

Substantive Change Checklist

Introduction

Substantive change is a term used by the U.S. federal government to describe any “significant modification of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Accredited higher education institutions must notify their accrediting body, in a timely manner, of potential or actual substantive changes and in specific instances must receive approval before implementing the proposed initiative. The University of North Alabama is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), which is required by the federal government to monitor the compliance of its members with the substantive change policy and to grant approval before major changes may occur. To ensure UNA’s compliance, all proposers of new programs, degrees, and other major initiatives should review the University’s substantive change policy at <http://www.una.edu/sacs/helpful-resources.html>, as well as the information provided on the SACSCOC website at <http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp>.

In addition, proposers should review the attached checklist, in consultation with UNA’s SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison before the proposal is presented to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Council, or the Non-Traditional and Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee (for academic programs and degrees) or to the University’s Executive Committee (in the case of major non-academic changes). Completion of the Substantive Change Checklist early in the development process—well before anticipated implementation—will help lessen delays further in the process.

During the spring semester each year the academic deans will review all new curriculum proposals emanating from their respective college during that academic year and will complete the Substantive Change Checklist reflecting those developments. A signed copy documenting this review will be submitted to the UNA SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison by April 15. The results will be shared with the Council of Academic Deans.

Feel free to contact UNA’s Accreditation Liaison (sacs@una.edu or 256-765-4625) with any questions.

Definition of *Significant Departure*:

Significant departure – a program that is not closely related to previously approved programs at the institution or site or for the mode of delivery in question. To determine whether a new program is a “significant departure,” it is helpful to consider the following questions:

- What previously approved programs does the institution offer that are closely related to the new program and how are they related?
- Will significant additional equipment or facilities be needed?
- Will significant additional financial resources be needed?
- Will a significant number of new courses will be required?
- Will a significant number of new faculty members will be required?

Name of Proposed Program/Action:

College/Administrative Unit:

Sponsoring Department:

Department/Proposal Contact: (Name, e-mail address, phone number)

Date:

Provide a Brief Description of Proposed Change, including proposed implementation date:

Answer the following questions regarding the proposed change.

