

Spring 2013

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

The Policy

Any administrator or administrative unit considering a substantive change at Warren Wilson College must inform the college's SACS liaison officer and the college president, so that approval, if necessary, for such a change may be granted from the college's accrediting body before the change is implemented.

Substantive change is a federal term pertaining to any "significant modification of the nature and scope of an accredited institution." According to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, a substantive change includes (but is not limited to):

- initiation of an off-campus site at which a degree or certificate program is made available;
- creation of a program representing a significant departure from others in place;
- establishment of a consortial relationship with another institution to offer a degree program;
- termination of a degree program in which students are enrolled;
- alteration of the institution's declared educational mission.

Background

Colleges and universities must notify their accrediting body of potential or actual substantive change in a timely fashion and, in many cases, must receive approval for such change from the accrediting body before the initiative is implemented.

SACS is required by the federal government to monitor its constituents' compliance with the substantive change policy and to grant permission for major changes to occur. In order to ensure our compliance, any administrator or administrative unit considering initiating new programs, degrees, and other major initiatives at Warren Wilson College should review this substantive change policy as well as the relevant portion of the SACS website, which contains much useful information: (<http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp>).

Failure of the president to report these and other planned substantive changes can result in loss of the college's accredited status.