Closing Programs and Off-campus Instructional Sites

SACCR 2025 Conference



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Goals

At the end of today's session, you'll know

1. the purpose of a teach-out plan and closure approval;
2. what requires closure approval;
3. what does not require closure approval;
4. the importance of addressing all required teach-out plan content;

more...

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Goals

...continued

5. when to submit a teach-out plan, and;
6. if a teach-out agreement is necessary.

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1 Purpose

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Purpose

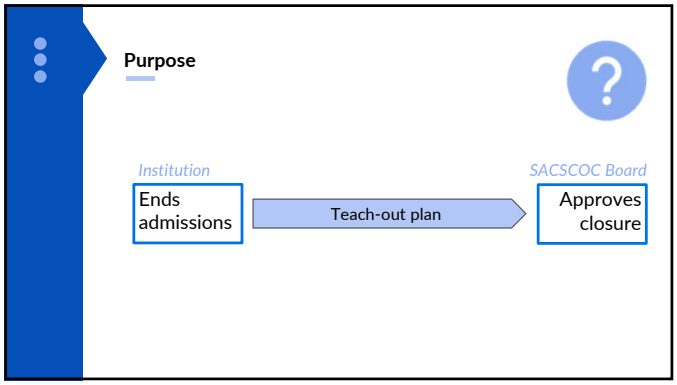
- Ensure reasonable completion options are offered to all affected students
- Provide options that minimize disruption to expected time-to-completion
- Provide options minimize additional costs, if any
- Ensure options do not require unreasonable travel or relocation, highly dependent on the program and location

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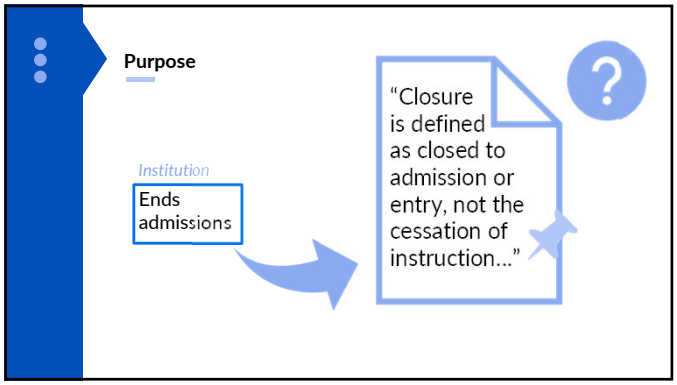
Purpose

- Reasonableness is a function of
  - the program's uniqueness and thus the number and range of completion options,
  - the location relative to comparable completion options, and
  - the student population served, viz., for method of delivery closures
- Reasonableness is demonstrated by the institution

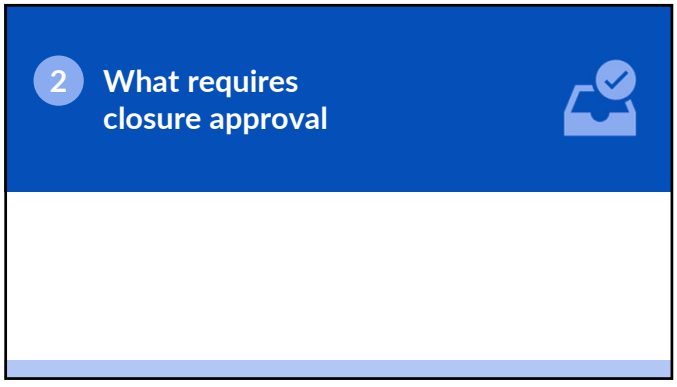
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Purpose
Institution
Ends admissions
Teach-out plan
SACSCOC Board
Approves closure

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Purpose
Institution
Ends admissions
"Closure is defined as closed to admission or entry, not the cessation of instruction..."

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What requires closure approval

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What requires closure

- Closure approval is required when you end admission to
  - a for-credit program (degree, certificate, diploma, etc.),
  - a program at an off-campus instructional site (OCIS),
  - a program method of delivery, or
  - a site (OCIS), i.e., all programs closed at an OCIS.

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What requires closure

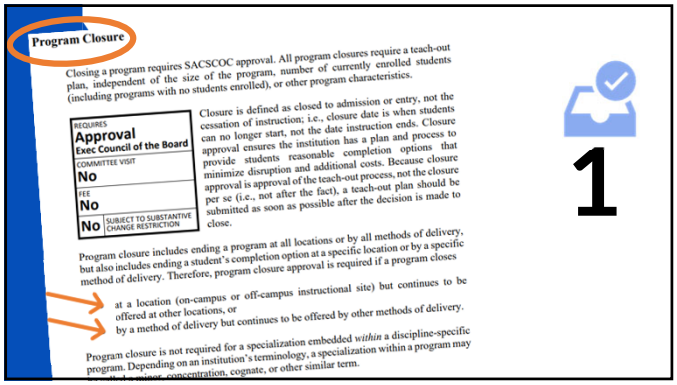
- Two – *and only two* – substantive change types, as defined in policy, for closures

