

GSW Policy on Substantive Change

Definition (taken verbatim from SACS-COC Policy Statement): Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes.

- Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
- Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- 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 addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution's current accreditation or reaffirmation.
- 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
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart* from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program.
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement such as a dual degree program or a joint degree program with another 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
- 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

***Note that in this context "geographically apart" also refers to distance education programs.**

Procedure: Any academic or administrative unit at GSW that plans to implement a change to an academic program that will be substantive as defined above must have the change reviewed by GSW's SACS-COC Liaison to insure that the proposed change goes to the appropriate faculty committee(s), the Faculty Senate, the Faculty, and the Board of Regents, if applicable, in sufficient time to allow prompt notification of SACS-COC. Since SACS-COC notification for changes such as degree level change and initiation of a new location are required one year in advance of program implementation, programs need to plan accordingly. Most other forms of substantive change require notification six months prior to implementation, and therefore, **changes proposed for implementation fall term of a given academic year, must have been approved at the Fall General Faculty meeting in the year prior to proposed implementation. Similarly, changes proposed for implementation in the spring term of a given academic year must be approved at the Spring General Faculty Meeting in the year prior to proposed implementation.** Any proposed substantive change forms must be signed by GSW's SACS-COC Liaison before submission to the appropriate faculty committee(s).