

**AMERICAN COUNCIL ON PHARMACEUTICAL
EDUCATION**



Substantive Change Policies and Procedures

January 2003

Overview of ACPE Responsibilities

ACPE is responsible for reviewing all substantive changes that occur between regularly scheduled comprehensive on-site evaluations to determine whether or not the change has affected the quality of the total program and to ensure the public that all aspects of the professional program in pharmacy continue to meet defined standards.

While the decision to implement a substantive change is a programmatic prerogative and responsibility, ACPE is obligated to determine the effect of any substantive change on the program's ability to meet the accreditation standards.

Overview of Responsibilities of an Accredited College or School

It is the responsibility of an accredited college or school to follow the Substantive Change policies and procedures of ACPE and to inform ACPE of such changes in accord with those procedures. If an accredited program is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact ACPE staff for consultation (cf. ACPE Policy #18: Substantive Change).

Definition of Substantive Change

Substantive change involves a substantial modification or expansion or contraction of the nature and scope of an accredited program. The Council's definition of substantive change includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any change in the established mission or goals of the institution or college/school;
2. Curricular change that represent a significant departure in either content or method of delivery, from those that were offered during the program's previous accreditation cycle including:
 - a. Development of a non-traditional doctor of pharmacy program
 - b. Development of a joint delivery of program agreement
 - c. Use of distance learning technologies or other unique methodologies to deliver a substantial portion of the curriculum (e.g. 25% or higher);
3. A substantial change in enrollment in the professional program (defined as 20% or more in one year or cumulatively over two consecutive years);
4. A substantial change in the number of clock or credit hours required for successful completion of the program;
5. A significant change in the length of the program;
6. The establishment of an additional geographic location at which substantial portions of the program are offered;
7. A substantial change in faculty composition or size;
8. Change in the legal status, governance, ownership or resources of the program;
9. Changes in leadership;
10. Changes in organizational structure;

11. Change in status with other accrediting agency; and
12. Any other changes that the Dean feels require notification of ACPE.

Procedures for Reporting Substantive Change

In general, a program considering or planning a substantive change should notify ACPE early in the institution's planning. Such notification will provide an opportunity for a program to seek consultation from ACPE's professional staff regarding the potential effect of the change on the accreditation status and the procedures to be followed. Notification of ACPE may require the submission of a comprehensive academic plan demonstrating the program's continued compliance with the accreditation standards.

The Comprehensive Academic Plan

The academic plan submitted to the Council should include the following information regarding the substantive change, where applicable:

1. Abstract
 - Describe the proposed change.
 - Provide a timeline for implementation of the substantive change.
 - State the projected number of students affected by the change, if applicable.
 - Describe the instructional delivery methods that will be used to implement the change, if applicable.

2. Background Information
 - Provide a clear statement of the nature and purpose of the change in the context of the program's mission and goals.
 - Discuss the rationale for the change.
 - Provide evidence of inclusion of the change in the program's ongoing planning and evaluation processes.
 - Describe any changes to the College or School's organizational structure that will be implemented as a result of the substantive change.
 - Include documentation that faculty and other groups were involved in the review and approval of the change.
 - Describe an exit strategy for protecting students if the proposed initiative fails to be viable.

3. Curriculum

- Describe any modifications to curriculum, including the teaching and learning processes used to deliver the curriculum, which will be implemented as a result of the initiative.
- Describe the College or School's technology capacity to teaching and learning effectively.
- Describe the plan for curricular assessment; including assessment of teaching strategies, indicators for student learning and the curriculum, related to the substantive change.

4. Students

- Describe any change in the program's policies and procedures for recruitment that will be implemented as a result of the substantive change.
- Describe modifications to the program's Student Affairs area which will be implemented as a result of the substantive change, if applicable.
- Describe the proposed methods the program will utilize to ensure adequate professionalization of students for substantive changes involving the establishment of campuses at separate geographic locations or involving distance learning techniques.

5. Faculty

- Provide a complete roster of faculty employed to teach in the program.
- Describe faculty and staff positions required to fully implement the substantive change.
- Include plans for recruiting faculty and staff.
- Describe the impact of the new initiative on faculty workload.
- Describe the actual and planned mechanisms for faculty development related to the substantive change.

6. Library and Learning Resources

- Describe the library and educational resources available to support the substantive change.

7. Physical Facilities

- Provide a description of physical facilities and equipment to support the initiative.
- Include a feasibility study of available practice sites, including:
 - A description of the number and types of sites, and the level of practice at the sites.

- Assess the impact of the substantive change on the existing program.

8. Financial Resources

- Provide a business plan that fully describes the financial resources to support the change.
- Provide a cash flow analysis for the first year of implementation.
- Demonstrate with supporting documentation that adequate funds will be available for a minimum of 1 year for:
 - Operations
 - Construction/capital development (where appropriate)
- An unencumbered reserve fund to be used to implement the Exit Strategy

Evaluation by the Council

The Board of Directors will review the comprehensive academic plan to determine the need to further assess its impact on the total program's ability to meet the accreditation standards. The circumstances provided may present the need for additional review and reconsideration of accreditation in accord with standard evaluation and operational procedures or appropriate monitoring, such as a focused on-site evaluation by members of the Board of Directors, professional staff and additional team members as appropriate.

Non-Compliance with Substantive Change Reporting

If a program fails to follow this substantive change policy and its procedures, the accreditation of the program may be placed in jeopardy.

ACPE's current policy/procedures for substantive change

Those Colleges and Schools of Pharmacy which are in operation, have an accredited professional program in pharmacy and propose to implement substantive change in their program should notify the Council of such proposals. The Council's definition of substantive change includes: any change in the established mission or goals of the institution; the addition or deletion of courses, pathways or programs that represent a significant departure in either content or method of delivery, from those that were offered during the program's previous accreditation cycle (e.g. a non-traditional doctor of pharmacy program, development of a joint delivery of program agreement, etc.); a substantial change in enrollment; a substantial change in the number of clock or credit hours required for successful completion of the program; a significant change in the length of the program; the establishment of an additional geographic location at which the program is offered; and any other changes that the Dean feels require notification of ACPE. Notification of the Council should provide documentation that the program will continue to comply with accreditation standards. The circumstances provided may present the need for review and reconsideration of accreditation in accord with standard

evaluation and operational procedures or appropriate monitoring, such as an on-site review by the professional staff.