  1. **Program Closure**
  2. **Off-campus instructional site closure**

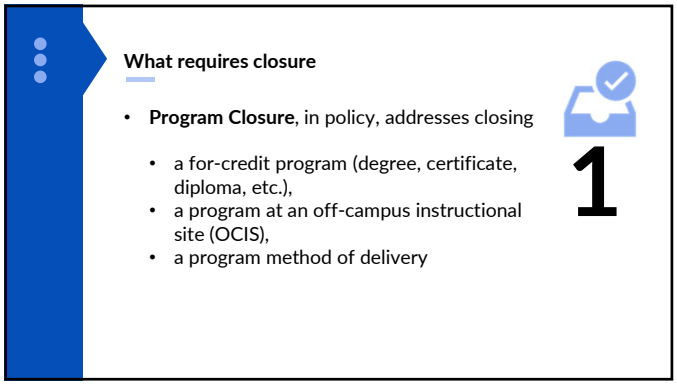
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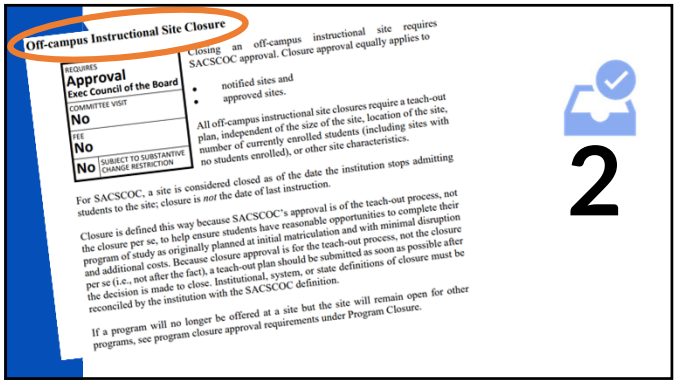
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Program Closure
Closing a program requires SACSCOC approval. All program closures require a teach-out plan, independent of the size of the program, number of currently enrolled students (including programs with no students enrolled), or other program characteristics.
REQUIRES
Approval
Exec Council of the Board
COMMITTEE VISIT
No
FEE
No
No
SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION
Closure is defined as closed to admission or entry, not the cessation of instruction; i.e., closure date is when students can no longer start, not the date instruction ends. Closure approval ensures the institution has a plan and process to provide students reasonable completion options that minimize disruption and additional costs. Because closure approval is approval of the teach-out process, not the closure per se (i.e., not after the fact), a teach-out plan should be submitted as soon as possible after the decision is made to close.
Program closure includes ending a program at all locations or by all methods of delivery, but also includes ending a student's completion option at a specific location or by a specific method of delivery. Therefore, program closure approval is required if a program closes
at a location (on-campus or off-campus instructional site) but continues to be offered at other locations, or
by a method of delivery but continues to be offered by other methods of delivery.
Program closure is not required for a specialization embedded within a discipline-specific program. Depending on an institution's terminology, a specialization within a program may
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What requires closure
Program Closure, in policy, addresses closing
a for-credit program (degree, certificate, diploma, etc.),
a program at an off-campus instructional site (OCIS),
a program method of delivery
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Off-campus Instructional Site Closure
REQUIRES
Approval
Exec Council of the Board
COMMITTEE VISIT
No
FEE
No
No
SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RESTRICTION
Closing an off-campus instructional site requires SACSCOC approval. Closure approval equally applies to
notified sites and
approved sites.
All off-campus instructional site closures require a teach-out plan, independent of the size of the site, location of the site, number of currently enrolled students (including sites with no students enrolled), or other site characteristics.
For SACSCOC, a site is considered closed as of the date the institution stops admitting students to the site; closure is not the date of last instruction.
Closure is defined this way because SACSCOC's approval is of the teach-out process, not the closure per se, to help ensure students have reasonable opportunities to complete their program of study as originally planned at initial matriculation and with minimal disruption and additional costs. Because closure approval is for the teach-out process, not the closure per se (i.e., not after the fact), a teach-out plan should be submitted as soon as possible after the decision is made to close. Institutional, system, or state definitions of closure must be reconciled by the institution with the SACSCOC definition.
If a program will no longer be offered at a site but the site will remain open for other programs, see program closure approval requirements under Program Closure.
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What requires closure

- **Off-campus Instructional Site Closure,** in policy, addresses closing
  - a notified site or
  - an approve site
  - where all instruction for all programs is ending.

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What requires closure

Off-campus Instructional Site Closure approval

- removes the site from your inventory of open OCISs and, therefore,
- removes it from the publicly available website

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3 What does not require closure approval

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What does not require closure

- Specializations embedded within a discipline-specific program for which a separate credential is not awarded.
  - The terminology varies considerably across institutions but may be called a
    - minor, concentration, cognate, specialization, endorsement, rider, area, etc.

