

Institutional and Program Changes Requiring Substantive Change Reporting

As required by [UCF Policy 4-505.2](#), the Academic Program Quality (APQ) unit maintains a current list of all actions that constitute a substantive change to the institution's accredited status as defined in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) [Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#). The lists that follow identify institution, program, and instructional location changes that require notification to or approval by the Commission prior to implementation. The SACSCOC requirements apply equally to all independently awarded for-credit credentials (i.e., degree and graduate certificate programs).

UCF Policy 4-505.2 specifies that any person initiating an action as referenced below or the unit head with oversight for the associated activity must notify the UCF SACSCOC liaison or designee as soon as the qualifying change is considered. **Typically, this would occur nine to twelve months in advance of the possible change.** The timeframe for reporting to the Commission is noted for each item below along with additional requirements. However, the timeframe noted below as well as the associated reporting requirements assume the institution is not on substantive change restriction. Should the institution be placed on substantive change restriction, UCF may not be eligible to initiate certain changes or may be subject to different timeframes and reporting requirements than those outlined below. [Fees and other associated costs](#) (e.g., site visit expenses) are normally paid by the initiating unit.

This document is provided as a limited tool to assist the UCF community to quickly identify actions that may necessitate substantive change reporting. More extensive details, definitions, and restrictions are described in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. The Commission also reserves the right to judge other actions to meet the definition of substantive change. All questions about whether a change is substantive and associated reporting requirements should be directed to the UCF SACSCOC liaison or designee in the Academic Program Quality unit.

DEFINITION OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

A significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Substantive change includes high-impact, high-risk changes and changes that can impact the quality of educational programs and services, as defined by federal regulations and SACSCOC policy.

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS REQUIRING APPROVAL PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION

Deadlines vary based upon whether the change can be reviewed by the Executive Council of the Board of Trustees that meets year-round or if the change must be reviewed by the full Board of Trustees that meets biannually.

Executive Council (meets year-round)

January 1 for changes to be implemented July 1 through December 31 of the same calendar year or
July 1 for changes to be implemented January 1 through June 30 of the subsequent calendar year

Full Board of Trustees (meets biannually)

March 15 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in June of the same calendar year
September 1 for review at the Board's biannual meeting in December of the same calendar year



INSTITUTION-LEVEL CHANGES

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
Change in the institution’s selected measure of student progress to completion on file with SACSCOC, including changes from or to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semester, trimester, or quarter academic calendars; • Time-based (i.e., calendar-based) or non-time based (i.e., competency-based) measures; and • Clock hour-based or credit hour-based measures 	No	Yes ¹	No	Jan. 1 or July 1	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes Curriculum review processes
Competency-based education (CBE) by course/credit-based approach in which ≥50% of the program may be earned through the course/credit-based approach to CBE (institution’s first program using course/credit-based approach; does not cover direct assessment CBE)	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ
Distance education in which ≥50% of instruction occurs when students and instructors are not in the same location; includes synchronous (live or real-time) and asynchronous (not live or real-time) instruction (institution’s first program)	No	Yes ¹	Yes	N/A – UCF is already approved (but see program-level modality changes)	N/A



Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
Governance Change – can include significantly altering governing board bylaws, the board’s scope of authority or responsibility, the number of board members, or how board members are selected (also see SACSCOC policy on Mergers/Consolidations, Acquisitions, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status)	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	March 15 or Sept. 1; also notification six months prior to the BOT meeting at which it will be reviewed	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes
Institution Closure	No	Yes ¹	No	Jan. 1 or July 1	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes
Institutional Relocation	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes
Institution, Program, or Location Acquisition from another institution or entity, including a campus, off-campus instructional site(s) or additional locations, or any portion of a campus or instructional site (also see SACSCOC policy on Mergers/Consolidations, Acquisitions, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status)	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	March 15 or Sept. 1; also notification six months prior to the BOT meeting at which it will be reviewed	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes



Academic Program Quality

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
Institutional Contingency Teach-out Plan required if qualifying actions occur as defined in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures (e.g., reimbursement or sanction by USDE or SACSCOC, revocation of state authorization)	No	Yes ¹	No	Jan. 1 or July 1	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes Annual report of institutional Title IV certification and reimbursement status provided to APQ by the Director of Student Financial Aid Programs
Level Change by initiating coursework or a program – including a certificate, diploma, degree, or other generally recognized credit-bearing program – at a different level than previously approved or authorized by SACSCOC	No	Yes ²	Yes	N/A – UCF is accredited by SACSCOC to award degrees at the associate, baccalaureate, master’s, specialist, and doctoral levels	N/A
Merger or Consolidation of a SACSCOC accredited institution with one or more other institutions or entities (also see SACSCOC policy on Mergers/Consolidations, Acquisitions, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status)	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	March 15 or Sept. 1 for BOT approval review; also notification six months prior to the BOT meeting at	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes



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				which it will be reviewed	
Mission Change that fundamentally alters the character of an institution and its portfolio of academic programs or other mission-driven activities (not an editorial change or re-wording)	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes
Ownership, Means of Control, or Legal Status Change (also see SACSCOC policy on Mergers/Consolidations, Acquisitions, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status)	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	March 15 or Sept. 1 for BOT approval review; also notification six months prior to the BOT meeting at which it will be reviewed	UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes

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PROGRAM-LEVEL CHANGES

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
Changing a program's progress to completion measure from credit hours to clock hours (or clock hours to credit hours)	No	Yes ¹	No	Jan. 1 or July 1	Curriculum review processes
Program in which ≥50% may be earned through the direct assessment approach to competency-based education (each program) (See also SACSCOC policy on Direct Assessment Competency-based Educational Programs)	No	Yes ²	Yes	March 15 or Sept. 1 for BOT approval review	Curriculum review processes
Program in which 25-49% may be earned through the direct assessment approach to competency-based education (each program)	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Curriculum review processes
Cooperative academic arrangement with a Title IV entity (or entities) to deliver program content with credit being recorded on UCF's transcript as its own (e.g., online or in-person course sharing or student exchanges IF course work delivered by the partner(s) is recorded on the UCF transcript as delivered by UCF) if either of the criteria below are met: 1) 50% or more of a program is offered through the arrangement OR	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Contracts and grants review process



Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
2) UCF could not deliver the program without the arrangement (i.e., it is dependent on the arrangement to deliver a program)					
Cooperative academic arrangement with a non-Title IV entity (or entities) to deliver 25-50% of a program's content recorded on UCF's transcript as its own (e.g., domestic or international, online or in-person, student exchanges IF course work delivered by the partner(s) is recorded on the UCF transcript as delivered by UCF; UCF serving as an institution of academic record for a non-Title IV entity)	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	Contracts and grants review process
Cooperative academic arrangement with a non-Title IV entity (or entities) to deliver less than 25% of a program's content recorded on UCF's transcript as its own (e.g., domestic or international, online or in-person, student exchanges IF course work delivered by the partner(s) is recorded on the UCF transcript as delivered by UCF; UCF serving as an institution of academic record for a non-Title IV entity)	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Contracts and grants review process
Correspondence education as a delivery modality – one in which the institution provides instructional materials and examinations, by mail	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	Annual review of distance learning thresholds initiated by APQ



Academic Program Quality

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or electronic transmission, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Courses are typically self-paced at the student's discretion. (All SACSCOC distance education requirements apply.)					Curriculum review processes
Partnerships in which a student receives dual academic awards at two (or more) institutions in prescribed curricula leading to each institution granting academic awards at the same credential level (e.g., dual master's degrees). The award granted by each institution bears only its name. (See also SACSCOC policy on Agreements Involving Dual and Joint Academic Awards)	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Contracts and grants review process
Joint academic award with (one or more) non-SACSCOC institution(s) or entity(ies) in which a student receives instruction in prescribed curricula leading to the institutions granting a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and officials' signatures of each participating institution. (See also SACSCOC policy on Agreements Involving Dual and Joint Academic Awards)	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	Contracts and grants review process



Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
Joint academic award with (one or more) SACSCOC institution(s) in which a student receives instruction in prescribed curricula leading to the institutions granting a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and officials' signatures of each participating institution. (See also SACSCOC policy on Agreements Involving Dual and Joint Academic Awards)	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Contracts and grants review process
Method of delivery additions by program are qualifying changes when a specific method of delivery (online, face-to-face, or competency-based education) is added for a program such that ≥50% of the program can be completed by that method. A program can be delivered ≥50% by more than one method and students may have a choice across methods. This requirement pertains to existing programs (not new program proposals).	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ Annual review of distance learning thresholds initiated by APQ
A new program with 50-100% new content at a new instructional level (baccalaureate, master's, specialist, doctoral) from the institution's existing programmatic offerings (also applies to regular and post-master's graduate certificate programs for which there is no corresponding graduate programming)	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	Curriculum review process



Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
A new program with 25-49% new content at a new instructional level (baccalaureate, master's, specialist, doctoral) from the institution's existing programmatic offerings (also applies to regular and post-master's graduate certificate programs for which there is no corresponding graduate programming)	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Curriculum review processes
Program closures include removing the credential pathway entirely from the institution's program inventory, removing the credential option at an approved site, or removing a particular method of delivery from a program offering (online, face-to-face, or competency-based education). A program teach-out plan or agreement is required and must be pre-approved by SACSCOC.	No	Yes ¹	No	Jan. 1 or July 1	Curriculum review processes Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ Annual review of distance learning thresholds initiated by APQ
Initiating prior learning as a condition of admission to a program	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Curriculum review processes
Program length changes that either increase or decrease the amount of time it takes a student to complete the program if 1) program credit hours (or demonstrated competencies for CBE) increase or decrease by $\geq 25\%$ AND 2) students' time to completion increases or decreases by more than	No	Yes ¹	Yes	Jan. 1 or July 1	Curriculum review processes



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one term (applies to degrees and graduate certificate programs)					
Program re-open is allowed if initiated within five years of the closure date; otherwise, new program notification or approval is required	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Curriculum review processes

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INSTRUCTIONAL LOCATION CHANGES

Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
Off-campus instructional site at which 25-49% of a program is delivered (includes dual enrollment sites but excludes internship and	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ



Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
clinical sites where no didactic instruction is delivered)					Curriculum review processes Contracts and grants review process
Off-campus instructional site (or branch campus) at which $\geq 50\%$ of a program is delivered (includes dual enrollment sites but excludes internship and clinical sites where no didactic instruction is delivered)	No	Yes ² Extensive Review Required	Yes	March 15 or Sept. 1 for BOT approval review	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ Curriculum review processes Contracts and grants review process
Off-campus instructional site relocation to a new address, geographically separate from the current location is permissible and limited to a single new address (Note: Moving all instruction from one site to a different SACSCOC approved instructional site is not a relocation; it is a closure of the original site.)	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ Contracts and grants review process
Branch campus relocation	No	Yes ¹	Yes	N/A – UCF has no branch campuses by	N/A



Type of Change	Prior Notification Required	Prior Approval Required	Fee	Timeframe for Submission to SACSCOC	UCF Safeguard Processes
				federal definition	
Off-campus instructional site name or address change	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ
Off-campus instructional site (or branch campus) closure (requires pre-approved teach-out plan)	No	Yes ¹	No	Jan. 1 or July 1	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ UCF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors governance processes
Off-campus instructional site re-open is allowable within five years of the closure date (reinitiating instruction after five years requires new site notification or approval)	Yes	No	No	Prior to implementation	Annual college survey of off-campus and alternative instructional delivery initiated by APQ

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