J. F. Drake State Technical College is responsible for compliance with the SACS COC Substantive Change Policy as a condition of the institutions continuing accreditation. SACS defines substantive change as “a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Substantive change includes 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 establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers 50% or more of an educational program is offered: In addition, substantive changes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved
- Expanding a current degree level
- 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
- Initiating programs at a lower degree level (e.g. certificates)
- Initiating a branch campus
- Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium
- Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution
- Relocating a campus
- Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status
- Altering significantly the length of a program
- Closing an institution/program

J. F. Drake State Technical College has developed and implemented the following system to ensure that the institution stays in compliance with the Commission on College’s Substantive Change Policy:

**Substantive Change Committee:**

1. The following executive administrative officers serve on the institution’s Substantive Change Committee: Accreditation Liaison, College President, Dean of Instructional and Student Services, Associate Dean of Instruction, Student Services Management Director, Business Manager, Director of Planning and Resource Development Title III Administrator, and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

Each of the committee members is responsible for being knowledgeable of the SACS COC substantive change policy, and the committee is responsible for informing the College’s President of proposals that may be considered a substantive change for the College.
2. Changes are reported to the Chairperson of the Substantive Change Committee. The Substantive Change Committee will meet each year, or as needed, to review the Commission’s Substantive Change policy, to discuss any possible changes planned for the College that might be substantive in nature, and to examine the institution’s current offerings and operations to make certain that the College is in compliance with the Commission’s Substantive Change policy.

3. Proposed changes are reviewed by the committee to determine if they are substantive. If any of the changes are substantive, then the committee also determines the specific procedure for reporting the change to the Commission.

4. The President is responsible for notifying the Commission of any substantive changes.

5. If the Commission requires the institution to write a prospectus or prepare additional documentation beyond the notification letter, the Accreditation Liaison, with assistance from the Substantive Change Committee, is responsible for preparing the documentation and for organizing any onsite substantive change committee visits. Additional committees can also be organized to assist in these tasks.

6. J. F. Drake State’s College’s Substantive Change policy is published in the Institution Handbook and Policy Manual and on the website. In addition, the Substantive Change Committee shares the policy and/or any changes to the policy as needed with all of the College’s administrators during Administrative Council and strategic planning meetings.

The College’s SACS Liaison Responsibilities:

The SACS Liaison provides the members of the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee with regular updates (at least annually) on the SACS substantive change policy and works with the committee to determine if a proposed change is substantive. The liaison also determines what action is necessary when a proposed change is substantive and has the primary responsibility for ensuring that an appropriate notice and/or prospectus is sent to SACS COC. The liaison is the point person for required follow-up actions and reporting.

Academic Council Responsibility:

As the statutory body responsible for approving all academic course and program changes, the College’s Academic Council must coordinate with the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee. No recommendation for a modification, addition, or removal of an academic course or program will be considered by the Substantive Change Monitoring Committee until it has been approved by the Academic Council. In accordance with the College Statutes, “the Academic Council shall evaluate all new courses and programs as well as changes in extant courses and programs for congruence with the mission of J. F. Drake State Technical College. The Academic Council shall also review existing programs on a periodic basis for their continued adherence to institutional purpose and their quality and viability”.


### INTRODUCTION

Substantive change is a federal term pertaining to any “significant modification of the nature and scope of an accredited institution.” Colleges and Universities must notify their accrediting body of potential or actual substantive change in a timely fashion and in many cases must receive approval for such change from the accrediting body before the initiative is implemented. J. F. Drake State Technical College regional accrediting body, the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), is required by the federal government to monitor its constituents’ compliance with the substantive change policy and to grant permission for major changes to occur. In order to ensure our compliance, all proposers of new programs, degrees, and other major initiatives should review the substantive change policy at the link the relevant portion of the SACS website, which contains much useful information: [http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp](http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp).

In addition, proposers must fill out this checklist and submit it to the J. F. Drake State Technical College SACS Liaison prior to presenting it to the Academic Programs Substantive Change Committee.

Please feel free to call Dean of Instructional and Student Services, Dr. Patricia G. Sims with any questions (256) 551-5122 or to email her at patricia.sims@drakestate.edu.

### CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This initiative …</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiates coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expands at current degree level (significant departure from current programs – no closely related counterpart exists among previously approved programs in the curriculum).</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are a number of new faculty required?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are &gt; 25% of the courses new?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are ≥ 50% of the courses new?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires new library or other learning resources.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiates a branch campus.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program will be initiated at new foreign sites.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initiates off-campus sites where
Student can obtain 50% or more credits toward program.
□ □
Student can obtain 25-49% of credit toward program.
□ □
Adds significantly different program at an approved site.
□ □
Initiates distance learning
Offering 50% or more of program.
□ □
Offering 25-49% of program.
□ □
Initiates programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium.
□ □
Changes the number of credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program.
□ □
Initiates a merger/consolidation.
□ □
Changes governance, ownership, control or legal status.
□ □
Alters significantly the length of a program.
□ □
Closes an institution/program; initiates teach-out agreements.
□ □

Thank you for your attention to this checklist, and for helping to ensure J. F. Drake State Technical College’s compliance with federal regulations.

Proposed Program ________________________________
School(s) ___________________________________
Point-of-Contact ________________________________
Date _______________________________________

□ □