



SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Calhoun Community College stays in compliance with all substantive change requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the Department of Education. As a member institution, Calhoun is accredited by SACSCOC, including all programs and services no matter their location (SACSCOC, 2024c). As a requirement of this membership, Calhoun is required to be in compliance with [*The Principles of Accreditation*](#) at all times. This includes standard 14.2 which states, “The institution has a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported in accordance with SACSCOC’s policy” (SACSCOC, 2024c, p. 32). Substantive change is defined as “a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution” (SACSCOC, 2024a, p. 182). According to the SACSCOC Resource Manual, this includes but is not limited to the following types of changes (2024a):

- 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 into 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 into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25 percent or more of one or more of the accredited institution’s programs.

It is the policy of Calhoun Community College that all potential institutional, program, site/location, and other changes like those referenced above be reviewed to determine if they are substantive in nature. If found to be substantive, the President and Accreditation Liaison

have the responsibility to report these changes to SACSCOC by the deadlines laid out in SACSCOC's Substantive Change Policy. These are listed below (SACSCOC, 2024b, p. 7).

For substantive changes requiring approval by the full Board of Trustees:

- **March 15** for review at the Board's biannual meeting in June of the same calendar year
- **September 1** for review at the Board's biannual meeting in December of the same calendar year

For substantive changes only requiring approval by the Executive Council of the Board of Trustees:

- **January 1** for changes to be implemented July 1 through December 31 of the same calendar year
- **July 1** for changes to be implemented January 1 through June 30 of the subsequent calendar year

The review and submission of these changes is accomplished via the procedure outlined below. Compliance with these procedures is mandatory.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE PROCEDURE

Calhoun Community College has developed and implemented the following system to ensure that the institution stays in compliance with SACSCOC's Substantive Change Policy:

1. Calhoun will establish a Substantive Change Committee to review all changes and ensure the proper procedure required by SACSCOC and/or the Department of Education is followed. The following individuals will serve on the institution's Substantive Change Committee: Accreditation Liaison (Chairperson), President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Services, Director of Dual Enrollment, Dean of Health Sciences, Dean of Business/CIS, Dean of Technologies, Dean of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, Dean of Fine Arts, two Faculty Senate representatives, Director of Distance Learning, Director of Financial Aid, Executive Director of Facilities, Maintenance and Safety, Instructional Services Coordinator, Institutional Research Analyst (ex-officio) and the Data, Assessment, & Reporting Specialist who serves as Recording Secretary.
2. Changes are reported to the Chairperson of the Substantive Change Committee. The Substantive Change Committee meets in January - March and July - September of each year, or as needed, to review SACSCOC's Substantive Change policy, to discuss any possible changes planned for the College that might be substantive in nature, and to examine the institution's current offerings and operations to make certain that the College is in compliance with SACSCOC's Substantive Change policy.

3. Proposed changes are reviewed by the committee to determine if they are substantive according to SACSCOC guidelines. If any of the changes are determined to be substantive, then the committee also determines the specific procedure (Institutional, Program, Off-Campus Instructional Sites, or other) for reporting the change to SACSCOC. Based on the specifics of the change, the change will require either notification prior to implementation, approval of the executive council of the Board prior to implementation, or approval of the full Board of Trustees prior to implementation. These requirements and the necessary documentation are laid out in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.
4. A subcommittee including the Accreditation Liaison, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Director of Dual Enrollment, Dean of Health Sciences, Dean of Business/CIS, Dean of Technologies, Dean of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Dean of Fine Arts will meet every November to review planned dual enrollment offerings for the following fall semester. The purpose of this review is to ensure proper planning takes place including any notifications and/or approvals that need to be submitted to SACSCOC in preparation for the following fall semester.
5. The Accreditation Liaison will also serve on the Curriculum and Catalog Committee. This committee is tasked with reviewing and approving all curriculum changes prior to implementation and inclusion in the college catalog. As a part of this committee work, the Accreditation Liaison will review each curriculum change submission prior to the committee's vote for approval to ensure SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures are being followed and that there is adequate time to submit necessary changes to SACSCOC.
6. The Accreditation Liaison and President are responsible for notifying SACSCOC of any substantive changes.
7. If SACSCOC requires the institution to write a prospectus or prepare additional documentation beyond the notification letter, the Accreditation Liaison, with assistance from the Substantive Change Committee, is responsible for preparing the documentation and for organizing any onsite substantive change committee visits. Additional committees may also be organized to assist in these tasks.
8. Calhoun Community College's Substantive Change policy is published on the institution's website. In addition, the Substantive Change Committee shares the policy and/or any changes to the policy as needed with all of the College's administrators during President's Staff meetings.

9. All Substantive Change correspondence will be posted on the College's website under the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research.
10. Calhoun Community College's Substantive Change policy and procedures will be reviewed annually to determine their effectiveness. This will take place at the July - September meeting of the Substantive Change Committee. The committee will have the opportunity to provide input on the development and amendment of the policy and procedures. If it is determined that the policy and procedures need to be revised, the committee will make a recommendation to the president for approval.

Document History

Adopted September 17, 2012 by the President's Staff

Revised October 7, 2015 due to staffing changes

Revised January 5, 2017 for clarity on types of Substantive Changes

Revised February 1, 2021 to include SACSCOC Policy Changes

Revised February 26, 2024 to update titles, add the Dean of FA, update recording secretary, and include Faculty representatives

Revised September 25, 2024 to include a clear policy in addition to the outlined procedure; a process to review, amend, and approve the policy and procedures; and additional safeguards for reviewing potential changes

References

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). (2024a). Resource Manual for The Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement. <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2024/02/2024-POA-Resource-Manual.pdf>

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). (2024b). Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf>

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). (2024c). The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement. <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2024/01/2024PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf>