

ELIZABETHTOWN COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PURPOSE The purpose of this policy and procedure is to describe the requirements Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC) must follow to remain in compliance with The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Standard 14.2. which states,

“The institution has a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported in accordance with SACSCOC’s policy.”

SACSCOC requires all member institutions to have a policy and procedure established to ensure the timely completion of substantive changes. It is the policy of Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC) to be in full compliance with the Substantive Change Policy and Procedure of SACSCOC.

SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation further states,

A member institution is responsible for following the substantive change policy by informing the Commission of changes in accord with the Commission’s procedures and, when required, seeking approval prior to the initiation of the change. If an institution fails to follow SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures, 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 SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction or for removal from membership.

It is *imperative* that the constituents of ECTC are familiar with substantive change policy and procedures so all necessary changes are reported in a timely manner.

COLLEGE POLICY STATEMENT In order to remain in compliance and good standing with the Commission, ECTC will report in writing any actions defined as a substantive change to the SACSCOC. All programs, departments, and administrative areas of the College are governed by and required to follow this policy. The type of substantive change required determines the type of written communication and documentation that must be submitted to SACSCOC and how far in advance this communication must be sent.

DEFINITION The *Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions* policy defines substantive change as a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes:

- 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

<http://sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>

TYPES OF ACTION The scope of the substantive change will determine the written communication the accreditation liaison will send to the SACSCOC. Some changes require prior approval *before* implementation while some just require notification prior to implementation and monitoring for more advanced changes.

Changes requiring approval before implementation are as follows (see flow charts at the end of the document):

- Initiating coursework, certificates, or programs of study at a different level than those previously approved by SACSCOC.
- Initiating certificate programs for workforce development.
- Initiating other certificate programs.
- Initiating an off-campus (additional) site (site-based/classroom group instruction) at which student can earn at least 50% of the credits toward an educational program.
- Adding a site for a previously approved program under a U.S. military contract.
- Initiating degree completion programs.
- Initiating a branch campus.
- Initiating distance learning or correspondence courses and programs by which students can earn at least 50% of a program's credits through delivery in a format other than face-to-face.
- Expanding at the institution's current degree level.
- Initiating a significant change in the established mission of the institution.

- Changing from clock hours to credit hours.
- Changing significantly the length of a program, substantially increasing or decreasing the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program.
- Relocating a main or branch campus.
- Initiating a collaborative academic program with another institution not accredited by SACSCOC.
- Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs.

Changes Requiring Notification Only

- For site-based/classroom group instruction (where the instructor is present)
 - Initiating an off-campus site at which a student may earn at least 25% but less than 50% of credits toward a degree.
 - Moving an approved off-campus instructional site within the same geographic area to serve essentially the same pool of students.
- Offering for the first time credit courses via distance learning/technology-based instruction by which students can obtain at least 25% but less than 50% of their credits toward an educational program.
- Initiating program/courses delivered through contractual agreement or a consortium.
- Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the accredited institution.
- Repackaging of an existing approved curriculum.

DESIGNATED RESPONSIBILITY In order to maintain compliance with Standard 14.2, ECTC’s Substantive Change Policy and Procedures, and to facilitate the flow of information regarding actions leading to a substantive change notification, institution Substantive Change will be a standing item on the schedule for ECTC’s SACSCOC Steering Committee which will meet four times a year (August, October, February, April). This team includes the President and Chief Executive Officer, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, all Division Chairs, Dual Credit Coordinator, Chief Student Affairs Officer, Director of Financial Aid, Dean of Workforce Solutions, Library Director, Chief Financial and Facilities Officer, QEP Chair, Director of Distance Learning, and the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison (convener). The accreditation liaison along with the Chief Academic Officer are responsible for timely reporting of a substantive change to the SACSCOC.

