

University of Central Florida Substantive Change Reporting Procedures

A substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution as defined by federal regulations and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policy. Qualifying changes include but are not necessarily limited to those listed in the table below. In accordance with UCF Policy 4-505 Reporting of Substantive Change, the designated UCF SACSCOC liaison in the Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for establishing internal procedures for identifying and reporting substantive changes. Appropriate procedures are identified below as are the timeframes and administrators responsible for notifying the UCF SACSCOC liaison about planned or potential changes. Please refer to **Appendix A** of this document for **UCF Definitions and Guiding Principles for Evaluating Changes as Substantive**; the appendix is an important companion document to and resource for interpreting the reporting requirements below. If uncertain about whether or not a particular activity or action constitutes a substantive change, responsible administrators should consult with the UCF SACSCOC liaison. Please note the commission's expectation that all university correspondence with SACSCOC be directed through UCF's Chief Executive Officer (the president) or the UCF SACSCOC liaison.

Type of Change	SACSCOC Procedures					UCF Procedures		
	SACSCOC Procedure ¹	Prior Notification Required to SACSCOC	Time Frame for Contacting SACSCOC	SACSCOC Approval Required Prior to Implementation	Documentation Required by SACSCOC	Time Frame for Notifying UCF's SACSCOC Liaison in Academic Affairs Prior to Implementation	EARLY AA NOTIFICATION* Administrators Responsible for Notifying UCF's SACSCOC Liaison in Academic Affairs During Initial Planning	SAFEGUARD UCF PROCESSES* UCF Processes or Procedures Providing Early Warning Flag to Responsible Administrators
Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved	1	Yes	12 months	Yes	Application for level change Due dates: April 15 or October 1	NA – UCF is Level VI	NA - UCF is Level VI	NA – UCF is Level VI
Expanding at current degree level (<i>significant departure from current programs</i>) ²	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	Initiating college dean(s), vice provost for academic program quality, and, as applicable, the dean and vice provost responsible for undergraduate studies or graduate studies	New program approval process Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files

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								/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
Initiating a branch campus ³	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	President or designee (e.g. provost, vice provost for regional campuses, internationalization officer)	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee
Relocating a main or branch campus	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	President or designee (e.g. provost, vice provost for regional campuses, internationalization officer)	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee
Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	Initiating dean, vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs), or internationalization officer, as appropriate	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee
Initiating degree completion programs	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	Initiating dean and, if applicable, vice provost for	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing

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							regional campuses	undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
Initiating a certificate program at employer's request and on short notice...								
...using existing approved courses	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
...at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)	1	NA	NA	Yes	Modified Prospectus	12 months	Initiating dean and, if applicable, vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs)	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf UCF Instructional Site Activity Early Warning Methodology
...that is a significant departure from previously approved programs	1	Yes	Approval required prior to implementation	Yes	Modified Prospectus	12 months	Initiating dean and, if applicable, vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews

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							education programs), and director of distributed learning	https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
Initiating other certificate programs								
...using existing approved courses	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
...at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	Initiating dean and, if applicable, vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs)	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf UCF Annual Review of Off-campus Instructional Site Activity and Early Warning Methodology
...that is a significant departure from previously approved programs	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	Initiating dean and, if applicable, vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews

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							education programs) and director of distributed learning	https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution ⁴	1	NA	NA	Yes	Contact Commission Staff (Also see page 16, item 9)	12 months	President or designee	Strategic planning process
Initiating joint or dual degrees with another institution:	(See " Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards " policy)							
Joint Programs: with another SACSCOC accredited institution	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution	12 months or prior to submission of grant application, if applicable, whichever is sooner	Initiating college dean(s) and, as applicable, the dean and vice provost responsible for undergraduate studies or graduate studies, the vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs), the internationalization officer, the vice president for research and	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf UCF Guidelines for International Agreements UCF Policy 2-102.2 Contract Review
Joint Programs: with an institution not accredited by SACSCOC	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus			
Dual Programs	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution			

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							commercialization, and the general counsel	
Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school)								
...Student can obtain 50% or more credits toward program	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	As applicable, the vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs), initiating college dean(s), the dean and vice provost responsible for undergraduate studies or graduate studies, and/or the internationalization officer	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf UCF Annual Review of Off-campus Instructional Site Activity and Early Warning Methodology
...Student can obtain 25-49% of credit	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Letter of notification	9 months		
...Student can obtain 24% or less	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		

