

# Substantive Change Policy

## **Implementation Date and Date of Subsequent Revisions**

2009, 2012, 2017, 2018

### **Purpose**

This policy is to ensure Beville State Community College (BSCC) is compliant with the substantive change requirements set forth by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in the Principles of Accreditation, Section 14.2: Substantive Change. This policy is applicable to all administrative units, divisions, departments, and campuses within the College.

### **Personnel Responsible for Implementation of Policy**

President

&

Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Research / SACSCOC Liaison

### **General Information**

BSCC is accredited by the SACSCOC. The accreditation indicates that the College “has 1) a mission appropriate to higher education, 2) has resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish and sustain that mission, and 3) maintains clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees its offers, and that indicate whether it is successful in achieving its stated objectives.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the College’s five-year and ten-year reviews by the Commission, the College should follow substantive change procedures established by the Commission and “notify the SACSCOC of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.”<sup>2</sup> The term “substantive change” is defined by the SACSCOC as a “significant modification or expansion of the nature or scope of an accredited institution.”<sup>3</sup> Failure to comply with the SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures may result in serious consequences for the College which may include suspending the activity until SACSCOC approval is received, repayment of financial aid funds dispersed to students, placing the College on sanctions, or removing the College’s accreditation entirely.

Substantive changes can include, but are not limited to:

- 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

<sup>1</sup> See *The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, p. 3

<sup>2&3</sup> See *Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on College: Policy Statement*, p. 1

- 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

Certain substantive changes require prior notification to the SACSCOC. Other substantive changes require submission of a substantive change prospectus prior to implementation of the substantive change. A substantive change may also require on-site committee reviews by the SACSCOC. In consultation with the SACSCOC policies and staff members, the Accreditation Liaison determines the applicability of the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy to the activities described above.

### **Policy & Procedures for Monitoring and Reporting Changes**

The College is dedicated to the expansion of academic opportunities that support the overall mission of the College through the development and offering of programs and courses offered off-site or by electronic means. BSCC has developed procedures to ensure that all divisions and units of the College monitor and respond accordingly to any proposed changes at the institution that constitutes a substantive change under the SACSCOC substantive change policy. Before developing or delivering courses off-site, electronically, or for a new program and program level, closing a program, and/or entering into a contract or consortial agreement for instruction, please consult these procedures. The BSCC Substantive Change Policy and Implementation Checklist is published on the College's website or can be obtained by contacting the Accreditation Liaison.

In addition, the Accreditation Liaison will share the College's policy and any changes to the policy, as needed, with College administrators during President Cabinet meetings which include senior level administrators, Academic Council meetings that involve divisional deans, and/or Strategic Planning meetings that include a variety of personnel from directors of departments, academic division chairs, and senior level administrators. This policy is reviewed annually at the College's Planning Summit.

Depending on the nature of the substantive change, it must be reported to the SACSCOC for notification and approval in a timely manner. All submissions will be coordinated through the College's SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison. Beginning Spring 2017, all substantive changes that require a submission of a prospectus for review and approval must be received at the SACSCOC by January 1 for fall implementation or July 1 for spring implementation. Therefore, the

Accreditation Liaison should be consulted prior to beginning a process that results in a substantive change.

All correspondence with the SACSCOC will be submitted by the College President in coordination with the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison.

### **Procedures**

The following steps will be used by faculty/staff members, divisions and units of the College when determining and reporting substantive change:

1. Directors, Division Chairs, Deans, etc., considering a change such as those identified in the bulleted list above must notify the Accreditation Liaison immediately of the proposed change for further guidance. If the Accreditation Liaison becomes aware of a potential change through other avenues, the Accreditation Liaison will immediately follow-up with the faculty/staff, division, or unit involved to obtain more information and provide guidance related to the next steps.
2. Directors, Division Chairs, Deans, etc., will be directed to complete the *BSCC Substantive Change Implementation Checklist* (Appendix S) to assist the Accreditation Liaison in determining the proper course of action related to the potential change.
3. The Accreditation Liaison will determine if the proposed change fits the definition of a substantive change as outlined in the SACSCOC substantive change policy and if required, consult with the College's SACSCOC Vice-President or the SACSCOC Director of Substantive Change. If any changes are considered substantive, the Accreditation Liaison will determine the specific procedure (1,2,3) for reporting the change to the SACSCOC and notifies the appropriate faculty / staff member, division, or unit of the College.
4. The Accreditation Liaison will work with the faculty / staff member, division, or unit involved to gather the data and documentation necessary to complete the specific procedure (1,2,3) as required by the SACSCOC. If a prospectus is required, the Accreditation Liaison will work with appropriate parties to meet the submission deadline of January 1 for fall implementation or July 1 for spring implementation.
5. The BSCC Substantive Change Implementation Checklist must be routed and approved by the College-wide Curriculum Committee if modifying a program or adding a new program, the College-wide Divisional Dean, and the appropriate President's Cabinet member before submission to the Accreditation Liaison for review.
6. The Accreditation Liaison will work with the President's Office for final approval and to notify the Commission in writing of the proposed change by the method identified in the SACSCOC Substantive Change policy.