Academic Program Change:	Yes	No
Will the proposal initiate coursework or programs at a <i>different level</i> than currently approved programs (e.g., proposing a doctoral program)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal expand offerings at the <u>current degree level</u> , but represent a <i>significant departure</i> from existing programs (i.e., the proposed program has no closely-related counterpart among previously approved programs in the curriculum)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposed program require new faculty? If <i>Yes</i> , how many?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are <i>25 percent or more</i> of the courses required for the proposed program <u>new</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are <i>50 percent or more</i> of the courses required for the proposed program <u>new</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal require new library or other learning resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal require a new resource base (significant new funding)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a <i>dual degree</i> program with another institution? (Separate program completion credential each of which bears <u>only</u> the name, seal, and signature of the awarding institution.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a <i>joint degree</i> program with another institution? (A single program completion credential bearing the names, seals, and signature of <u>each</u> of the institutions awarding the degree.) (<i>If Yes, answer the following:</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Academic Program Change: (continued)	Yes	No
• Will the <i>joint program</i> be with another SACSCOC accredited institution?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the <i>joint program</i> be with an institution <u>not</u> accredited by SACSCOC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Will the proposal involve entering into a contract with an entity <u>not</u> certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs where <i>25% or more</i> of the educational program will be offered <u>by the other entity</u> (an entity that is not accredited by SACSCOC)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Will the proposal involve entering into a contract with an entity <u>not</u> certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs where <i>less than 25%</i> of the educational program will be offered <u>by the other entity</u> (an entity that is not accredited by SACSCOC)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a <i>certificate program</i> ? (If Yes , answer the following:)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the proposal initiate a certificate program <u>at an employer's request</u> and <u>on short notice</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the proposed certificate utilize <u>existing</u> , already approved courses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the proposed certificate program be a <i>previously approved program</i> offered at a <u>new off-campus</u> site (sited based classroom/group instruction)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the proposed certificate program represent a <i>significant departure</i> from programs <u>previously approved</u> for the institution?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a program at a <u>new off-campus site</u> ? (If Yes , answer the following:)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the student be able to earn <u>50 percent or more</u> of the program's credits at the off-campus instructional site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the student be able to earn <u>25 to 49 percent</u> of program credits at the off-campus instructional site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the student be able to earn <u>24 percent or fewer</u> of the program credits at the off-campus instructional site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a program at an <u>existing approved</u> off-campus instructional site? (Note: This asks about an already approved site, not a new one.) (If Yes , answer the following:)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the proposal add a program that is <i>significantly different</i> from programs previously approved for the institution (or any of its approved off-campus sites)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the proposal add a program that is <u>NOT</u> significantly different from current programs approved for the institution?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal add a <i>combination degree</i> program that <u>reduces</u> the hours needed to complete the combined degrees (e.g., combination baccalaureate and master's degrees)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Academic Program Change: (continued)	Yes	No
Will the proposal <u>initiate</u> a program offered via distance education (where the majority of the instruction occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place)? <i>(If Yes, answer the following:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will more than <u>50 percent</u> of the proposed program be offered via distance education? (Indicate % of credits online, % face-to-face instruction) 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will <u>25-49 percent</u> of the proposed program be offered via distance education? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will <u>24 percent or less</u> of the proposed program be offered via distance education? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate programs or courses offered through <u>contractual agreement</u> or a <u>consortium</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal alter significantly the <u>length</u> of an existing program? Note: The change would have a noticeable impact on programs completion time. <i>(If Yes, answer the following:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this a change mandated by an academic program's accrediting agency? <i>(If Yes, indicate the accreditor.)</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a <u>degree completion</u> program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal <u>close</u> an existing program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a <u>direct assessment competency-based program</u> (where direct assessment of student learning is based solely on the attainment of defined competencies, not credit hours, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Administrative Substantive Change:	Yes	No
<p>Will the proposal initiate a branch campus?</p> <p>Note: A branch campus is a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus. A location is considered independent of the main campus if the new location is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Permanent in nature _____ Offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential _____ Has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization AND _____ Has its own budgetary and hiring authority. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Administrative Substantive Change: (continued)	Yes	No
Will the proposal initiate an <i>off-campus instructional site</i> (<u>including</u> Early College programs offered at a <u>high school</u>) where: _____ Students can obtain <u>50 percent or more</u> of the credits toward a program (where students have to be in the location to receive the instruction)? _____ Students can obtain <u>25-49 percent</u> of credit required for program? _____ Students can obtain <u>24 percent or less</u> of the credit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal alter significantly the <u>educational mission</u> of the institution?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal initiate a <u>merger/consolidation</u> with another institution?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal involve <u>relocating</u> the main campus or a branch campus?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal involve <u>changing the governance</u> , ownership, control, or legal status of the institution?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal involve changing from clock hours to <u>credit hours</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal involve <u>closing a program, an instructional site, branch campus, or institution</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal involve <u>moving an off-campus instructional site</u> to another location (serving the same geographic area)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal involve <u>acquiring a program</u> or site from another institution?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposal add a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a <u>teach-out</u> for students from another institution that is closing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Checklist was adapted from Duke University's "Substantive Change Checklist"

As a rule of thumb, if 25 percent or more of a proposed program will involve new courses the program generally requires approval from SACSCOC before the program can be implemented.

Submitted by (signature) _____ Date _____

If the answer to any question is "Yes," consult the UNA SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison to determine the following:

Action Recommended: _____ No Action Needed _____ Letter of Notification _____ Prospectus

UNA SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison (signature) _____ Date _____

Note: Checklist was accepted by Council of Academic Deans on April 6, 2015, to be used by deans in spring of each semester to review the year's new proposals within their areas and to submit documentation of review to UNA's SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison on or by April 15 of each year.