Proposed Policy 906: Reporting Substantive Changes to GPC’s Accrediting Body

Georgia Perimeter College will notify the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) of changes in accordance with SACSCOC’s substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes. Different types of substantive change require different forms of reporting to SACSCOC.

Georgia Perimeter College will adhere to all requirements of SACSCOC regarding substantive change as outlined in the most current version of the document titled “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges.” Substantive changes that must be reported to SACSCOC include those listed below. Changes are briefly categorized by the type of reporting required by SACSCOC.

I. Application to SACSCOC for permission:

   A. Initiating coursework or programs at a different degree level than currently approved.

II. Submission of a prospectus to SACSCOC

   A. Making significant changes to the educational mission of the institution.

   B. Expansion at the current degree level that constitutes a significant departure from existing programs.

   C. Initiating a branch campus – defined by SACSCOC as a campus having its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization and its own budgetary and hiring authority.

   D. Initiating joint programs with institutions not accredited by SACSCOC.

   E. Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school) in which students can obtain 50 percent or more of the credits needed for a degree.

   F. Significantly altering the length of a program.

   G. Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs in which the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the COC accredited institution.

   H. Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution.

   I. Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution.
J. Relocating a main or branch campus.

K. Initiating degree completion programs.

L. Acquiring any program or site from another institution.

M. Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing.

III. Submission of a modified prospectus to SACSCOC

A. Initiating a certificate program at a new off-campus site (previously approved program) or that is a significant departure from previously approved programs.

IV. Notification to SACSCOC

A. Initiating joint programs with other SACSCOC-accredited institutions. Requires copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution.

B. Initiating dual educational programs with other institutions. Requires copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution.

C. Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school) in which students can obtain 25-49 percent of the credits needed for a degree.

D. Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites by adding programs that are significantly different from current programs at the site.

E. Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium.

V. Copy of signed agreement

A. Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs in which the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the COC accredited institution. Requires copy of signed agreement.

B. Moving an off-campus instructional site serving the same geographic area. Requires letter of notification with new address and starting date.
C. Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution - institution to teach out its own students – Description of teach-out plan must be included with letter of notification.

D. Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution - Institution contracts with another institution to teach-out students (Teachout Agreement) - Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement detailing terms must be included with the letter of notification.

Procedures to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to SACSCOC in a timely fashion.

GPC’s SACS Liaison will provide training annually to all administrators concerning substantive changes that must be reported to SACSCOC.

GPC’s SACS Liaison will review proposals on the Faculty Senate and Staff Senate websites prior to each scheduled meeting to determine whether proposals are likely to produce substantive changes that must be reported to SACSCOC. In instances where proposals lead to substantive changes that must be reported to SACSCOC, the SACS Liaison will make sure that the president of the college is aware of the changes and his or her duty to report these to SACSCOC and will follow up to ensure that appropriate reporting has been completed.

GPC’s SACS Liaison will review the policy council proposals on the Governance and Policy website prior to each scheduled meeting to determine whether proposals are likely to produce substantive changes that must be reported to SACSCOC. In instances where proposals lead to substantive changes that must be reported to SACSCOC, the SACS Liaison will make sure that the president of the college is aware of the changes and his or her duty to report these to SACSCOC and will follow up to ensure that appropriate reporting has been completed.