



*Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097*

MERGER/CONSOLIDATION, ACQUISITION, CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP, AND CHANGE OF GOVERNANCE, CONTROL, FORM, OR LEGAL STATUS

Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions

Policy Statement

Overview

Definition: Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations and for the purposes of this policy, substantive change includes:

- initiating a merger or consolidation;
- acquiring an institution or location (including programs) of another institution;
- initiating a change of ownership;
- initiating a change of governance, control, form, or legal status; and
- adding as a permanent off-campus instructional site a location at which the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution;

Institutional Obligations:

1. Member institutions are required to notify the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, for those changes addressed in this policy, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes. Notification requires a letter to the SACSCOC president from the institution's chief executive officer or his/her designated representative summarizing the proposed change and providing the intended implementation date.
2. Member institutions are required to have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely fashion (Standard 14.2).

The policy and procedures for the reporting and review of these types of substantive changes are outlined following the Glossary of Terms.

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Glossary of Terms

Acquisition – the sale, exchange, or transfer of *a component* of an institution’s or entity’s assets to a SACSCOC accredited institution. Following acquisition, the participating entities remain in operation as separate institutions or entities. Acquisition **includes** off-campus instructional sites, for-credit educational programs, or other tangible educational assets. Acquisition **excludes** assets unrelated to the core mission of the SACSCOC institution such as non-educational real estate and intangible property. Acquisition is independent of financial consideration; i.e., an acquisition may or may not involve the exchange of money between participating entities.

Assets – institutional assets include – but are not limited to – land, buildings, off-campus instructional sites, courses, and educational programs.

Branch campus – an off-campus instructional site that is geographically apart **and** independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is

- permanent;
- offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential;
- has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; **and**
- has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

Change of legal status, governance, control, or form – a change of corporate form, governance structure, or conversion, including, but not limited to, change from Limited Partnership to Corporation, from Limited Liability Corporation to Corporation, from a Not-for Profit Corporation to a For-Profit Corporation, a private to a public, a Not-for Profit Corporation controlled by members to one controlled by its Board of Directors, significant change in the size of the institution’s governing board.

Change of ownership – the sale or transfer to a new owner of all, or a substantial portion, of the institution’s assets.

Degree completion program – a program typically designed for a non-traditional undergraduate population such as working adults who have completed some college-level course work but have not achieved a baccalaureate degree. Students in such programs may transfer in credit from courses taken previously and may receive credit for experiential learning. Courses in degree completion programs are often offered in an accelerated format or meet during evening and weekend hours, or may be offered via distance learning technologies.

Educational program – a coherent course of study leading to the awarding of a credential (*i.e.*, a degree, diploma or certificate).

Off-campus instructional site (location) – a location physically apart from an institution’s sole main campus at which instruction is delivered. Off-campus instructional sites may include branch campuses.

Merger/Consolidation – the sale, exchange, or transfer of *all* assets of at least one institution or entity to a SACSCOC accredited institution. Following a merger/consolidation, only one institution remains in operation as a separate institution or entity. Merger/consolidation is independent of financial consideration; i.e., a merger/consolidation may or may not involve the exchange of money between participating entities.

Notification – a letter from an institution’s chief executive officer, or his/her designated representative, to the SACSCOC President summarizing a proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the complete physical address (if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus instructional site).

Teach-out agreement – a written agreement between institutions providing equitable treatment of students and reasonable opportunities for students to complete programs of study if an institution, or an institutional location providing fifty percent or more of at least one program, closes before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. Teach-out agreements require SACSCOC approval prior to implementation.

Teach-out plan – an institution’s written plan providing equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location providing fifty percent or more of at least one program, closes before all students have completed their programs of study. This plan may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between institutions. Teach-out plans must be approved by SACSCOC prior to implementation.

The Policy

SACSCOC Responsibilities

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accredits an entire institution and its programs and services, wherever they are located or however they are delivered. It is responsible for reviewing all substantive changes that occur between an institution's decennial reviews to determine whether or not the change has affected the quality of the total institution and to assure the public that all aspects of the institution continue to meet defined standards.

SACSCOC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an agency whose accreditation enables its member institutions to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV programs. To maintain its recognition with the U.S. Department of Education, SACSCOC has incorporated federal requirements into its substantive change policy and procedures. Some of those requirements expect an institution to seek approval prior to the initiation of a substantive change so that the change can be included in the institution's scope of accreditation. All mergers/consolidations, acquisitions, changes of ownership, and changes of governance, control, form, or legal status require prior approval.

Institutional Responsibilities

The institution is responsible for following the substantive change policy and procedures and for informing SACSCOC of such changes. If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should email or call Commission staff for consultation. SACSCOC accredits institutions, not systems. *While a system may provide SACSCOC with important information regarding changes planned or underway at its institutions, each institution is expected to follow the reporting requirements of the substantive change policy.*

Procedures for Notification and Approval

The types of substantive change referred to in this policy all require similar notification and approval procedures as indicated below:

| Type of Change | Prior Notification Required | Prior Approval Required | Documentation and Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC | Site Visit Required |
|---|--|-------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution | Yes – at least 6 months before review date | Yes | Cover Sheet Institutional Summary Form Prospectus (See Appendix in this Policy) Due dates: March 15 (for June review); September 1 (for December review) | Yes |
| Acquiring assets, including programs and sites, from another institution or entity | | | | |
| Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution | | | | |
| Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution | | | | |

Policy Statements Regarding These Substantive Changes

1. SACSCOC's *Substantive Change Policy and Procedures* applies only to accredited institutions. Applicant and candidate institutions may not initiate substantive change.
2. Failure to comply with the *Principles* or with procedures referred to in this policy could result in the institution being placed on sanction or being removed from membership.
3. All final decisions regarding the accreditation status of an institution are made by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, except for those that are appealable. Denial of substantive change and the imposition of sanctions are not appealable actions. An institution that fails to gain approval of the substantive change may resubmit a revised prospectus or application following the guidelines and time frames described in this procedure.
4. An accredited institution in the appeals process or in litigation with SACSCOC is not eligible for consideration of substantive change.
5. A SACSCOC-accredited institution whose proposal for change is not approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees shall maintain its separately accredited status with SACSCOC. However, if the institution continues with the change after denial of approval, it may be placed on sanction or removed from membership.
6. An institution may withdraw its prospectus/application or may discontinue substantive change at any time during the review process by submitting a formal letter of withdrawal to the President of SACSCOC.
7. Once an institution submits its prospectus or application and the document is reviewed by either the Committee on Compliance and Reports or by Commission staff, any information included therein that indicates possible non-compliance with any of the standards in the *Principles of Accreditation* may lead SACSCOC to a further review of the institution, even if the prospectus is withdrawn or approval of the change is denied.
8. If an institution fails to report or to receive approval of one of these types of substantive change prior to its implementation, both the prospectus and the issue of late submission will be referred to SACSCOC Board of Trustees for action.
9. The prospectus for an institution planning a merger/consolidation; change of ownership; and change of legal status, governance or form of control will automatically be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for approval.
10. The prospectus for a SACSCOC-accredited institution acquiring an educational program, an off-campus instructional site, or adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach out will be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for approval.
11. 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 money received by the institution related to the 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.
12. Substantive changes that include a merger/consolidation, acquisitions of institutions, or change of ownership normally affect an institution's cycle of reaffirmation of accreditation. A change of governance, legal control, form, or governance may affect the reaffirmation cycle. Acquiring a program or site from another institution will normally not affect an institution's reaffirmation cycle.
13. In accordance with federal and SACSCOC policy, extensive substantive changes by an institution may

accelerate the date for the institution's next reaffirmation. Examples of triggers for an accelerated reaffirmation include the following changes: proliferation of off-campus instructional sites, frequent mergers/consolidations or changes of ownership, significant increases in enrollments, or rapid proliferation of new educational programs.

14. If an institution has filed bankruptcy, SACSCOC will require any institution or organization acquiring the assets of the SACSCOC-accredited institution in bankruptcy to apply independently for accreditation.

Fees and Expenses

1. The following fees will be assessed to institutions for the review of an application or prospectus:
 - \$500 For an institution seeking review of a substantive change prospectus
 - \$500 Per SACSCOC member institution for a substantive change involving multiple institutions (e.g., change in governance/ownership, or collaborative program)
 - \$5,000 Per SACSCOC member institution for a substantive change involving multiple institutions in a merger/consolidation or acquisition.
 - \$7,500 Per non-SACSCOC member institution for a substantive change involving multiple institutions in a merger/consolidation or acquisition. The SACSCOC-accredited institution(s) are responsible for ensuring payment.
2. Fees related to Substantive Change Committee visits

In addition to the fee assessed for reviewing the substantive change prospectus, the following fees will be assessed to an institution hosting a Substantive Change Committee visit:

The actual cost of the committee
(Includes travel, lodging, food, Incidental Fee for each reviewer, and related expenses),
and

An administrative fee for Substantive Change Committees: \$2,000

The institution will be billed the total following the conclusion of the committee's evaluation activities.

