

**2018 SACSCOC Learning and Student Resources Committee Meeting
April 19, 2016
Library Administrative Suite (MC 4.2)**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Introductions
2. SACSCOC Overview
3. Committee Charge & Assigned Principles
4. Next Steps & Takeaway Tasks

Learning and Student Resources Committee Members

Josh Hammers (Committee Chair)	Director of Assessment, Student Affairs
Debbie Montgomery (Committee Co-Chair)	Associate Library Director, University Library
Paul F. Diehl	Associate Provost and Director, Center for Teaching and Learning; Professor, School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
Vladimir Dragovic	Professor and Program Head, School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Richard Golden	Professor and Program Head, School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences
James Cannici	Director, Student Counseling Center
Cristen Casey	Assistant Vice President for International Programs, International Center
Darren Crone	Assistant Provost, Learning Technologies
Don Davis	Director, Technology Customer Service, Office of Information Technology
Frank Feagans	Associate Vice President of Enterprise Applications, Office of Information Technology
Kimshi Hickman	Associate Dean, Student Success Center
John Jackson	Associate Dean, Undergraduate Education
Elizabeth Samuel	Senior Associate Director of Academic Records, Registrar's Office
Amanda Smith	Interim Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Director of Wellness Center
Mary Jo Venetis	Director, Provost's Office
Grant Branam	Student Fee Advisory Committee Representative, Student Government; School of Arts, Technology, and Emerging Communication
Luis Garcia Fuentes	Library Committee Student Representative, Naveen Jindal School of Management

SACSCOC Accreditation Overview:

Learning and Students Resources Committee
April 19, 2016

Serenity Rose King

Assistant Provost for Policy and Program Coordination
SACSCOC Liaison

Who/What is SACSCOC?

- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- Regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the eleven southern states
 - Alabama (54), Florida (76), Georgia (83), Kentucky (50), Louisiana (39), Mississippi (32), North Carolina (112), South Carolina (50), Tennessee (63), Texas (162), Virginia (72) and schools for U.S. students in Latin America (6) Total: 799
 - 268 two-year colleges, 113 Level VI universities (four or more doctoral programs)
- **Peer-reviewed, self-regulated process; SACSCOC staff do not accredit institutions**
- Mission
 - "Accreditation by SACS Commission on Colleges signifies that the institution (1) has a mission appropriate to higher education, (2) has resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish and sustain that mission, and (3) maintains clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees it offers, and that indicate whether it is successful in achieving its stated objectives."

Why is Accreditation Important?

- We lose federal funding (cannot offer federal financial aid to students; faculty cannot obtain federal grants)
- Public sanctions (warning, probation) damage the reputation of the university
- Alternative: federal government direct oversight

When is SACSCOC season?

- **Every day**
- SACSCOC conducts 5-year condensed (Fifth-Year Interim Report) and 10-year comprehensive (Reaffirmation) reviews of all institutions; *unscheduled reviews
- 2008 Last Reaffirmation
- 2013-2015 Monitoring*
- 2014 Fifth-Year Interim Report
- 2018 Reaffirmation Project

When is SACSCOC season?

- 2018: Tenth-Year Reaffirmation Project
- Timeline for Tenth-Year Review
 - 2015
 - 2018 SACSCOC Leadership Team Appointment & Orientation
 - Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Development
 - 2016
 - Formation of Reaffirmation Committees and Orientation
 - Commence progress reports and data collection
 - QEP Selection Topic meetings
 - **Nov 1:** Prepare to write Compliance Certification Report (CCR) draft for your committee
 - QEP proposal and design pilot
 - 2017
 - **Sept 11:** Submit final CCR and draft QEP to SACSCOC
 - Nov 7-10: SACSCOC Off-Site Peer Review Conducted and Findings shared with UT Dallas
 - Nov 11-Jan 22: Prepare & complete Focused Institutional Response Report (Focused Report) in response to SACSCOC Off-Site Review Committee Report; Prepare final QEP report
 - 2018
 - **Jan 23:** Submit UT Dallas Focused Report and final QEP to SACSCOC
 - **March 6-8:** SACSCOC On-Site Visit at UT Dallas
 - Aug 8: Submit UT Dallas Focused Report to SACSCOC On-Site Review Committee Report (if applicable; due 5 months after On-Site Visit)
 - Dec 8-11: Official decision from SACSCOC

Where Can I Find More Information?

- UT Dallas SACSCOC page
 - <https://sacscoc.utdallas.edu/>
- SACSCOC website
 - <http://www.sacscoc.org/>

What is the CCR?

- *The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* (96; four sections, <http://dox.utdallas.edu/publication1209>)
- Assigned *Principles* for Learning and Student Resources Committee
 - 3.4.9: The institution provides appropriate academic support services. (Academic support services) NOTE: this standard is also assigned to the Programs, Curriculum Instruction Committee.
 - 3.4.12: The institution's use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology. (Technology use)
 - 4.5: The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. (See Commission policy "*Complaint Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions.*") (Student complaints)

What is the CCR?

- *Principles' Focus on Student Affairs and Services*
 - 2.10: The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that are intended to promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. (Student support services)
 - 3.9.1: The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community. (Student rights)
 - 3.9.2: The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records and maintains security measures to protect and back up data. (Student records)
 - 3.9.3: The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff – with appropriate education or experience in the student affairs area – to accomplish the mission of the institution. (Qualified staff)

What is the CCR?

- *Principles' Focus on Library and Learning/Information Resources*
 - 2.9: The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs. (Learning resources and services)
 - 3.8.1: The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission. (Learning/information resources)
 - 3.8.2: The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources. (Instruction of library use)
 - 3.8.3: The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff – with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources – to accomplish the mission of the institution. (Qualified staff)

Additional Information about *Principles*

- 2008 Focused Report
 - <http://sacscoc.utdallas.edu/frnav/> (requires log-in)
- SACSCOC Top 10 Frequently Cited *Principles*
 - 2013 Chart: <http://dox.utdallas.edu/chart1236>
 - 2014 Chart: <http://dox.utdallas.edu/chart1235>
- Revisions since 2007

Any Other SACSCOC Requirements?

- *Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation*
 - <http://dox.utdallas.edu/publication1210>
 - Provided excerpts for assigned *Principles*
 - Use the online, interactive version of the 2007 CCR navigator, found at <http://sacscoc.utdallas.edu/ccrnav/>
 - PDF versions of narratives also included in CCR navigator for each *Principle*
 - Review the 2007 CCR narrative reports and ensure that the questions listed in the *Resource Manual* are answered
- Policies / Documents
 - <http://www.sacscoc.org/policies.asp>
 - Distance and Correspondence Education
 - Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC or its Accredited Institutions
 - Developing Policy and Procedures Documents

How Can I Learn More?

- View SACSCOC web-based training modules
- Evaluator
- Attend/present at SACSCOC annual meetings or summer institutes
- Spread awareness

Questions?

- What else would you like to know?

Assigned SACSCOC *Principles* for Learning and Student Resources (LSR) Committee with web links

Online, interactive version found here:

<http://sacscoc.utdallas.edu/ccrnav/>

Assigned *Principles* for LSR

3.4.9 - Academic Support Services: The institution provides appropriate academic support services.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u333>

NOTE: this standard is also assigned to the Programs, Curriculum Instruction Committee.

3.4.12 - Technology Use: The institution's use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u336>

4.5 - Student Complaints: The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. (See Commission policy "*Complaint Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions.*")

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u405>

Principles' Focus on Student Affairs and Services

2.10 - Student Support Services: The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that are intended to promote student learning and enhance the development of its students.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u213>

3.9.1 - Student Rights: The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u352>

3.9.2 - Student Records: The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records and maintains security measures to protect and back up data.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u353>

3.9.3 - Qualified Staff: The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff – with appropriate education or experience in the student affairs area – to accomplish the mission of the institution.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u354>

Principles' Focus on Library and Learning/Information Resources

2.9 - Learning Resources and Services: The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u212>

3.8.1 - Learning/Information Resources: The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u369>

3.8.2 - Instruction of Library Use: The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u350>

3.8.3 - Qualified Staff: The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff – with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources – to accomplish the mission of the institution.

<http://go.utdallas.edu/ccr2007/u351>

Note: none of the LSR Principles have been revised since the 2008 edition; none were found non-compliant in the 2007 CCR narrative responses.

Related SACSCOC Policies and Documents

<http://www.sacscoc.org/policies.asp>

Policies

Distance and Correspondence Education

Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC or its Accredited Institutions

Document

Developing Policy and Procedures Documents

Principles

2.9 The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs. (*Learning resources and services*)

Rationale and Notes

The purpose of this Core Requirement is to ensure that an institution's students, faculty, and staff have access to appropriate collections, services, and other library-related resources that support all educational, research, and public service programs wherever they are offered and at the appropriate degree level. The levels and types of degrees offered by an institution determine the nature and extent of library-related resources needed to support the full range of its academic programs. In order to adequately support the institution's curriculum and mission, an institution may arrange for its students and faculty to have convenient access to the library/learning resources of another institution or to library-related resources that are shared by a consortium of institutions. In any case, it is expected that the institution provide appropriate library collections, resources, and services at all locations, including off-campus instructional sites and branch campuses and offered through distance and correspondence education.

Note: The determination of an institution's effectiveness in providing sufficient collections, services, and resources within its mission should be addressed in CS 3.3.1.3.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- How are the institution's services (or access to them) structured to meet the needs specific to the institution's programs, wherever they are located?
- How does the institution assure convenient, timely, and user-friendly access?
- How does the institution determine adequacy and relevancy of library/learning resources to support all its educational, research, and service needs?
- How does the collection development policy support the educational, research, and service needs of the institution?
- How does the institution determine if its services are appropriate?
- What are the library resources and are they appropriate to support the educational programs offered?
- What access to collections and services is provided for off-campus sites and distance learning courses?
- How does the institution provide access to library-related resources not owned by the institution?
- How does the institution ensure that library-related resource relationships outside its direct control are relevant to its academic program?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Description of library collections
- Description of library resources
- Description of library services
- Policies and procedures governing collections, services, and access to other library-related resources
- Evidence that the institution's library-related resources support all its educational, research, and public service programs wherever located

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- If the institution provides access to library resources through an arrangement with another institution, copies of contracts and agreements outlining access and services
- If the institution provides access to library resources through an arrangement with another institution, description and analysis of the appropriateness of other institutions' collections and services for which access contracts are maintained; documentation of relevance and adequacy
- User satisfaction surveys
- Comparison data of collections to user population
- Examples of recent improvements, changes, or expansions made as a result of data usage/satisfaction
- Collection development and weeding policies

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

"Distance and Correspondence Education"

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Comprehensive Standard 3.8.1

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3

2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that are intended to promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. (*Student support services*)

Rationale and Notes

Appropriate student support programs and services apply to undergraduate and graduate programs and enhance the educational development of students at all levels. The expectation is that an institution recognizes this important component of student learning and student development, regardless of placement in the organizational structure, and that, in the context of its mission, the institution provides an appropriate range of support services and programs to students at all locations, including off-campus instructional sites, branch campuses, and those enrolled in distance and correspondence education.

Note: The determination of an institution's effectiveness for promoting student learning and student development within its mission should be addressed in CS 3.3.1.3.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What is the student body profile and do the student support programs and services provided by the institution serve all levels of students?
- How do the student support programs and services effectively promote the mission of the institution for all students served by the institution?
- How do students taking courses at off-campus instructional sites or taking distance and correspondence education courses access student support programs, services, and activities?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Descriptions of the various student support programs and services
- Narrative relating the student support services and programs to the mission of the institution

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Processes used to determine student needs/interests and examples of recent changes in services made in response

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

"Distance and Correspondence Education"

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3
Comprehensive Standards 3.9.1 – 3.9.3
Comprehensive Standard 3.4.9

3.4.9 The institution provides appropriate academic support services.

(Academic support services)

Rationale and Notes

Academic support services pertain to students at all levels as well as to faculty. The services are consistent with the institution's mission, enhance the educational experience, and contribute to the achievement of teaching and learning outcomes. Student and faculty success is affected by the learning environment. An institution provides appropriate academic support services to strengthen academic programs and ensure the success of students and faculty in meeting the goals of the educational programs. Academic support services may include, but are not limited to, academic teaching and resource centers, tutoring, academic advising, counseling, disability services, resource centers, laboratories, and information technology. (Library services are addressed in CR 2.9.)

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What academic support programs exist for faculty and students?
- How does the institution ensure that its academic support programs and services are adequate and appropriate to the needs of its students and faculty?
- How do they relate to the mission and to student and faculty needs?
- How does the institution ensure that students and faculty have knowledge of and access to academic support programs, including distance learning and correspondence programs and off-campus instructional sites?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Description of academic support services

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Publications and websites (e.g., academic support services) explaining how support services are provided and how services can be accessed
- Data on the frequency of usage of academic support services by students and faculty
- Surveys indicating that student and faculty needs are being met

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

"Distance and Correspondence Education"

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3

3.4.12 The institution's use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology. *(Technology use)*

Rationale and Notes

This standard addresses the appropriate use of technology to enhance student learning, meet program objectives, and enrich resources available to students and faculty. It is the institution's responsibility to provide opportunities for students and faculty to develop competencies in the use of technology. To do so, there must be a qualified corps of faculty/staff with experience/ training in the area of technology. In addition to formal training, other opportunities for developing competencies in technology can be provided

through access to technology laboratories for students, residence halls where computers are networked with other learners and units, and access to technology for presentation of material and other means.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- How is the institution using technology to enhance student learning?
- What evidence exists that technology is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs?
- How does the institution ensure student and faculty access to technology and to the training, use, and applications of technology?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

