Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC)
Substantive Change Policy

ABAC is responsible for compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Substantive Change Policy as a condition of the institution’s continued accreditation. SACSCOC defines substantive change as “a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Substantive change includes such issues particularly pertinent to ABAC as 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 establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers 50% or more of an educational program; a change in name or status of the college, as the transition from community to state college; the offering of a new degree; and online (distance learning) delivery of 50% or more of an educational program. In addition, substantive changes include, but are not limited to:

- Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved;
- Expanding a current degree level;
- A change from clock hours to credit hours;
- A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program;
- Initiating programs at a lower degree level (e.g. certificates);
- Initiating a branch campus;
- Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium;
- Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution;
- Relocating a campus;
- Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status;
- Altering significantly the length of a program;
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or 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; and
- 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.

Ensuring Timely Reporting of Substantive Changes to SACSCOC: To ensure compliance with the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, who is also the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison, are responsible for being knowledgeable of the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy, updating the College’s Substantive Change Policy, and serving on specific committees, which allows them to gain awareness of changes occurring at the College. These committees include:

- The President’s Cabinet
  - The Vice President for Academic Affairs is an active member of the President’s Cabinet. This committee addresses changes related to the mission of the College as well as adding or changing instructional sites.

Revised by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness on 10.28.2015.
• The College’s Curriculum Committee
  o The College’s SACSCOC Liaison, academic deans, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs are members of the College’s Curriculum Committee. This committee addresses significant changes related to curriculum issues such as adding new programs or significant changes to academic programs, moving programs to an advanced level, and other issues related to academic programs, such as delivery of instruction.

The College’s SACSCOC Liaison’s Responsibilities: The SACSCOC Liaison provides the members of the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee with regular updates on the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy and its revision. The Liaison works with the committee to clarify and determine whether a proposed change is substantive, determines what action is necessary when a proposed change is substantive, and has the primary responsibility for ensuring that an appropriate notice, request for approval, and/or prospectus is sent to SACSCOC. The Liaison is the point person for required follow-up actions and reporting and the archivist for all correspondence with SACSCOC regarding substantive change reporting and approvals.

Publishing/Awareness of the College’s Substantive Change Policy: The College has a dedicated website for its Substantive Change Policy, including a listing of the required forms and a link to the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy. Additionally, the Liaison is also responsible for planning and presenting on the topic of substantive change annually to the faculty, each School’s Curriculum Committee, and the college-level Curriculum Committee.

Reporting Substantive Change: The SACSCOC guidelines for reporting substantive change, as specified in SACSCOC’s Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions, are the fundamental resource for guiding the reporting of substantive changes and for doing so within the prescribed timeline for each change.

Any possible substantive change must be reported via ABAC’s Substantive Change Form immediately to the College’s SACSCOC Liaison in order to determine if the change fits the definition of a substantive change as required by SACSCOC.

Approved by ABAC’s Substantive Change Monitoring Committee in June 2015.

Approved by ABAC’s President’s Cabinet in June 2015.

Revised by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness on 10.28.2015.