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Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites								
...Adding approved programs that ARE NOT significantly different from current programs at the site	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Initiating college dean(s) and, as applicable, the vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs), and the internationalization officer	UCF Annual Review of Off-campus Instructional Site Activity and Early Warning Methodology *Note that even though such program additions are not considered a substantive change reportable to SACSCOC, the institution must track its program offerings at all locations for other SACSCOC reporting requirements and quality assurance oversight.
...Adding approved programs that ARE significantly different from current programs <u>at the site</u> but NOT <u>at the institution</u>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	12 months		
...Adding programs that ARE significantly different from current programs <u>at the site</u> AND <u>at the institution</u>	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	Initiating college dean(s), the vice provost for academic program quality, and, as applicable, the dean and vice provost	New program approval process Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum

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							responsible for undergraduate studies or graduate studies, the vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs), and the internationalization officer	committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
Altering significantly the length of a program ⁵	1	NA	NA	Yes	Modified Prospectus	12 months	Initiating college dean(s) and, as applicable, the dean and vice provost responsible for undergraduate studies or graduate studies, and the vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs)	Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
Changing from clock hours to credit hours	1	NA	NA	Yes	Justify reasons for change, indicate	N/A	N/A	N/A – UCF already uses credit hours only

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					calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information			
Initiating a direct assessment competency-based program	See SACSCOC Policy " Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs "	Yes	6 months	Yes	Submit "Screening Form" with letter of notification. If Prospectus is required, due dates: April 8 or September 15.	12 months	Initiating college dean(s), and, as applicable, the vice provost for academic program quality, the vice provost for regional campuses (and corporate education programs), the dean and vice provost responsible for undergraduate studies or graduate studies, and the director of distributed learning	New program approval process Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
Initiating distance learning...								
...offering 50 % or more of program for the first time	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus	At time of annual review of distance learning activity	Director of distributed learning	UCF Annual Review of Distance Learning Activity and Early Warning Methodology

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...offering 25-49 %	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification			*Note: Although UCF was approved by SACSCOC to offer 50% or more of a program via distance learning in 2005 and expanded online offerings are not considered a substantive change reportable to SACSCOC, the institution must track its online program offerings for other SACSCOC reporting requirements and quality assurance oversight.
...offering 24 % or less	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	No	Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement	12 months or prior to submission of grant application, if applicable, whichever is sooner	Initiating college dean(s), and, as applicable, the vice provosts, the vice president of research and commercialization, the director of distributed	New program approval process Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews

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							learning, and the general counsel	https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf UCF Guidelines for International Agreements UCF Policy 2-102.2 Contract Review
Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs								
...if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the COC accredited institution	1	NA	NA	Yes	Prospectus	12 months or prior to submission of grant application, if applicable, whichever is sooner	Initiating college dean(s), and, as applicable, the vice provosts, the vice president of research and commercialization, the director of distributed learning, and the general counsel	New program approval process Policies, procedures, and guidelines governing undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee reviews https://afia.ucf.edu/files/UGandGradRptSubChg6.pdf
...if the entity provides less than 25% of an	2	Yes	Prior to implementation	NA	Copy of the signed agreement	6 months	Initiating college dean(s), and, as applicable, the	UCF Guidelines for International Agreements

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educational program offered by the COC accredited institution							vice provosts, the vice president of research and commercialization, the director of distributed learning, and the general counsel	UCF Policy 2-102.2 Contract Review
Initiating a merger or consolidation with another institution	See SACSCOC policy " Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status "	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus Due dates: April 8 or September 15	12 months	President or designee	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee
Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution	1	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	President or designee	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee
Acquiring any program or site from another institution	See SACSCOC policy " Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or "	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	President or designee	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee

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	Legal Status "							
Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing	See SACSCOC policy " Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status "	Yes	6 months	Yes	Prospectus	12 months	President or designee	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee
Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution...								
...Institution to teach out its own students	3	Yes	Immediately following decision to close	Yes	Description of teach-out plan included with letter of notification	12 months	President or designee (e.g., chief academic officer, vice president for facilities and finance)	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee
...Institution contracts with another institution to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)	3	Yes	Immediately following decision to close	Yes	Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement detailing terms included with	12 months	President or designee (e.g., chief academic officer, vice president for facilities and finance)	BOT approval process – contact the UCF staff liaison to the appropriate BOT committee UCF Policy 2-102.2

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					notification			Contract Review

¹SACSCOC procedures one, two, and three are described in detail in the commission's policy regarding [Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#). Please work with the UCF SASCCOC liaison or designee to assure completion of the appropriate reporting procedure.

