Orientation to SACS Reaffirmation: Role of Student Affairs

Jen Skaggs, Ph.D.
Program Director
SACS Reaffirmation Project
What is SACS Reaffirmation about?

• Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) regional accreditation

• Commission on Colleges accredits higher education institutions in 11 southern states

• Provides for peer review process to ensure quality

• Takes place every 10 years

• Threshold of eligibility for receiving federal funds

• Threshold of eligibility for program accreditation
What does it signify?

• Mission appropriate to higher education
• Sufficient resources, programs and services to accomplish and sustain mission
• Clear educational objectives consistent with mission and degree offerings
• Successful in achieving stated objectives
# What is the Reaffirmation Process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Compliance Certification—16 Core Requirements; 56 Comprehensive Standards; 3 Responsibilities; 7 Federal Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>Off-Site Peer Review of Compliance Certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>On-Site Peer Review of QEP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>Commission Review of Results and Judgment</td>
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</table>
SACS Organizational Chart

**Principle of Integrity**
Leadership Team

**QEP**
Co-Chairs & Committees

**Core Requirements** *
Team Leaders & Team Members
*(Evidence of acceptable QEP)*

**Compliance Certification**
Team Leaders

**Comprehensive Standards**
Team Leaders & Team Members
*(“Narrative” of QEP)*

**Federal Requirements**
Team Leaders & Team Members
Changes in SACS Reaccreditation Process

- Previous reaccreditation in 2002 involved:
  - Institutional Self Study
  - Over 400 “must” and “should” statements
- New Process (effective 2004)
  - 17 Core Requirements
  - 59 Comprehensive Standards
  - 7 Federal requirements
  - QEP Plan (biggest change)
What this means

• Onus is on institution to “make its case” with regard to compliance
• Emphasis in *Principles of Accreditation* is placed on more *subjective* analysis of best practices
• Determination of compliance is frequently more *subjective* with the *Principles of Accreditation*. 
The Compliance Certification

- Institution makes the case for compliance for each
  - Core Requirement
  - Comprehensive Standard
  - Federal Requirement
- Case is supported with documentation, relevant data, and an explanatory narrative
Consequences of Non-compliance Findings

- If an institution is found out of compliance with any of the **Core Requirements (CR)**
  - Immediate public sanction of non-compliance
  - Reaffirmation will be denied until deficiencies are corrected
- If an institution is found out of compliance with any **Comprehensive Standard (CS) or Federal Requirement (FR)**
  - The institution submits a formal response regarding those issues and the steps being taken to become compliant (Focused Report)
Consequences of Non-compliance Findings

• In all cases of non-compliance
  • Monitoring will be made to SACS until compliance is demonstrated within a two-year monitoring period at which time sanctions will be imposed if compliance or significant progress towards compliance has not been made.

Loss of accreditation leads to loss of federal funding for student aid
## Key Concerns for Student Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement or Standard</th>
<th>Compliance Area</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Student Support Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.1</td>
<td>Student Affairs &amp; Services – Student Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.2</td>
<td>Student Affairs &amp; Services – Student Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3</td>
<td>Student Affairs &amp; Services – Qualified Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1.1</td>
<td>Student learning improvement based on assessment results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Student Complaints</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Acceptable QEP

- **CR 2.12** – includes an institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment and focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution

- **CS 3.3.2** – demonstrates institutional capability; includes broad-based involvement; and identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement
Role of Student Affairs in SACS

- Compliance Certification
  - Provide best practice examples of policy implementation
  - Provide necessary documentation
  - Encourage your colleagues on the CCR Team
- QEP
  - QEP Theme – MCXC
    Multimodal Communication Across the Curriculum
  - Assist with the Public Relations & advertising
  - Grassroots involvement with students
  - Be available for the On-Site visit
Reaffirmation Timeline

www.uky.edu/SACS/timeline.html
UK SACS Website

www.uky.edu/SACS
Questions?