Substantive change is a federal term for any “significant modification of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Baylor’s regional accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), is required by the federal government to monitor compliance with the substantive change policy and to approve any major changes.

The types of substantive change and the procedures for addressing them may be found in the Commission’s policy on substantive change.

Substantive changes that require approval must be submitted to SACSCOC more than six months in advance. Examples of substantive change that require SACSCOC approval include:

**Program/Course Level:**

- Adding an academic program that is a significant departure from currently offered programs.
- Adding coursework or programs at a different degree or credential level than currently approved.
- Initiating a collaborative academic arrangement, such as a joint or dual degree program with another institution
- Closing a program

**School/College/Department Level:**

- Initiating an off-campus site or distance learning
- Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites
Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium

**Institutional Level:**

- Initiating a branch campus
- Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution
- Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution
- Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution

For more information on substantive change and how to obtain the necessary approvals prior to implementing a substantive change, contact **Dr. Wes Null**, the University's SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison. If you want to propose a new academic program, submit information to the office by December 1 for Fall start term programs or June 1 for Spring start term programs. These possible Fall and Spring start dates, however, will be dependent upon other factors addressed during the standard curriculum review process.

To determine whether a planned change constitutes a substantive change, please take the **Substantive Change Survey**.