*Academic Affairs Early Notification Procedure: Administrator's responsible for notifying academic affairs of proposed substantive changes should inform the UCF SACSCOC liaison at the time of initial planning, even if it is in advance of the timeframe noted above. Several existing UCF procedures noted herein serve as safeguards for flagging potential substantive change proposals not identified during the early planning process.

Associated Fees and Expenses

Substantive changes can involve associated fees. Costs vary based upon the type of change and other factors. For more information on related SACSCOC fees please see the commission's policy on [Dues, Fees, and Expenses](#). Depending upon the nature and scope of the change, other UCF units, including academic affairs, may also assess an overhead fee. Typically, all fees associated with processing substantive changes are the responsibility of the initiating unit.

APPENDIX A

UCF Definitions and Guiding Principles for Evaluating Changes as Substantive

A substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution as defined by federal regulations and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policy. The following definitions and guiding principles should be used to help determine if a planned or potential change should go through the SACSCOC notification and/or approval process. The definitions below include and expand upon those articulated in the [SASCCOC policy on Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#) for direct application at UCF. Members of the UCF community should review [UCF Policy 4-505 Reporting of Substantive Change](#) and UCF's Substantive Change Reporting Procedures (above) to assure familiarity with UCF internal reporting procedures and timeframes that can impact planned activities. If unsure about whether or not a planned or potential change requires reporting, please consult with the designated UCF SACSCOC liaison or designee in the Office of Academic Affairs.

Branch campus – is a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is

- permanent in nature;
- offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential;
- has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and
- has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

Contractual Agreement – typically is one in which an institution enters an agreement for receipt of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs (i.e., clinical training internships, etc.) delivered by another institution or service provider.

Consortial Relationship - typically is one in which two or more institutions share in the responsibility of developing and delivering courses and programs that meet mutually agreed upon standards of academic quality. Dual and joint degree programs as defined by the SACSCOC policy on [Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards](#) are considered consortia; their definitions are reproduced below:

An agreement by two or more institutions to grant **dual academic awards** is one whereby students study at two or more institutions and each institution grants a separate academic award bearing only its name, seal, and signature.

An agreement by two or more institutions to grant a **joint academic award** is one whereby students study at two or more institutions and the institutions grant a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the participating institutions.

Many partnerships use the term consortia to describe the relationship between participating parties; however, not all such relationships meet the spirit of the SACSCOC definition. Key to determining whether or not a particular partnership fits the SACSCOC definition for purposes of substantive change reporting is whether or not the partnership involves a formal agreement that includes the sharing of courses or programs (beyond an articulation agreement) and/or a commitment to offer participating students a dual or joint academic award. Dependency upon one or more partners in order to offer

students the courses or programs covered by the agreement is another key element in identifying a consortial relationship that should normally be reported to SACSCOC.

Correspondence education – is a formal educational process under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student; courses are typically self-paced.

Degree completion program – a program typically designed for a non-traditional undergraduate population such as working adults who have completed some college-level course work but have not achieved a baccalaureate degree. Students in such programs may transfer in credit from courses taken previously and may receive credit for experiential learning. Courses in degree completion programs are often offered in an accelerated format or meet during evening and weekend hours, or may be offered via distance learning technologies.

Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs – is defined by federal regulations as an instructional program that, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, uses direct assessment of student learning relying solely on the attainment of defined competencies, or recognizes the direct assessment of student learning by others. The assessment must be consistent with the accreditation of the institution or program using the results of the assessment.

Distance education - a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVD’s, and CD-ROMs if used as part of the distance learning course or program.

