), *and*

   $2,000 administrative fee

PROCEDURE ONE

The Review of Substantive Changes Requiring
Approval Prior to Implementation

Changes Requiring Approval

Substantive changes requiring submission of an application or a prospectus, and approval by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees prior to implementation by the institution are as follows:

1. **Initiating coursework, certificates, or programs of study at a different level than those previously approved by SACSCOC.** Institutions may not offer individual credit courses or programs at a degree level that has not been approved by SACSCOC. Examples of level changes requiring approval include: an associate degree-granting college initiating bachelor's degrees or a four-year institution initiating degrees at the master's level; a graduate-level-only institution initiating degrees at the undergraduate level, a baccalaureate degree-granting institution initiating occupational and technical degrees at the associate degree level. An institution requesting a level change should complete an "Application for Members Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level."

    Note: Repackaging of an existing approved curriculum to create a new degree level, such as an institution that offers a full 120-hour baccalaureate program creating an associate degree from its lower-division offerings, usually requires only advance notification, not approval.

    SACSCOC classifies institutions according to the highest degree level offered by an institution. Those classifications are as follows:

Level I	Offers the associate degree as the highest degree
Level II	Offers the baccalaureate degree as the highest degree
Level III	Offers the master's degree as the highest degree
Level IV	Offers the master's and specialist degree as the highest degrees
Level V	Offers three or fewer doctorate degrees as highest degrees
Level VI	Offers four or more doctorate degrees

    An institution adding a fourth doctorate degree, causing it to be reclassified from Level V to Level VI, is required to request the level change in writing in order for SACSCOC to reclassify the institution within its data base.

    Applications for a change from Level III to Level IV and Level V to Level VI will be reviewed and, if possible, approved by staff.

2. **Initiating certificate programs for workforce development.** These are typically offered at the request of an employer, either on campus or at the workplace. Offering previously approved certificate programs at an unapproved off-campus site requires approval of the site prior to implementation. Similarly, offering a certificate program that is a significant departure from existing approved certificate programs, either on or off campus, requires approval of the program prior to implementation. SACSCOC will accept a modified prospectus consisting of the name of the certificate, date of implementation, the complete physical address of the off-campus site (if applicable), a faculty roster, a discipline-specific description of library/learning resources, a description of physical facilities, and descriptions of courses to be offered at the site.

3. **Initiating other certificate programs.** Certificate programs consisting of courses drawn from the existing approved curriculum for a degree or diploma program do not require separate approval; they are considered to be included in the institution's current accreditation. However, to offer such a certificate at a new site requires approval of the site. A certificate that is a significant departure from previously approved programs must be approved in advance—the same as any other new educational program.

4. **Initiating an off-campus (additional) site (site-based/classroom group instruction) at which students can earn at least 50% of the credits toward an educational program.** Locations at which instruction is offered by distance delivery, but students must be present on-site to access such instruction, are considered off-campus instructional sites and must be approved in advance.

    Approval of an off-campus site is effective for a maximum of five years and will be reviewed again in the context of the fifth-year or decennial review.

    For an institution replicating an approved educational program that is already offered at three or more approved sites, a modified prospectus consisting of a faculty roster, descriptions of the courses to be offered at the site, a description of discipline-specific library resources, a description of student support services, and a description of physical resources will suffice in lieu of responding to the requirements of a full prospectus.

5. **Adding a site for a previously approved program under a U.S. military contract.** Institutions that enter into contracts with the U.S. military to offer programs at off-campus instruction sites must obtain approval for the curricula and delivery systems prior to entering into the contract if the programs and delivery systems are not already approved. Thereafter, SACSCOC will accept a modified prospectus that includes the date of the program start, the physical location of the site (including street address), a listing of the approved programs that will be offered at the site, a brief description of academic (library/learning resources, etc.) and student support services available at the site, and a faculty roster identifying projected qualified instructors for courses offered through at least the first full term at the site.

6. **Initiating degree completion programs.** Degree completion programs usually include a compressed format with classes offered evenings or weekends to accommodate working adults, a requirement to transfer in some amount of previous college credit, and may include offering credit for career or life experience. The prospectus should include a discussion of how the degree completion program differs from the same program offered in traditional form, and how the institution will ensure that student learning outcomes are the same for both offerings. An example of such a change is adult or accelerated programs in management or organizational leadership.

7. **Initiating a branch campus.** A branch campus is defined as 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 (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority. The prospectus for a proposed branch campus must include a business plan for the branch campus that describes:
    - The educational program(s) to be offered at the branch campus;
    - The projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow at the branch campus; and
    - The operation, management, and physical resources at the branch campus.

8. **Initiating distance learning or correspondence courses and programs by which students can earn at least 50% of a program's credits through delivery in a format other than face-to-face.** Institutions must demonstrate that a student who registers for a distance or correspondence course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit. Means of verification might include a secure login and pass code, proctored examinations, or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification. Processes used to verify student identity must also protect student privacy. Please see also the SACSCOC policy "Distance and Correspondence Education."

9. **Expanding at the institution's current degree level** (significant departure from current programs). What constitutes a "significant departure" from existing programs depends on what related programs are currently in place at a given institution. Refer to the Glossary of Terms for more specificity. Examples include the following: developing a new general education program, adding a master's degree in nursing when the institution is accredited at Level III but currently offers only a master's degree in education; an institution accredited at Level II (bachelor's degrees), offering only a bachelor's degree with a major in religion, adding three new bachelor's degrees with majors in biology, business administration, and computer science.

10. **Initiating a significant change in the established mission of the institution.** Significant changes in mission are those that lead to a fundamental shift in the nature of the institution. Examples include the following: the transformation of a technical college into a comprehensive community college, the initiation by a seminary of significant liberal arts offerings, the addition by a medical college of general education offerings, the initiation of an

engineering school at a liberal arts institution. Editorial changes in the language of a mission statement are not substantive and need not be reported. See Commission staff regarding the prospectus. The change in mission may dictate a mix of required documentation.

