

1. GENERAL

- 1.01 Sam Houston State University is committed to adhering to all of the principles and policies of its institutional accreditation body. This policy is designed to facilitate an effective and timely notification process regarding substantive changes.
- 1.02 As a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Sam Houston State University is responsible for notifying and, when necessary, seeking approval for substantive changes from the Commission in accordance with the SACSCOC substantive change policy. The most current policy can be accessed from the SACSCOC website.
- 1.03 As defined by the SACSCOC, a “substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.”
- 1.04 Notification is defined as an official communication from an institution, accompanied by a Substantive Change Cover Sheet, summarizing the proposed change. For a substantive change requiring notification only, it can be submitted any time before implementation.
- 1.05 Approval is sought through the submission of a SACSCOC application or prospectus, the content of which is specified for each change type within the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. Changes requiring approval cannot be implemented until approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

2. PROCEDURES

- 2.01 The SHSU SACSCOC Liaison is assigned the responsibility of coordinating efforts to identify the need for and creation of notification letters, applications, and prospectus documents. The SACSCOC Liaison is also responsible for educating the campus community of their responsibility in reporting substantive changes (or potential substantive changes) to the SACSCOC Liaison.
- 2.02 Substantive changes include, but are not limited to:
 - 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.
- 2.03 At least once each academic year, the SACSCOC Liaison will provide education and training to the academic deans and division vice presidents in relation to substantive change policies and procedures.
- 2.04 The SACSCOC Liaison will utilize the University curriculum review cycle to identify substantive changes related to the addition, deletion, or modification of courses and degree programs.
- 2.05 The SACSCOC Liaison will utilize the minutes from the Council of Academic Deans meetings, President's Cabinet meetings, and Academic Affairs Council meetings to identify potential substantive changes.
- 2.06 At least once each academic year the SACSCOC Liaison will prompt the academic deans and division vice presidents to identify potential substantive changes.
- 2.07 All substantive change education and review activities must be coordinated to allow ample time to satisfy the timeframes for notification and/or approval as set by the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures.

APPROVED: <signed>
Alisa White, Ph.D., President

DATE: 5/24/2023

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This academic policy statement (APS) has been approved by the reviewer(s) listed below and represents SHSU's Division of Academic Affairs' policy from the date of this document until superseded.

Original: December 12, 2008
Reviewer(s): Academic Affairs Council

Review Cycle: Five years*
Review Date: Fall 2025

Approved: <signed>
Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D.
Provost and Sr. Vice President
for Academic Affairs

Date: 5/9/2023

*Effective January 2018, Academic Policy Statements will be reviewed on a rotating 5-year schedule. To transition to a distributed review load, some policies may be reviewed prior to the 5-year timeframe, with subsequent reviews transitioning to the 5-year schedule.