



PROCEDURE: 2.3.5.p.L.
WGTC Substantive Change

Revised: February 24, 2020
Last Reviewed: October 20, 2015; June 30, 2015; May 21, 2014
Adopted: May 24, 2012

Purpose

The Wiregrass Georgia Technical College (WGTC) substantive change procedure is designed to ensure that the college will report all proposed changes to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) appropriately and in a timely manner in accordance with the Commission's policy outlined in the publication, "Substantive Changes for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Accredited Institutions." WGTC notifies the Commission of changes as stipulated in the policy and, if required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of such changes. WGTC is responsible for providing SACSCOC with a list of all substantive changes that occur between the College's decennial reviews. By definition, a substantive change is "a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution" and includes:

- 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 percent of an educational program
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution
- Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution
- Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25 percent or more of one or more of the accredited institution's programs

As stated in the policy, various types of substantive changes are addressed using three procedures.

- Procedure One – Substantive changes requiring approval prior to implementation
- Procedure Two – Substantive changes requiring only notification prior to implementation
- Procedure Three – Closing a program, site, branch campus, or institution

Each of the procedures above is described in the SACSCOC substantive change policy. Guidelines and summary of timelines for reporting changes included in each of the three categories are outlined in the SACSCOC substantive change reporting policy as well as instructions for reporting.

Identification of Substantive Change

In accordance with the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia's substantive change reporting policy, WGTC will facilitate changes appropriately and in a timely manner to SACSCOC. WGTC will submit all substantive changes according to the time frame listed on the table in the SACSCOC substantive change reporting policy. WGTC has established the following procedural order for communicating proposals for change within the institution and to the accrediting agency:

1. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs works with the associate vice presidents, academic deans, Executive Director for Academic Affairs, and other stakeholders to develop a new program request, program termination, or description of the intended change of existing program.
2. The Academic Affairs Administration and President reviews and approves the proposed change.
3. The Local Board of Directors reviews and approves the proposal.
4. The State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia approves the new program request, program termination, or intended change.
5. The Executive Director for Academic Affairs works with the President, the SACSCOC Liaison (Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness) and other appropriate staff to prepare correspondence materials to be submitted to SACSCOC.
6. The President submits a letter and supporting documentation to the SACSCOC President.

WGTC notifies the Commission, as stated in the Commission policy in the form of "...a letter from the institution's chief executive officer or his/her designated representative to the President of the Commission summarizing the proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the complete physical address, if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site or branch campus."

7. Academic Affairs Administration is notified by the President and/or SACSCOC Liaison when a SACSCOC response letter is received.

Responsibility

The Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness/SACSCOC Liaison has the overall responsibility of ensuring this procedure is implemented.

References

TCSG Policy 2.3.5 Technical College Substantive Change Reporting

SACSCOC Policy: Substantive Change Reporting