Lunch and Learn: SACSCOC Accreditation

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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
    - Prepare to write Compliance Certification Report (CCR) draft
    - 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

What is the CCR?

- The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement (96; "program assessment" is just one; four sections)

- Examples: Program Principles

  - 2.7.2: The institution offers degree programs that embody a coherent course of study that is compatible with its stated mission and is based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. (Program content)

  - 2.8: The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of each of its academic programs (Faculty)

  - 3.4.11: For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration. (Academic program coordination)

  - 3.2.8 The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience and competence to lead the institution. (Qualified administrative/academic officers)

What is the CCR?

- Examples: 3.5 Principles for Undergraduate Educational Programs

  - 3.5.1: The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them. (General education competencies)

  - 3.5.2: At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. (See Commission policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.") (Institutional credits for a degree)

  - 3.5.3: The institution publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, including its general education components. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (See Commission policy "The Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees.") (Undergraduate program requirements)

  - 3.5.4: At least 25 percent of the course hours in each major at the baccalaureate level are taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree—usually the earned doctorate or the equivalent of the terminal degree. (Terminal degrees of faculty)

What is the CCR?

- Examples: 3.6 Principles for Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Professional Programs

  - 3.6.1 The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs. (Post-baccalaureate program rigor)

  - 3.6.2 The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences. (Graduate curriculum)

  - 3.6.3 At least one-third of credits toward a graduate or a post-baccalaureate professional degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. (See Commission policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.") (Institutional credits for a graduate degree)

  - 3.6.4 The institution defines and publishes requirements for its graduate and post-baccalaureate professional programs. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (Post-baccalaureate program requirements)

Any Other SACSCOC Requirements?

- Policies

  Example: Substantive Change Policy

  (examples include: closing a program, offering a program—including certificates— off-campus, offering a program online, offering joint or dual degree with another institution)

SACSCOC Top 10 Frequently Cited Principles

- SACSCOC provides institutions the Top 10 Frequently Cited Principles to assist them during the reaffirmation process. SACSCOC shows the most frequently cited principles from three perspectives: (1) Off-Site Committee, (2) On-Site Committee, and (3) Board of Trustees. (See http://sacscoc.utdallas.edu under SACSCOC Resources)

PRELIMINARY DATA

Top 10 Most Frequently Cited *Principles* in Reaffirmation Reviews: *2014* Reaffirmation Class Institutions (N=83)

Rank	Review Stage I: OFF-Site Committee — Requirement/Standard	% Institutions in Non-Compliance	Rank	Review Stage II: ON-Site Committee — Requirement/Standard	% Institutions in Non-Compliance	Rank	Review Stage III: C&R | Board of Trustees — Requirement/Standard	% Institutions in Non-Compliance
1.	3.7.1 (Faculty Competence)	94%	1.	3.3.2 (Quality Enhancement Plan)	47%	1.	3.3.1.1 (IE – Educational Programs)	12%
2.	3.3.1.1 (IE – Educational Programs)	61%	2.	3.3.1.1 (IE – Educational Programs)	31%	2.	3.3.1.2 (IE – Administrative Units)	
3.	2.11.1 (Financial Resources)	48%	3.	3.7.1 (Faculty Competence)	28%	3.	3.3.1.3 (IE – Educational Support)	6%
4.	3.4.11 (Academic Program Coordination)	46%	4.	3.3.1.2 (IE – Administrative Units)	14%	4.	3.10.1 (Financial Stability)	
5.	3.3.1.5 (IE – Community/Public Service)	45%	5.	3.3.1.3 (IE – Educational Support)	12%	5.	3.3.1.5 (IE – Community/Public Service)	5%
6.	3.3.1.2 (IE – Administrative Units)	40%	6.	3.3.1.5 (IE – Community/Public Service)		6.	3.7.1 (Faculty Competence)	
7.	3.7.2 (Faculty Evaluation)	39%	7.	3.10.1 (Financial Stability)	7%	7.	3.3.2 (Quality Enhancement Plan)	4%
8.	3.3.1.3 (IE – Educational Support)	37%	8.	3.5.1 (General Education Competencies)		8.	3.5.1 (General Education Competencies)	
9.	2.8 (Faculty)	36%	9.	3.7.2 (Faculty Evaluation)	6%			
10.	3.5.1 (General Education Competencies) 4.1 (Student Achievement)	35%	10.	3.12.1 (Substantive Change)				<3%

Review Stage I: FOCUSED REPORT. Review Stage II: RESPONSE REPORT.

What is the QEP?

- Quality Enhancement Plan
- 2007: Gateways to Excellence in Math and Science (GEMS)
- Now the Student Success Center
- Next? Submit ideas: http://qep.utdallas.edu/

How Can I be Involved?

- Reaffirmation Committees

- Evaluator

- Attend/present at SACSCOC annual meetings or summer institutes

- View SACSCOC web-based training modules

- Spread awareness

Where Can I Find More Information?

- SACSCOC website
  - http://www.sacscoc.org/

- UT Dallas SACSCOC page
  - https://sacscoc.utdallas.edu/

- What else would you like to know?