None noted

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Documents that contain policies and procedures for the use of technology to enhance student learning
- Evidence that the use of technology in teaching and learning is appropriate and effective
- Evidence that students and faculty have sufficient opportunity for access and training in the use of technology. Schedules and usage patterns could be presented
- Evidence that the institution assesses competencies of students in the use of technology and uses the results for continuous program improvements
- Evidence that the institution is monitoring technology resources to provide necessary support for faculty and students

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

“Distance and Correspondence Education”

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.9

3.8.1 The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission.

(Learning/information resources)

Rationale and Notes

The mission of an institution requires a broad range of resources that relate to facilities and sufficient learning/information resources. The institution has an obligation to provide support for all aspects of an institution’s mission relating to learning, services, and research.

Note: Institutions should include information on library facilities/learning resources in the library and other locations as appropriate (e.g., curriculum lab, specified reading rooms, computer labs, writing centers, etc.)

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- How are the institution’s facilities or access to them, configured to meet the needs specific to the institution’s programs, wherever they are offered and by whatever mode of delivery?
- How is the provision of facilities and learning/information resources related to the mission?
- How does the institution determine appropriate facilities, and learning/information resources?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Documents describing facilities, services, and learning/information resources and how they support programs and disciplines

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Mission statement of the library, learning resource center, or other similar support services
- Evaluations of educational programs needs and how the institution addresses facilities, services, and learning/information resources to address those needs
- Findings from user surveys and comparisons with peer institutions

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

“Distance and Correspondence Education”

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Core Requirement 2.9

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3

3.8.2 The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources.

(Instruction of library use)

Rationale and Notes

To ensure appropriate use of the library and other learning/information resources, the institution is expected to provide timely and effective access to the library/learning resources that enables students, faculty, and staff to take full advantage of the learning resources provided by the institution.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What is the objective and the type of assistance available to learning/information resource users?
- What delivery mechanisms exist for instruction and assistance to library users and how are they assessed?
- How does the institution deliver instruction and assistance to all users at all locations and through all modes of delivery?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Documentation of the availability and type of instruction

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Documentation of the assessment of the instruction
- Reports of library instructional activity that demonstrate broad participation in the instructional program by all segments of the institution at all teaching locations

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

“Distance and Correspondence Education”

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Core Requirement 2.9

3.8.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff—with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources—to accomplish the mission of the institution. *(Qualified staff)*

Rationale and Notes

A sufficient number of qualified staff is measured by the effectiveness of the delivery of services to students, faculty, and staff rather than simply the number of staff employed. Qualified staff members are essential to carrying out the mission of the library. The emphasis is on overall qualifications and is based on academic credentials as the standard qualification for library staff; other types of qualifications may prove to be appropriate.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- How does the institution determine the qualifications of its library/learning resource/ library information staff?
- How does the institution demonstrate that the staff is sufficient to accomplish the mission?
- What professional opportunities are available to the learning/information resources staff?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Roster of library/learning resource staff and documentation of their qualifications

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Position descriptions and any professional development support
- Evidence that personnel use opportunities for professional growth and training

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

None noted

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Core Requirement 2.9

3.9.1 The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community.

(Student rights)

Rationale and Notes

Institutions are obligated to develop comprehensive and appropriate policies delineating student rights and responsibilities because students and student learning are central to the mission of the institution,. To be effective, such policies are clear and widely available to the entire community of the institution and need to include procedures for use by students in preserving these rights and responsibilities.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- How do student rights conform to sound educational principles practice and meet the needs of all undergraduate and graduate students served by the institution?
- What are ways in which the institution ensures that students as well as other constituencies of the institution are aware of student rights and responsibilities?
- How are alleged violations and grievances regarding student rights and responsibilities handled?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Statement of student rights and responsibilities

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Methods of dissemination of statements on student rights and responsibilities

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

“Distance and Correspondence Education”

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.5

Federal Requirement 4.5

3.9.2 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records and maintains special security measures to protect and back up data.

