



# North Florida College Substantive Change Procedure

(procedures to implement BOT policies 1.10 and 2.59)

## Accrediting Agencies

North Florida College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award Associate's and Bachelor's degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia, 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of North Florida College. The official SACSCOC website is [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org).

The Emergency Medical Services – Paramedic program was granted initial accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs on September 15, 2017. This accreditation is valid until September 30, 2022.

The Associate in Science Degree-Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program and the Associate in Science Degree: Registered Nursing – RN Program are candidates for accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing. Contact info: Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, ACEN; 3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850, Atlanta, Georgia 30326; Phone: (404) 975-5000; Fax: (404) 975-5020; Email: [info@acenursing.org](mailto:info@acenursing.org); Web: [www.acenursing.org](http://www.acenursing.org).

## Substantive Change Procedure

North Florida College's Substantive Change Procedure has been created to ensure all substantive changes are reported correctly and timely to its accrediting bodies. These procedures are designed to serve as a guide to person(s) modifying/adding courses, programs, degrees, at North Florida College.

A substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Typically substantive changes include:

- 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 of study at a degree or credential level different from 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% of an educational program.
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution

- Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution
- Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution’s programs

For specific SACSCOC procedures to address substantive change, see the *Substantive Change Policies and Procedures* at <https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/substantive-changes/>

For substantive changes to nationally accredited programs such as the BSN, ASRN, and Paramedic programs, each accrediting agency (ACEN, CAAHEP) may have their own standards and procedures in addition to those of the regional accrediting agency, SACSCOC. Please refer to those policies, linked below:

**Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)**

<https://resources.acenursing.org/space/AP/1824260104/Policies> (Policy #14)

**Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)**

**Committee on Accreditation for the EMS Professions (COAEMSP)**

“The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs ([CAAHEP](https://caahep.org/)) is a programmatic post-secondary accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation ([CHEA](https://chea.org/)). CAAHEP is the only nationally recognized accreditor for EMS education, and CoAEMSP is the only organization recognized by CAAHEP to provide accreditation services for Paramedic and, beginning in 2025, AEMT education programs.”

<https://coaemsp.org/caahep-standards-and-guidelines> (CAAHEP Standards and Guidelines 2023, page 13)

Some questions to consider as you analyze whether changes constitute a significant departure from what NFCC currently offers include the following:

1. What other related programs are already in place?
2. Does the new program require
  - additional faculty;
  - new courses;
  - additional library or other learning resources;
  - new equipment or facilities;
  - a different resource base?

**Substantive Change Actions**

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS ARE SPECIFIC TO SACSCOC REQUIREMENT, PLEASE REFER TO SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ACEN AND CAAHEP FOR THE BSN, RN, AND PARAMEDIC PROGRAMS.

**NO ACTION**

Some changes do not need to be reported to SACSCOC. These include the following:

- Initiating a certificate program at an employer’s request and on short notice using existing approved courses and location.
- Initiating other certificate programs using existing approved courses and location.

- Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school) that amount to 24% or less of the coursework needed to complete a degree, certificate or diploma.
- Initiating distance learning that amount to 24% or less of the coursework needed to complete a degree, certificate, or diploma.
- Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites, adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site.
- Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites, adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs at the site, BUT NOT at the institution.
- Initiating distance learning by offering 24% or less of any program for the first time

## NOTIFICATION

Other changes simply require that SACSCOC be notified in advance of the implementation of the change. The letter of notification should a completed Substantive Change Cover Sheet, description of the planned change, intended implementation date, intended date of SACSCOC review.

## PROSPECTUS AND PRIOR APPROVAL

Larger scale changes require written notification at least 6 months (in some cases, 12 months) in advance **and** approval of a [prospectus](#), which must be submitted prior to the SACSCOC deadline.

## SITE VISITS

Certain types of substantive changes, such as change in governance, level change, mergers, change in ownership or control, and addition of off-campus instructional sites require a site to determine continued compliance with the [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.”

## SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE EXAMPLES

The examples in the chart are the substantive changes most likely to be of consideration for North Florida College and are taken directly from the SACSCOC policies. Information on additional types of changes and required timelines can be found on the [SACSCOC website](#) or by contacting the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison of the College. For specific requirements related to the BSN, RN, and Paramedic programs, see also [ACEN](#) and [CAAHEP](#) substantive change policies.

Type of Change	Requires Notification	Requires Prior Approval	Requires Visit
INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES			
Change Measure Progress to Completion		Yes	
Distance Ed-Institutional-level Approval		Yes	
Governance Change	Yes	Yes	Yes
Institutional Contingency Teach-out		Yes	
Level Change		Yes	Yes
Merger / Consolidation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mission Change		Yes	
Ownership, Means of Control, or Legal Status Change	Yes	Yes	Yes
PROGRAM CHANGES			

Clock-Credit Hour Conversion		Yes	
Method of Delivery	Yes		
New Program (50-100% new content)		Yes	
New Program (25-49% new content)	Yes		
Program Closure		Yes	
Program Designed for Prior Learning	Yes		
Program Length Change		Yes	
Program Re-open	Yes		
<b>OFF-CAMPUS INSTRUCTIONAL SITE (OCIS)</b>			
OCIS (25-9% instruction delivered at site)	Yes		
OCIS (50% or more instruction delivered at site)		Yes	Contingent
OCIS Relocation - Non-Branch	Yes		
OCIS Relocation - Branch		Yes	
OCIS Name or Address Change	Yes		
OCIS Closure		Yes	
OCIS Re-open	Yes		

## Timelines

In order to comply with SACSCOC policy on substantive change, North Florida College recognizes the timeline necessary in the reporting process.

Substantive changes requiring approval by SACSCOC full Board of Trustees

March 15 for review in June

September 1 for review in December

Substantive changes requiring approval of SACSCOC Executive Council

January 1 for changes implemented July 1 – December 31 in same year

July 1 for changes implemented January 1 – June 30 of subsequent year

Offices contemplating significant changes for North Florida College should immediately contact the Accreditation Liaison to determine if the change fits the definition of a substantive change as required by SACSCOC. The Accreditation Liaison will work with SACSCOC representatives to ensure that the correct procedures are followed.

All substantive change activity will be documented in North Florida College's Accreditation Liaison office.

## Accreditation Liaison

According to SACSCOC policies, "it is expected that the ... designated representative of an institution will notify the Commission President of substantive changes at that institution. Every institution has an [Accreditation Liaison](#) whose charge is to ensure compliance with accreditation requirements. The Accreditation Liaison should take the time to become familiar with the Commissions policies and procedures, ensure that

substantive changes are recognized and reported in a timely fashion, and consult with the institution's COC staff member about any questions."

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## **SACSCOC Representatives**

Commission on Colleges  
Dr. Belle Wheelan, President  
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Commission on Colleges  
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## **REFERENCES**

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing. (6 March 2024). *ACEN Policies*. Web.  
<https://resources.acenursing.org/space/AP/1824260104/Policies>

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs. (2023). *CAAHEP Standards & Guidelines 2023*. Web. <https://coaemsp.org/caahep-standards-and-guidelines>

Sightler, Ph. D. Kevin. "Recognizing and Responding to Substantive Change." SACSCOC Substantive Change Workshop. Tallahassee College, Tallahassee, FL. 27 March 2015. Presenter.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. (March 2023). *Substantive Change Policies and Procedures*. Web. <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/SubstantiveChange.pdf>

## **DOCUMENT HISTORY**

*Original procedure for 2.59 was established in July 2010 along with approval of BOT Policy 2.59*

*Original procedure for 1.10 was established in September 2012 along with approval of BOT Policy 1.10*

*Procedures for 1.10 and 2.59 combined and updated in November 2015*

*Updated June 2018 to include ACEN and other accrediting agencies*

*Updated May 2024 to reflect college's name change and include most recent SACSCOC documentation available*