

# BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

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## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

AREA: Academic Affairs  
NUMBER: Policy 2.36  
SUBJECT: Substantive Change

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of Blue Mountain College. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the College adheres to Comprehensive Standard 3.12.1, Substantive Change of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and Policy Statement, *Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges*.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Comprehensive Standard 3.12.1, Substantive Change, requires the College to notify the Commission of changes in **accordance with the Commission's substantive change policy** and, when required, to seek approval prior to the initiation of changes. Notification of a substantive change constitutes a letter from the President of the College to the President of the Commission on Colleges summarizing the proposed change, and providing the intended implementation date. The types of substantive change, the policy, and the procedures for appropriately addressing the change **are found in the Commission's document, *Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges***.

### A. Assigned Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the College to follow the substantive change procedures as established by SACSCOC and to inform SACSCOC of such changes in accordance with those procedures. SACSCOC should be contacted for consultation if the College President, or designee, is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature.

It is the responsibility of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and SACSCOC liaison to ensure that the College remains in compliance with **the Commission's substantive change policy** and procedures.

### B. Types of Substantive Changes

SACSCOC has identified different types of substantive changes, their specific approval/notification requirements, and their reporting time lines. While all types of substantive changes are important, many do not occur on a frequent basis.

The following types of substantive changes may occur frequently and require careful monitoring to ensure that the College remains in compliance:

1. Initiating a certificate program
2. Altering significantly the length of a program
3. Initiating distance learning

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4. Initiating degree completion programs
5. Expanding at current degree level (significant departure either in content or method of delivery from current programs)
6. Closing a program and initiating teach-out agreements
7. Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement such as a dual degree program or a joint degree program with another institution (see Policy 2.35: Collaborative Academic Arrangements)
8. Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium
9. Adding significantly different programs at an approved site (only if programs are currently approved)
10. Initiating an off-campus site offering an educational program at which a student:
  - a. can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward the program;
  - b. can obtain 25-49 percent or more credits toward the program; and/or
  - c. can obtain 24 percent or less credits toward the program.

The following substantive changes occur less frequently and are more likely to be monitored and reported.

11. Initiating a branch campus
12. Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved
13. Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
14. Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
15. Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution
16. Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution conducts a teach-out program for a closed institution.
17. Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs
18. Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution
19. Relocating a main or branch campus
20. Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same area)
21. Changing from clock hours to credit hours

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22. Acquiring any program or site from another institution.
23. Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing.

## C. Methods of Assuring Compliance

Any proposed program change that could involve one or more of the above items will be **monitored by the VPAA since program and course proposals are reviewed by the Academic Dean's Council or Graduate Council.** [Cross Reference with Policy 2.31: Curriculum and Program Approval and Program Closure.] If the change is substantive, the VPAA will identify the SACSCOC procedures to be followed prior to implementation of the change and ensure that the steps, including the development of a prospectus, are followed to gain SACSCOC approval.

SOURCE: Board of Trustees: February 24, 2012  
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