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What does not require closure

- Completion pathways:
  - dual academic awards (unless the award offered standalone – i.e., could be earned outside of a dual academic award – is closing)
  - So-called 3+2 or 3+3 programs, e.g., BS-to-PharmD pathway, or a BA-to-JD pathway (unless the standalone program is closing)
- Transfer articulation agreements

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4 Teach-out plan content

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Teach-out plan content

- Probably the easiest part of the closure – but not trivial
- The teach-out is a description of the institution's closure plan to ensure students are not disadvantaged

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Teach-out plan content

- Content is prescribed:
  - Policy states, in a numbered list, what to include and address
  - Program closure and site closure content, while addressed separately in policy, are in parallel form
  - Some teach-out content is federally mandated and is not discretionary by institutions or accreditors

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Teach-out plan content

Off-campus Instructional Site Closure

☑ Submit a teach-out plan to include the following:

1. Provide the closure date, defined by SACSCOC as the date when students are no longer *admitted*.
2. Provide a communication plan to inform all affected parties of the closure to include
   a. how each of the following will be informed for the closure:
      i. currently enrolled students,
      ii. students with lapsed enrollment (i.e., not currently enrolled but recently enrolled), and
      iii. prospective students.
   b. how faculty and staff will be informed, viz., admissions and recruiting / marketing staffs; and
   c. how community or industry partners will be informed. If not applicable, provide an affirmative statement to that effect.
3. If the institution is providing options for students to complete at another institution(s), provide copies of all planned communication from the institution and from the teach-out institution(s) related to the closure. All communication must demonstrate the institutions are making accurate statements about students' ability to transfer credits to the teach-out institution(s) and disclose tuition, fees, and other costs at the teach-out institution(s).
4. An explanation of how all affected students will be helped to complete their programs of study with minimal disruption or additional costs.

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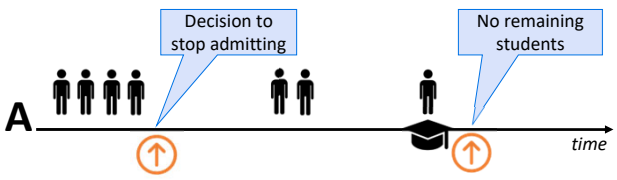
5 When to submit

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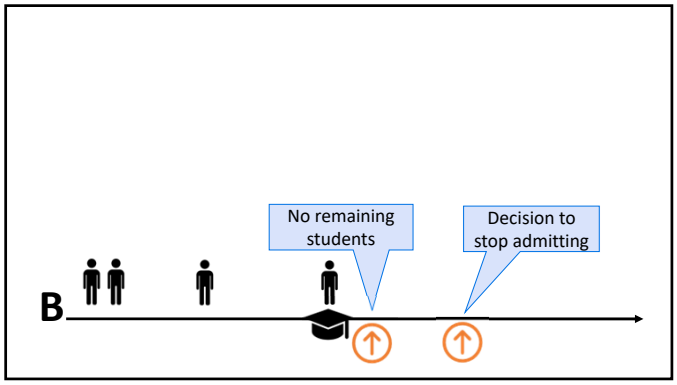
When to submit

- Submit the teach-out plan as soon as possible after the decision is made to close
  - A good rule-of-thumb is within one month of the decision to close
  - The January 1 and July 1 deadlines, therefore, don't apply to closures
  - Remember: *closure* as used here means when admission is stopped

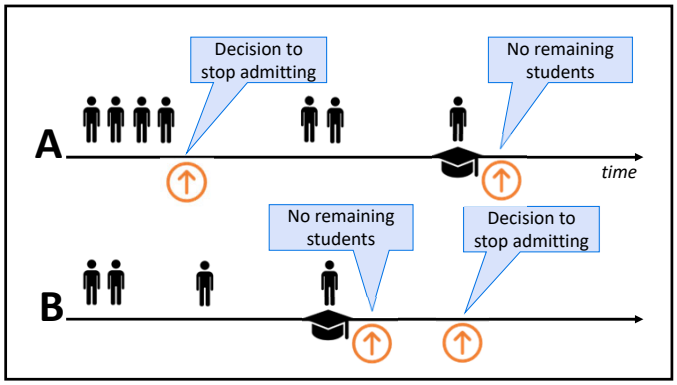
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6 Teach-out agreement

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Teach-out agreement

- A written agreement with a partnering teach-out is necessary if and only if terms are negotiated other than a standard transfer articulation.
- Other terms could include
  - tuition parity guarantees,
  - application or other fee waivers,
  - time limits,
  - financial assistance,
  - admission criteria, and others.

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Teach-out agreement

- Are subject to approval in addition to the teach-out plan
  - Additional agreements may be submitted for approval if negotiated *after* the teach-out approval
- There is no standard content or format; at the institutions' discretion and professional judgment
- Teach-out agreements are uncommon for program and site closures

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