11. **Changing from clock hours to credit hours.** The prospectus must include a clear explanation of the formula used to calculate equivalency of credit awarded. Please see also the SACSCOC policy "Credit Hours."

12. **Changing significantly the length of a program, substantially increasing or decreasing the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program.** Significant changes in program length are those with noticeable impact on the program's completion time. Examples include the following: expanding a certificate program from 250 contact hours to 450 contact hours; increasing a baccalaureate degree from 124 hours to 150 hours.

13. **Relocating a main or branch campus.** The prospectus should demonstrate that the new facilities maintain the institution's compliance with Standards 13.7 (Physical resources) and 13.8 (Institutional environment).

14. **Initiating a collaborative academic program with another institution not accredited by SACSCOC.** The prospectus should demonstrate compliance with the SACSCOC policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards." Examples include joint degree or dual degree programs.

15. **Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs.** This applies if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the accredited institution. The prospectus must include a copy of the signed agreement.

The Procedure for Approval

Time of Notification

An institution undergoing substantive change requiring prior approval must provide written notification of the change to the President of SACSCOC in accord with the designated times outlined in the table on pages 6-9 of this document. In some cases, prior notification is not required.

If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact SACSCOC staff for consultation.

Submission of a Prospectus or an Application

Prospectus: Prospectuses may be submitted in print form or on flash drive, CD or DVD (submit one copy). Once the prospectus has been submitted, the institution may advertise and recruit students to a new program or site as long as all materials clearly state that the program or site is pending approval by SACSCOC. Prospectuses will not be accepted via email. In addition, all transmittals must include the required cover sheet and state the planned date of implementation. There is a different prospectus for changes governed by these policies:
- "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status"
- "Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs"

Application for Member Institutions Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level: The application for change of degree level must be submitted by **March 15** for consideration at the June meeting of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, or by **September 1** for consideration at the December meeting of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees to allow ample time for review and approval. Four copies of the completed application should be submitted to the President of SACSCOC as a print document or on flash drive, CD or DVD. Applications must include the required cover sheet and must include the planned date of implementation.

Staff Options

Upon receipt of a substantive change **prospectus**, a SACSCOC staff member will review the prospectus and any supporting material submitted by the institution and will recommend to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees one of the actions listed below:

1. approve the substantive change or

2. refer the substantive change to the SACSCOC Committee on Compliance and Reports for review and a final recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Options of the Committees on Compliance and Reports
Following Review of the Prospectus or of the Application

Prospectus: The Committee will review the prospectus and any additional material submitted, and will recommend one of the following actions:

1. accept the prospectus and recommend approval of the program, with or without a site visit. A site visit is required within six months after the initiation of the following approved substantive changes:
   (a) consolidation/merger; a change of ownership resulting in a change of control; change of governance, ownership, legal status
   (b) a branch campus
   (c) an off-campus site at which a student can earn at least 50% of the credit toward an educational program, if any of the following applies: the institution
   • has a total of three or fewer additional locations at which 50% or more of a programs credits are offered, or
   • has not demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, that it has a proven record of effective educational oversight of additional locations, or
   • has been placed on sanction by SACSCOC or is subject to some limitation on its accreditation

2. defer action and seek additional information

3. recommend denial of approval of the substantive change and continue the institution's accreditation. The reason for denial of approval may have been caused by an institution's current non-compliance with a standard or requirement. Consequently, denial may be accompanied by monitoring or imposition of a sanction.

Application for Member Institutions Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level:
An application for offering programs at a level different from that for which the institution is approved is automatically referred to the Committees on Compliance and Reports, except for a change in degree levels from III to IV and from V to VI which are reviewed by staff. The Committee will review the application and any additional material submitted, and will recommend one of the following actions:

1. accept the application and approve the program, with a site visit within six months after initiation of the substantive change

2. defer action and seek additional information

3. deny approval of the substantive change and continue the institution's accreditation. The reason for denial of approval may have been caused by an institution's current non-compliance with a standard or requirement. Consequently, denial may be accompanied by monitoring or imposition of a sanction.

Preparation for a Substantive Change Committee Visit

When a Substantive Change Committee is authorized, it is charged with determining the institution's continued compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation* following the initiation of the change. The visit will occur within six months after initiation of the change. In preparation for this visit, the institution will complete the appropriate substantive change documentation template which cites relevant Standards and the roster of faculty members who will be teaching in the program or at the site. Both the template and the Faculty Roster form are available on the SACSCOC Web site (www.sacscoc.org) under "Substantive Changes". The institution's SACSCOC staff representative will inform the institution of the composition and schedule for the Committee.

Options of the Committees on Compliance and Reports

Following Review by a Substantive Change Committee

The report of the Substantive Change Committee, together with the response of the institution to the recommendations contained in that report (due within five months of the Committee visit), will be reviewed by the Committee on Compliance and Reports. The Committee on Compliance and Reports may recommend one of the following actions:

1. continue the institution in accreditation, with or without a monitoring report

2. continue the institution in accreditation, impose a sanction, and request a monitoring report, with/without a special committee visit (mandatory visit if placed on Probation)

3. discontinue accreditation

PROCEDURE TWO

The Review of Substantive Changes
Requiring Only Notification Prior to Implementation

Changes Requiring Notification Only

Substantive changes requiring an institution to notify the President of SACSCOC prior to implementation by the institution are as follows:

1. For site-based/classroom group instruction (where the instructor is present)

    a. **Initiating an off-campus site at which a student may earn at least 25% but less than 50% of credits toward a program.** The letter of notification must include the starting date and complete physical address of the new site.
    b. **Moving an approved off-campus instructional site within the same geographic area to serve essentially the same pool of students.** The letter of notification must include the complete physical address of the old site, the complete physical address of the new site, and the starting date of the new site.

2. For distance learning/technology-based group or individual instruction (where the instructor and student are geographically separated), **offering for the first time credit courses via distance learning/technology-based instruction by which students can obtain at least 25% but less than 50% of their credits toward an educational program.**

3. **Initiating program/courses delivered through contractual agreement or a consortium.** This provision *does not apply* to articulation agreements with other institutions, clinical agreements, or internship agreements. The notification must include (1) a letter with the starting date of the agreement and the names of the institutions and programs involved and (2) a copy of the signed agreement.

