

## ***ECU Substantive Change Checklist***

Substantive change, according to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), is “a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.”<sup>1</sup> Substantive change is a federal concept, based in the regulations of the U.S. Department of Education,<sup>2</sup> which institutional accreditors are required to enforce.

East Carolina University is required to submit notification of any substantive change to SACSCOC for review, and in some cases, to receive approval prior to the initiation of the change. As stated in the SACSCOC Policy on Substantive Change, “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.”<sup>3</sup>

**What we’re looking for:** A significant departure. SACSCOC defines “significant departure” as a “program that is not closely related to previously approved programs at the institution or site or for the mode of delivery in question.” This includes hybrid or off-site programs, which may constitute a substantive change. SACSCOC also requires notification, and in some cases approval, to deliver the majority of an existing program’s content online.

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

To ensure compliance, faculty planners should complete the checklist on the following pages in the early stages of any proposal. Complete the preliminary identification information below, check the program action(s) requested, and complete the appropriate Section for the action you’re taking.

**Name of Program:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sponsoring Department and College:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Developer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> See [Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> See [34 C.F.R. § 602.22](#).

<sup>3</sup> See [Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#), p. 4.

### **Program Action Requested:**

- New Degree or Certificate Program – Complete Section I only
- New or Additional Off-Site Delivery (Location) of an Existing Degree or Certificate Program – Complete Section II only
- New or Additional Distance Education (Online) Delivery of an Existing Degree or Certificate Program – Complete Section II only
- Discontinued Degree or Certificate Program – Complete Section III only
- Initiate a Program or Courses through Contractual Agreement or Consortium – Complete Section IV only

Upon completion of the section(s) checked above, attach the form to the accompanying Curriculog proposal form. A determination will be made as to whether the proposal constitutes a substantive change.

Questions concerning substantive change may be directed to Academic Planning and Accreditation in IPAR.

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### **SECTION I – NEW DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

1. Will the proposal expand offerings at the current program level that represent a significant departure from existing programs? SACSCOC defines “significant departure” as a “program that is not closely related to previously approved programs at the institution or site or for the mode of delivery in question.”

To determine whether a new program is a “significant departure,” SACSCOC suggests consideration of the following questions:

- a. What previously approved programs does the institution offer that are closely related to the new program and how are they related? If none, state “N/A.” For determining significant departure, the presence of closely-related programs provides evidence that the proposed program is within the scope of ECU’s accreditation and therefore not a substantive change.

Examples of closely-related programs: Other degree or certificate programs in the department or at the university with similar titles or coursework, other programs with similar CIP codes at the four- or six-digit level, higher or lower level programs (e.g. BA/BS, MS, PhD; 4C, PB, PM, or PD certificate) in the same or a closely-related discipline, and programs that would be considered feeders.

Please include both CIP codes and titles as listed on the Academic Program Inventory (API). (Add lines as needed.)

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- b. Will significant additional equipment or facilities be needed?  Yes  No
  - c. Will significant additional financial resources be needed?  Yes  No
  - d. Will a significant number of new faculty members be required?  Yes  No
  - e. Will significant additional library/learning resources be needed?  Yes  No
  - f. Are 25 percent or more of the courses required for the proposed program new?  Yes  No
2. Will the proposal initiate a dual degree or certificate program with another institution? (Degrees/certificates awarded from both institutions)  Yes  No
3. Will the proposal initiate a joint degree or certificate program with another institution? (One degree/certificate issued with names of both institutions)  Yes  No
4. Will the proposal initiate a program offered via distance/online education?  Yes  No  
(Students and instructors are not in the same place)

If yes, choose the best answer from "a-c":

- a. Will more than 50 percent of the program be offered via distance education; e.g. 15+ hours of a 30-hour program?  Yes  No
- b. Will 25 to 49 percent of the program be offered via distance education; e.g. 7.5-14.9 hours of a 30-hour program?  Yes  No
- c. Will less than 25 percent of the program be offered via distance education; e.g. <7.5 hours of a 30-hour program?  Yes  No

## SECTION II – NEW OR ADDITIONAL OFF-SITE DELIVERY (LOCATION) OF AN EXISTING DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

