Owensboro Community & Technical College

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Academic Affairs Policy Statement

Introduction

Substantive change is a federal term pertaining to any “significant modification of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Colleges and universities must notify their accrediting body of potential or actual substantive change in a timely fashion and in many cases must receive approval for such change from the accrediting body before the initiative is implemented.

Owensboro Community and Technical College’s (OCTC) regional accrediting body, the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), is required by the federal government to monitor its constituents’ compliance with the substantive change policy and to grant permission for major changes to occur.

1. Policy

It is the policy of Owensboro Community and Technical College (OCTC) to comply with the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy and procedures as a condition of its continued accreditation by SACSCOC. All academic and administrative areas of the college are governed by this policy. All programs and services of the college wherever located and however delivered are subject to this policy. In many cases, approval must be received from SACSCOC prior to the implementation of a substantive change.

Policy Amendment

Policy changes pertaining to substantive change should be submitted to the OCTC Institutional Accreditation Liaison who will present the proposed change to the college’s Executive Team and subsequently to the Administrative Council.

2. Responsibility

All information regarding possible substantive changes is submitted to the Institutional Accreditation Liaison via internal form AA-1 for development of a letter of notification and, if needed, for development of a prospectus.

Responsibilities of the Institutional Accreditation Liaison:
- provide the President, Vice Presidents, and the Administrative Council with information on the substantive change policy on an annual basis;
- work with Vice Presidents, Administrative Council, Academic Deans, and Department Heads to determine whether a proposed change is substantive;
- determine what action with respect to SACSCOC is needed when a change is substantive;
- submit materials to the President of the college for review;
- file the appropriate notice or prospectus with SACSCOC;

Reviewed and Approved:  Executive Team  3/19/2012  Revision Approved 2/19/2013
                    Administrative Council  3/19/2012  Revision Approved 2/19/2013
                    Administrative Council  9/18/2017  Revision Approved 9/18/2017
• forward all information to the Director of Financial Aid who forwards it to the Department of Education so as to be in compliance with federal Title IV regulations;
• coordinate with SACSCOC, the President, the Vice Presidents, and the Administrative Council regarding any required follow-up action.

Responsibility of Vice Presidents/Academic Lead(s)
• determine what action with respect to SACSCOC is needed when a change is substantive;
• notify the Institutional Accreditation Liaison (of any substantive change by filing the AA-1 Form regarding substantive change within the division/unit;
• submit supporting documents, prospectus, etc. as required.

Responsibility of the Administrative Council
• The Administrative Council should be aware of the substantive change policy, inform the college’s Institutional Accreditation Liaison at the earliest point possible of proposals that may be considered a substantive change for the college, and provide the Institutional Accreditation Liaison with any data or information necessary to comply with SACSCOC policy when requested.

3. Local Procedure
Local procedure for substantive change is based on SACSCOC policy and covers all areas of the college, including distance education, dual credit, on and off-campus instructional sites, and Workforce Solutions. The types of substantive changes, the procedures for addressing them appropriately, and the forms/templates required for reporting are maintained online at http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp.
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; and/or
• 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.

All substantive change reporting must adhere to the following deadlines, as published online annually at http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp:

• January 1, 2018: Substantive changes reviewed by staff and approved by the Executive Council of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees (most approvals involving sites and programs) for implementation between July 1, 2018, and December 31, 2018. (Note: The Commission office is closed and does not receive mail or deliveries December 4-7, 2017 (all staff at the Annual Meeting) and December 21, 2017 - January 1, 2018 (winter holiday). Plan accordingly.
• March 15, 2018: Substantive changes reviewed by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees in June 2018 (mergers, change in governance, level changes, institutions on sanction, etc.).

4. **Point of Contact**
Every SACSCOC member institution has an Institutional Accreditation Liaison whose charge is to ensure compliance with accreditation requirements. Questions or clarification regarding this policy should be directed to the Institutional Accreditation Liaison.

Stacy Edds-Ellis, Ph.D.
Institutional Accreditation Liaison
Dean of Academic Affairs, Interim
4800 New Hartford Road
Owensboro, KY 42303
(270) 686-4573
Stacy.Edds@kctcs.edu