Pfeiffer University Faculty Handbook - Substantive Change Monitoring Policy

updated June 11, 2015

Substantive Change Monitoring Policy
Added November 14, 2011

(See Appendix O for Substantive Change Prospectus)

The purpose of this policy is to adhere to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC) requirements for reporting substantive changes. In accordance with SACS requirements, Pfeiffer University will notify the Commission of any substantive changes prior to initiation and will seek approval of such changes. Pfeiffer University is committed to establishing procedures to ensure compliance with standard 3.12.1 by providing ongoing substantive change training and information updates to faculty and staff regarding curricular and organizational changes requiring SACS notification and approval.

Institutional Responsibility:
Pfeiffer University’s Substantive Change policy ensures that the university is at all times in compliance with the SACS Comprehensive Standard, 3.12.1, Substantive Change. The following is a statement which was approved by the Commission on Colleges in December 2006 regarding Comprehensive Standard 3.12.1. It states “the institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and when required seeks approval prior to initiation of the changes.” Under federal regulations, substantive change is considered a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Other conditions requiring substantive changes include, but not limited to the following:

- 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 at a degree or credential level above 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
- Initiating distance learning courses

1. Monitoring Conditions Requiring Substantive Change: p>A Substantive Change Monitoring Committee (SCMC) will be formed and will include the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs (AVPAA), SACS Liaison, the Assistant Director of Institutional Research and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or designee. The committee will be responsible for notifying the university president of any changes that require SACS-COC approval.
The university president or designee in turn will forward letter of request (including prospectus-when necessary) indicating the proposed change and implementation date. Further, all deans, department chairs, program directors and staff initiating change (by contacting the CFO), must submit a letter to the committee requesting approval prior to submission to curriculum board or other appropriate administrative office. The committee members are responsible for reviewing substantive change policies and procedures every year during fall conference. This new policy will be disseminated institution wide in the following manner, Senior Leadership Team (SLT)/President’s Cabinet, Deans and Directors of Academic Disciplines, Staff Managers and Board of Trustees.

2. SACS Liaison Responsibilities:

The SACS Liaison is responsible for providing the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee with updates to the SACS substantive change policy. The liaison determines what action is necessary when a proposed modification represents a substantive change in critical mission requirements (new program, change in delivery systems, movement of campus location, etc.) Further, the liaison has primary responsibility for review of any changes, policies or processes associated with accreditation.

3. Assistant Director of Institutional Research

The Assistant Director of Institutional Research will assist the SACS Liaison in maintaining data profiles and provide analytical support when requested. They will assist in gathering data pertaining to headcount enrollment, retention, and completion rates.

4. Curriculum Board and Graduate Council

As Pfeiffer University’s committees responsible for approving all academic course and program changes, the Curriculum Board and Graduate Council must coordinate all course/program development activities with the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee. No recommendations for modification, addition, or removal of an academic course or program activity will be considered by the Curriculum Board/Graduate Council until it has been approved by the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee. Further, changes associated with the Teacher Education Board will be directed through the appropriate division level where the change is initiated (curriculum board-undergraduate, graduate council-graduate)

5. Substantive Change Reporting Guidelines:

All substantive changes must be reported in accordance with established timelines related to the nature of the proposal. Cited guidelines are located at the following web address: (http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp) Any institutional plan to implement a substantive change must be completed for review by the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee at least three months prior to SACS-COC established timeline for notification and approval.

Pfeiffer University Process:

1. Responsibility. The Provost and SACS Liaison will be responsible for notifying the university President of any changes that require SACS-COC approval. The university President or designee in turn will forward letter of request (including prospectus-when necessary) indicating the proposed change and implementation date. Further, all deans, department chairs, program directors and staff initiating change, must submit a letter to the Office of Provost and SACS Liaison requesting approval prior to submission to Curriculum Board or other appropriate administrative office.
2. The Office of Provost and SACS-Liaison are responsible for reviewing Substantive Change policies and procedures every two years during fall conference.

3. Reporting. All Substantive Changes must be reported in accordance with established timelines related to the nature of the proposal. Timelines for proposals may be found in the SACS-COC Substantive Change Policy (see institutional link on provost page-http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp). Any potential changes must be completed for review by SACS Liaison and Office of Provost at least three months prior to SACS-COC established timeline for notification and approval.

4. Procedures for Assuring Compliance
   a. Potential program change initiated at departmental/program level and should be documented in annual university wide planning process during each fall semester.
   b. Approval and initiation of program change by school/division/program
   c. Dean/Program Director forwards program change with prospectus (this includes faculty roster, budget & resource allocations) to Office of Provost/SACS Liaison (SACS monitoring committee).
   d. Provost (monitoring committee) forwards program change/prospectus to appropriate area (Graduate Council, Curriculum Board, Teacher Education Board)
      i. For Graduate Program-program changes submitted to Graduate Council
      ii. Education Program Changes-program changes submitted to Teacher Education Board (TEB)
      iii. Undergraduate program changes submitted to Curriculum Board
   e. Appropriate Board reviews program change (with prospectus) and forwards to general faculty assembly for vote/approval.
   f. Approved program changes and prospectus are forwarded to President by Provost
   g. Letter submitted to SACS-COC President with prospectus from University President and President forwards to Board for approval.
   h. For broader institutional changes: the appropriate administrative officer with forward prospectus to Office of Provost/SACS Liaison for review and subsequently to President for submission to SACS-COC.

Approval

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Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs/SACS Liaison

Date ____________________

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President Date

*Added September, 2011*