

**SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY**

**Procedures**

The [SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures document](#) provides extensive guidance on what constitutes substantive change and what notifications, approvals, or extensive reviews are necessary for each type of change under various circumstances. The types of substantive change detailed in the chart below are representative of common changes encountered at Laurel Ridge. They are not, however, exhaustive. The President, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (VP ASA), and the Institutional Accreditation Liaison (IAL) are responsible for monitoring Laurel Ridge’s status in regard to all other substantive changes and coordinating the appropriate notification to SACSCOC.

Type of Change	How Substantive Change is Identified	Procedure	Responsibility
New Off-campus Instructional Site (OCIS) at which 50% or more of a program's instruction is delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determination is made based on the percentage of <i>total</i> program instruction required to earn a credential, measured in credit hours.</li> <li>This type of change includes, but is not limited to, dual enrollment sites, employer sites, and new branch campuses. Clinical sites where no didactic instruction is delivered are not OCISs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval by either extensive or limited review is required. The first two new OCIS approvals at the institution, after December 2020, require extensive review. Extensive review includes both an institutional-level and a site-specific review. After two sites are approved by extensive review under the new policy, sites may thereafter be approved by limited review through a prospectus submission.</li> <li>Requests for new sites are made by the school or Early College dean to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (VP ASA) who notifies the Institutional Accreditation Liaison (IAL). Requests should be made at least six months in advance of the implementation date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Dean and/or Dean of Early College</li> <li>VP ASA</li> <li>IAL</li> </ul>

Type of Change	How Substantive Change is Identified	Procedure	Responsibility
New Off-campus Instructional Site at which 25-49% or more of a program's instruction is delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination is made based on the percentage of <i>total</i> program instruction required to earn a credential, measured in credit hours.</li> <li>• This type of change includes, but is not limited to, dual enrollment sites, employer sites, and new branch campuses. Clinical sites where no didactic instruction is delivered are not OCISs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification prior to implementation is required.</li> <li>• Requests for new sites are made by the school or Early College dean to the VP ASA and the IAL. The IAL drafts and sends notification.</li> <li>• Instruction may cross the 25% threshold any time after the institution submits notification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Dean or Dean of Early College</li> <li>• VP ASA</li> <li>• IAL</li> </ul>
Relocation of Off-campus Instructional Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The OCIS must serve the same geographic area in order for it to be considered a relocation.</li> <li>• Relocation of a branch campus requires a different process than other types of OCISs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification prior to implementation is required.</li> <li>• After the internal decision to move a site, the IAL is notified and drafts notification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VP ASA</li> <li>• IAL</li> </ul>
Name or address change of Off-campus Instructional Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Site name</i> - Ensure the site name does not suggest that it is a branch campus unless it has been approved as such. Ensure the site name does not suggest it is a separate institution.</li> <li>• <i>Address change</i> - Ensure only the address is changing, not the site location.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification prior to implementation is required.</li> <li>• After internal decision to move site, the IAL is notified and drafts notification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VP of ASA</li> <li>• IAL</li> </ul>
Closure of Off-campus Instructional Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closure applies to notified <i>and</i> approved sites.</li> <li>• Closure is the date on which the institution stops admitting students to the site, <i>not</i> the last day of instruction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval with teach-out plan is required.</li> <li>• After internal decision to move site, the IAL is notified and drafts notification.</li> <li>• Because the approval is essentially an approval of the <i>teach-out process</i> for the site, it is due to SACSCOC as soon as possible after the institution decides to close the site.</li> <li>• Because this situation is time-sensitive, the teach out plan may begin upon submission of approval; however, this does not relieve the college of its obligation to provide an acceptable plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VP ASA</li> <li>• IAL</li> </ul>

Type of Change	How Substantive Change is Identified	Procedure	Responsibility
New program at current degree level with 25-49% new content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination is made based on the percentage of program credit hours required to earn a credential, exclusive of general education courses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification prior to implementation is required.</li> <li>• After initial planning between school dean and faculty program lead, new programs are submitted for consideration of the C&amp;I committee. They are then reviewed and approved by the college board.</li> <li>• After C&amp;I approval, the IAL drafts and submits notification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Program Lead</li> <li>• School Dean</li> <li>• VP ASA</li> <li>• IAL</li> </ul>
Closure of academic program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program closure includes ending a program at <i>all locations</i> or by <i>all methods of delivery</i>, but also includes ending a student's completion option at a <i>specific location</i> or by a <i>specific method</i> of delivery.</li> <li>• Program closure is not required for a specialization embedded within a discipline-specific program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval with teach-out plan is required.</li> <li>• Closure date is when students can no longer start the program, not the date program instruction ends.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Program Lead</li> <li>• School Dean</li> <li>• VP ASA</li> <li>• IAL</li> </ul>
Altering significantly the length of a program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A change in program length - for either an increase or decrease requires approval if program credit hours increase or decrease by 25% or more AND students' expected time to completion increase or decreases by more than one term or its equivalent or comparable measure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After initial planning between school dean and faculty program lead, new programs are submitted for consideration of the C&amp;I committee. They are then reviewed and approved by the college board.</li> <li>• After C&amp;I approval, the program lead drafts a new program prospectus with the guidance of the school dean and IAL. Final draft of the prospectus is submitted to the VP ASA and President for approval before formal submission one month in advance of biannual SACSCOC submission dates. SACSCOC submission dates are January 1 for changes to be implemented July 1 through December of the same calendar year, and July 1 for changes to be implemented January 1 through June 30 of the subsequent calendar year.</li> </ul>	

**Glossary of Terms:**

*Branch campus:* A location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is

- 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 Contractual Agreement – typically is one in which an institution enters an agreement for receipt of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs (i.e., clinical training internships, etc.) delivered by another institution or service provider.

*Consortial Relationship:* A consortial relationship typically is one in which two or more institutions share in the responsibility of developing and delivering courses and programs that meet mutually agreed upon standards of academic quality.

*Cooperative academic arrangement:* An agreement between a SACSCOC-accredited institution and another entity (or entities) to deliver program content recorded on the SACSCOC institution's transcript as its own.

*Program* – A coherent course of study leading to a for-credit credential including a degree, diploma, certificate, or other generally recognized credential. *Exception:* General education, for substantive change purposes, is usually considered a program even if a credential is not awarded.

*Teach-out plan* - A written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50% or more of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between institutions. This applies to the closure of an institution, a site, or a program. Teach-out plans must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation.

***Document History:***

*Approved: President J. Sygielski, Feb 2008*

*Revised: President C. Thompson-Stacy, Aug 2014*

*Revised: President C. Thompson-Stacy, Jan 2017*

*Revised: President K. Blosser, Sep 2018*

*Revised: President K. Blosser, April 2023*