

SACSCOC Reaffirmation

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What is Accreditation?

Accreditation signifies that an institution has a commitment apt to higher education and has resources, programs, and services adequate to achieve and sustain that commitment.

What does it do?

- Indicates that an institution maintains clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees it offers.
- Enhances academic quality in a region by improving the effectiveness of institutions and ensuring that institutions meet standards established by the higher education community.
- Requires an institutional commitment to student learning and achievement.
- Makes an institution highly desirable but membership with an accrediting body is voluntary - and is an earned and renewable status.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Reaffirmation

Accreditation is reaffirmed by SACS COC every ten years (our regional accrediting body)

- **Compliance Certification** (Submitted 15 months prior to reaffirmation)
- **Quality Enhancement Plan** (Submitted six weeks prior to on-site visit)

Why is accreditation reaffirmation important?

- Federal funding
 - Student Financial Aid
 - Federal Contracts and Grants
- Reputation
- State Requirements
- Dedication to higher education
- Desire to continuously improve quality

What's required?

Core Requirements

- **17 standards**, all of which must be met.

Formerly Comprehensive Standards

- Prior to 2018 there were several standards identified as Comprehensive Standards. That distinction was removed in the 2018 edition of the *Principles of Accreditation*.

Formerly Federal Requirements

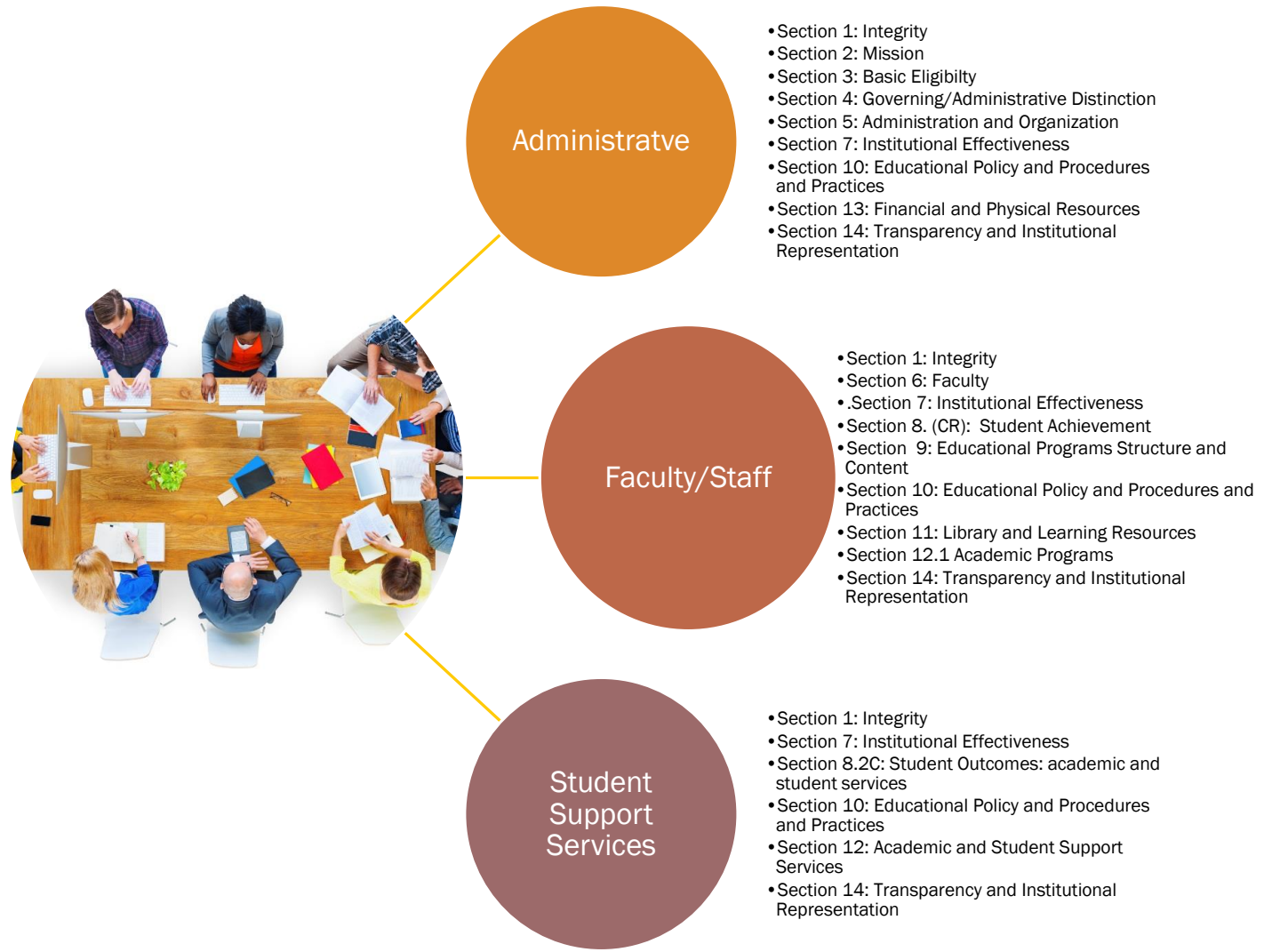
- **20 components (some of which are core requirements)**
These are standards that must be reviewed by the SACSCOC On-site Committee as required by the U.S. Department of Education. The distinction was removed in 2018.

82 specific components plus applicable policies and guidelines.

PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION

Section Topic:

1. The Principle of Integrity
2. Mission
3. Basic Eligibility Standard
4. Governing Board
5. Administration and Organization
6. Faculty
7. Institutional Planning and Effectiveness
8. Student Achievement
9. Educational Program Structure and Content
10. Educational Policies, Procedures, and Practices
11. Library and Learning/Information Resources
12. Academic and Student Support Services
13. Financial and Physical Resources
14. Transparency and Institutional Representation





WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE REAFFIRMATION PROCESS?



Leadership Team

The college establishes a leadership team to direct and manage the reaffirmation process. By design, the leadership team is few, but should include at least the:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Academic Officer
- Accreditation Liaison
- One Faculty Member
- Others as determined by the President

Compliance Certification

The leadership team will appoint a committee to oversee the compliance certification document:

- ♣ Institutional Research
- ♣ Finance and Business
- ♣ Educational Programs
- ♣ Student Services
- ♣ Institutional Effectiveness
- ♣ Library and Learning Resources
- ♣ Enrollment Management
- ♣ Governance

Good News,
Everyone!



Accreditation Review

1. Off-site peer review (a chair and peer evaluators from institutions of a similar mission and type in the areas of):

- Finance
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Organization and Governance
- Student Support Services
- Library and Learning Support Services
- Three or more evaluators for Academic Administration and Educational Programs

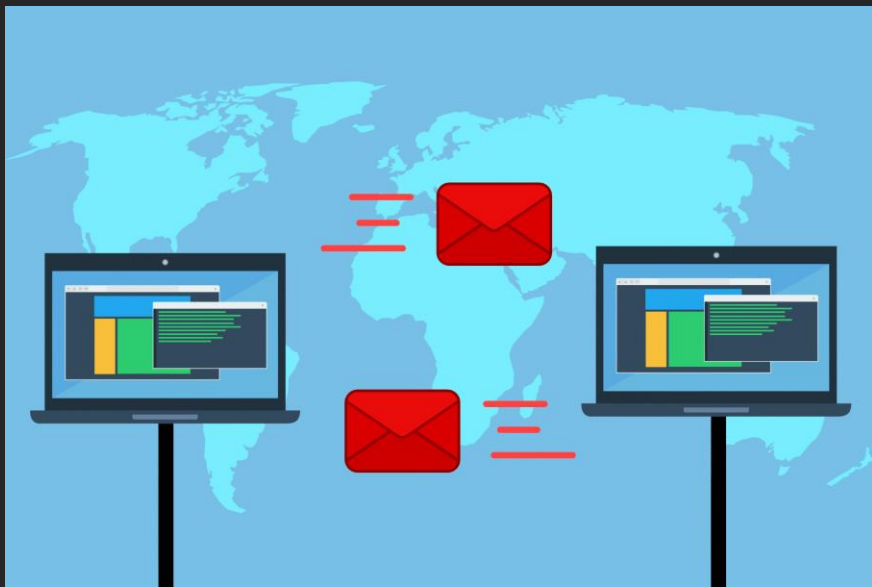
2. On-site peer review (a minimum of 7 members)

- SACSCOC VP assigned to the institution. (Dr. Stephanie Kirschmann is R-CCC's VP).
- Chair and evaluators in the areas of:
 1. Organization and Governance
 2. Academic Administration
 3. Faculty
 4. Student support or Library services
 5. Institutional Effectiveness
 6. The Quality Enhancement Plan
 7. Library and Finance will be added if cited as being Non-Compliant

Peers evaluators cannot reside in the same State as the institution being reviewed.

3. Review by the Commission's Board of Trustees

How is the Compliance Certification submitted?



Submission Requirements:

Send one copy of the following to each committee member and two copies of the following to the institution's Commission staff representative:

- ❖ Electronic file(s) of the Compliance Certification document with appropriate supporting documents.
- ❖ An instruction sheet that includes (a) clear directions on how to access the electronic documents, (b) the name and contact numbers of the technical support person who can assist an evaluator who may have trouble accessing electronic information, and (c) the name and contact numbers of the person who will provide print materials of documents if any evaluators request them.
- ❖ Catalog(s).
- ❖ Current Institutional Summary Form Prepared for SACSCOC Reviews.
- ❖ An organizational chart.
- ❖ One pdf copy of the signed Compliance Certification (with narrative but **without** the supporting documentation) should be sent to the institution's SACSCOC staff member (for archival purposes).

How Do Reviewers Evaluate Compliance?

SACSCOC Manuals

Guidance from Chair

Committee discussions consensus

SACSCOC Staff serves on Committee as resource

Individual experiences

See Mini-Handbook



QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT
PLAN
(QEP)

QEP

Standard 7.2

The QEP is not included in the Compliance Certification. It is a separate detailed document.

Institutional Support of the QEP:

- A consensus that the QEP can result in significant, even transforming, improvements in student learning.
- Broad-based institutional participation in its development.
- Careful review of best practices related to the topic or issue(s).



*A QEP Lead Evaluator will be nominated by R-CCC and selected by SACSCOC staff to participate in the on-site review.

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

Institutional Support of the QEP:

- Allocation of adequate human and financial resources to develop, implement, and sustain the QEP.
- Clear implementation strategies, timelines, and assignment of responsibilities.
- A structure for evaluating the impact of the QEP upon student learning.

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

The leadership team will appoint a committee to oversee the QEP:

- those with the greatest knowledge about and interest in the topic
 - ▶ **ideas**
 - ▶ **content**
 - ▶ **process**
 - ▶ **methodologies**
- those with planning and assessment expertise those with planning and assessment expertise those responsible for managing and allocating institutional resources
- those responsible for managing and allocating institutional resources

Common Problem Areas Found During Reaffirmation



- ❖ Each course is taught by faculty with acceptable qualifications with the appropriate evidence
- ❖ Number of full-time faculty is adequate to support mission and ensure quality
- ❖ Complete set of student learning and program outcomes and their use for education, administration, support, research and service.
- ❖ Evidence of on-going, integrated and institution wide research-based planning and evaluation.
- ❖ College level general education competencies
- ❖ General education component meets criteria
- ❖ Distance Education meets all criteria
- ❖ Off campus Instructional Programs meet all criteria
- ❖ Acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan with funding
- ❖ QEP not directly related to student learning
- ❖ Failure to articulate and assess student learning outcomes

What's next?



Work groups will be assigned/formed.

Writing Teams



QEP Director selected.



QEP ACTIVITIES
RESUME



QEP PROPOSALS.



Standards assigned for
first draft narratives.



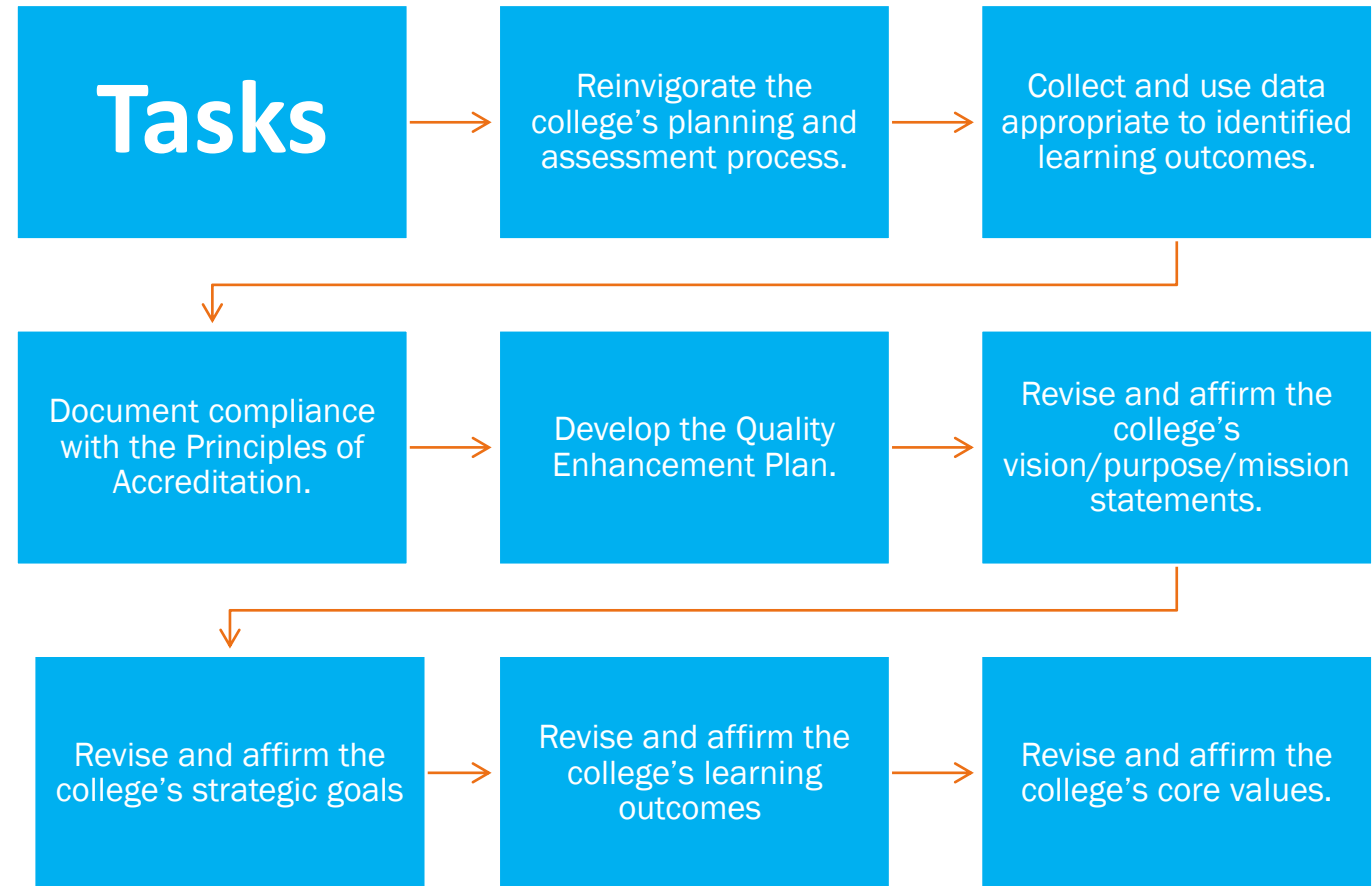
Data collection
(Continuous)



Regular meetings
established.

You May Be Called on to...

- Help insure complete transcript file
- Fill in gaps in the Institutional Effectiveness data
- Help in response to findings by the Off-Site Committee
- Be available for visits by SACS representatives
- Participate in vetting and completion of the QEP
- Provide Documentation (If you didn't document it, it didn't happen!)



Anticipated Timeline

Anticipated Reaffirmation Timeline (Class of 2023)									
General preparation	Orientation of Leadership Team – Virtual (Dec 2020)	Conduct Planning Activities	Form Leadership Team; Develop Editorial Guidelines	Leadership Team Meets Regularly; Approves QEP Topic	Leadership Team Meets Regularly	Leadership Team Approves Compliance Report, Reviews QEP	Leadership Team Approves QEP Prepare for On-Site Visit	Receive On-Site Review Team Oct. 10-13	Review by the Commission on Colleges
Compliance Preparation	Plan Strategy/ Form Readiness Assessment Team	Begin Readiness Audit Process/ Begin Gathering Evidence	Form Compliance Certification Team/ Fix Problems, Gather Evidence	Draft Narratives Continue Work on Compliance Certification Continue to fix problems	Final Edit/ Approval of Compliance Report	Compliance Report Due to SACS March 1, 2022	Off-Site Peer Review Done; Prepare Focused Report	Focused Report Due to SACS	Respond to On-Site Committee Report
QEP Preparation	Plan Strategy	Form QEP Planning Team/Begin Topic ID Process	Identify a QEP topic.	Fully Develop the QEP Proposal	Solicit Feedback/ Refine QEP	Edit and finalize QEP	Final review/QEP approval	QEP due to SACS August 31, 2022	Fully Implement 1st Phase of QEP
Follow up!! Follow up!! Follow up!!	Fall 2020 Spring 2021	Spring 2021	Summer 2021 Fall 2021	Spring 2021	Fall 2021- Spring 2022	Summer 2022 Follow up!! Follow up!! Follow up!!	Fall 2022	Follow up!! Follow up!! Follow up!!	Follow up!! Follow up!! Follow up!!
	2020	→	2021-22	→	2021-22	→	2021-22	→	2022-23

COC Meeting June 2023

TARGET DATES

	R-CCC Target Dates
2019	
2020	Leadership Orientation for the Reaffirmation (Annual SACSCOC)
2021	Continuous- Collect Data, write, review and revise narratives. Monthly- Sub-Committee meetings (2nd-Tuesdays)
2022	March 1 - Compliance Certification Due April 19-22 - Offsite Peer-Review Conducted August 31 - QEP Due (6-Weeks prior to On-Site Peer Review) October 10-13 - On-Site Reaffirmation Committee Visit

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

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