UCF Modality Type and Definition	UCF Designation as Face-to-Face or Distance
W – World Wide Web courses are conducted via web-based instruction and collaboration. Some courses may require minimal campus attendance or in-person/proctored examinations.	Distance
M – Mixed Mode/Reduced Seat Time courses include both required classroom attendance and online instruction. Classes have substantial activity conducted over the web, which substitutes for some classroom meetings.	Face-to-Face
V – Video Streaming courses are delivered over the web via streaming digital video which may be supplemented by additional Web activity, projects or exams	Distance
RV – Video Streaming/ Reduced Seat Time courses provide classroom-based content over the web via streaming video and classroom attendance is not required. Other required activities that substitute for video instruction may include any of the following: web activity, in-person or proctored examinations, and labs. See course notes for details.	Distance

P – Face To Face Instruction courses have required classroom attendance and meet on a regularly scheduled basis. Students may encounter internet and/or computer requirements in these classes.	Face-to-Face
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Dual degree – refers to separate program completion credentials each of which bears only the name, seal, and signature of the institution awarding the degree to the student.

Educational program – means a coherent course of study leading to the awarding of a credential (i.e., a degree, diploma or certificate). At UCF, minors and undergraduate certificate programs do not lead to the awarding of a credential; rather, they serve as a supplement to a major that can only be granted together with the award of a UCF baccalaureate degree. As such, minors and undergraduate certificates are not considered educational programs for purposes of SACSCOC reporting.

Geographically separate – denotes an instructional site or branch campus that is located physically apart from the main campus of the institution.

Joint degree – refers to a single program completion credential bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the two or more institutions awarding the degree to the student.

Modified prospectus - a prospectus submitted in lieu of a full prospectus for certain designated substantive changes. When a modified prospectus is acceptable, the Commission specifies requested information from the institution.

Notification – is a letter from an institution’s chief executive officer, or his/her designated representative (the UCF SACSCOC liaison), to the SACSCOC president summarizing a proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the complete physical address if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site or branch campus. The policy and procedures for reporting and review of institutional substantive change are outlined in the document [Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#).

Program closure – refers to an institutional decision to remove an educational program as defined above from its portfolio of offerings and to effectively eliminate a student’s ability to pursue a course of study in the subject matter. In most cases, the common prefix(es) assigned to courses in the corresponding subject matter would also no longer be in use at the institution or would be nearly eliminated. Curriculum modifications resulting in a repackaging or unbundling of courses that does not result in eliminating a student’s ability to pursue a course of study in the subject matter are not considered program closures for purposes of substantive change reporting because they do not represent a significant modification (i.e., reduction) to the nature and scope of the institution’s current accreditation. Similarly, changes in program name only do not represent a program closure. Normally, decisions to close a program such that a student may no longer pursue the associated course of study, require Board of Trustees approval and can involve a reduction in workforce (layoff) although a reduction in workforce may also take place without program closure to accommodate such factors as lack of program demand or curriculum modification. Temporary suspension of admission to a program is not a program closure as suspending admission does not prevent a student who has already declared the program of study from continuing to complete that program of study.

Significant departure – Changes to the nature and scope of the institution’s current accreditation are subject to substantive change reporting when they represent a significant departure from the institution’s existing state.

...in mission:

Significant changes in mission are those that lead to a fundamental shift in the nature of the institution, such as an institution that had offered only professional programs deciding to add general education offerings, or a technical college transforming itself into a comprehensive community college. A change in mission wording does not by itself represent a change to the nature of the institution. A change to the latter, however, is subject to substantive change reporting.

...from existing programs:

A significant departure in program is one in which the proposed new program represents a program that is not closely related to previously approved programs at the institution or site or for the mode of delivery in question. In other words, it has no closely related counterpart among the previously approved programs in the curriculum. To determine whether a new program is a “significant departure,” it is helpful to consider the following questions:

- What previously approved programs does the institution offer that are closely related to the new program and how are they related?
- Will significant additional equipment or facilities be needed?
- Will significant additional financial resources be needed?
- Will a significant number of new courses will be required?
- Will a significant number of new faculty members will be required?
- Will significant additional library or learning resources be needed?

...in program length:

Significant changes in program length are those with noticeable impact on the program’s completion time (e.g., increasing a baccalaureate degree program from 124 hours to 150 hours).

Teach-out agreement - a written agreement between institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students and a reasonable opportunity for students to complete their program of study if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50% or more of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. This applies to the closure of an institution, a site, or a program. Such a teach-out agreement requires SACSCOC approval in advance of implementation.

Teach-out plan - a written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50% or more of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between institutions. This applies to the closure of an institution, a site, or a program. Teach-out plans must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation.