ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

TITLE: Substantive Change Procedures (Accreditation)

PROCEDURE: AP - 3.91

REFERENCES:
6Hx11-3.91, Accreditation
Florida Statutes: 1001.64
Florida Administrative Code: 6A-14.063

RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATOR:
Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness

LAST REVISION: September 1, 2010

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Purpose:
In keeping with Board Policy 6Hx11-3.91 Accreditation, the following Substantive Change Administrative Procedure is issued as a guideline to maintain compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.12.1 Substantive Change, of the Principles of Accreditation of the Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Definition:
Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes but is not limited to the following:

- 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 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 or altering significantly the length of a program**

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- 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
- A detailed chart for Reporting the Various Types of Substantive Change includes the types, procedures to be used, respective approval/notification requirements and reporting timelines follows.

*A significant departure in program is one in which the proposed new program has no closely related counterpart among the previously approved programs in the curriculum. To determine if a new program is a “significant departure,” it is helpful to ask if the new program requires

- Numbers of new faculty?
- Many new courses?
- New library or other learning resources?
- New equipment or facilities?
- A new resource base?

**Significant changes in program length are those with noticeable impact on the program’s completion time (e.g., increasing a baccalaureate degree from 124 hours to 150 hours).

Responsibility:
All substantive changes that have a college-wide impact will require the approval of the IRSC District Board of Trustees. The Accreditation Liaison initiates the notification process and coordinates all activities related to seeking Board and SACS approval of substantive changes.

The College President will notify the Commission President of institutional substantive changes in accordance with the Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges Policy Statement: [http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Substantive%20change%20policy.pdf](http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Substantive%20change%20policy.pdf)

Administrators and Staff will consult with the Accreditation Liaison when changes are considered to determine a) whether the desired change qualifies as a substantive change b) the required timeline for notification and implementation.

The College Accreditation Liaison - the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness - is charged with ensuring institutional compliance with all accreditation requirements and will recognize and report to the President in a timely fashion all substantive changes, consulting with the institution’s Commission on Colleges SACS staff member as needed.

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College Procedures:
The following procedures have been adopted in adherence to the SACS substantive change policies.

- **College Curriculum Committee**
  This Curriculum Committee considers all recommended changes to the College curriculum or College programs and continually evaluates all programs and courses of the College. Committee actions are submitted to the President. The policies and required documentation for this Committee are strictly adhered to and include verbiage directing the requester to the Accreditation Liaison for review of the requested change. The Curriculum Committee then forwards the program change request to the Accreditation Liaison to sign off approving the requested program change before the change is permitted to move forward.

- **President’s Cabinet**
  The Accreditation Liaison sits on the President’s Cabinet along with the other six College Vice Presidents. A SACS update is presented each quarter during the weekly President’s Cabinet Meeting and includes discussion of the substantive change procedures and guidelines. Vice Presidents regularly review what warrants a substantive change working with their staff to identify potential changes at least seven months prior to the intended implementation date. The President’s Cabinet will review and approve requested institutional substantive changes beyond the program and course level. The Accreditation Liaison initiates the notification process and coordinates all activities related to seeking SACS approval of substantive changes.

- **President’s Staff Meeting**
  All College Administrators are required to attend the President’s monthly Staff Meeting. Twice per year during that meeting the Accreditation Liaison present the Substantive Change guidelines to review in detail through discussion and slides the reporting, timeline and approval requirements. This reminder alerts all Administrators to the importance of contacting the Accreditation Liaison regarding any question related to changes in programs, courses, or sites which may warrant the initiation of substantive change procedures.

- **Substantive Change Activities**
  The Accreditation Liaison will coordinate all substantive change activities including letters of notification from the President, development of Prospectus Reports, Modified Prospectus Reports, Applications, and if needed consultation with assigned SACS staff member.

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