

2.3.5.L. Wiregrass Substantive Change Reporting

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

Guidelines and timelines for reporting changes included in each of the three categories are outlined in the SACSCOC substantive change policy. The [attached chart](#) contains a summary of the timelines and instructions for reporting. Each of the procedures above is described in the SACSCOC substantive change policy.

To facilitate changes appropriately and in a timely manner, the college has established the following procedural order for communicating proposals for change within the institution and to the accrediting agency:

1. At regularly scheduled meetings, the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs informs the Senior Staff of intended changes.
2. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs works with academic deans and other stakeholders to develop a new program request or description of the intended change.
3. The Senior Staff reviews and approves the proposed change.
4. The Local Board of Directors reviews and approves the proposal.
5. The State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia approves the intended change.
6. The Dean of Student Affairs works with the President and other appropriate staff to prepare correspondence materials to be submitted to SACSCOC.
7. The President submits a letter and supporting documentation to the SACSCOC President.

The SACSCOC Liaison has the overall responsibility for ensuring implementation of this policy.

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.”