

## **Substantive Change Policy and Procedure**

In accordance with the Substantive Change policies of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Stetson University's SACSCOC Liaison submits a letter of notification or a Substantive Change Prospectus to SACSCOC for approval for all substantive changes once a substantive change has been reviewed and approved by the Executive Vice President and Provost for Academic Affairs academic programs, and by the President or Executive Vice President and CFO and/or the Executive Vice President and Provost ON BEHALF OF the President for institution-wide changes.

Substantive change is defined as a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations and as defined by SACSCOC, substantive changes include:

- 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 credential).
- 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.
- 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 student 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.

Key SACSCOC requirements that Stetson University must follow and explicitly stated by SACSCOC include the following:

- An institution is required to notify or secure SACSCOC approval prior to implementing a substantive change.
- 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, viz.,
  - Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards;
  - Credit Hours;
  - Direct Assessment Competency-based Educational Programs;
  - Distance and Correspondence Education;
  - Dual Enrollment;
  - Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status; and
  - Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level.
- An institution is required to have a written substantive change policy and procedure. It must be approved through institutional processes and published in institutional documents accessible to those affected and to the public. The purpose of the institution's substantive change policy and procedure is to ensure all substantive changes are reported to SACSCOC in a timely fashion as required by Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. Institutions are responsible for implementing and enforcing their substantive change policy and procedure.
- An institution's fiscal and administrative capability to operate off-campus instructional sites is assessed when a new site is reviewed for approval and as part of decennial and fifth-year interim reviews.
- A new off-campus instructional site is subject to a substantive change committee visit. A committee visit, when necessary, is authorized when a site is approved. The committee visit ensures the site has the personnel, facilities, and resources identified by an institution in its application or prospectus and ensures the quality of instructional and support services offered at the site.
- Different or additional requirements apply to an institution on substantive change restriction. Restrictions apply if an institution that has been placed on Warning, Probation, or Probation for Good Cause, or if an institution is under provisional certification for participation in federal financial aid programs.
- An institution placed or continued on Probation or Probation for Good Cause must submit to SACSCOC an institutional contingency teach-out plan within 30 days of the notification of the Board of Trustees action.

### Academic Curricular and Policy Changes

At Stetson University, proposed academic curricular and program changes are submitted by department chairs, program directors and faculty to a college or school curriculum committee for review and approval. College and school curriculum committees review and approve all proposed curricular changes, including course changes, new courses, new programs, program closure, and academic policy changes.

At the DeLand Campus, all college and school approved general education-related academic proposals are submitted to the University General Education Committee (UGEC), and all other academic proposals are submitted to UCCAP for review and approval.

At the College of Law, minor and moderate curricular changes are reviewed and approved by the College of Law's Curriculum Committee, comprised of faculty members. Academic policy changes are reviewed and approved by the Academic Standards Committee, also comprised of faculty members. Significant curriculum changes including substantive changes (such as program initiation or discontinuation) and other major curricular changes, including a significant change in pedagogical approach(es) which result(s) in change in class size range and average, a change in the admission or graduation standards, etc., or changes to faculty-approved policies will also be presented to and approved by the full faculty membership. Approved curricular changes will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Law for review and approval prior to submitting to the Executive Vice President and Provost for review and approval.

The Deland campus Director of Curriculum and the Dean of the College of Law have delegated authority to approve curriculum and program changes that are not substantive changes as defined by the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy. Examples of substantive changes include: opening new or closing existing programs; establishing an off-campus instructional site; and entering into a Joint or Dual degree program with another institution. Major academic changes approved by the UCCAP and the Dean of the College of Law requiring Provost approval shall be submitted to the Provost for review and approval, and once approved, are reported to the SACSCOC Liaison by the Provost to submit the appropriate document to SACSCOC for review and either acknowledgement or approval.

### Institutional Substantive Changes

The President or the Executive Vice President and CFO and/or the Executive Vice President and Provost for the President will submit institutional substantive change requests to the SACSCOC Liaison for preparing the appropriate submission to SACSCOC. When Board of Trustees approval is required for institutional substantive changes, such as: substantially changing the established mission or objectives of an institution or its programs; changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership; changing the governance of an institution; merging or consolidating with another institutions or entity; acquiring another institution or any program or location from another institution, etc., the President will submit the proposed change to the Board of Trustees for review and approval. Once approved, the President will communicate to the SACSCOC Liaison to submit the required substantive change document upon approval by the Board of Trustees.

### Academic and Institutional Substantive Changes

Substantive changes must be submitted at least 12 to 18 months in advance of the implementation of the change, because US Department of Education approval may also be needed. If the changes are indeed deemed substantive, then the SACSCOC liaison will, in collaboration with the program or project lead, prepare and submit the appropriate substantive change document to SACSCOC.

