



REPORT OF THE REAFFIRMATION COMMITTEE

Statement Regarding the Report

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is responsible for making the final determination on reaffirmation of accreditation based on the findings contained in this committee report, the institution's response to issues contained in the report, other assessments relevant to the review, and application of the Commission's policies and procedures. Final interpretation of the Principles of Accreditation and final action on the accreditation status of the institution rest with SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

Name of the Institution: **University of South Carolina - Columbia**

Date of the Review: **March 22 – 25, 2021**

SACSCOC Staff Member: **Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover**

Chair of the Committee: **Dr. Laurie Casteen**
Associate Dean of Students
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA

The institution provided documentation of policy implementation. All substantive changes related to degree programs begin with a pre-authorization request for Provost review. While the image of the process in the narrative was too blurred to fully read, the additional evidence and narrative was sufficient to demonstrate that the institution implements its policy consistently. The institution provided documentation of seven examples of policy implementation.

A review was conducted of the complete list of the institution's substantive changes since the last reaffirmation by accessing the institution's SACSCOC Document Directory website. The website provides documentation of the notification to SACSCOC and the SACSCOC response. The institution has had 18 substantive changes and they have all been reported in accordance with SACSCOC's policy.

- 14.3 The institution applies all appropriate standards and policies to its distance learning programs, branch campuses, and off-campus instructional sites.
(*Comprehensive institutional reviews*) [Off-Site/On-Site Review]

The institution has provided clarifying statements related to each standard in response to Standard 14.3. The institution's responses to each standard have information regarding the Palmetto College campuses, off-campus sites, and distance learning woven throughout the respective narratives. This documentation throughout the Compliance Certification, cross referenced in the institution's response to Standard 14.3, illustrates a systemic attention to general standards and policies as far as they relate to distance education and the Palmetto College campuses. Because the institution's case for compliance with this Standard depends upon the institution's documentation provided under other Standards, it may be helpful to the institution to update their response to this Standard as well in their Focused Report as many of the related Standards throughout the Compliance Certification included information that could be verified.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed the institution's website and conducted interviews with the Interim Director for the Office of Academic Programs and Director Office of Distributed Learning; Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation and SACSCOC Liaison; Director of Distance Education, Arnold School of Public Health; Director of Interdisciplinary Studies (B.A.I.S.) and Online Learning, College of Hospitality, Restaurants, and Tourism Management; Director of Distributed Learning, College of Nursing; Director, AGACNP Program, College of Nursing; Associate Dean for Instruction, Community Engagement and Research, College of Arts and Sciences; Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum/Professor, College of Social Work; Associate Provost (Palmetto College); Faculty Director, Professional MBA Program, Moore School of Business; Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and Curriculum, Arnold School of Public Health; Associate Dean of Academic Programs, College of HRSM; Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management and Academic Program Development, College of Education; and the Director of MSN/DNP Nurse Executive, College of Nursing, in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 14.4 The institution (a) represents itself accurately to all U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting agencies with which it holds accreditation and (b) informs those

agencies of any change of accreditation status, including the imposition of public sanctions. (See SACSCOC policy “Accrediting Decisions of Other Agencies.”)
(Representation to other agencies) [Off-Site/On-Site Review]

The institution provided a list of 14 United States Department of Education (USDOE) recognized agencies that accredit the institution’s programs (misabeled as Institutional Accreditation Agencies, when they are Programmatic Accreditation Agencies). The narrative presents the institution’s mission, discussions of the student body and the impact the institution has on its region, and documentation of external program reviews, substantive changes, program self-studies and letters from some of its programmatic accreditors. The institution further states that it is in good standing with its programmatic accreditation agencies and has had no negative actions since its last reaffirmation.

This standard expects the institution to provide documentation that it represents itself identically to all its USDOE recognized accreditors. The Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee was unable to determine compliance because it could not locate this documentation for all its USDOE recognized accreditors.

The institution may also want to check its entry in the Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs. The list of programmatic accreditors in the database does not match the list provided in the narrative.

The institution’s Focused Report documents the amended statement of accreditation as addressed in Standard 14.1 and includes one additional accrediting agency that was omitted from the initial narrative report. The institution provided the new and unified statement of SACSCOC accreditation to each of its accrediting bodies and provided evidence of this documentation in the Focused Report.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee met with the Interim Director of the Office of Academic Programs/Director of Distributed Learning, the Vice Provost and Dean of the Faculty, the Director Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation/SACSCOC Liaison, and the University Registrar and discussed the institutional process for ensuring that each new relevant accrediting agency is added to the institution’s database of accrediting agencies and provided with the institution’s correct SACSCOC accreditation statement. They also discussed a plan for an annual review of this list of agencies to ensure annual compliance.

- 14.5 The institution complies with SACSCOC’s policy statements that pertain to new or additional institutional obligations that may arise that are not part of the standards in the current *Principles of Accreditation*.
(Policy compliance)
(Note: For applicable policies, institutions should refer to the SACSCOC website [<http://www.sacscoc.org>])

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Policy, “Reports Submitted for SACSCOC Review,” states that:

For electronic submissions, please comply with all steps outlined below:

1. Copy the report and all attachments onto the appropriate number of flash drives, in accordance with the number of requested copies of the report. **Each** flash drive should be