

Pellissippi State Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award the associate's degree. Accreditation by SACSCOC assures the public that the institution meets defined standards of quality education and enables the institution to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV programs as authorized under the United States Education Amendments of 1972.

To maintain accreditation, the institution submits a self-study and undergoes a major review by the Commission every ten years and a more limited review at the five-year point. In addition, SACSCOC requires its member institutions to inform the Commission of substantive changes as they occur. Substantive change is defined as significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of the accredited institution. Some changes require only notification; others require prior approval by the Commission. Reporting changes assures that all programs offered by the institution have undergone appropriate review and are recognized by the Commission. The SACSCOC Substantive Change policy may be viewed at this link:
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>.

This Pellissippi State policy is intended to ensure that substantive changes are identified and reported to the Commission in a timely, accurate and complete manner, according to the SACSCOC policy. The College's SACSCOC accreditation liaison works with the president and vice presidents to accomplish appropriate notification.

Definition

Substantive change includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

- Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
- Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the institution was last evaluated
- The addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution's current accreditation or reaffirmation
- A change from clock hours to credit hours
- A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution

- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution's programs

Implementation

When a change such as those listed above is planned, the appropriate vice president or designee informs the president and the accreditation liaison, who reviews the SACSCOC policy and procedures to determine the appropriate action. Changes are reported in a letter from the college president to the president of SACSCOC at least annually. For changes that require prior approval, the liaison prepares the appropriate documentation and submits it to the Commission according to the timeline included in the SACSCOC policy. In the case of uncertainty as to what is required, the liaison contacts the SACSCOC vice president assigned to the College for clarification.

Failure to follow SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures may result in serious consequences, including the loss of Title IV funding or the necessity to reimburse the U.S. Department of Education for money received for programs related to the unreported substantive change. The accreditation liaison reviews the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy and the college policy annually with the president and vice presidents to ensure that the College remains in compliance.

Reviewed/Recommended: President's Council, March 28, 2016

Approved: President L. Anthony Wise, Jr., March 28, 2016