

TABLE 1
From the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy

Types of Change	Procedure	Prior Notification Required	Time Frame for Contacting COC	Prior Approval Required	Documentation
Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved	1	Yes	12 months	Yes	Application for Level Change Due dates: April 15 or October 1
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>) ¹	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Initiating a branch campus (see definition of "branch campus" on p. 5 of this document)	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Initiating joint degrees with another institution (see Commission policy "Collaborative Academic Arrangements: Policy and Procedures)	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Initiating a certificate program... (typically for workforce development)					
...using existing approved courses	NA	NA	NA	NA	None
...at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)	1	Yes	Approval required prior to implementation	Yes	Modified prospectus
...that is a significant departure from previously approved programs ¹	1	Yes	Approval required prior to implementation	Yes	Modified prospectus
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school) ...					
...Student can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward program	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
...Student can obtain 25-49 percent of credit	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification
...Student can obtain 24 percent or less	NA	NA	NA	NA	none
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites					
...Adding programs that are significantly different from current programs	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification
...Adding programs that are NOT significantly different from current programs	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution ²	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Initiating distance learning...					
...Offering 50 percent or more of a program (Once approved, institutions may add programs that are significant departures from the originally approved programs by submitting notification in advance) ¹	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
...Offering 25-49 percent	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification
...Offering 24 percent or less	NA	NA	NA	NA	None
Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	3	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: April 15 or October 1
Relocating a main or branch campus	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Relocating an off-campus instructional site	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Altering significantly the length of a program ³	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Initiating degree completion programs	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus
Closing an institution or program: (see Commission policy "Closing a Program or Institution")					
...closing a program with internal teach-out protocol	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Description of plan
... closing a program with a teach-out agreement with another institution	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Copy of teach out agreement
...closing an institution	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	no	Description of plan

¹ a significant departure in program is one in which the proposed new program has no closely related counterpart among the previously approved programs in the curriculum. To determine if a new program is a "significant departure", it is helpful to ask if the new program requires

- Numbers of new faculty?
- Many new courses?
- New library or other learning resources?
- New equipment or facilities?
- A new resource base?

² significant changes in mission are those that lead to a fundamental shift in the nature of the institution, such as an institution that had offered only professional programs deciding to add general education offerings, or a technical college transforming itself into a comprehensive community college.

³ significant changes in program length are those with noticeable impact on the program's completion time (e.g., increasing a baccalaureate degree from 124 hours to 150 hours).