



## **Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure**

**OP 02.06:** Reporting Substantive Changes to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools—Commission on Colleges

**DATE:** March 28, 2012

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to describe the rationale and steps necessary to comply with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools—Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC) standards related to substantive change.

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed in March of even-numbered years by the SACS-COC Accreditation Liaison with recommended revisions forwarded through the provost and vice president of academic affairs to the president by April 15.

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE**

#### **1. Authority**

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, Section 3, Comprehensive Standards, Requirement 3.12.1, “The institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the Commission’s substantive change policy and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes.” (Substantive change). Responsibility for compliance with the Commission’s substantive change procedures and policy, requires, as a comprehensive accreditation standard, the notification of SACS-COC regarding substantive changes, as defined below.

#### **2. Policy**

Angelo State University will strictly follow the Commission on Colleges policy “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions.”

#### **3. Definition of Substantive Change**

Substantive change is defined as significant modification or expansion of an institution’s scope, such as but not limited to change in the nature of its affiliation or its ownership, merger with another institution, addition of courses or programs at a different degree level, or addition of courses or programs different in content or mode of delivery.

#### **4. Notification of SACS-COC**

- a. The SACS-COC Policy requires that notification be sent in a letter from the institution's chief executive officer to the president of the commission.
- b. The letter must summarize the proposed change and the intended implementation date; if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site, the institution must provide the street address.

#### **5. Procedure to Assure Compliance (Academic Programs)**

##### a. Institutional Procedure

- (1) All requests for new degree programs must follow the procedures and approval process outlined in OP 04.05 "Approval Process for New Degree Programs."
- (2) Under this policy, the SACS-COC Accreditation Liaison is responsible for assuring that required notification is sent to SACS-COC.

##### b. Administrative Alert and Education Component

- (1) At least once each academic year, the SACS-COC Accreditation Liaison or his/her designee will inform institutional constituents concerning policies and procedures for reporting substantive changes.
- (2) This alert may include, but is not limited to, any or all of the following: announcement on website; e-mails; training sessions for deans, department chairs, and program heads; presentations at Deans' Council and departmental meetings.

##### c. Organization Channels to Ensure Adherence

The organization channels outlined in 5.d. will be used to ensure adherence at all levels of the institution.

##### d. Approval Levels

- (1) The following approvals are required for Preliminary Authority Requests (if required by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the establishment of any new academic program).
  - Department Chair
  - College Dean
  - Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
  - Vice President for Finance and Administration (required only for programs requiring new funding)
  - President (required only for programs requiring new funding)
  - SACS-COC Accreditation Liaison (required for substantive changes; prepares a letter of initial notification to SACS-COC if substantive change is indicated)

(2) Upon approval of a Preliminary Authority Request (if required), the following campus approvals are required for Curriculum Change Proposals (required by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for final approval of any new degree program):

- Department Chair
- College Curriculum Committee Chair (changes requiring approval of the Curriculum Committee)
- College Dean
- Teacher Education Council (changes involving teacher certification programs)
- Graduate Council Chair (changes in graduate curricula)
- Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (changes in graduate curricula)
- University Curriculum Committee Chair (changes requiring approval of the Curriculum Committee)
- Registrar

(3) Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs prepares letter to SACS-COC for review by SACS-COC Accreditation Liaison confirming approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Texas Tech University System Board of Regents for actual implementation.

#### **6. Procedure to Assure Compliance (Other)**

As a member of the President's Cabinet, the SACS-COC Accreditation Liaison will monitor other types of substantive changes which require SACS-COC notification and prepare correspondence for president's approval. These changes include the following:

- Initiating a merger/consolidation;
- Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution;
- Relocating a campus;
- Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status;
- Closing an institution/program and/or initiating teach-out agreements;
- Establishment of additional locations.