

**University Policy Number: 900.01:
Substantive Change Policy**

Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Planning and Assessment

Responsible Office: Institutional Effectiveness

Originally Issued: March 1, 2021

Revision Date: April 29, 2024

Authority: Office of the President

Policy Statement

An institution is responsible for maintaining compliance at all times with Standard 14.2 (Substantive Change) of the Principles of Accreditation and with the Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and related policies. The institution is required to notify or secure SACSCOC approval prior to implementing a substantive change.

Clafin University, as an institution accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), complies with the substantive change Policy Statement. A substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Substantive change includes high-impact, high-risk changes that impact the quality of educational programs and services” requiring the university to notify and /or seek approval for “programs, locations, and other locations, and other institutional changes” as defined in the latest SASCOC **Substantive Change Policy and Procedures**.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a description of Clafin’s process and procedures for any intended substantive change. Depending on the nature of the change, SACSCOC requires prior notification and approval of the change before implementation. In other cases, only prior notification is required. See the complete SACSCOC **Substantive Change Policy and Procedures** for additional details.

DEFINITION

The Commission defines a substantive change as “a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution” that requires compliance with federal regulations. Substantive changes, as noted in SACSCOC policy include, but are not limited to the following:

- 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 the 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.
- Participating in the federal Prison Education Program providing Pell Grant access to confined or incarcerated students.
- Other substantive change requirements, including those required by federal regulations, include:
 - o Advertising and Student Recruitment;
 - o Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards;
 - o Credit Hours;
 - o Direct Assessment Competency-based Educational Programs;.
 - o Distance and Correspondence Education;
 - o Dual Enrollment;
 - o Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status;
 - o Request for a Period of Noncompliance; and
 - o Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level .

Applicability

To ensure compliance with SACSCOC requirements, Claflin University has a program proposal process in place, consisting of criteria for proposals, approval protocols, and assessment of new and existing programs determining the need for the proposed changes for any program change, whether revised or new.

PROCEDURES /PROTOCOL

1. The concerned department or area completes the Substantive Change Form and ensures approval of the Provost and SACSCOC Liaison to initiate the process.
2. Depending on the specific nature of the change, the concerned unit adheres to institutional processes for approval of the change. Once approved at the departmental and school/divisional levels, proposals are reviewed by the faculty and or additional committees appropriate, advanced to the Provost, the President and/or the Board of Trustees, **if warranted**, for final approval.
3. According to SACSCOC template and timeline, if a prospectus is required, the concerned department prepares a draft of the document and submits it to the Office of the Accreditation Liaison for review at least two months before established SACSCOC deadlines. (See policy at SACSCOC.org)
4. The SACSCOC Liaison is responsible for reporting changes, notifications, or transmitting a prospectus, if necessary.

Substantive Change Request Form

Instructions:

Review the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures before completing this form.

Date Submitted:

Department/ Program/School/Division:

Type of Substantive Change. Please check all that are related to this substantive change.

- 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 percent of an educational program.
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering 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 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.

Other:

Description of Substantive Change: Provide a paragraph describing the nature of the requested change, the impact on the university and how it will change the program. Once the request is approved, the department may begin the process for university review as outlined in the Substantive Change Policy # 900.1

University Approval:

SACS Liaison _____

Date _____

Provost _____

Date _____