



<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Substantive Change</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	UNIV-487
<b>Revision Date:</b>	June 2021
<b>Policies Superseded:</b>	None
<b>Policy Management Area(s):</b>	Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analysis

## **SUMMARY:**

Coastal Carolina University (CCU) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, master's, specialist, and doctoral degrees. As a member institution, CCU is required to comply with SACSCOC's policy *Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions* (SACSCOC, Edited July 2016).

SACSCOC's substantive change policy is available in its entirety, along with additional information, at: [Substantive Change News and Announcements](#).

This college policy is available, along with a historical and current listing of substantive changes submitted to and approved by SACSCOC at the Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analysis website: [Substantive Change](#).

## **POLICY:**

### **I. AUTHORITY**

Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analysis is under the direct supervision and management of the executive director of planning and research, who serves as the SACSCOC accreditation liaison and reports to the provost.

### **II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish institutional procedures for recognizing and approving substantive change and ensuring timely notification to SACSCOC.

A. As a member institution, CCU is required to:

1. Notify SACSCOC of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy, and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes. 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.

2. Have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to SACSCOC in a timely fashion.
3. Follow [SACSCOC substantive change procedures](#) and inform SACSCOC of substantive changes as specified in those procedures.
4. Contact SACSCOC staff for consultation if unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature.

B. Substantive change is a ***significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution***. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes the following items, as included in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures:

- Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of an institution or its programs.
- Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership of an institution.
- Changing the governance of an institution.
- Merging/consolidating two or more institutions or entities.
- Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution (including a branch campus).
- Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- Adding graduate programs at an institution previously offering only undergraduate programs (including degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other for-credit credentials).
- Changing the way an institution measures student progress, whether in clock hours or credit hours; semesters, trimesters, or quarters; or time-based or non-time-based methods or measures.
- Adding a program that is a significant departure from the existing programs, or method of delivery, from those offered when the institution was last evaluated.
- Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.
- Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
- Entering into a written arrangement under 34 C.F.R. § 668.5 under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in Title IV Higher Education Act (HEA) programs offers less than 25% (notification) or 25-50% (approval) of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs. An agreement offering more than 50% of one or more of an institution's programs is prohibited by federal regulation.

- Substantially increasing or decreasing the number of clock hours or credit hours awarded or competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded, for successful completion of one or more programs.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.
- Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location, including a branch campus.
- Adding a permanent location at a site at which an institution is conducting a teach-out program for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.
- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.

### III. PROCEDURES RELATED TO THE POLICY

- A. The administrative heads of both academic and nonacademic units are responsible for being knowledgeable as to what SACSCOC considers a “significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Before initiating any substantive change, the administrative head is responsible for apprising the University’s SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison, who will determine if the proposed change constitutes substantive change as defined by SACSCOC.
- University procedures are directed by the specific procedures as outlined in the SACSCOC substantive change policy.