4. **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.** A copy of the signed agreement must be provided.

5. **Repackaging of an existing approved curriculum** to create a new degree level, such as an institution that offers a full 120-hour baccalaureate program creating an associate degree from its lower-division offerings, usually requires only advance notification, not approval

Review Procedure

Time of Notification

An institution undergoing substantive change must provide written notification of the change to the President of SACSCOC prior to implementation. The letter must include the date of implementation of the proposed change, and for an off-campus site, the complete physical address of the location. If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact SACSCOC staff for consultation.

Staff Options

Upon receipt and review of the substantive change notification, SACSCOC staff will recommend one of the following options to the President of SACSCOC:

1. acknowledge receipt of the notification and indicate that the change will be included in the scope of the institution's accreditation

2. acknowledge receipt of the notification and request additional information.

Upon receipt and review of additional information, if requested, SACSCOC staff may recommend one of the following options to the SACSCOC President:

1. acknowledge receipt of the additional information and include the change in the scope of the institution's accreditation,

2. refer the substantive change to the Board of Trustees of SACSCOC for review,

3. authorize a substantive change visit,

4. take other action as may be appropriate.

PROCEDURE THREE

Closing a Program, Instructional Site, Branch Campus or an Institution:
Teach-Out Plans and Teach-Out Agreements

In accordance with Federal regulations, **an institution is required to submit a teach-out plan to SACSCOC for approval if any of the following occurs:**

1. The USDOE notifies the Commission that it has initiated an emergency action against an institution or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV, HEA program.

2. The Commission terminates accreditation or candidacy.

3. The institution notifies the Commission that it intends to cease operations entirely or close a location that provides at least 50% of at least one program.

4. A State Licensing or authorizing agency notifies the Commission that an institution's license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.

If an institution decides to close an educational program, approved instructional site, branch campus, or the entire institution, it must submit to SACSCOC a teach-out plan for approval. If the plan includes teach-out agreements, then the agreements must also be approved prior to implementation.

Teach-out plans and teach-out agreements must be approved by SACSCOC prior to implementation. *See also* the SACSCOC Good Practices document "Closing a Program, Site, Branch or Institution"

Teach-out Plans

A teach-out plan is a written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides fifty percent 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. Teach-out plans must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation.

To be approved, a teach-out plan must include the following information:

1. Date of closure (date when new students will no longer be admitted)

2. An explanation of how affected parties (students, faculty, staff) will be informed of the impending closure

3. An explanation of how all affected students will be helped to complete their programs of study with minimal disruption

4. An indication as to whether the teach-out plan will incur additional charges/expenses to the students and, if so, how the students will be notified

5. Copies of signed teach-out agreements with other institutions, if any

6. How faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment

7. If closing an institution, arrangement for the storing of student records, disposition of final financial resources and other assets

Following review and approval of a teach-out plan that includes a program that is accredited by another accrediting agency, the Commission will notify that accreditor of its approval.

Teach-out Agreements

A teach-out agreement is 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 fifty percent or more of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. Such a teach-out agreement requires SACSCOC approval in advance of implementation.

For approval by SACSCOC, the agreement must be between institutions that are accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency, be consistent with applicable standards in the *Principles of Accreditation* and with SACSCOC policies, and provide for the equitable treatment of students by ensuring that:

1. the teach-out institution has the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that provided by the closed institution; and

2. the teach-out institution demonstrates that it can provide students access to the program(s) and services without requiring them to move or travel substantial distances.

Please see the SACSCOC Good Practices document "Closing a Program, Site, Branch or Institution" for additional discussion of issues regarding closing of programs, sites, branch campuses or institutions.

Closing an institution without an agreement

If an institution accredited by SACSCOC closes and is no longer accredited, SACSCOC will seek assistance from the United States Department of Education and appropriate state agencies to help its students find reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional expense.

Approval Process

Time of Notification

As soon as the decision to close is made, the institution should provide to SACSCOC at the same time the following two pieces of information: (1) notification of the intended closing of a program, site, branch campus, or institution and (2) a teach-out plan for approval (including any teach-out agreements with other institutions).

Staff Options

Upon receipt and review of the notification of impending closure, SACSCOC staff will recommend that the President of SACSCOC acknowledge receipt of the notification and request the teach-out plan if was not included with the notification. Upon receipt and review of the teach-out plan, SACSCOC staff may recommend one of the following options to the SACSCOC President:

1. request additional information for the teach-out plan
2. approve the teach-out plan

Appendix A:
Current Standards and Policy Statements Addressing
Unreported Substantive Change

1. ***Principles of Accreditation*, Standard 14.2**

   The institution has a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported in accordance with SACSCOC policy.

2. **"Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports" – Policy Statement**

   If an institution fails to report a substantive change that requires prior approval or prior notification, the committee will take the following actions:

   a) If discovered during the off-site review. The Off-Site Review Committee will mark Standard 14.2 out of compliance. The institution will be able to address the omission in its Focused Report and before the on-site review.

   b) If discovered during the on-site review. The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee will mark Standard 14.2 out of compliance and write a recommendation. The institution will address the recommendation in its response to the Commission.

3. **Policy Statement on Unreported Substantive Change**

   Unreported substantive changes requiring prior notification or prior approval come to the attention of the Commission through two means: (1) information discovered by the institution or by the Commission between periods of formal review by the Commission and (2) information discovered during an off-site or an on-site review by the Commission. The procedure for handling such unreported substantive changes is as follows:

   a) Upon discovery, the institution formally notifies the SACSCOC President of the unreported substantive change. The letter of notification must include the date of the original implementation of the change. A completed prospectus or application should accompany the letter for cases outlined in **Procedure One** of this document.

   b) Commission staff will review the substantive change prospectus, if required; and any additional information that may have been requested. Following analysis, Commission staff will recommend to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees one of the following actions:

      1. approve the program, with or without a site visit;
      2. refer the prospectus to the Committee on Compliance and Reports for review at its next meeting (June or December); or
      3. acknowledge receipt of the notification and indicate that the change will be included in the scope of the institution's accreditation (an option only if prior notification is required).

   c) The issue of failure to comply with Standard 14.2 of the *Principles of Accreditation* (Substantive change) will be forwarded automatically to the Commission's Board of Trustees for action at its next meeting, if the change required prior approval. If the change required prior notification only, the issue of failure to report will be addressed in correspondence from the SACSCOC President.

   d) If the unreported substantive change requiring prior notification or prior approval is discovered during the institution's off-site or on-site review for reaffirmation, SACSCOC will follow its policy as described on page 1 of "Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports". If it is discovered during review by another type of SACSCOC committee, the review committee will write a recommendation. The recommendation will ask the institution to report the change in writing to SACSCOC and to provide in its response to the Committee Report a statement describing internal procedures established that would ensure

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future substantive change reporting and evidence that the procedures have been implemented. The institution's response will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees of SACSCOC for action on failure to report a substantive change.

Failure to Comply with Reporting Requirements

If an institution fails to follow SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures, it may lose its Title IV funding or be required by the U.S. Department of Education to reimburse it for money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution's case may be referred to SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction or for removal from membership.

Appendix B:
The Substantive Change Prospectus

Use this information to determine the content and process for submitting a prospectus for a "Procedure One" substantive change requiring approval prior to implementation.

The Prospectus must be accompanied with a completed <u>Cover Sheet</u>.

Do <u>not</u> use this information for
- mergers, consolidations, change of ownership, acquisitions, and change of governance, control, form, or legal status (http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Mergers.pdf),
- direct assessment competency-based educational programs (http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/DirectAssessmentCompetencyBased.pdf), or
- level changes (http://www.sacscoc.org/subchg/policy/ApplicationLevelChange.docx).

Before developing a prospectus, please review all of the information below concerning the content of the prospectus and how to submit the prospectus. When developing a prospectus, respond to all of the <u>applicable</u> requests for information.

<u>Please remember that the prospectus should address the specific substantive change for which you are requesting approval.</u> For example, if you are seeking approval for an off-campus site where adult, employed students will be enrolled in a graduate degree program, address specifically only the student support services that those students will need and describe how the support will be provided. Do not describe student support services that those students will not need such as athletic programs, dormitories, cafeterias, and other on-campus services that they cannot access.

How to Submit the Prospectus

- **Each submission must include the following in the order listed:**

  1. Transmittal letter signed by an institutional representative which briefly explains the submission
  2. "<u>Cover Sheet for Submission of Substantive Changes Requiring Approval</u>" form (available on the Substantive Change webpage at www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp).
  3. Name, telephone number, and email address of the person who may be contacted concerning questions about the prospectus.
  4. A list of degrees and majors which the institution is authorized to grant (photocopy from the catalog is acceptable)
  5. A list of existing **approved** off-campus sites and their addresses. **Note:** an approved site is one for which a prospectus has been submitted and which SACSCOC has approved to offer 50% or more of a program. A site where 25-49% of a program is offered is not considered to be an "approved" site; it is a site for which only notification has been accepted by SACSCOC.
  6. Prospectus (should be no longer than 25 pages plus appendices)

- **Submit only <u>one</u>** copy of the above materials to the President of SACSCOC at the address listed on the Cover Sheet.

- Submit the **Transmittal Letter and Cover Sheet** in hard copy (paper).

- Submit the body of the prospectus itself in hard copy (paper), flash drive, CD or DVD.

Documents will not be accepted via e-mail.

Special Note: SACSCOC will accept documentation submitted for approval to a system office or to a state coordinating or governing board, provided such documentation includes all the information required in a prospectus

as listed below. **However**, the submission must include the completed <u>Cover Sheet</u> and Transmittal Letter and **must contain an index** correlating the documentation submitted to another entity with the corresponding information required in a prospectus.

Submissions lacking a clear, easily used index will not be accepted and will be returned to the institution without review. Faculty qualifications must be documented using the <u>Faculty Roster Form</u>, utilizing the <u>Faculty Roster instructions</u>. Curriculum vitae submitted in lieu of a faculty roster will <u>not</u> be accepted and will result in the submission being returned to the institution without review.

Please note that SACSCOC reserves the right to make amendments to the requirements outlined below for certain types of changes.

Required Components of the Prospectus

1. **ABSTRACT** (limit to one page or less)

    - Describe the proposed change with its date of implementation.
    - If a new program, identify where it will be offered.
    - If a new off-campus site or branch, list its complete physical address.
    - Provide projected number of students, if applicable.
    - Indicate the projected life of the program or site, if applicable (single cohort or ongoing).
    - Describe the primary target audience.
    - Describe the instructional delivery methods to be used.
    - Describe strengths of the institution to undertake this change.

2. **DETERMINATION OF NEED FOR THE CHANGE/RELATIONSHIP TO MISSION/PLANNING AND APPROVALS FOR THE CHANGE**

    - Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.
    - Describe the rationale and need for the program to include how the institution determined need.
    - Provide evidence of legal authority for the change if approval is required by the governing board or the state.
    - Provide documentation that faculty and appropriate other groups were involved in planning for and approval(s) of the change.

3. **REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR THE SPECIFIC SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE (SELECT THE CHANGE RELEVANT TO THE PROSPECTUS AND PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR THAT PARTICULAR CHANGE)**

    For a <u>NEW PROGRAM</u> provide the following information:

    - Provide the curriculum for the program and a projected schedule of course offerings.
    - Provide specific programmatic goals (objectives) and specific student learning outcomes for the program.
    - Describe how the student learning outcomes **for the program** will be assessed.
    - Provide course descriptions for all courses in the proposed program.
    - Describe admissions and graduation requirements for the program.
    - Demonstrate compliance with Standard 10.7 (Policies for awarding credit) of the *Principles of Accreditation*.
    - Describe administrative oversight to ensure the quality of the program.
    - For a program offered in compressed time frames, describe the methodology for determining that levels of knowledge and competencies comparable to those required in traditional formats have been achieved.

- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach in the program.

For a <u>NEW OFF-CAMPUS SITE OR BRANCH CAMPUS</u> provide the following information:

- Identify whether the site is a branch campus or an instructional site. The definitions of "branch campus" and "instructional site" may be found on pages 5-6 of the *Principles of Accreditation*. See also Procedure One in the policy entitled "Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions". **Note: An institution is required to present itself and its sites to SACSCOC in the exact way it presents itself to the U.S. Department of Education.**
- Describe the educational program(s) to be offered at the site or branch. If a program to be offered at the site or branch is a new program requiring approval, also respond to the requirements for a new program listed above.
- Describe any differences in admission, curriculum, or graduation requirements for students enrolled at the new site or branch or any special arrangements for grading, transcripts, or transfer policies.
- Describe how programs at the new site or branch will be monitored and evaluated and how they will be incorporated into the institutional evaluation and assessment processes.
- Describe the administrative structure for overseeing the site or branch campus.
- Describe how services and operations at the new site or branch will be evaluated.
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach at the site or branch campus.

For the <u>OFFERING OF PROGRAM(S) VIA DISTANCE METHODOLOGY (ELECTRONIC OR CORRESPONDENCE) DELIVERY FOR THE FIRST TIME</u> provide the following information:

- Describe the infrastructure to support distance delivery methods to include the learning management system and administrative structure for electronic delivery.
- Describe how faculty members will be trained in distance delivery methodology and how courses will be developed.
- Describe technical support for students enrolled in courses delivered by distance methods and technical support for faculty members.
- Describe how effectiveness of programs offered via distance delivery will be assessed.
- Document compliance with Standard 10.6 (Distance and correspondence education).
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty scheduled to teach courses provided by distance methodology.
- Describe processes in place to ensure that students have structured access to faculty members.

For the <u>INITIATION OF DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAMS</u> provide the following information:

- Describe the degree completion program to include a description of how the degree completion program differs from the same program offered in traditional format.
- Describe how the institution ensures that student learning outcomes are the same for the program offered as a degree completion program as those for the program offered in traditional format.
- Describe assessment methods for determining achievement of student learning outcomes for the degree completion program.
- Describe admission requirements for students entering the degree completion program.
- Describe the format for offering the degree completion program (for example, compressed format, accelerated format, etc.).
- Follow instructions in item 4 below for providing information concerning number and qualifications of faculty members scheduled to teach in the degree completion program.

4. **FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS**

- Complete the <u>Faculty Roster Form</u> for faculty members scheduled to teach in the new program, in a degree completion program, at a new site or branch campus, or in programs to be offered by distance

methodology for the first time. Follow directions for completing the form which requires that the institution present the qualifications of each faculty member to teach the courses assigned to them. The form and instructions may be accessed at www.sacscoc.org under Institutional Resources or from a link on the Substantive Change page.

- For a **new program**, the institution must demonstrate that it has at least one qualified faculty member to develop and/or teach discipline courses in the new program. Refer to Standard 6.2.a in the *Principles* concerning the determination of appropriate qualifications.
- Provide narrative with supporting evidence that the number of full-time faculty members will be adequate to support the initiative and describe the impact on faculty workload of the new program, new site, or distance delivery.
- Document scholarship and research capability of faculty members teaching in graduate programs and document faculty experience in directing student research.

5. LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

- List and describe discipline-specific learning resources to support a new program. Please do not list all resources located in the library if they do not relate to the specific change.
- Document discipline-specific refereed journals and primary source materials.
- If the institution is reliant on agreements with other libraries, provide a signed copy of each formal agreement and describe how the collections support the program(s).
- Describe specifically how students enrolled in a new program and/or enrolled in a program at an off-campus location and/or enrolled in a distance education program access these discipline-specific learning resources.
- Describe how students and faculty members will access information electronically.
- Describe how faculty and students are instructed in the use of online resources as well as on site library resources.
- Describe resources to support students in access to and use of learning resources.

Note: If electronic databases are listed, describe the discipline-specific suites of resources and not just the name of the database or the consortium through which it is accessed (such as Viva, TexShare, Galileo, Louis, etc.).

6. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

- Describe specific programs, services, and activities which will support students enrolled in the new program and/or enrolled at a new off-campus site and/or enrolled in distance education programs. Do not list student support services which are not relevant to the specific change.

7. PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- Describe the adequacy of physical facilities which will support the change.
- Describe equipment which will be available for a new program or available at a new site.
- Describe the impact that the proposed change will have on physical facilities and equipment for existing programs and services.

8. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Provide a business plan that includes all of the following **(NOTE: This applies to ALL submissions**

    (a) a description of financial resources available to support the proposed change, **including a budget for the first year of the proposed change (a three-year budget is required for a new branch campus)**. Do not send a copy of the entire institutional budget.

     (b)   projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow for the proposed change

     (c)   the amount of resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services for the proposed change

     (d)   the operational, management, and physical resources available for the change.

- Provide contingency plans in the event that required resources do not materialize.

The institution must disclose if it is currently on reimbursement for Title IV funding.

Institutions currently on sanction with SACSCOC for financial reasons must provide a copy of the audit for the most recently completed fiscal year.

9. DESCRIPTION OF INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESSES FOR THE CHANGE

- Provide a brief description of institutional assessment processes.
- Describe how the institution will incorporate the change (program, site, distance education or other change) into the institution-wide review and assessment processes.

10. APPENDICES

- Appendices may be used in hard copy (print) submissions to provide documentation supporting the narrative in the prospectus.

- **<u>NOTE: In hard copy submission tabs must be provided identifying each appendix (by name or number) referenced in the narrative</u>**.

- Links may be provided in electronic submissions to link to documentation supporting the narrative in the prospectus. **<u>Be sure links allow reviewers to return to the narrative.</u>**

<div align="right">

June 2009
Edited: February 2013
Edited: January 2015
Edited: November 2015
Edited: May 2016, July 2016
Edited for the Principles of Accreditation: *May 2018*

</div>

Larkin University
18301 N. Miami Ave.
Miami, FL 33169

Records Maintenance Policy of the Commission

Purpose: As part of its application for SACSCOC accreditation, Larkin University must commit and accept all policies of the accrediting body. This policy ensures that Larkin University agrees with this policy as it is applicable to their institution.

Policy: The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, (SACSCOC), maintains files and records in accordance with Commission Policy or federal regulations governing accrediting associations recognized by the Dept. of Education. Larkin University will comply and accept the Records Maintenance Policy of the Commission effective in January, 2012. For reference the full text of the SACSCOC Policy is attached to this document.

Implementation: May 1, 2019

Maintenance and Review of the Policy: The president/CEO and Larkin University Senior leadership are responsible for the implementation, monitoring and compliance of this mandatory policy. This policy will be reviewed every four years for its effectiveness. All administrative policies of Larkin University can be accessed electronically at ularkin.org or can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

SACS COC™

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097

RECORDS MAINTENANCE POLICY
OF THE COMMISSION

Policy Statement

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) maintains the following files and records in accordance with Commission policy or with federal regulations governing accrediting associations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Official Correspondence to Institutions

All official correspondence signed by the President of SACSCOC addressed to applicant, candidate, and member institutions informing them of formal Commission action and other correspondence deemed to be important for permanent retention are classified as official correspondence.

Disposition: Maintained permanently.

Institutional Profiles and Important Correspondence

Recent print copies of Institutional Profiles are maintained for one year. Institutional profile information is stored in the Commission data base.

Disposition: Information on enrollment and finances collected from the Institutional Profiles is stored in the data base for a minimum of ten years. Print copies of profiles are purged annually upon receipt of the Institutional Profile for the subsequent year and entry into computer. Audits submitted with Institutional Profiles are retained for three years after submission.

Institutional Materials related to Reaffirmation

For each institution, the Commission retains a print copy of the original signed Compliance Certification that includes narrative supporting determination of compliance, the Quality Enhancement Report, the Institutional Summary Report, Report of the Reaffirmation Committee, and the response of the institution to the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee.

Disposition: All copies of the above are maintained in off-site file storage area and recorded in the Commission's data base for such time as to permit the file to contain records of the last two comprehensive reviews. Print copies destroyed after that point; data base files are retained.

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Institutional Materials Related to Substantive Change

Institutions notify the Commission before making significant changes in program, location, or program delivery mode in accordance with the Commission's Substantive Change policy. The Commission's response may be simple acknowledgement, addition of the information to the Commission's files, request for further information and/or a prospectus, notification that the change will be reviewed at the point of the next Reaffirmation, referral to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for approval, or authorization of a Substantive Change Committee visit. When a Committee is authorized, the Commission retains a copy of the Report of the Substantive Change Committee, the response of the institution to the Report, and the letter of notification informing the institution of Commission action.

Disposition: The Report of the Substantive Change Committee will be retained for 10 years. If a committee visit is authorized, the institution's prospectus or application will be maintained by the Commission staff member assigned to that institution. Once the final action of the Commission has been taken, whether by the SACSCOC President or by the SACSCOC Board, all institutional materials are destroyed except for the original institutional notification letter, the Committee Report, and the final letter of notification regarding Commission action.

Other Institutional Accreditation Information and Reports

Currently, institutional accreditation information maintained by the Commission includes reaffirmation, candidate, accreditation, substantive change, special and other visiting committee reports; monitoring reports (formerly called follow-up or progress reports); accreditation decision letters; official correspondence; and fifth-year interim and follow-up reports. Other pertinent information may be maintained at the discretion of the staff.

Disposition: Information is retained off site for such time as will permit the file to contain records of the last two institutional reviews. Print copies are destroyed after that point; data base files are retained. Other information may be retained at the discretion of the staff, again, taking into account the need to maintain complete and accurate records while reducing whenever possible redundancy and file storage space requirements. All copies of Applications are destroyed after the initial Accreditation Committee report is received and official action is taken by the Commission.

If an institution is removed from candidate or accredited status or the institution withdraws its status, all files pertaining to the institution will be purged following final action by the Commission' Board of Trustees (includes appeals) with the exception of the retention of official correspondence.

Documents related to Appeals and Litigation

Print copies of the administrative record, the institution's brief, the Commission's response brief, and official correspondence related to an appeal will be stored until final resolution of the appeal. Significant documents related to litigation between the Commission and an institution will be maintained until the case has been resolved.

Disposition: Upon notification that litigation has been resolved, all print copies of institutional case materials will be maintained for one year. After one year, only official correspondence and significant material related to litigation will be maintained.

Upon a final resolution of an institution's appeal, print copies of all case materials will be maintained for two years. After two years, only official correspondence related to the appeal will be maintained.

Staff Working Files

Maintained in staff liaison offices, these files contain day-by-day working papers pertaining to individual institutions, notes, correspondence, etc.

Disposition: Files are purged by staff at the point of staff reassignment. Upon notification that an institution has initiated litigation, no materials regarding the institution will be purged from the files until such action is resolved.

Other Historical Documents relating to the Work of the Commission

Materials include documents deemed by the staff to be important to documenting the history of the institution or of the Commission and its work.

Disposition: Documents are stored off-site and maintained permanently. Staff judgment as to contents of these files will be informed by the knowledge that, since these files relate to the history of the organization, their contents would likely be accessible to its members.

Review of this Policy

This policy will be updated regularly to ensure contemporary compliance with federal laws and regulations and other pertinent legal requirements.

Origination:	*03/2020*
Effective:	*03/2020*
Last Approved:	*03/2020*
Last Revised:	*03/2020*
Next Review:	*03/2021*
Owner:	*Rudi Ettrich: President*
Area:	*Facilities*
Tags:	

Larkin University

Remote work in state of emergency policy

PURPOSE

Remote work can be helpful in urgent situations and/or a declared campus state of emergency, allowing for continuity of operations. This policy assumes that the campus still does exist and is facilities are functional but can't be used as a result of a pandemic. This policy does also address if the state of emergency results from a partial non-functionality of the campus. This policy outlines the transitions of the University to remote work in such a state of emergency and defines procedures and expectations.

