

**SACS Commission on Colleges
NC Regional Meeting on Accreditation Review Project
October 10, 2000**

Synopsis

The Accreditation Review Project is a comprehensive review of both accreditation requirements and peer review process. If approved, it will replace the current Criteria and process.

Features of proposed changes:

- Increased attention to quality enhancement
- Increased attention to student learning outcomes
- Greater flexibility in addressing these requirements
- More institutional accountability/responsibility
- More focused on-site review
- Increased consistency in application by visiting teams
- Emphasis on learning and learning environment
- Strong culture of institutional integrity essential
- College mission and commitment to improve taken into account
- More analysis of critical issues, less descriptive narrative
- More forward thinking rather than historical
- Shorter time frame for reaccreditation efforts
- Maintains 10 year accreditation cycle

General sense of NC regional meeting:

- Heading in a good direction overall
- Some concerns on individual requirements and wording

Pilot of new model

8 institutions selected for pilot, including 2 community colleges:
John Tyler CC (VA) and Richmond College (TX)

Pilot institutions will explore potential for electronic submissions in the accreditation process

Implementation Calendar for New Model

October 2000 Regional Meetings and Website Call for Comments
November 2000 Task Force Meetings to review comments received and make revisions
December 2000 Sessions on new model at SACS Annual Meeting
March 2001 Final Call for Comments
April/May 2001 Task Force Meetings to review comments received and make revisions
June 2001 Commission Meeting re Bylaws
October 2001 Final Proposal to members
December 2001 Vote on new model at SACS Annual Meeting
2002 First SACS letters to colleges up for renewal in 2004
2003 SACS Letters to colleges up for renewal in 2005

New process under construction, goes on website after December 2000 Meeting

Six Components of Accreditation

1. Acceptable Improvement Report
2. Compliance with Principles of Integrity
3. Compliance with Core Requirements (12)
4. Compliance with Comprehensive Requirements (60)
5. Compliance with federal Title IV (Student Assistance) Requirements (6)
6. Visiting committee of peers

Four distinct college documents

1. Expanded annual institutional profile

Collect data year to year to monitor health of institution
Examples: enrollment data, graduation rates

2. Certification of compliance

Starts with SACS letter in year 8; due in September of year 9
Administrative in nature, probably a small group prepares this
Item by item statements re compliance with requirements
Yes/no format with “why we say that” and “what we need to do to fix”
Some documentation required
To be signed by CEO and Accreditation Liaison

3. Portfolio of evidence (patterns of evidence)

Copies or locations of all supporting documentation
Some sent in, some for onsite

4. Improvement/Enhancement report

Requires broad campus involvement
Topic emerges from critical issues identified in college planning; can't be arbitrarily selected
Similar to Alternative Model currently used
Creates a blueprint of how to improve
Viewed as 100 page document: 75 narrative, 25 appendices

Use of Documents by Commission

Peer review of each document submitted

3 layers of review:

1. Offsite review with perhaps 10 like institutions reviewed together; produces a report which guides the on-site review of each and increases consistency of on-site review
2. On-site review (changed from current model); produces visiting team report
3. Commission of Colleges review of visiting team report plus college response

Additional points:

Faculty credentials are listed as guidelines, not must statements
Continuing education instructors and developmental faculty credentials are not prescribed
Institutional effectiveness continues to be important; expectations continue to rise
Expectations for IE can be met in many ways, less prescriptive than before
Following a college's published policies is considered a matter of integrity
Moving away from the term “self-study”

The term "learning resources" has replaced "library"
SACS concept of "mission" is broader than "purpose"

Thanks to Karen Noel for developing this page.