A. PURPOSE

As defined by SACSCOC, substantive change is a “significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.”¹ The Commission is required to review all substantive changes that occur, determine if the changes affect the quality of the institution and assure the general public that the institution continues to meet all standards. As an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, SACSCOC is required to enforce federal policies, such as substantive change.²

Christopher Newport University is responsible for following all SACSCOC substantive change procedures and inform the commission, as necessary, of any changes prior to implementation. Failure to follow the substantive change policy and procedures could result in the loss of Title IV funding or require reimbursement to the U.S. Department of Education for money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution may be referred to the commission for the imposition of a sanction or be removed from membership. CNU is required to have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely manner.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

Christopher Newport University will notify the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.

C. PROCEDURES

To ensure compliance, academic deans are responsible for completing documentation in the early stages of any curriculum proposal (e.g. new degree programs, initiation of off-campus location, etc.). Upon completion, the documentation should be submitted to the CNU SACSCOC liaison by email, who will make a determination as to whether the proposal constitutes a substantive change.

² See 34 C.F.R. § 602.22.
The CNU SACSCOC liaison shall serve on the Provost Advisory Staff (PAS) and the University Leadership Team to ensure awareness of other potential substantive changes (e.g. contract or consortia relationships, joint and dual academic agreements, changes to mission, etc.).

If required, substantive change documentation shall be submitted by the CNU SACSCOC liaison in a timely manner and according to the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy statement. Christopher Newport’s Substantive Change policy shall be published on Christopher Newport University’s website. In addition, the liaison shall annually report any submitted substantive changes to the University Leadership Team at the University Advance. All substantive change activity shall be documented by the CNU SACSCOC liaison.

D. APPROVAL AND REVISIONS:

**Approved By:** Policy Committee, August 31, 2016  
**Revision 1:** Policy Committee, October 12, 2017  
**Revision 2:** Policy Committee, November 19, 2019

E. NEXT REVIEW DATE: December 2021