A pandemic is a disease epidemic that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents, or worldwide. A pandemic crosses international boundaries, usually affecting a large number of people. Pandemics can also occur in important agricultural organisms (livestock, crop plants, fish, tree species) or in other organisms. A disease or condition is not a pandemic merely because it is widespread or kills many people; it must also be infectious.

A key part of managing an infectious disease outbreak is trying to decrease the epidemic peak, known as flattening the epidemic curve. This helps decrease the risk of health services being overwhelmed and providing more time for a vaccine and treatment to be developed. Non-pharmaceutical interventions that may be taken to manage the outbreak include personal preventive measures such as hand hygiene, wearing face-masks and self-quarantine; community measures aimed at social distancing such as closing schools and cancelling mass gathering events; community engagement to encourage acceptance and participation in such interventions; as well as environmental measures such as cleaning of surfaces

The health of Larkin Community, our students and employees is and must be our top priority and therefore in case of a declared pandemic Larkin University will work diligently and carefully with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Florida Department of Health, The Florida Department of Education and local authorities to make decisions and arrangements to maximize social distancing and eliminate gatherings of large groups of students to minimize the impact on our campus. LU Administration will work with students, faculty and staff to mitigate the impact of necessary public health decisions and implement the following measures designed to promote social distancing, which experts say is central to preventing the spread of disease. This is adressed in part A of this policy.

LU might also need to transition to remote work or partial remote work as the result of a different critical incident that lead to a declaration of a state of emergency in which the Critical Incident Management Team advised not to use the whole campus or its parts for normal operations. This is addressed in part B of this policy

SCOPE

This policy applies to all faculty and staff, Board members, students, interns and volunteers

DEFINITIONS

State of emergency: This situation exists when a critical incident has resulted in substantial disruption of University functions and is likely to be long term, and it becomes necessary, for continuity of normal operations and/or the well-being of the University community, to modify/alter normal functions, established procedures, and/or policies without submitting to a formal process.

POLICY

A. Remote work in response to a pandemic

A. **All face to face classes will move to virtual instruction using online tools.**

B. **Larkin University will be transitioning to remote work following the move to virtual instruction. Certain employees will be required to be on campus, as we will continue to support our academic and research enterprise as well as other university functions during this time.**

During this unusual time, it is imperative that supervisors work with each member of their team to confirm the remote work assignment, provide guidance for remote work, and set expectations.

PROCEDURES

• All employees, on-site and working remotely, are expected to fulfill their duties and work hours.

• All employees are to remain connected to secured systems during normal working hours and following all university policies related to access, data security, and data confidentiality.

• All classes and courses will be taught via virtual instruction and the University makes every effort that your professors will be providing the full spectrum of services you are used to via online/virtual delivery. IT support is available during normal business hours, please call Dr. Marchado via tel 305-760-7525 if you need any assistance, he will try to solve your issue via teamviewer and if not possible set up an appointment time when you would met at the University.

• As the University will be going virtual also in other areas like counselling and tutoring, you are required to continue to monitor your email for regular updates from your Departments or Colleges.

• The office of the Registrar, financial services, and admissions will continue to provide their full spectrum of services, all emails and phone lines are expected to work during business hours and appointments will be set up virtually.

• The Library and all classrooms, study rooms and lounges will be closed for general access. Access will be granted by facilities management only to smaller groups of less than 5 people and only for essential meetings approved by either the College deans or the Office of the president. However, Library services will be provided virtually, please call or email Dr. Argov with any requests. She will be happy to assist.

• The building will be open 6am to 6pm Monday to Friday and Security will be on campus only 9am-5pm. Only individuals with approval from the president and provided with an access code are allowed to be in the building outside those hours.

• The building will be closed on weekends. Only individual with approval from the president and provided with an access code are allowed to be in the building.

• All routing forms that typically need signatures (Credit care purchase/Purchase order/Vacation requests etc) can be signed electronically via a scanned signature and can be submitted via email, see separate **Signing of routing and transmittal documents in state of emergency policy**

• Essential research infrastructure will be maintained. Research work in the research or educational lab can continue under certain conditions specified in the **Research in case of transition to remote work policy.**

• Under no circumstances are researchers to take materials other than laptops, data storage devices, etc., offsite (e.g., to their homes). Ensure that no data or files with patient or participant identifying information is compromised and HIPAA and IRB regulations are followed.

• If employees are in roles that do not traditionally accommodate remote work, supervisors are expected to assign other work, projects or professional development that can be performed remotely. Human Resources will assist in identifying alternative work assignments for these employees.

• During this period of remote work, employees will avoid travel and are asked to practice social distancing. Travel restrictions will be in place for all university-related travel. In addition LU recommends to reduce private travel to an essential minimum and not to use public transport or mass travel.

• Employees who are not able to do their work from home because the work requires their physical presence on campus, will work closely with their supervisors to devise a suitable solution that supports social distancing. Supervisors are expected to assign alternative or additional work. Human Resources will assist in identifying alternative work assignments for these employees.

• New hires expected to start during the remote period will be contacted by HR and their departments to discuss each case individually.

• The university cleaning crew will maintain an increased frequency for cleaning and sanitizing the building so that at all times if somebody needs to come in the building will be clean and as free of germs as possible.

A pandemic is a dynamic situation; it is important that you strictly follow all guidelines for social distances and prevention strictly and continue to stay alert to updates, read your email at least once per day, follow all updates on the university web page http://ularkin.org/ and have your cell phone charged and turned on to be able to receive notices and get contacted.

B. Remote work in response to a different critical incident

If LU needs to transition to remote work or partial remote work as the result of a different critical incident that lead to a declaration of a state of emergency, the Critical Incident Management Team will advise which parts of the policy and procedure outlined in A can be and will be applied or implemented.

