

JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

Manual of Policies and Procedures

POLICY NUMBER: II:10

DATE: June 2003

REVISION/REVIEW DATE: Sept 2008, Dec 2011, Dec 2012

SUBJECT: Substantive Change

APPROVED: William A. Meehan, President

PURPOSE

To provide faculty and administrators with instructions on academic substantive change requirements, including preparation of proposals for external approval of curriculum changes, new degree programs or majors, or change of level for the university. In addition to academic substantive changes, procedures to address changes that are administrative in nature are also included herein.

POLICY

Proposals involving distance programs, new degree programs/majors or change of level originate within the academic department or college proposing the change. Internal review and approvals are processed through the University Curriculum Committee (undergraduate changes/programs) or the Graduate Council (graduate changes/programs). Changes that are non-academic in nature are processed through the appropriate internal channels and once approved by the JSU Board of Trustees are submitted to appropriate external agencies for their review and approval prior to being implemented.

PROCEDURE

I. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges

A. What is a substantive change and how should it be handled?

Substantive change is defined by SACS-COC as “a significant modification or expansion in the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” The following outlines what does and does not constitute a substantive change:

- If less than 25% of the coursework needed to complete a degree, certificate, or diploma are offered online, we do not need to report this to the Commission.
- If from 25% to 49% of the coursework required for a program is offered on-line, we must notify the Commission in advance of the implementation of the change.
- If changes are larger scale, such as adding significantly different programs to the academic curriculum or offering a majority of the coursework needed to complete a

degree, certificate or diploma on-line, we must notify the Commission at least 6 months in advance and submit a [prospectus](#) at least 3 months prior to the anticipated implementation date.

- If we are offering coursework at a more advanced level than that for which we are currently approved, we must notify the Commission at least 12 months in advance, and submit an [application](#) for level change at least 9 months before the expected start of the proposed programs.

Note: Prospectuses and applications for level change should include a faculty roster (see [Faculty Roster Form](#) and [Faculty Roster Instructions](#)) presenting the qualifications of each faculty member in the program to teach the courses they are assigned.

Certain types of substantive changes, for example adding branch campuses, level changes, mergers/consolidations, and changes in governance require a visit by a substantive change committee to determine continued compliance with the Commission's [Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#). When a committee visit has been authorized by the President of the Commission, the institution will be asked to provide documentation of the impact of the change on selected requirements in the *Principles of Accreditation*.

Notification constitutes a letter from the institution's chief executive officer to the President of the Commission summarizing the proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the street address if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site. The policy and procedures for reporting and review of institutional substantive change are outlined below.

Definitions for Course Identification Type:

JSU identifies courses using the following four classifications:

1. Traditional = all classes meet in the class room with no use of distance technology.
2. Hybrid = a mixture of the class room and distance technology with < 50% being distance
3. DE = at least 50% of the class is taught using distance technology
4. WWW = 100% on-line; no in-class meetings required

B. SACS Procedures for Reporting Substantive Change

(Note: These procedures address SAC-COC requirements; it is also understood that ACHE requirements for approval/reporting will be followed as well.)

There are three procedures for addressing the different types of substantive changes.

1. Procedure One for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring *Notification and Approval Prior to Implementation*

2. Procedure Two for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring *Only Notification Prior to Implementation*
3. Procedure Three for the Review and Approval of *Consolidations/Mergers*

For the various types of substantive changes (academic and non-academic), the following table indicates whether notification and/or SACS-COC approval is required. The table also indicates the associated SACS-COC notification/approval deadlines and the type of documentation required. See <http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp> for required documentation and forms.

Types of Change	Procedure	Prior Approval Required	Prior Notification Required	Time Frame for Contacting COC
Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved	1	Yes	Yes	12 months
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>)	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Initiating programs at a lower degree level	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Initiating a branch campus	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Initiating Off-campus Sites...				
Student can obtain 50% or more credits toward program	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Student can obtain 25-49%	2	No	Yes	Prior to implementation
Student can obtain 24% or less	NA	NA	NA	NA
Adding significantly different programs at an approved site (<i>only if programs are currently approved</i>)	2	No	Yes	Prior to implementation
Initiating distance learning... Offering 50% or more of program (<i>Subsequent programs do not need reporting unless they are significant departures from initially approved program(s).</i>)	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Offering 25-49%	2	No	Yes	Prior to implementation
Offering 24% or less	NA	NA	NA	NA
Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	2	No	Yes	Prior to implementation
Initiating a merger/consolidation	3	Yes	Yes	6 months

Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Relocating a campus	2	No	Yes	Prior to implementation
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Altering significantly the length of a program	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Initiating degree completion programs	1	Yes	Yes	6 months
Closing an institution/program; initiating teach-out agreements (<i>see Commission policy</i>)	1	Yes	Yes	6 months

C. Steps in the Process for Academic Substantive Change

1. A department/program/college desires to make a change in the way programs are currently being offered. This change may involve an already existing program or a proposed new program. The change must be evaluated based on the information provided in the table above.
2. The curriculum review process in place within the department/college is followed and the change is either approved or disapproved at that level.
3. If the change is approved at the college level, the Curriculum Revision Request Form will be completed and sent to the chair of either the JSU Curriculum Committee (for undergraduate programs) or the Graduate Council (for graduate programs).
4. For undergraduate changes the JSU Curriculum Committee chair will review the request and determine if additional information is required. If so, he/she will inform the requesting college; if not, he/she will approve the change and send to the Provost/VPASA/SACS Liaison who will evaluate the change and determine if it rises to the level of a substantive change based on SACS-COC definition of "What is a Substantive Change?"
5. For graduate change requests, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will present the request for change to the Graduate Council which will either approve or deny the proposed change.
6. If requested changes (either undergraduate or graduate) are approved by the Provost/VPASA/SACS Liaison and are deemed to be substantive, the department/program/college will complete the necessary documentation consistent with the type of change involved (see above table).
7. The Provost/VPASA/SACS Liaison will submit requests to the President who will submit the proposed change to the JSU Board of Trustees for approval.
8. Once approved by the JSU Board of Trustees, the President will ensure that the proper notification/application/prospectus is submitted to Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) and, once approved by ACHE, submitted to SACS-COC ensuring that the proper timeline is followed based on the information provided in the table above.

D. Steps in the Process for Administrative Substantive Changes

Whereas the number and frequency of occurrence of non-academic substantive changes is expected to be few, when such a change is considered JSU will follow the procedures outlined in the previous table as well as its own internal process based on the nature of the suggested change. Once approved by the JSU Board of Trustees, the President of the institution will notify the President of the Commission summarizing the proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the street address if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site. When changes require prior approval, the President of the institution or his representative will seek input from the COC staff member assigned to JSU in order to determine the procedure to follow.

CURRICULUM/SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE REQUEST FORM

This form must be prepared for every proposed curriculum/program change to include moving an already existing program to distance technology.

Please check one: Undergraduate Graduate

Program/Department: _____

College: _____

Initiator: _____

Print Name

Signature

Date: _____

Does the change proposed on this form include any of the following situations? If so check the appropriate box and provide a detailed explanation in the table below. Provide additional information as required by the attached JSU Substantive Change Policy.

Type of Change	Explanation
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved	
<input type="checkbox"/> Expanding at current degree level (significant departure from current programs)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiating a branch campus	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiating off-campus sites: Student can obtain 50% or more credits Student can obtain 25 -49% of credit Student can obtain 24% or less	
<input type="checkbox"/> Adding significantly different programs at an approved site (only if programs are currently approved)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiating distance learning: Student can obtain 50% or more credits Student can obtain 25 -49% of credit Student can obtain 24% or less	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	
<input type="checkbox"/> Closing an institution/program; initiating teach-out agreement	

If the proposed change does not include one of the above, check the appropriate box in the following table and provide the appropriate information following the table.

Type of Change
<input type="checkbox"/> New Course
<input type="checkbox"/> Course Deletion
<input type="checkbox"/> Course Revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Add New Program
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Delete Existing Program

1. Exact old catalog description

2. Exact new catalog description (if 1a or 1b) including, if applicable, assigned new number.

3. Justification for request, to include a discussion of credit hour equivalency, if applicable

4. How will this change impact other programs at JSU?

5. Expected Date of Implementation _____

Approval/Required Signatures

Dept. Head _____

College Curriculum Chair _____

Dean _____

Chair, University Curriculum Committee or

Graduate Dean: _____

To be completed by the SACS Liaison

Is this a Substantive Change? Yes () No ()

If this is a new course or a new mode of delivery for this course, does it satisfy JSU's credit hour determination policy? Yes () No ()

Approved: Yes () No ()

Provost/VPASA (SACS Liaison) Signature _____

Date: _____

Check those that apply

- Copy to Distance Education
- Copy to Houston Cole Library
- Copy to Registrar
- Copy to OIRA
- Copy to Dean
- for graduate programs, copy to the Dean of Graduate Studies
- Reported to SACS-COC on Date: _____
- Reported to ACHE on Date: _____