

## *Texas A&M University-San Antonio*

### **11.99.99.00.01 Substantive Change**

Approved: March 3, 2014

Revised: April, 2016

Next Scheduled Review: April, 2021

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### **Procedure Statement**

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The purpose of this Procedure is to specify the responsibilities associated with change practices at Texas A&M University-San Antonio (A&M-San Antonio) that may affect the University's accreditation and to specify the process by which such changes would be addressed and communicated to the University's accrediting organization.

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### **Official Procedure**

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#### **1. GENERAL**

- 1.1 Only the President or designated Vice President may approve practices or changes that would be considered substantive changes according to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) standards. This restriction applies to all campuses and units of A&M-San Antonio, including units located at any of its off-campus sites.
- 1.2 Compliance with this procedure is mandatory for all academic and non-academic units of A&M-San Antonio.
- 1.3 This procedure will be posted online and distributed to all units of the University.
- 1.4 The effectiveness of this procedure will be reviewed annually by the University president, vice presidents, and the accreditation liaison. This body will recommend modifications to this procedure as warranted. Only the University president can approve modifications to this procedure.

#### **2. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE**

- 2.1 For substantive changes that require that SACSCOC be notified, but that do not require SACSCOC approval, an approving authority at the University may authorize the change. The University approving authority may be the University president, or the vice president with responsibility for the practice undergoing change.

- 2.2 Substantive changes that require only internal authorization and notification to SACSCOC include modifying programs such that more than 24% but less than 50% of a program is offered at an off-campus site; more than 24% but less than 50% of a degree program is taught by distance methods such as online courses, hybrid courses, or videoconferencing; and various other modifications detailed in “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges.”
- 2.3 Once any substantive change described in this section is approved internally, the University president or the accreditation liaison will promptly notify SACSCOC in writing.
- 2.4 Only after SACSCOC has accepted the notification and indicated that the change will be included in the scope of the institution’s accreditation can the change be implemented.

### 3. APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

- 3.1 For substantive changes that require SACSCOC approval, an approving authority at the University may authorize the initiation of the application process. The University approving authority may be the University president or the vice president with responsibility for the proposed change.
- 3.2 The accreditation liaison will coordinate the application efforts between the unit proposing the substantive change, central administration of the University, and SACSCOC staff. The accreditation liaison will assist the unit in composing the substantive change prospectus, ensuring that it conforms to the requirements stated in “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges.”
- 3.3 The University president, or her/his designee, is the approving authority for the application for substantive change. If the president approves of the application and its accompanying prospectus (s)he may choose to submit the application for approval of substantive change to SACSCOC.
- 3.4 Only after SACSCOC has approved the application for substantive change can the change be implemented.

### 4. MONITORING COMPLIANCE

- 4.1 The accreditation liaison will report at least annually to the University president on the status of University compliance with this procedure.
- 4.2 The University president and the accreditation liaison will continually monitor compliance with SACSCOC policies, core requirements, comprehensive standards, and related federal requirements (see “The Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement” available online at: <http://www.sacscoc.org/principles.asp>).

- 4.3 Practices suspected to be out of compliance with this procedure or with policies, core requirements, comprehensive standards, or federal requirements set by SACSCOC will be referred to the appropriate vice president for timely resolution.
- 4.4 Questions regarding substantive change should be directed to the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, who serves as the accreditation liaison for A&M-San Antonio. (210) 784-1204

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## Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

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Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter Q, Rule 4.274. (With regard to off-campus programs, “Institutions shall comply with the standards and criteria of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.”)

Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter P, Rule 4.259. (With regard to distance education, “An Institutional Plan for Distance Education shall conform to Board guidelines and criteria of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in effect at the time of the Report’s approval.”)

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## Definitions

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**SACSCOC** - Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges, the regional accrediting association for the southeastern US, including colleges and universities in Texas.

**Substantive Change** - Significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution (see “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges” available online at <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>).

Under federal regulations, substantive change includes, but is not limited to:

- 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 reaffirmed by SACSCOC
- The addition of courses or programs at a degree or credential level above 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

**Accreditation Liaison** - Administrator or senior faculty member designated by the University president having responsibilities to ensure that compliance with SACSCOC policies is incorporated into institutional planning, to notify SACSCOC of substantive changes within the University to familiarize the University community with SACSCOC policies, and to serve as the contact person for SACSCOC staff.

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**Contact Office**

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Academic Affairs, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Accreditation Liaison  
(210) 784-1204

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**Office of Responsibility**

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Office of the President (210) 784-1600

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