### Roles and Responsibilities

**SACSCOC Liaison.** It is the responsibility of the Stetson University SACSCOC Liaison to assist with and review substantive change documentation and resolve any questions or issues that surface during that review with the college or school dean/associate dean/department chair/program director, and advise the Executive Vice President and Provost concerning any question or issue requiring an institution-level decision prior to final approval of the substantive change. The SACSCOC Liaison will also inform the university leadership of changes in SACSCOC policies and procedures related to substantive change, maintain the SACSCOC website to include the most recent updated version of the SU Substantive Change Policy, and draft a letter for the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to the SACSCOC President notifying the SACSCOC of the substantive change when SACSCOC notification and/or approval is necessary.

**Executive Vice President and Provost.** It is the responsibility of the Executive Vice President and Provost to review the substantive change documentation with the SACSCOC Liaison to confirm that no issues or questions remain that justify withholding approval for the substantive change, to sign the substantive change documentation for approval, to finalize the draft letter to the SACSCOC President notifying (and seeking approval when necessary) for the substantive change, to share communications pertaining to the substantive change by to and from the SACSCOC with the respective college or school dean, and to notify the University Registrar and Institutional Research and Effectiveness Office of the approved substantive change by sending a copy of the completed routing form so that the courses making up the degree program can be appropriately coded in the SU registration system.

**University Council on Curriculum and Academic Policy (UCCAP).** The University Council on Curriculum will review all curriculum for the DeLand Campus academic units, and academic policy proposals for all University academic units to ensure consistency with Stetson University policy and, where applicable, national disciplinary and professional standards. UCCAP is responsible for reviewing and approving course and program proposals, and developing, reviewing, and approving academic policy. The responsibility for curricular development and academic policy review and approval extends to undergraduate and graduate programs in the College of Arts & Sciences, the School of Music, and the School of Business Administration, as well as additional programs originating on the DeLand campus. UCCAP is responsible for reviewing and approving academic policies that impact DeLand and the entire University, but not curriculum review of the College of Law programs nor academic policies that impact only the College of Law. Additional details can be found in the UCCAP Defining Document: <https://intranet.stetson.edu/administration/provost/governance/councils-and-committees/uccap.php>

**Dean of College of Law.** The Dean of the College of Law will review and approve College of Law major curriculum and program changes prior to submitting approved changes to the Provost for review and approval.

**College of Law Curriculum Committee, Centers and Faculty.** Curriculum proposals typically originate from the Associate Dean of Academics, a concentration program, an academic program, or faculty

committee. Minor curricular changes are submitted directly to the College of Law Curriculum Committee for review and approval. Major curricular changes, including any changes to the required curriculum for any program, also require presentation to the full-time faculty for review and approval prior to submission to the Dean of the College of Law.

The College of Law curriculum committee will follow the College's protocol for curriculum review and approval for all proposed changes, and will submit major changes to the Dean of the College of Law for review and approval.

DeLand College and Schools Curriculum Committees, Deans and Department/Program Chairs. Curriculum proposals typically originate at the department or program level (herein referred to as department, with the academic leader referred to as chair) for the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Business Administration. Interdisciplinary curriculum proposals will typically be defined collaboratively by the involved chairs, faculty and the college/school Dean. Undergraduate Honors Program curriculum proposals will involve the Honors Program Director, the Honors Program Committee, and relevant faculty and chairs. DeLand international program proposals will involve the International Programs Council and relevant faculty and chairs. The department chair(s) will lead departmental development and review of curriculum proposals and will involve all full-time department members in discussion and deliberation. The chair(s) and faculty will identify as carefully as possible any resource or program implications for the home department(s)/program and for other University departments — both within their College/School and for other Stetson University Colleges/Schools and departments (e.g., Library, Academic Technology). The department chair(s) will forward a recommendation for curriculum change to the appropriate College or School curriculum committee. The School of Music, which does not have assigned departments, is structured with a Curriculum and Program Review Committee. All curricular actions are submitted to the School of Music's Curriculum Committee and Program Review Committee, and are ultimately voted on by the entire School of Music faculty.

The College/School curriculum committee (and College/School Graduate Council and/or International Programs Council, as appropriate) will follow College/School protocol for curriculum review and recommendations (including faculty vote, as appropriate) and will forward a recommendation for curriculum change to the appropriate University curriculum committee, either UGEC or UCCAP. Refer to the Academic Affairs Curriculum website for further details on each college and school's workflows: <https://intranet.stetson.edu/administration/provost/policies-and-guidelines/curriculum.php> .

#### Informing Other Accreditors of SACSCOC Accreditation Status Changes

The SACSCOC Liaison, in conjunction with the program directors of non-SACSCOC accreditation institutions, will submit a letter of notification to all non-SACSCOC accrediting institutions within 30 days of receiving a change in the SACSCOC Accreditation status. The SACSCOC Liaison will maintain copies of submissions and any responses received by the other accreditors.

#### Review Cycle and Updating the Policy

The SACSCOC Liaison will review the policy annually, typically during the summer. The SACSCOC Liaison will update the policy to incorporate changes published by SACSCOC, and to incorporate any changes in policy or procedures during the annual policy review, or as needed.

Reference: SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures Policy Statement, located on the SACSCOC website: <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf> .

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