



Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions

Introduction

Policy Statement

Voorhees College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Voorhees College. As a standard of accreditation (Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement, January 2018 edition, Standard 14.2) the College must:

1. Have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely manner; and,
2. Notify SACSCOC of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.

See Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>) for more detailed information.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the requirements, procedures and processes necessary to ensure timely coordination and notification of substantive changes involving Voorhees College's regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Applicability

This policy applies to Voorhees College and all of its Affiliates.

Responsible Institutional Officer: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Responsible Institutional Coordinator: SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison

Definitions

Affiliates: For purposes of this policy, the term "Affiliates" means organizations or entities in which the College owns a controlling interest or has the right to elect the majority of the entity's governing board.

Substantive Change: For purposes of this policy, a substantive change is a "significant modification of the nature and scope of an accredited institution." Colleges and Universities must notify their accrediting body of potential or actual substantive change in a timely manner and in some cases must receive approval from SACSCOC for that change



before the initiative is implemented. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes:

- (a) Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
- (b) Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- (c) 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
- (d) 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
- (e) A change from clock hours to credit hours
- (f) A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program
- (g) The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program
- (h) The establishment of a branch campus
- (i) Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- (j) Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- (k) Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution
- (l) Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution
- (m) Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution's programs

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Substantive change is based on the concept of "significant departures" from previously approved programs, instructional sites, or modes of delivery. The overwhelming majority of program modifications, changes in curriculum, or changes to courses do not require a notice of substantive change to SACSCOC. The accreditation liaison serves as the gatekeeper and advisor for the substantive change process and will consult as needed with the College's assigned staff representative at SACSCOC.

Policy and Procedures

Section I. Designated Responsibility

The SACSCOC accreditation liaison is responsible for the timely reporting of a substantive change to SACSCOC in accordance with the requirements of SACSCOC and Voorhees College policy. It is the responsibility of the accreditation liaison to keep the College informed of any changes in the substantive change policy. The Voorhees College accreditation liaison reports directly to the President.

Each College department or unit is responsible for informing the accreditation liaison of any potential substantive changes in a manner that ensures Voorhees College can meet the required notification, review and approval processes of SACSCOC. For academic program activities, a SACSCOC substantive change report may be required.

Section II. Implementation Procedures:

A. The academic or administrative officer or department/unit initiating the substantive change (requestor) will:

1. Make contact with the accreditation liaison to determine if potential program changes could result in a substantive change request. A determination of substantive change shall, at all times, be guided by the Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>).
2. Prepare and submit a Substantive Change Request (see Section III: The Content of the Substantive Change Request) to the appropriate departmental or unit head, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the accreditation liaison. The requestor should actively consult with the accreditation liaison regarding the content of the substantive change request.
3. Ensure the necessary documentation for any substantive change is included with the request and that approvals are collected of the appropriate departmental or unit head and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.
4. Once approved, coordinate with the accreditation liaison to submit the substantive change report (due to SACSCOC six months in advance of implementation and due to the accreditation liaison one month earlier than that).

B. The SACSCOC accreditation liaison will:

1. Update the College's substantive change policy and procedures as needed based on SACSCOC policy.
2. Regularly present the substantive change policy and any other SACSCOC accreditation updates to the Executive Cabinet and Senior Staff, Board of Trustees, Department Chairs and Unit Heads, and other relevant groups.
3. Respond to a requestor regarding a potential substantive change request, providing a determination on whether or not a substantive change request is warranted.
4. Work with the requestor as needed to address all components of the substantive change



request and any deficiencies.

5. Review the substantive change request for completeness, appropriateness and consistency with SACSCOC policies and standards.
6. Prepare the formal transmission to SACSCOC.

Section III. The Content of the Substantive Change Request

A. Detailed guidance regarding the content of a substantive change request will be provided by the accreditation liaison.

B. At a minimum, the substantive change request will include the following components:

1. Concise executive summary or abstract
2. Background information
3. Needs assessment and program planning/approval
4. Description of the change
5. Resources to be committed, as appropriate, to include:
 - a. Faculty and staffing
 - b. Library and learning resources
 - c. Student Support Services
 - d. Academic support services
 - e. Physical resources (facilities, equipment, etc.)
 - f. Financial support, to include a business operational plan
6. Evaluation and assessment plan (institutional effectiveness)
7. Support documentation

IV. Policy Amendments

The policy shall be amended as necessary to align with SACSCOC guidelines.

Approved by: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Issued: 12/10/2018

Responsible Offices: Academic Department Chairs, Coordinator for Institutional Effectiveness Research, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison, College Registrar and Compliance Specialist, Executive Cabinet

Contact Information:

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