



## AA-1 SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Approved: April 17, 2023

Reviewed:

Revised:

Monitoring Unit: Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

### I. PURPOSE

To establish the requirements and procedures to ensure that Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at New Orleans (LSUHSC-NO) notifies the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), the university's institutional accrediting body, of any substantive change and seeks prior approval of changes as required by the commission in accordance with the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and SACSCOC Standard 14.2.

### II. DEFINITIONS

**1. Accreditation Liaison:** Every SACSCOC member institution has an Accreditation Liaison who is responsible for ensuring compliance with accreditation requirements. LSUHSC-NO's Accreditation Liaison is:

Janet Southerland, DDS, MPH, PhD  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
433 Bolivar, Suite 824  
504-568-4804  
[jsouther@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:jsouther@lsuhsc.edu)

**2. Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE):** The LSUHSC-NO Office of Institutional Effectiveness is responsible for the university's SACSCOC accreditation, including reviewing and submitting requests for approval of Substantive Changes. The OIE contact is:

Christine Manalla, MHA  
Director, Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
433 Bolivar, Room 827  
504-568-2072  
[cmanal@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:cmanal@lsuhsc.edu)

**3. Substantive Change:** A significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Substantive change includes high-impact, high-risk changes and changes that affect the quality of educational programs and services. An institution is required to notify or secure SACSCOC

approval prior to implementing a Substantive Change

**Substantive Changes**, including those required by federal regulations, include one or more of:

- Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of an institution or its programs.
- Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership of an institution.
- Changing the governance of an institution.
- Merging/consolidating two or more institutions or entities.
- Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution (including a branch campus).
- Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- Adding graduate programs at an institution previously offering only undergraduate programs (including degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other for-credit credential).
- Changing the way an institution measures student progress, whether in clock hours or credit-hours; semesters, trimesters, or quarters; or time-based or non-time-based methods or measures.
- Adding a program that is a significant departure from the existing programs, or method of delivery, from those offered when the institution was last evaluated.
- Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.
- Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
- Entering into a written arrangement under 34 C.F.R. § 668.5 under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the title IV Higher Education Act (HEA) programs offers less than 25% (notification) or 25-50% (approval) of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs. An agreement offering more than 50% of one or more of an institution's programs is prohibited by federal regulation.
- Substantially increase or decreasing the number of clock hours or credit hours awarded or competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded, for successful completion of one or more programs.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.
- Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location including a branch campus.
- Adding a permanent location at a site at which an institution is conducting a teach-out program for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.
- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site

### **III. POLICY GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES**

1. LSUHSC-NO is required to (a) notify and/or secure SACSCOC approval prior to implementing a Substantive Change, and (b) follow all guidance in the SACSCOC *Substantive Change Policy and Procedures*, including meeting all required reporting deadlines.

2. Academic officers (i.e., program directors, associate deans for academic affairs, and deans) shall closely monitor all potential Substantive Changes within their areas of responsibility to ensure appropriate and timely LSUHSC-NO administrative review and approval. Advance planning is necessary to avoid delays in proposed program implementation. Questions and requests for OIE review should be directed to the OIE as early as possible in the planning process.

3. Upon becoming aware of a potential Substantive Change, the academic officer proposing it should immediately notify the OIE, which will then determine whether the proposal is a Substantive Change under the SACSCOC policy and will establish subsequent required steps.

4. If OIE determines a proposal to be a Substantive Change, LSUHSC-NO must seek SACSCOC approval as much as twelve months in advance of implementing the change. If Louisiana Board of Regents and/or LSU Board of Supervisors approvals are also required for the Substantive Change, those approvals must be obtained prior to SACSCOC notification.

5. For a Substantive Change requiring approval by the full SACSCOC Board of Trustees (which meets biannually), to be implemented after the date of the SACSCOC Board meeting, the submission deadlines are:

- March 15, for review at the Board's biannual meeting in June of the same calendar year
- September 1, for review at the Board's biannual meeting in December of the same calendar year

6. For a Substantive Change requiring approval by the Executive Council of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees (which meets year-round), the submission deadlines are:

- January 1, for changes to be implemented July 1 - December 31 of the same calendar year
- July 1, for changes to be implemented January 1 - June 30 of the subsequent calendar year

7. For a Substantive Change requiring notification only, a notification can be submitted any time before implementation. Once LSUHSC-NO has submitted notification, the change may be implemented before receiving a response from SACSCOC. Substantive Changes requiring SACSCOC approval cannot be implemented until formally approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

8. All formal requests for approval of a Substantive Change, whether to the LSU Board of Supervisors, the Louisiana Board of Regents, or the SACSCOC Executive Council or Board of Trustees, must flow through the OIE and be approved and submitted by the Accreditation Liaison.

## **V. REFERENCES**

SACSCOC *The Principles of Accreditation*, Standard 14.2

<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/2018PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf>

SACSCOC *Substantive Change Policy and Procedures* (revised December 2021)

<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf>