

Rice University Policy No. 106

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

General Policy

Rice University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). As an accredited university, Rice has the responsibility to notify SACSCOC of any substantive change and in some cases, to seek approval prior to initiation of the change. Substantive change is defined by the federal government and by SACSCOC as "a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution." SACSCOC is required by the federal government to monitor compliance with the substantive change policy and to approve any major change. Such approvals or notification are required prior to enrolling students impacted by the change.

Elaboration of Policy

The President shall appoint a SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison. The President or the liaison will notify the Commission of any proposed substantive change. Please refer to the *Substantive Change Compliance Procedures*, available on the website of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, for further information and guidance regarding the identification, management and reporting of substantive change.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **President:** appoints the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison; determines in consultation with the liaison and others the items that require notification or approval and sends written notification to SACSCOC of any proposed significant change.
- **Provost:** reviews proposed changes in coursework, programs or degrees for discussion and approval with the Faculty Senate.
- **SACSCOC Liaison:** prepares letters, in consultation with the President and other university officials, to notify SACSCOC of any pending substantive change; advises university officials on changes that would be considered substantive change and coordinates any necessary follow up and documentation required to be submitted to SACSCOC.
- **Deans and Department Chairs:** consult with SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison regarding proposed changes; inform the liaison at the earliest point possible of any proposal that may be considered substantive change and provide any data, information, or prospectus necessary to comply with SACSCOC requirements.
- **Faculty Senate:** approves changes in coursework, programs or degrees.

Signed David W. Leebron
David W. Leebron, President