RELATED POLICIES

Emergency and Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

Signing of routing and transmittal documents in state of emergency policy

Research in case of transition to remote work policy

Incoming mail and deliveries in state of emergency poclicy

Attachments

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Approver	Date
Rudi Ettrich: President	03/2020
Alan Fessenden: CFO	03/2020
Frida Musila: HR	03/2020
Rafael Zarate: Director	03/2020
Rudi Ettrich: President	03/2020

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Last Revised:	*03/2020*
Next Review:	*03/2021*
Owner:	*Rudi Ettrich: President*
Area:	*Academics*
Tags:	

Larkin University

Research in case of transition to remote work policy

PURPOSE

This policy provides the University research community with guidance and procedures to help mitigate any potential impacts on research activities resulting from a transition to remote work in case of a declared state of emergency.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, students and interns involved in research activities

DEFINITIONS

State of emergency: This situation exists when a critical incident has resulted in substantial disruption of University functions and is likely to be long term, and it becomes necessary, for continuity of normal operations and/or the well-being of the University community, to modify/alter normal functions, established procedures, and/or policies without submitting to a formal process.

POLICY

It is the policy of Larkin University that research work in the research or educational lab can continue if the declared state of emergency is the result of a pandemic or a critical incident that left the research infrastructure intact. In case that the University needs to transition to remote work, a PI can request to be granted access to the campus and research infrastructure to enable him to continue their research. In case of a pandemic, students that wish to continue under the supervision of the PI to work on their research need to sign the attached statement that they are aware that they are not required to come to the University and do so on their own risk and will follow the guidelines for social distances and prevention strictly.

PROCEDURE

Research continuity summary

In case of a declared state of emergency advance planning will allow everyone in your research group to focus on their own efforts and work together as a team, rather than wonder how they and their team members are to

proceed.

Quick Checklist:

A. Identify critical lab operations.

B. Identify critical lab personnel and ensure they know what to do in the event of suspended operations.

C. Remind lab personnel of your communication plan or create one if not in place.

D. Ensure remote access to files, data, servers, etc.

E. Prioritize experiments.

F. Cancel non-essential travel, and check University travel restrictions before making travel plans.

Requests to Access Research Laboratories

During a remote working environment, essential functions are typically those which must continue in order to ensure the health/safety of the university and ensure the continuity of key operations. **In a remote working environment for LU, there will be either essential functions that will require some level of presence in research laboratories, both wet and dry or there is a need for the research team to continue with their research.** Our focus is on the health and safety of the university community. We are assessing requests for needs to maintain essential laboratory activities or requests to continue the research program on a case-by-case basis. In order to better manage the decisions on allowed laboratory functions, a request has to be completed and submitted for review and approval to the office of the president by the PI. When the request is submitted to the President, the respective Dean needs to be copied in order to facilitate possible discussions between the Office of the President and respective college.

In reviewing the needs of your lab or research team and submitting your request, it will be important to distinguish carefully between those functions that require access to campus, and those that can be conducted remotely. In most situations, we anticipate that only *a subset of research personnel within a lab* will require access to campus. In your request provide information which project/research program will require physical presence in the lab, which personnel needs access to campus and give a time-line who will be on which specific days and hours on campus and in which lab, respecting the emergency operation hours on campus.

Grant submission

We expect that the LU Administration will remain fully operational, with the ability to submit, receive and manage research grants, even if most personnel are working remotely. Typically, federal agencies are flexible about deadlines under difficult circumstances beyond our control such as natural disasters or pandemic events. However, if federal agencies are officially closed, proposals will most likely remain in a queue, pending resumption of agency operations – as has been the case during federal budget-related shutdowns. It is the responsibility of the PI to search for available agency specific guidance. LU Administration is making every effort to ensure continuity of services for the research community.

Institutional Research Board (IRB)

Researchers are expected to continue to follow their IRB-approved protocols. Researchers will need to use their own judgement to determine if their research activities involving face-to-face interactions should be placed on hold as a result of a pandemic. Placing a research project on hold will not be considered as a protocol deviation.

Researchers should carefully review over their protocols to determine if any modifications will be necessary (alternative locations/methods for consenting subjects, collecting data, storing data, etc.). If modification are needed to an ongoing IRB-approved research study, then the researcher must submit an amendment to the IRB and receive IRB approval before implementing the proposed modifications.

The only exception to the above requirement is if the change is designed to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to subjects (45 CFR 46.103(b)(4)). If the researchers modify the research in order to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects without prior IRB approval, then they must report this change to the IRB via an amendment within 5 business days of making the change. Contact Dr. Caballero if you have any questions.

Research at LU during a remote working environment

- Assess and prioritize critical laboratory activities.
- Identify any research experiments that can be ramped down, curtailed, or delayed. Notify pre-award and funding agency program officers (if applicable) of such delays.
- Identify key personnel able to safely perform essential activities, and to ensure the integrity of your group's research efforts.
- Essential research infrastructure will be maintained. In case of a pandemic research work in the research or educational lab can continue **if not more than 5 people are present at the same time in the same room**. Security will strictly enforce this regulation, as well as following the guidelines for social distances and prevention.
- All students involved in the research have to sign the attached statement and their presents in the lab has to be requested by the PI (see Requests to Access Research Laboratories)
- Access to the research and educational labs is only allowed when security is on campus. All access outside those hours is strictly prohibited.
- Depending upon the nature of your research, consider prioritizing work that can only be carried out at LU, and put off work amenable to remote support, such as data analysis. Stockpiling results and data now that could be analyzed remotely in the future is a potential option that might create future flexibility.
- Facilities Management will maintain essential research support functions, although some lower-priority services may need to be curtailed (e.g., less frequent waste pick-up).
- Orders for critical supplies may be delayed and/or unavailable. Facilities Management can assist if researchers need help in locating supplies in case of shortages.
- Under no circumstances are researchers to take materials other than laptops, data storage devices, etc., offsite (e.g., to their homes). Ensure that no data or files with patient or participant identifying information is compromised and HIPAA and IRB regulations are followed.

FORMS

Student_Statement.pdf

RELATED POLICIES

Emergency and Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
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Student_Statement.pdf

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