

1. Policy on Substantive Change and Notifications

It is the duty of DETC Accrediting Commission to make certain that any substantive change undertaken by an accredited institution does not adversely affect its capacity to continue to meet DETC's Accreditation Standards. All "substantive changes" must be reported to the Commission. An institution must obtain the Commission's approval *before* the change in the institution's scope of accreditation will be granted. The Commission will consider approving requests based on evidence that the proposed change does not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet the DETC's standards, policies, and procedures.

The individual policy (as indicated in parentheses) provides detailed information on the actions required by the institution to properly notify the Commission.

The Accrediting Commission's definition of "substantive change" includes the following types of changes:

1. Any significant change in the established mission, goals, and objectives of the institution; (C.2.)
2. Any change in the legal status, form of control, or ownership/management of the institution; (C.3.)
3. Any change in location or new administrative site(s); (C.4.)
4. The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure from existing offerings of educational programs from those that were offered when the institution was last evaluated; (C.5.)
5. The addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which the institution was offering when it was accredited or re-accredited; (C.5.)
6. A change or variation of credit hours; (C.5.)
7. Change in method of delivery since the last evaluation of the institution (C.5.);
8. An increase *or decrease* in the number of credit hours awarded for successful completion of a *course or* program; (C.5. see under "Revisions") (10/11)
9. Any additional location (training site) geographically apart from the institution's main facility; (C.7.)
10. Any change or addition of a training site; (C.7.)
11. Any significant changes in marketing activities, e.g., using sales representative for the first time; (C.11.)
12. An intention to seek to establish eligibility to participate in Federal student financial assistance programs; (C.15)
13. Any contract where an institution certified to participate in Title IV enters into a contract with another institution or organization not certified to participate in the Title IV programs wherein it offers more than 25 percent of one or more of the accredited institution's educational program. (C.15.) (10/11)
14. Any changes in international activities, including recruiting or partnerships with institutions undertaken outside the U.S. by an institution headquartered in the U.S. (C.17). (10/11)
15. Any significant changes in the institution's financial condition; (C.18.)
16. Any significant *growth or decline in enrollments and/or programs*; (C.18.) (10/11)
17. Any change in the institution's name; (C.25.) (10/11)
18. A plan to close the institution; (C.27.) (10/11)

Action

Substantive changes in an institution that would cause an institution to be required to undergo a special visit (see C.16. Policy on Special Visits) or a new comprehensive accreditation review would include, but not be limited to, any proposed or actual change that the Commission judges to:

- diminish the capacity of the institution to comply with the Standards of Accreditation
- have a deteriorating impact on the quality of curriculum, services or faculty
- be a significant departure from the institution’s current mission and goals when it was last accredited
- be a significant negative impact on an institution’s financial stability
- negatively impact the reputation of the institution or the Commission
- represent a violation of state or federal laws
- result in a deleterious effect on students
- other likely impacts the Commission may judge serious enough to warrant a special visit or a new comprehensive review of the institution.

The Commission monitors an institution’s enrollment and program growth or decline through the use of the institution’s Annual Report (as described in C.18. Policy on Annual Reports). If an institution reports “significant growth or decline” in its enrollments and/or programs over the past year, it will be reported to the Commission. The Commission will take appropriate action to assess the institution’s ability to maintain compliance with any of the Standards for Accreditation. *(10/11)*

When the Commission determines that any of the “substantive changes” listed above may diminish the capacity of the institution to comply with the Standards of Accreditation, the Commission will take appropriate action, including, but not limited to, requiring the institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation. Refer to the appropriate policies (as indicated in parentheses) as to the reporting requirements, timelines, visit requirements, and other notifications.

In addition, proposed changes to an institution may be so substantial that the Commission may consider that the institution to which it granted accreditation has effectively closed and a new institution is proposed to open. After affording the institution the opportunity to provide information about the changes and whether sufficient continuity of the accredited institution will be maintained, the Commission may act to require a total re-evaluation of the institution or to withdraw the accreditation and require the institution to re-apply for accreditation. *(12/11)*

The Commission allows for due process as noted in the individual policies by providing reasonable time for institutions to comply with its request for information and documentation. In all cases, the Commission will allow the institution sufficient time to respond to any findings before any final decision regarding the institution’s accredited status is made. *(10/11)*

Notifications

The institution must inform the Commission immediately of any actions it plans to take itself—or actions taken against it by other agencies—if those actions have the capacity to affect the reputation of the Commission, the institution’s good standing with the Commission and/or its acceptance by the public. This includes the institution’s satisfactory (to the Commission) resolution of any complaints in a forthright, prompt, amicable, and equitable manner. In instances where prior approval of a substantive change is granted, an effective date will be indicated. The effective date will not be retroactive, and it must be within 30 days of the Commission’s final decision of the requested substantive change (except for changes in ownership). See C.2. Policy on Change of Ownership for details. DETC member institutions should make periodic contact with the DETC staff to apprise them of governmental and media actions which may affect their institution or the Commission.

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