5. Will the proposal initiate a program offered via distance/online education?  Yes  No  
(Students and instructors are not in the same place)

If yes, choose the best answer from "a-c":

- a. Will more than 50 percent of the program be offered via distance education; e.g. 15+ hours of a 30-hour program?  Yes  No

- b. Will 25 to 49 percent of the program be offered via distance education; e.g. 7.5-14.9 hours of a 30-hour program?  Yes  No
  - c. Will less than 25 percent of the program be offered via distance education; e.g. <7.5 hours of a 30-hour program?  Yes  No
6. Will the proposal initiate a program at a new or existing off-campus site?  Yes  No  
(an instructional site or branch campus that is located physically apart from the main [east or west] campus of ECU)

If yes, choose the best answer from "a-c":

- a. Will a student be able to earn 50 percent or more of program credits at the site; e.g. 60+ hours of a 120-hour program?  Yes  No
  - b. Will a student be able to earn 25 to 49 percent or more of program credits at the site; e.g. 30-59.9 hours of a 120-hour program?  Yes  No
  - c. Will a student be able to earn less than 25 percent of program credits at the site; e.g. <30 hours of a 120-hour program?  Yes  No
- d. Will the proposal initiate a new off-campus site?  Yes  No

If yes, facility name and physical address of new off-campus site

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- e. Will the proposal relocate the physical address of an existing off-campus site; for example, change buildings or streets within the same campus?  Yes  No

Facility name and physical address of existing site

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Facility name and physical address of relocated site

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7. Will the proposal significantly alter the length (+/- 25% or more) of an existing program?  Yes  No

8. Will the proposal initiate a degree completion program?  Yes  No  
 (Program in which students can transfer in credit from courses taken previously and may receive credit for experiential learning; programs in which all coursework cannot be obtained from ECU)

**SECTION III – DISCONTINUATION OF A DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

9. Will the proposal discontinue a degree or certificate program, a delivery mode, or instructional site?  Yes  No

*(This action involves critical timing and may require the submission of a teach out plan. Please contact Academic Planning and Accreditation immediately.)*

**If yes:**

10. Which of the following best describes the discontinuation:
- Discontinue permanently (program components will not become a significant or distinct component of another program; program is discontinued in full in the academic program inventory, including any approved off-campus sites and alternate means of delivery)
  - Discontinue delivery (eliminate one or more delivery types and keep the program active)
    - Discontinue on-campus delivery of program
    - Discontinue online delivery of program
    - Discontinue site-based delivery of program
      - Instructor present (off-campus delivery)
      - Instructor not present (site-based DE)
  - Discontinue/consolidate (programs will become a significant or distinct component of another program; e.g. concentration)
    - An existing program will absorb the discontinuing program  
Program title \_\_\_\_\_
    - A new program will be developed and will absorb the discontinuing program  
Program title \_\_\_\_\_

11. If discontinuing site-based delivery only (and the program itself will continue to be offered), what is the approved site name and physical address to be discontinued?  
 If multiple sites, list all that will be discontinued with this action.

Site #1:  
 Facility Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Physical Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_

Site #2:  
 Facility Name \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address \_\_\_\_\_  
County \_\_\_\_\_

Site #3:  
Facility Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Physical Address \_\_\_\_\_  
County \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION IV – INITIATE A PROGRAM OR COURSES THROUGH CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT OR CONSORTIUM

12. Will the proposal initiate a program or courses through contractual agreement or consortium as defined in the SACSCOC substantive change policy?  Yes  No  
(contractual agreement – one in which ECU would enter into agreement for receipt of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs [i.e. clinical training internships, etc.] delivered by another institution or service provider)  
(consortium – relationship in which two or more institutions share in the responsibility of developing and delivering courses and programs that meet mutually agreed upon standards of academic quality)
- If yes, is the other institution located in the United States?  Yes  No  
If yes, which accrediting body accredits the Institution? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Will the other institution provide 25% or more of the program?  Yes  No
- Will the coursework received be accepted as transfer credit?  Yes  No
- Will the coursework received be transcribed as if offered by ECU?  Yes  No