

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE CHECKLIST¹
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
DUKE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

Substantive change, according to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC or SACS), is “a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.”² Substantive change is a federal concept, based in the regulations of the U.S. Department of Education,³ which regional accreditors are required to enforce.

The University is required to submit any substantive change to SACSCOC for review, and in some cases approval, prior to implementation of such substantive change. As noted by SACSCOC, “if an institution fails to follow the substantive change policy and procedures of the Commission on Colleges, it may lose its Title IV funding or be required by the U.S. Department of Education to reimburse it for money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution’s case may be referred to the Commission for the imposition of a sanction or for removal from membership.”⁴

In order to ensure our compliance, all proposers of new programs, degrees, closings of programs and degrees, and other noteworthy initiatives should review the substantive change policy at the link provided in [Appendix Y](#) of the Faculty Handbook as well as the relevant portion of the [SACS website](#). Subsequently, proposers must complete this form and submit it to both the provost and the associate vice provost for academic affairs by e-mail (sally.kornbluth@duke.edu and molly.goldwasser@duke.edu). A determination will be made as to whether the proposal constitutes a substantive change.

Questions concerning substantive change may be directed to Molly Goldwasser, associate vice provost for academic affairs and SACSCOC liaison, at 919-684-0731 or molly.goldwasser@duke.edu.

¹ Adapted, with appreciation, from the University of Virginia’s “Substantive Change Checklist.”

² See [Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges: Policy Statement](#), p. 1.

³ See [34 C.F.R. § 602.22](#).

⁴ See [Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges: Policy Statement](#), p. 9.

Name of Proposed Program/Action:

Sponsoring School:

School Contact:

Date:

CHECKLIST	YES	NO
Will the proposal initiate coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved?		
Will the proposal expand offerings at the current degree level that represent a significant departure from existing programs (i.e. the proposed program has no closely-related counterpart among previously approved programs in the curriculum)?		
Will the proposed program require a number of new faculty?		
Are more than 25 percent of the courses required for the proposed program new?		
Are more than 50 percent of the courses required for the proposed program new?		
Will the proposal require new library or other learning resources?		
Will the proposal require new equipment or facilities?		
Will the proposal require a new resource base?		
Will the proposal initiate a branch campus?		
Will the proposal initiate a dual degree program with another institution?		
Will the proposal initiate a joint degree program with another institution?		
Will the proposal initiate a direct assessment (competency-based) program?		
Will the proposal initiate a certificate program? <i>(if yes, answer the following)</i>		
Will the proposed certificate program utilize existing courses?		
Will the proposed certificate program be offered at a new off-campus site?		
Does the proposed certificate program represent a significant departure from previously approved programs?		

Will the proposal initiate a program offered at a new off-campus site? *(if yes, answer the following)*

Will a student be able to earn 50 percent or more of program credits at the site?

Will a student be able to earn 25 to 49 percent of program credits at the site?

Will a student be able to earn 24 percent or less of program credits at the site?

Will the proposal initiate a program at an existing off-campus site? *(if yes, answer the following)*

Does the proposed program represent a significant departure from previously approved programs?

Will the proposal initiate or convert a program to be offered via distance education? *(if yes, answer the following)*

Will more than 50 percent of the program be offered via distance education?

Will 25-49 percent of the program be offered via distance education?

Will less than 25 percent of the program be offered via distance education?

Will the proposal initiate a program or courses through contractual agreement or consortium?

Will the proposal relocate an existing off-campus site?

Will the proposal alter the length of an existing program?

Will the proposal initiate a degree completion program?

Will the proposal close an existing program?