It is the responsibility of the Steering Committee to remain current with SACSCOC Substantive Change Policies. In order for the Committee to understand the many different types of changes that fall within the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy, a copy of the entire policy will be distributed annually to all members in the August meeting or as the policy is updated by SACSCOC.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES All information regarding a possible substantive change must be submitted to the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison for the development of the required materials to be sent to the President of the College for review and submission to SACSCOC. Once the President approves the substantive change, the information will be forwarded to the Director of Financial Aid who forwards it to the Department of Education (as needed) to be in compliance with federal Title IV regulations.

To monitor compliance with the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy,

- A tracking file of all off-campus dual-credit sites is maintained by the Dual Credit coordinator. This file includes names and complete addresses of all off-campus dual credit sites along with the listing of courses offered, faculty teaching the courses, contact information for the Point of Contact for the dual-credit site, and the percentage of courses towards a credential available by year.
- A tracking file of off-campus sites, not related to dual credit, is maintained by the Director of Institutional Effectiveness. This file includes names and complete addresses of all off-campus sites along with the listing of courses offered, faculty teaching the courses, contact information for the Point of Contact for the site, and the percentage of courses towards a credential available by year.
- A tracking file of locations where workforce development certificates are being offered and is maintained by the Department of Workforce Solutions. This file includes names and complete addresses of all workforce sites along with the listing of courses offered, faculty teaching the courses, contact information for the Point of Contact for the site, and the percentage of courses towards a credential available by year.

The Dual Credit Coordinator, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and Department of Workforce Solutions will inform the Accreditation Liaison each time a new course is added to a location. Working in conjunction with the Accreditation Liaison will ensure all documentation needed for substantive change, if necessary, is submitted in a timely manner.

During the Steering Committee Meetings, the ECTC Accreditation Liaison will solicit feedback concerning any substantive change, new program, or new academic area from the members of the Committee. This includes all program and curriculum changes reviewed as necessary by the local CRC.

If any information brought forth are deemed substantive according to the *Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions* policy, then the Accreditation liaison, in conjunction with the Chief Academic Officer will determine the type of substantive change needed and will consult with the institution's COC staff member as needed.

If the Commission requires the institution to write a brief or complete prospectus or prepare any additional documentation, the Accreditation Liaison will work with the appropriate departments and Committee members to complete the necessary documents.

Once all pieces are completed, the Accreditation Liaison or Chief Academic Officer will prepare the necessary letters and attach all necessary documentation to be submitted to the President of the College to be signed and sent to the President of SACSCOC.

POLICY REVIEW The ECTC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures will be reviewed annually by the Steering Committee or when the *Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions* policy statement has been updated, whichever is more frequent, and the policy will be published on the ECTC website.

Questions or clarification regarding this policy should be directed to the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison.