(Student records)

Rationale and Notes

The ongoing security and confidentiality of student records is critical to the integrity of the institution. This standard acknowledges the responsibility of the institution to oversee the release and use of all student records and institutional data with personally identified information and identifies four key aspects of that responsibility: security, confidentiality, integrity, and data protection and back up. As applied to this standard, integrity means to ensure that data within the records are not changed without appropriate oversight and sufficient security measures. Special security measures emphasize the imperative for the institution to protect confidentiality of records, preserve the integrity of its students' academic records, and oversee the release of records in accord with state and federal mandates and commonly accepted standards and practices among institutions of higher learning.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What types of student records does the institution store?
- What are the definitions, policies, and procedures governing the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records? How does the institution ensure that it adheres to these policies and procedures?
- How does the institution manage the physical security of record storage?
- How does the institution manage the security of electronic data storage systems, paper storage, and/or other storage?
- What is the institution's disaster plan for records retrieval?
- How does the institution ensure that faculty and staff understand and carry out the commitments to confidentiality, integrity, and security of student academic records?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- The policies and procedures governing student records, their security, integrity, and confidentiality, their use, and their release.
- Security measures adopted by the institution that apply to the protection and backs up of data

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Publications used by students and personnel that (a) discuss student academic records, including statements addressing confidentiality of student record and (b) identify specific policies for the security of records and include statements about physical security of records, storage of records, back-up of records in both electronic and hard-copy, receipt of course grades, issuance of transcripts, etc.
- Documentation that faculty and staff are trained regarding policies on the confidentiality, integrity, and security of student records
- Documentation of data back-up procedures
- Procedures for response to security breaches

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

"Distance and Correspondence Education"

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Comprehensive Standard 3.10.3

Federal Requirement 4.7

3.9.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff—with appropriate education or experience in the student affairs area—to accomplish the mission of the institution. (Qualified staff)

Rationale and Notes

Appropriate and effective student programs and services are central to student learning and development. In order to carry out such programs and services, the institution is expected to have student affairs professionals who have adequate educational training or experience to provide these services. Qualified staff members are essential to carrying out the mission of student services programs. The emphasis is on overall qualifications rather than academic credentials and, that while academic credentials are primary and, in most cases, will be the standard qualification, other types of qualifications may prove to be appropriate.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What are the various student support programs and services and how are they staffed?
- What are the qualifications for student affairs personnel?
- What are the training and professional growth opportunities for student affairs staff?
- How does the institution demonstrate that the staff is sufficient to accomplish the mission?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Roster of student affairs staff and documentation of their qualifications

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Student affairs organizational chart
- Position descriptions
- Evidence that members of the student affairs staff have opportunities for professional growth and training and that they take advantage of them

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

None noted

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Core Requirement 2.10

4.5 The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. (See Commission policy “Complaint Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions.”) (Student complaints)

Rationale and Notes

Student complaints need to be addressed in a fair and professional manner, and the policies and procedures governing student complaints need to be well publicized and provide clear and consistent guidelines for their resolution.

Note: In addition to FR 4.5 addressing student complaints, the Commission’s “Complaint Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions” states: Each institution is required to have in place student complaint policies and procedures that are reasonable, fairly administered, and well-publicized. (See FR 4.5). The Commission also requires, in accord with federal regulations, that each institution maintains a record of complaints received by the institution. This record is made available to the Commission upon request. This record will be reviewed and evaluated by the Commission as part of the institution’s decennial evaluation. (page 2)

The Commission requires that institutions respond to the requirement of the policy statement by documenting compliance under CS 3.13.1 of the institution's Compliance Certification or include documentation under FR 4.5. The Compliance Certification states that "when addressing this policy statement, the institution should provide information to the Commission describing how the institution maintains its record and also include the following: (1) individuals/offices responsible for the maintenance of the record(s), (2) elements of a complaint review that are included in the record, and (3) where the record(s) is located (centralized or decentralized). The record itself will be reviewed during the on-site evaluation of the institution."

For FR 4.5 and CS 3.13 (as it applies to complaints), at the time of its review of an institution, the Commission will review (1) the acceptability of the complaint policy of the institution, (2) whether the institution follows its policy in the resolution of student complaints, and (3) the institution's record of student complaints in the examination for patterns. If a pattern of student complaints exists and those complaints are related to SACSCOC accreditation standards, the Commission will review the complaints if the issues were unresolved.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What are the policies and procedures governing student complaints and are they adequate to meet the needs of the students?
- How are the policies and procedures governing student complaints disseminated?
- What is the evidence that the publicized policies and procedures are followed when resolving student complaints?
- How does the institution retain a record of student complaints?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Policies and procedures for addressing student complaints
- Evidence that the published policies and procedures are followed when resolving student complaints
- An example of a student complaint resolution (with sensitive information redacted)
- See CS 3.13 for additional requirements applicable to complaints

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Evidence that complaint policies and procedures are published and disseminated

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

"Complaint Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions"

"Distance and Correspondence Education"

"Developing Policy and Procedures Documents"

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

None noted

Policies

"Distance and Correspondence Education"

"Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC or its Accredited Institutions"

Other

"Developing Policy and Procedures Documents"