

**EXCERPT FROM THE PRELIMINARY 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: **November 3-4, 2020**

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

Chair of the Committee: **Dr. Timothy S. Brophy**
Director, Institutional Assessment
and Professor, Music Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32606

12.4 Student Complaints

- 12.4 The institution (a) publishes appropriate and clear procedures for addressing written student complaints, (b) demonstrates that it follows the procedures when resolving them, and (c) maintains a record of student complaints that can be accessed upon request by SACSCOC.

(Student complaints) [Off-Site/On-Site Review]

Compliance

The Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee found support for the institution's case for compliance.

The institution provided substantial documentation of its promulgated student policies, describing student options for compliant resolution on a variety of areas of student concerns related to (a) equal opportunity and affirmative action, (b) equal opportunity complaint processing procedures, (c) sexual harassment, (d) discriminatory harassment, (e) non-discrimination, (f) sexual assault, (g) relationship violence and stalking, (h) hazing, (i) student non-discrimination and non-harassment, (j) the student code of conduct, and (k) academic grievances. The institution provided multiple redacted example responses to demonstrate resolution of written student complaints from its main campus in Columbia and its Palmetto College branch campuses in Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter, and Union. Records policies outline responsible departments for complaint processes, along with department and institutional standards for records retention and access. The responsible department maintains the complaint records. Along with standard departmental and academic unit procedures, an institution-level undergraduate and graduate ombudsperson is available to help students resolve complaints. Additionally, the ombudsperson reviews policies, makes revisions when necessary, and oversees overall policy compliance.