Document History

Revised for the Principles of Accreditation, February 2004

Revised: Commission on Colleges, December 2006

Adopted: Commission on Colleges, June 2008

Revised: Board of Trustees, June 2009

Revised: SACSCOC Board of Trustees, June 2011, June 2012, December 2015

Updated: May 2016

Edited: July 2016

Revised: SACSCOC Board of Trustees: June 2018, December 2018, June 2021

Edited: December 2021

Procedures

SACSCOC follows two procedures pertaining to the review and approval of merger/consolidation, the acquisition of a program/site, change of ownership, or a change of legal status, governance, form, and control.

1. Procedure for a SACSCOC-accredited institution initiating changes involving another SACSCOC-accredited institution: Merger/consolidation; acquisition; change of ownership; and change in governance, control, form, or legal status

Time of Notification: The chief executive officer(s) of the member institutions undergoing the change must provide written notification of the change to the President of SACSCOC six months in advance of the intended date of review of the change by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Upon notification, the President of SACSCOC will ask the institution(s) involved to submit a combined written prospectus.

Submission of the Prospectus: The SACSCOC Board of Trustees meets in June and in December. The prospectus for substantive change must be submitted to the Commission office by **March 15** for consideration at the Board's June meeting, and by **September 1** for consideration at the December meeting. The institution must include the required cover sheet that stipulates the planned implementation date. The institution must also include an Institutional Summary Form that fully describes the programs and locations of programs that will be offered by the newly-formed institution and indicate which of the institutions had been responsible for the locations and programs listed prior to the intended merger. The prospectus must describe how each institution plans to continue to meet the *Principles* while implementing the change. *(Please refer to the Appendix for information to be included in the prospectus.)*

Review Process: The SACSCOC President will forward the institution's prospectus to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. If the Board approves the prospectus, the change is effective as of the date specified in the prospectus, which cannot exceed 30 days after approval by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. The Board also will authorize a Substantive Change Committee to visit the institution. This Committee will be charged with determining the institution's ongoing compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation* following the initiation of the change. In preparation for this visit, the institution will complete the appropriate substantive change documentation template which cites relevant Core Requirements and Standards. The template is available on the SACSCOC website (www.sacscoc.org) under "Substantive Changes." The institution's SACSCOC staff representative will inform the institution of the composition and schedule for the Committee.

The Substantive Change Committee visit will occur within six months after the implementation date. The report of the Substantive Change Committee, together with the response of the institution to any recommendations contained in that report, will be reviewed by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Following review, the Board will (1) continue the new institution in accreditation, with or without a monitoring report or (2) impose sanctions for failure to maintain compliance with the *Principles*. If the Board of Trustees determines that the substantive change adversely affects the institutions' continued compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*, the accreditation of member institutions involved will be placed in jeopardy.

If SACSCOC Board does not approve the prospectus for the change and the institutions do not proceed with the change, the SACSCOC-accredited institutions will maintain their separately accredited status. A new prospectus may be submitted for future Board review. However, if the institutions continue with the change without prior approval, accreditation of the institutions involved will be placed in jeopardy.

Initial Accreditation Date: The initial accreditation date for the newly-merged/consolidated institution will be the date of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees' action to approve the substantive change.

Changes to the Reaffirmation Cycle: The newly-merged/consolidated institution will be required to achieve reaffirmation of accreditation within five years following the Commission's action to approve the change. The

institution will then maintain the normal ten-year reaffirmation cycle. A change of governance, control, or legal status may alter the reaffirmation cycle as determined by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Acquiring a limited number of programs and/or off-campus instructional sites will normally not affect an institution's reaffirmation cycle.

In cases where the lead institution – as designated in the prospectus – has successfully received reaffirmation of accreditation within the preceding three (3) years of SACSCOC Board approval of the merger, then the newly-merged institution will maintain the lead institution's reaffirmation of accreditation cycle. In these cases, the resulting institution will be required to submit a Fifth-Year Interim Report along with its reaffirmation class; however, the institution will not be required to submit a QEP Impact Report as part of its Fifth-Year Interim Report.

