



PROCEDURE: 2.3.5p.L1

WGTC Substantive Change

Approved: May 30, 2023

**Last Reviewed/Revised: May 30, 2023, February 24, 2021; October 20, 2015; June 30, 2015;
May 21, 2014**

Adopted: May 24, 2012

Purpose

The Wiregrass Georgia Technical College (WGTC) substantive change procedure is designed to ensure that the college will report all proposed changes to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) appropriately and in a timely manner in accordance with the Commission's policy outlined in the publication, "SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures." WGTC notifies the Commission of changes as stipulated in the policy and, if required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of such changes. WGTC is responsible for providing SACSCOC with a list of all substantive changes that occur between the College's decennial reviews. By definition, a substantive change is "a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution" and includes:

- Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of an institution or its programs.
- Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership of an institution.
- Changing the governance of an institution.
- Merging / consolidating two or more institutions or entities.
- Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of an institution (including a branch campus).
- Offering courses or programs at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- Adding graduate programs at an institution previously offering only undergraduate programs (including degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other for-credit credentials).
- Changing the way an institution measures student progress, whether in clock hours or credit-hours; semesters, trimesters, or quarters; or time-based or non-time-based methods or measures.
- Adding a program that is a significant departure from the existing programs, or method of delivery, from those offered when the institution was last evaluated.
- Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.
- Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.

- Entering a written arrangement under 34 C.F.R. § 668.5 under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the title IV Higher Education Act (HEA) programs offers less than 25% (notification) or 25-50% (approval) of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs.
- Substantially increasing or decreasing the number of clock hours or credit hours awarded or competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded, for successful completion of one or more programs.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.
- Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.
- Adding a new off-campus instructional site/additional location including a branch campus.
- Adding a permanent location at a site at which an institution is conducting a teach-out program for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.
- Closing an institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.

As stated in the policy, various types of substantive changes are addressed using three categories:

- Institutional Changes
- Program Changes
- Off-Campus Instructional Site Changes

Each of the categories above is described in the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures. Guidelines and summary of timelines for reporting changes included in each of the three categories are outlined in the SACSCOC substantive change reporting policy as well as instructions for reporting.

Identification of Substantive Change

In accordance with the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia's substantive change reporting policy, WGTC will facilitate changes appropriately and in a timely manner to SACSCOC. WGTC will submit all substantive changes according to the time frame listed in the SACSCOC substantive change reporting policy. WGTC has established the following procedural order for communicating proposals for change within the institution and to the accrediting agency:

1. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVPAA) works with the Deans of Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness (AVPIE), and other stakeholders to develop a new program request, program termination, or description of the intended change of existing program.
2. The Academic Affairs Administration and President review and approve the proposed change.

3. The Local Board of Directors reviews and approves the proposal.
4. The State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia approves the new program request, program termination, or intended change.
5. The EDIE works with the President and other appropriate staff to prepare correspondence materials to be submitted to SACSCOC.
6. The President submits a letter and supporting documentation to the SACSCOC President.
7. Academic Affairs Administration is notified by the President and/or SACSCOC Liaison when a SACSCOC response letter is received.

Responsibility

The EDIE/SACSCOC Liaison has the overall responsibility of ensuring this procedure is implemented.

References

TCSG Policy 2.3.5 Technical College Substantive Change Reporting SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures