

# UT Dallas Substantive Change Policy - UTDPP1094

## Policy Statement

A substantive change is a significant modification or expansion in the nature and scope of an accredited institution. The federal government requires regional accrediting agencies to have a substantive change policy and to monitor the compliance of its member colleges and universities with the substantive change policy. UT Dallas' regional accrediting agency, the Southern Association Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Board of Trustees requires as a condition of accreditation member institutions to notify the SACSCOC of substantive changes, and, in some cases, seek SACSCOC approval prior to implementation of such changes.

## Policy Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to establish the UT Dallas responsibilities and required procedures for timely notification of substantive changes to SACSCOC. The policy complies with the [SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement](#) and the [SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#) in adherence with United States Department of Education Regulations 34 CFR 602.22 Substantive changes and other reporting requirements.

## Scope

This policy applies to any university employee who can initiate, review, or approve changes that are considered substantive according to the current version of the [SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#). In academic affairs, this includes faculty, assistant and associate deans, deans, vice provosts, and the provost. Other university officials in the Office of Research, Procurement Management, or the International Center might be asked to review or approve a substantive change initiative. Further, a substantive change may come directly to the attention of the president, vice presidents, or the university attorney. These individuals are responsible for timely notification of substantive changes to the SACSCOC Liaison, who is responsible for notifying or seeking approval from SACSCOC as appropriate for the substantive change.

## Types of Substantive Changes

The most common UT Dallas reported substantive changes include:

- 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
- Creating a new academic program (a degree program or an academic certificate) if new content meets the established numerical thresholds for significant departure
  - Reporting program length changes
  - Closing a degree or academic certificate program, including closing of delivery methods/ modalities, with an appropriate teach-out plan, off-campus site, or branch campus
  - Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
  - Entering into a contract with an entity not certified for Title IV funding if offering 25% or more of at least one of our degree or academic certificate programs
  - Initiating certificate programs at an off-site location
  - Initiating distance learning programs

Several additional types of substantive changes, such as initiating dual credit or initiating degree completion programs, are included in the SACSCOC policy. Some types of substantive change require only prior notification to SACSCOC whereas others require both SACSCOC notification and approval prior to implementation.

## Responsibilities

Each individual, position, or entity designated as within the scope of this policy is required to be familiar with and comply with this policy.

Each school, program, or department is recommended to incorporate this policy into its bylaws.

Each dean is required to produce an annual report that confirms his school is in compliance with this policy.

The SACSCOC Liaison is responsible for ensuring the university policy is in compliance with the current version of the SACSCOC policy. The SACSCOC Liaison is also responsible for communicating policy updates to university stakeholders. The SACSCOC Liaison will remind university stakeholders about the policy each long semester.

## Procedures for Notification

At the earliest stage of consideration, any potential substantive change must be submitted in writing via the appropriate dean or vice president to the SACSCOC Liaison, who will coordinate any additional paperwork, such as a prospectus, and internal and external approvals. Once all appropriate documentation and internal approvals have been completed, the SACSCOC Liaison will submit to the President's Office a cover letter addressed to SACSCOC. Upon the president's review, approval, and signature, the SACSCOC Liaison will submit the request to SACSCOC. The SACSCOC Liaison will update the appropriate dean or vice president about the status of the

request.

## Responsible University Official

Chief Academic Officer ([policy@utdallas.edu](mailto:policy@utdallas.edu))

## Policy History

- Issued: 2015-03-11
- Editorial Amendments: 2015-07-17
- Editorial Amendments: 2020-11-20
- Revised: 2021-12-14

## Policy Links

- Permalink for this policy: <https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdpp1094>
- Link to PDF version: <https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdpp1094/makepdf>
- Link to printable version: <https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdpp1094/makeprint>