



# Reporting of Substantive Change

<b>Policy Number</b>	4-505.2
<b>Responsible Authority</b>	Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
<b>Initiating Authority</b>	Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
<b>Effective Date</b>	4/29/2021
<b>Date of Origin</b>	8/31/2009

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## APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

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This policy is applicable to all individuals involved in developing or overseeing programming offered for academic credit, at any locations where the university conducts its business. It also applies to individuals with authority to initiate or implement institutional mergers, consolidations, or acquisitions, as well as changes to institutional mission, means of control, ownership, legal or operational status, governance structure, or footprint.

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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The University of Central Florida is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award degrees at the associate, baccalaureate, master's, specialist, and doctoral levels. This accreditation provides public documentation of institutional quality and enables the university to seek eligibility to participate in federal programs.

In addition to five- and ten-year reviews by the commission, UCF is required to follow substantive change procedures established by SACSCOC that entail, as appropriate, notification and sometimes approval by the commission prior to implementing a qualifying change. Substantive change reporting requirements can be triggered by activities defined in the SACSCOC policy and procedures document that encompass certain institutional and program level changes as well as changes impacting the institution's footprint by adding, closing, or modifying instruction at a location off UCF's designated main campus.

Failure to comply with the commission's substantive change procedures can result in serious consequences that include suspending the activity until required SACSCOC notification and approval is received, requiring the university to pay back financial aid dispersed to students,

placing the university on sanction, or removing the university's accreditation entirely. Certain substantive changes require only prior notification. **Other changes require prior approval, which typically involves submission of a substantive change prospectus six to twelve months prior to the planned implementation of a substantive change.** Many substantive changes are assessed an administrative fee by SACSCOC, and some require on-site committee reviews involving additional associated costs. On-site reviews require the institution to update its compliance status with the SACSCOC, *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, and provide in-depth information on core requirements, comprehensive standards, and federal requirements prior to committee review.

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

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The University of Central Florida maintains compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, *Substantive Change Policy and Procedures*, through the appropriate and timely reporting of qualifying changes. The senior associate provost for Academic Affairs serves as the SACSCOC liaison and is responsible for educating the campus community about substantive change reporting requirements and leading efforts to monitor high risk activities to proactively detect potential substantive changes.

The Academic Program Quality unit, under the oversight of the designated UCF SACSCOC liaison, must maintain a current list of all institution and program level actions the commission considers to meet the definition of substantive change and must post this list on its website. All questions about whether a change is substantive should be directed to the UCF SACSCOC liaison or designee. It is expected that all substantive changes, including those requiring SACSCOC notification and/or approval prior to implementation, will also secure any other required approvals as necessitated by UCF, Board of Governors, or other regulatory body policy, regulation, or law.

In accordance with SACSCOC expectations, all official institutional correspondence with SACSCOC, including reporting of substantive changes, will be submitted only by the president of the university or the designated UCF SACSCOC liaison. Given their significance to the university's continued accreditation status, all substantive change requests requiring SACSCOC approval will be reported to the UCF Board of Trustees.

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## **DEFINITION**

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**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 can impact the quality of educational programs and services, as defined by federal regulations and SACSCOC policy.

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## PROCEDURES

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The person initiating an action as referenced in the list maintained by the Academic Program Quality unit or the unit head with oversight for the associated activity must notify the UCF SACSCOC liaison or designee as soon as the change is considered. Typically, this would occur nine to twelve months in advance of the possible change. The UCF SACSCOC liaison or designee will review each proposal to determine if it constitutes a substantive change needing to go through the SACSCOC notification and/or approval process. If substantive change reporting is required, the liaison or designee will be responsible for determining the appropriate deadline for submission to the commission and collaborating with the initiating party to prepare complete documentation for SACSCOC review.

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## RELATED INFORMATION

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[List of current actions considered substantive changes by SACSCOC](#)

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## CONTACTS

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[UCF SACSCOC liaison in the Office of the Provost](#)

<b>POLICY APPROVAL</b> <b>(For use by the Office of the President)</b>		
Policy Number: 4-505.2		
Initiating Authority: <u>Michael Johnson</u>	<small>Digitally signed by Michael Johnson Date: 2021.04.29 08:14:02 -04'00'</small>	Date: <u>4/29/2021</u>
University Policies and Procedures Committee Chair: <u></u>		Date: <u>4/27/2021</u>
President or Designee: <u>Alexander Cartwright</u>	<small>Digitally signed by Alexander Cartwright Date: 2021.04.29 16:19:29 -04'00'</small>	Date: <u>4/29/2021</u>