2. Procedure for a SACSCOC-accredited institution initiating changes involving a non SACSCOC-accredited institution: Merger/consolidation; acquisition; change of ownership; and change in governance, control, form, or legal status

Time of Notification: The chief executive officer of the SACSCOC-accredited institution affected by any of these changes must provide written notification of the change to the President of SACSCOC six months in advance of the intended date of review by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Upon notification, the President of SACSCOC will ask the SACSCOC member institution to submit a written prospectus.

Submission of the Prospectus: The SACSCOC Board of Trustees meets in June and in December. The prospectus for substantive change must be submitted to the Commission office by **March 15** for consideration at the June meeting, and by **September 1** for consideration at the December meeting. The institution must include the required cover sheet that stipulates the planned implementation date. The institution must also include an Institutional Summary Form that fully describes the programs and locations of programs that will be offered by the newly-formed institution and indicate which of the institutions had been responsible for the locations and programs listed prior to the intended merger. The prospectus must describe how the member institution plans to continue to meet the *Principles* while implementing the change. (*Please refer to the Appendix to this Policy for information to be included in the prospectus.*) **Four** copies of the prospectus should be submitted to the President of SACSCOC in print form or on a flash drive.

Review Process: Upon receipt of the prospectus, the President of SACSCOC will refer it to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for review. Following review, the Board will take one of the following actions:

1. Accept the prospectus and authorize the appointment of a Substantive Change Committee to visit the institution within 6 months.
2. Deny acceptance of the prospectus. The reason for denial of approval may be caused by an institution's current non-compliance with a Standard. Consequently, denial may be accompanied by monitoring or imposition of a sanction.
3. Defer action to the next Board meeting, pending submission of additional information.

If the prospectus is accepted, the institutions may begin implementation of the substantive change. During this time, the accreditation status of the SACSCOC-accredited member institution will remain unchanged until after the substantive change has been approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

A Substantive Change Committee visit will occur within six months after its authorization. When a Substantive Change Committee is authorized, it is charged with determining the institution's ongoing compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation* following the initiation of the change. In preparation for this visit, the institution will complete the appropriate substantive change documentation template, which cites relevant Core Requirements and Standards. The template is available on the SACSCOC website (www.sacscoc.org) under "Substantive Changes." The institution's SACSCOC staff representative will inform the institution of the composition and schedule for the Committee.

The report of the Substantive Change Committee, together with the response of the member institution to any recommendations contained in that report, shall be reviewed by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. The Board has the options to (1) approve the substantive change, (2) deny the approval of the change, or (3) defer action.

If the Board does not approve the substantive change following the visit by the Substantive Change Committee and the SACSCOC-accredited institution does not proceed with the change, the SACSCOC-accredited institution will maintain its separately accredited status. A new prospectus may be submitted for future Board review. However, if the member institution continues with the change without prior or final approval, accreditation of the institution involved will be placed in jeopardy.

Initial Accreditation Date: The initial accreditation date for the newly-merged/consolidated institution will be the date of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees' action to approve the substantive change.

Changes to the Reaffirmation Cycle: The newly-merged/consolidated institution will be required to achieve reaffirmation of accreditation within five years following the Commission's action to approve the change. The institution will then maintain the normal ten-year reaffirmation cycle. A change of governance, control, or legal status may alter the reaffirmation cycle as determined by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Acquiring a limited number of programs and/or off-campus instructional sites will normally not affect an institution's reaffirmation cycle. If the Board determines that the substantive change adversely affects an institution's continued compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*, the accreditation of the institution involved will be placed in jeopardy.

Preparation for a Substantive Change Committee Visit

When a Substantive Change Committee is authorized, it is charged with determining the institution's compliance with the Principles of Accreditation following the initiation of the change. The visit will occur within six months after initiation of the change. In preparation for this visit, the institution will complete the appropriate substantive change documentation template, which cites relevant Core Requirements and Standards. The template is available on the SACSCOC website (www.sacscoc.org) under "Substantive Changes." The institution's SACSCOC staff representative will inform the institution of the composition and schedule for the Committee.

Options of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees Following Review by a Substantive Change Committee.

The report of the Substantive Change Committee, together with the response of the institution to any recommendations contained in that report, will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees. The Board may take one of the following actions:

1. Approve the substantive change (if the prospectus was only accepted) and continue the institution in accreditation, with or without a monitoring report
2. Continue the institution in accreditation (if the substantive change was approved following review of the prospectus), with or without a monitoring report
3. Continue the institution in accreditation, impose a sanction, and request a monitoring report, with/without a special committee visit (mandatory visit if placed on Probation)
4. Remove the institution from membership

APPENDIX

The Substantive Change Prospectus

Use this information to determine the content and process for submitting a prospectus for a mergers/consolidation; acquisition; change of ownership; or change of governance, control, form, or legal status.

The prospectus must be accompanied by a completed [Cover Sheet](#).

Submit four copies of the prospectus, the cover sheet, and all supporting documents. The prospectus will be reviewed by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. The prospectus and supporting documents may be submitted on paper or flash drive. ***Documents will not be accepted via e-mail.*** The prospectus includes a concisely worded narrative with the information specified in this Appendix. A prospectus may not exceed **25 pages** exclusive of appendices. SACSCOC reserves the right to amend the requirements outlined below for certain types of changes.

SACSCOC will accept documentation submitted for approval to a system or state coordinating or governing board provided all required prospectus content is included and includes an index correlating the submitted materials with the corresponding information required in a prospectus. Faculty qualifications, however, must be documented using the [Faculty Roster form](#). Curricula vitae in lieu of a faculty roster will not be accepted.

The following guidelines are generic; each prospectus should be tailored to focus on the specific change being proposed. However, each section identified below must be included in the prospectus.

1. ABSTRACT (limit to one page or less)

Describe the proposed change, the location, the projected implementation date and factors affecting the implementation date, and the organizational structure of the current institution. The implementation date in the prospectus shall be the official effective date of change approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. This date should take into consideration the proposed date of approval by the Commission's Board, the date of approval by the institution's governing board, and USDE reporting timelines affecting Title IV funding. For merger/consolidation or acquisition, designate the lead institution.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Provide a clear statement of the nature and purpose of the change in the context of the institution's mission and goals. Provide evidence of the legal authority for the change (if authorization is required by the governing board or the state); if no governing board or state authorization is required, explain that in the narrative.

3. ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND PROGRAM PLANNING/APPROVAL

Briefly discuss the rationale for the change, including an assessment of need; evidence of inclusion of the change in the institution's ongoing planning and evaluation processes; and documentation that faculty and other groups were involved in the review and approval of the change, where appropriate.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE CHANGE

Provide a description of the proposed change, including any change in degree-granting authority. Provide an organizational chart for the proposed change. Describe the current governing board and the new governing board, listing the rosters for both. The rosters should provide titles, board members' occupations and affiliations, and current term. Describe the current and proposed authority of the Board and address committees of the Board. Explain the role of current owners/board members in the proposed change. Provide the current and proposed conflict of interest and board dismissal statements. Describe any differences in administrative oversight of programs or services. Describe any new foundations that will be established as the result of the change and the foundation's role in governance, if any. Describe how the change affects current foundations.

5. FACULTY

Provide a narrative with supporting evidence that the number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support programs. Describe the impact of the proposed change on faculty and faculty workload. If the institution is merging with a non-SACSCOC institution, provide a complete roster (using the [Faculty Roster form](http://www.sacscoc.org) at www.sacscoc.org under "Substantive Changes") of the non-SACSCOC faculty to be added to the institution's faculty, including a description of those faculty members' academic qualifications and other experiences relevant to the courses to be taught. NOTE: Depending on the nature of the substantive change, it may be appropriate to provide additional faculty details.

6. LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

As appropriate to the change, describe library and learning resources, in general as well as specific to the program, site, or institution, as warranted. Describe the staffing and services in place to support the change. If reliant upon other libraries, describe those collections and their relevance to the proposed change and include a copy of formal agreements in the appendix. Relative to electronic resources, describe how students and faculty will access information, training for faculty and students in the use of online resources, and staffing and services available to students and faculty. If citing electronic databases accessed through consortial or statewide groups, please describe the discipline-specific suites of resources and not just the name of the consortium (such as Viva, Tex-Share, Galileo, Louis, etc.).

7. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Provide a description of student support programs, services, and activities—general as well as specific to the change—in place to support the change.

8. PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Provide a description of physical facilities and equipment to support the change. Assess the impact the proposed change will have on physical resources, facilities, and equipment.

9. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Provide a business plan including **all** of the following:

- a. a description of the financial transaction and the effect the transaction has on the net assets of all the institutions or entities involved. In addition, specifically provide details regarding each of the following: (1) liabilities, (2) transfer of assets, (3) future contractual obligations, (4) existing

- contracts, (5) charitable contributions generated or involved with the transaction, and (6) any other significant factor that will impact financial or physical resources;
- b. a description of financial resources to support the change, including a budget for the first year;
- c. projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow;
- d. the amount of resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services;
- e. the operational, management, and physical resources available for the change.

Provide a contingency plan in case expected resources do not materialize or costs exceed projections.

As part of the prospectus, the institution is required to submit financial audit reports for the two most recent fiscal years, and include its most recent financial aid audit. The most recent year is defined as the fiscal year ending immediately prior to the submission of the prospectus. For a merger/consolidation, acquisition, or change of ownership, the participating institution(s) or entity(ies) are also required to provide the audits as described above. In addition, the institution is required to include a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year.

Include a copy of the institution’s Pre-Acquisition Application submitted to USDE, if appropriate for the change, and all documents/correspondence from the institution to USDE and from USDE to the institution pertaining to the reporting of the change.

10. EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Describe how the institution assesses overall institutional effectiveness and the means used to monitor and ensure the quality of the changes. Summarize procedures for systematic evaluation of instructional results, including the process for monitoring and evaluating programs and using the results of evaluation to improve institutional programs, services, and operations. Explain how the change has or will affect the institution’s strategic planning including the development of campus master plans.

11. APPENDICES

Provide copies of documents appropriate to the change. For a merger/consolidation or an acquisition, the prospectus must include a complete list of all off-campus instructional sites including branch campuses that will exist *after* the merger/consolidation or acquisition; a template with instructions is provided on the following pages.

Document History

Approved: Executive Council, June 2010

(Separate document previously part of the COC policy “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions”)

Revised: SACSCOC Board of Trustees, June 2012

Edited: March 2014; July 2021

Updated: June 2014; May 2016

Prospectus updated June 2018, July 2019

Revised and Edited: SACSCOC Board of Trustees, December 2021

Comprehensive List of Off-Campus Instructional Locations and Branch Campuses for All Institutions Involved in the Merger/Consolidation/Acquisition

List *all locations* for all entities involved in the merger/consolidation/acquisition where 50% or more of the credit hours toward a degree, diploma, or certificate can be obtained primarily through traditional classroom instruction. Report two types of locations: (1) all off-campus instructional sites and (2) all branch campuses. The sites and branch campuses should be reported in accord with the Commission's definitions and the directions as specified below. The new entity approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees will include only the sites and campuses listed on this form. The main campus of the consolidated institutions must be identified and all other formerly independent campuses should be listed on the submitted forms (if such sites are to be retained – normally as a branch campus(es)).

Listing of all Off-Campus Instructional Sites Including Branch Campuses

Off-campus instructional sites—a site located geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers 50 % or more of its credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree. This includes high schools where courses are offered as part of dual enrollment. **Branch campus**—an instructional site located geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority. Provide the information below for all off-campus instructional sites currently a part of all of the institutions that are involved in the consolidation/merger/acquisition. **List A should include only those sites reported and approved by SACSCOC—for current SACSCOC accredited institutions.** Listing unapproved sites below does not constitute reporting them to SACSCOC. In such cases when an institution has initiated an off-campus instructional site as described above without prior approval by SACSCOC, a prospectus for approval should be submitted immediately to SACSCOC. **List B should include all sites currently a part of any non-SACSCOC accredited institution involved in the merger/consolidation/acquisition.**

Name and Location of Main Campus

Proposed Name of Institution:

Physical Address (street, city, state, country) Do not include PO Boxes.

List A: To be completed for SACSCOC-accredited institution(s)

| Name of Site | Physical Address (street, city, state, country) Do not include PO Boxes. | Branch Campus? (Y/N) | Date Approved by SACSCOC | Date Implemented by the institution | Educational programs offered (specific degrees, certificates, diplomas) with 50% or more credits hours offered at each site | Is the site currently active? (At any time during the past 5 years, have students been enrolled and courses offered? If not, indicate the date of most recent activity.) |
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List B: To be completed for any non-SACSCOC accredited institutions

| Name of Site | Physical Address (street, city, state, country) Do not include PO Boxes. | Branch Campus? (Y/N) | Date approved by another accrediting agency (if applicable) | Date Implemented by the institution | Educational programs offered (specific degrees, certificates, diplomas) with 50% or more credits hours offered at each site | Is the site currently active? (At any time during the past 5 years, have students been enrolled and courses offered? If not, indicate the date of most recent activity.) |
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