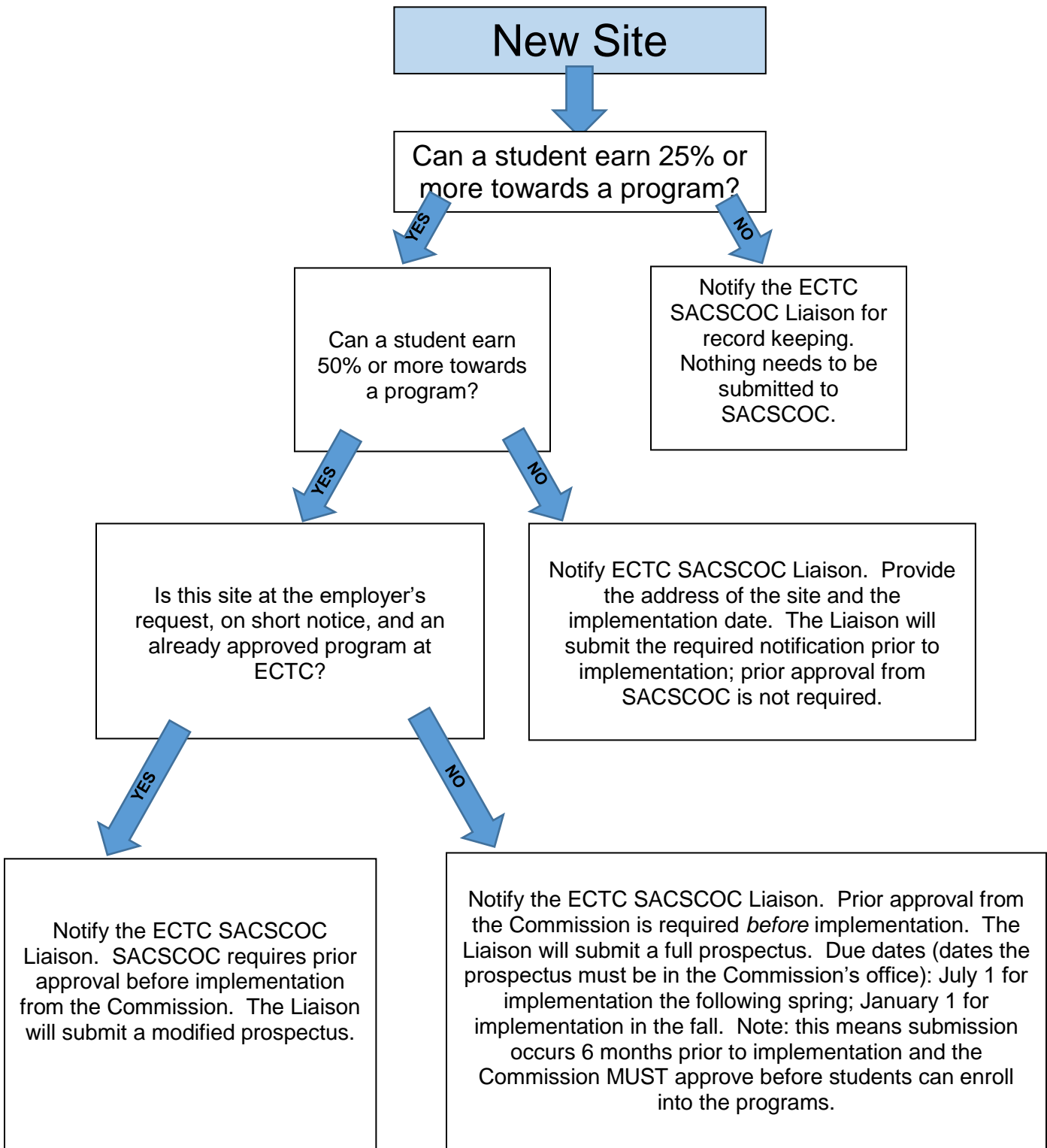
Document History:

Approved: President's Cabinet, May 31, 2017

Updated: Addition of Steering Committee Members and Flow Charts August 4, 2017

Updated: Adjusted Standard to represent updated Principles February 2, 2018

Updated: Adjusted meeting schedule and members September 12, 2018



New Program Degree/Diploma/Certificate

Does ECTC currently offer the program?

YES

NO

Is it a significant departure from the current program offerings?

Is it a significant departure from the current program offerings?

NO

YES

YES

NO

Notify the ECTC SACSCOC Liaison for record keeping. Nothing needs to be submitted to SACSCOC.

Notify the ECTC SACSCOC Liaison. Prior approval from the Commission is required *before* implementation. The Liaison will submit a full prospectus. Due dates (dates the prospectus must be in the Commission's office): July 1 for implementation the following spring, January 1 for implementation in the fall. Note: this means submission occurs 6 months prior to implementation and the Commission **MUST** approve before students can enroll into the programs.

Notify the ECTC SACSCOC Liaison for record keeping. A justification for not needing a substantive change needs to be written. Nothing needs to be submitted to SACSCOC.

What constitutes significant departure?

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," it is helpful to consider the following questions:

- What previously approved programs does the institution offer that are closely related to the new program and how are they related?
- Will significant additional equipment or facilities be needed?
- Will significant additional financial resources be needed?
- Will a significant number of new courses will be required?
- Will a significant number of new faculty members will be required?
- Will significant additional library/learning resources be needed?