

SACS-COC

March 7, 2014 Notices/Updates

1. Official Name & Acronym of SACSCOC – You might recall that a few years ago, the Commission on Colleges became a separately incorporated 501(c)3 organization from our parent company and with that our OFFICIAL NAME became the **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges or SACSCOC**. I respectfully request that you use this name and acronym when referring to and communicating with the Commission. Please note that there is no space or dash among the letters. I know that it will take some getting used to but it is important that we establish our identity.

In addition, you should modify the language on your Web site and in other materials to ensure that you are using our official name and acronym.

2. SACSCOC/Lumina Foundation/DQP Project – In December at the Annual Meeting, we distributed a copy of a book entitled, “Making the Case for the Application of the Lumina Foundation’s Degree Qualifications Profile” to the presidents in attendance. It was the product of work done with several of our Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and funded by a grant we received from the Lumina Foundation. If you did NOT receive a copy of the document and would like one, just let me know and we will gladly send it to you.

Inadvertently, the information from Tougaloo College was excluded from the document. The following statement is being issued as an errata sheet in future copies we will deliver but I wanted to notify you of the statement. It is:

"On page 24, a report from Tougaloo College indicates that no data were submitted. However, the report was later resubmitted after the data analysis was completed. This institution did satisfy the requirements of the grant."

3. New Policy – At the December meetings of the Executive Council and SACSCOC Board of Trustees, a policy was approved regarding competency-based or direct assessment programs. The new policy statement, “Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs” outlines procedures for the notification and approval of direct assessment competency-based educational programs; instructional programs that, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, use direct assessment of student learning which relies solely on the attainment of defined competencies.

4. Revised Policies/Institutional Summary Form – The following are policies with changes approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees:

a. Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions. The revised policy includes a new provision that requires an institution to seek approval when reactivating (1) an already approved educational program (if approval was required prior to implementation) that, within a five-year period, has been inactive but not closed and (2) an already approved off-campus instructional site (where 50 percent or more of an educational program is offered) that, within a five-year period, has been inactive but not closed.

b. Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC or Its Accredited Institutions. The revised policy includes a new provision outlining procedures for submission of a formal complaint by complainants with demonstrated disabilities.

c. Accreditation Procedures for Applicant Institutions. The revised policy includes a new provision stating that an application for membership failing to provide evidence of degree-granting authority as required by the state or country in which the institution submitting the application is located will not be accepted and will result in withdrawal from consideration.

d. Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports. The revised policy clarifies that branch campuses are required to be visited at the time of an institution's reaffirmation of accreditation.

e. Accrediting Decisions of Other Agencies. The policy has no significant changes; however, it does clarify and customize the Federal regulation using SACSCOC terminology.

f. Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status. Changes include a new form to accompany a prospectus to list all off-campus instructional sites and branch campuses.

g. Institutional Summary Form Prepared for Commission Reviews. During reaffirmation and fifth-year interim reviews, institutions are required to complete this form which is used to describe the institution to the Commission's evaluators. The revised form requests more specificity about off-campus instructional sites, branch campuses, and distance learning so that, in reading the compliance certifications, evaluators know the degree to which an institution is expected to integrate the examination of these three areas into its compliance certification.

5. Minor Edits to Policies – There have been minor edits to additional documents that you should note:

a. Disclosure of Accrediting Documents and Actions of SACSCOC

b. Dues, Fees and Expenses

c. Integrity and Accuracy in Institutional Reporting

d. Sanctions, Denial of Reaffirmation, and Removal from Membership

e. Special Committee Procedures and Team Report.

5. Goodbye to Mark Smith; Hello to Michael Hoefler – We said “So Long” to Dr. Mark Smith at the end of January. His successor is Dr. Michael Hoefler who, prior to joining SACSCOC, was Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectives for the Art Institutes International. Those of you who were served by Dr. Smith should have received a letter from me identifying your new Commission staff member. If you have not, let me know and I'll get it right out to you.

6. Activities of C-RAC – The Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) is gearing up for visits to The Hill this spring. We have developed some one-pagers on a variety of topics that I will share with you in the next few weeks once they are in their final form. I ask that as you visit with your Congressional delegation that you try and help them understand what we do and that the value of our peer review process adds value to your institution.