



## Panola College Policy on Substantive Change

### *What is Substantive Change?*

Substantive Change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. A substantive change requires either a letter of notification or a prospectus to SACS.

### POLICY:

The Panola College policy on substantive change is a collaborative effort by the IR director and deans and directors which is developed, approved, and amended under the supervision and direction of the VPI.

This policy will be used to recognize and approve substantive changes and report these changes in a timely manner according to the requirements and timeline that SACSCOC has provided. The types of substantive changes and persons responsible for reporting such changes are listed on the following pages.

### What types of typical changes might we have?

Additions	Addition of off-campus sites
	Addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure from those that were offered at the last evaluation
	Addition of courses or programs at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution's current accreditation or reaffirmation
% Reached	% of courses on off-campus site reaches 25-49% toward a program, degree, or certificate
	% of courses on off-campus site reaches 50% or more toward a program, degree, or certificate
Other	A substantial increase in clock or credit hours for successful completion of a program
	Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
	Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution

## Substantive Change Responsibilities

### Dean, Director, or Chair

- The dean, director, or chair schedules a substantive change request as an item on the Curriculum & Instruction Committee's agenda. During the meeting, the information justifying the proposal is presented by the dean, director, or chair. Then the proposal is discussed and either approved or disapproved. Further information is provided to the IR and VPI if a Prospectus needs to be written.

### IR Director

- The IR reviews the approved proposal and supporting data and works with the VP of Instruction to determine if a letter of Notification or Prospectus needs to be written. If so, the IR writes the letter or prospectus and sends it to the VPI for review.
- The IR is also responsible for looking at the courses offered at Panola College's off-campus sites at the beginning of each semester and sharing this information with the Deans and Directors. The IR, Deans, and Directors will review the number of courses offered at off-campus sites and determine if there has been an increase. Any changes will be reported to the IR Director and the VPI, who will initiate the appropriate action if necessary.

### Vice President of Instruction

- The VPI assists deans, directors, & chairs with the substantive change process. The VPI reviews any approved proposals and supporting data to determine if a letter of notification or prospectus need to be written. If so, the IR will write the letter or prospectus and submit it to the VPI for review. The VPI reviews the document, makes any necessary revisions, and sends it to the President for approval.

### President

- The President is given a copy of approved proposals. Then he receives a final copy of the letter of Notification or Prospectus from the VPI for revision/approval. Finally, the President sends the document to SACS.



## **Substantive Change Notification Process**

1. The Vice President of Instruction meets with deans and department chairs at the beginning of each semester to review the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) substantive change policies and procedures. If a change requiring SACS notification is identified, the Vice President works with the appropriate dean and department chair to prepare for notification. (Please see Types of Substantive Changes and timelines pp. 4-8.)
2. If a change is indicated, the department chair and/or dean completes the Substantive Proposal Form and gathers necessary documentation.
3. The Curriculum and Instruction Committee meets in October and February of each academic year. The dean schedules the substantive change request on the committee's agenda. The department chair or dean presents the proposed change to the committee, and the proposal is discussed and approved or disapproved.
4. When a proposal is approved by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee it is forwarded to the Vice President of Instruction, who reviews the proposal and accompanying documentation. If approved, the proposal is forwarded to the President.
5. The President reviews the substantive change proposal and if approved, sends a letter notifying SACS that a substantive change in the curriculum is pending.
6. After a letter of notification is submitted to SACS, the President directs the Vice President, dean, and/or department chair to prepare a prospectus if warranted. Prospectuses are submitted to SACS in March and July.

Revisions: 05/27/2015; 11/20/2015; 04/05/2016

**Types of Substantive Change**  
(Information from SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy)

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation	Responsible Office(s)
Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved	No	Yes	Application for Level Change <b>Due dates:</b> March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President
Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer's request and not on short notice)	No	Yes	Cover Sheet; Prospectus <b>Due dates:</b> January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation  July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President
Expanding at current degree level (significant departure from current programs).				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site AND at the institution				
Initiating degree completion programs				
Initiating a branch campus (See definition of "branch campus" on p. 3 of this document.)				Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Initiating distance learning by offering 50% or more of the first program for the first time				Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President
Relocating a main or branch campus				

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation	Responsible Office(s)
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the SACSCOC accredited institution	No	Yes	Cover Sheet; Prospectus <b>Due dates:</b> January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Initiating dual or joint degrees involving program expansion (significant departure) or initiating a new site where student can obtain 50% or more credits toward a program	No	Yes	Cover Sheet; Prospectus <b>Due dates:</b> January 1 for 7/1-12/31 implementation July 1 for 1/1-6/30 implementation Copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s) involved. See Policy	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Initiating dual or joint degree with at least one institution not accredited by SACSCOC	At least 6 months prior to implementation	Yes	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement, contact information for each institution, and additional details on non-SACSCOC institution(s). See Policy.	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Initiating a direct assessment competency-based program	Yes- Screening Form	Yes	Submit "Screening Form" with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required, <b>Due dates:</b> March 15 (for June review) September 1 (for December review)	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation	Responsible Office(s)
Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution	Yes: Dec 15 (for June review); June 1 (for Dec review)	Yes	Cover Sheet, Institutional Summary Form, Prospectus (See Appendix in SACSCOC Policy: "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status")  <b>Due dates:</b> March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review)	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution				
Acquiring any program or site from another institution				
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing				
Initiating a certificate program at a new off-campus site at employer's request and on short notice (previously approved program)	No	Yes	Cover Sheet Modified prospectus Contact Commission Staff.	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Initiating a certificate program that is a significant departure from previously approved programs at employer's request and on short notice				
Adding a site under a U.S. military contract for a previously approved program				
Altering significantly the length of a program				
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution				
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	No	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President

<b>Type of Change</b>	<b>Prior Notification Required</b>	<b>Prior Approval Required</b>	<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Responsible Office(s)</b>
Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)	Yes	No	Letter of notification with old address, new address, and implementation date	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Initiating dual or joint degrees with other SACSCOC accredited institution(s)	At least 6 months prior to implementation	No	Acceptance of notification, copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution. See Policy.	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium				
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the SACSCOC accredited institution	Yes	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President
Initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 25-49% of credits toward a program (including but not limited to Early College High School, dual enrollment programs offered at a high school, and certificate programs that are not at employer's request and not on short notice)	Yes	No	Letter of notification Including street address and implementation date	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President
Initiating distance learning by offering 25-49 of the first program for the first time				
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans to teach out its own students	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan included with letter of notification	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President Board
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution where the institution plans contracts with another institution(s) to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)	Yes	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement(s) detailing terms included with notification	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Documentation	Responsible Office(s)
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice using existing approved courses and location	No	No	NA	Dean/Director C & I Committee IR, VPI, President
Initiating certificate program (not at employer's request and not on short notice) using existing approved courses and location				
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) where student can obtain 24% or less of credits toward a program				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site				
Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding approved programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site but NOT at the institution				
Initiating distance learning by offering 24% or less of any program for the first time				