



January 13, 2015

Dr. Dusty R. Johnston  
President  
Vernon College  
4400 College Drive  
Vernon, TX 76384

Dear Dr. Johnston:

The Committee on Fifth-Year Interim Reports reviewed the institution's compliance with the 17 select standards of the *Principles of Accreditation* outlined in the Commission's Fifth-Year Interim Report. Based only on those reviewed standards, the institution is requested to submit a Referral Report to the Commission on Colleges due **April 1, 2015**, addressing the following referenced standards of the *Principles*:

**CS 3.4.11 (Academic program coordination)**

The documentation provided by the institution in the instructional organizational chart and in the narrative indicated that the Associate Dean of Instructional Services assists in providing oversight for instructional programs. However, the institution did not identify the individual assigned to this position nor provide documentation related to this position.

Qualifications for division chairs for the four divisions of the institution do not support that these coordinators are academically qualified in each of the areas to which they are assigned responsibility. The institution indicated that faculty within each program are academically and experientially qualified to assume primary responsibility for curriculum and course development and review. However, these faculty members were not identified nor were their qualifications provided.

The institution should demonstrate that it assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field for each major in a degree program.

**CS 3.13 (Policy compliance – “Complaint Procedures against the Commission or Its Accredited Institutions”)**

The institution furnished information regarding how to file a complaint with the Commission. The institution should provide information describing how it maintains its record of student complaints and (1) individuals/offices responsible for the maintenance of the record(s), (2) elements of a complaint review that are included in the record, and (3) where the record(s) is located (centralized or decentralized).

**Review of Audit Information**

The Committee reviewed the institution's most recent financial audit information. No additional report is requested.

**QEP Impact Report**

The Committee also reviewed the institution's QEP Impact Report. The report was accepted with the following comments:



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The institution has adequately described the initial goals and intended outcomes of its QEP, discussed the limited changes made in the QEP, and discussed the impact on student learning and/or the environment supporting student learning, and described what the institution has learned as a result of the QEP experience.

Guidelines for the Referral Report are enclosed. Because it is essential that institutions follow these guidelines, please make certain that those responsible for preparing the report receive the document. When submitting your report, please send **five copies** to your Commission staff member.

Reports requested by the Committee on Fifth-Year Interim Reports will be forwarded to the Committees on Compliance and Reports (C & R), standing committees of SACSCOC Board of Trustees, for action at the meeting immediately following the due date of the Referral Report. The review by C & R will begin a two-year monitoring period within which your institution must document compliance with all the identified standards above.

We appreciate your continued support of the activities of SACS Commission on Colleges. If you have questions, please contact the Commission staff member assigned to your institution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.  
President

BSW:cj

Enclosure

cc: Dr. John S. Hardt



Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
Commission on Colleges  
1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097

## REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR COMMITTEE OR COMMISSION REVIEW

### Policy Statement

Institutions accredited by the Commission on Colleges are requested to submit various reports to an evaluation committee or to the Commission's Board of Trustees for review. Those reports include:

- Response Report to the Visiting Committee
- Monitoring Report or Referral Report

When submitting a report, an institution should follow the directions below, keeping in mind that the report will be reviewed by a number of readers, most of whom will be unfamiliar with the institution.

### Information Pertaining to the Preparation of All Reports

#### *Preparation of a Title Page*

For any report requested, an institution should prepare a title page that includes the following:

1. Name of the institution
2. Address of the institution
3. Dates of the committee visit (*not applicable for the Referral Report*)
4. The kind of report submitted
5. Name, title, and contact numbers of person(s) preparing the report

#### *Presentation of Reports*

For any report requested, an institution should

1. **For print copies**, copy all documents front and back, double-space the copy, and use no less than an 11 point font. If the report requires binding beyond stapling, do not submit the report in a three-ring binder. Ring binders are bulky and must be removed before mailing to the readers.
2. **For electronic copies**, copy the report and all attachments onto an electronic memory device (e.g., external hard-drive, DVD, CD, or flash/thumb drive). Provide the name of the person who can be contacted if the readers have problems accessing the information. Provide **one print copy** of the response without the attachments.

Each electronic memory device smaller than 4" by 4" should be submitted in a paper or plastic envelope not smaller than 4 x 4 inches and the envelope should be labeled with the name of the institution, the title of the report, and the list of document contents. The electronic memory device should be labeled with the name of the institution and the title of the report.



## Information Specific to the Preparation of a Monitoring Report or a Referral Report

- Definition:** These reports address recommendations and continued concerns of compliance usually identified by the Committee on Compliance and Reports or the Executive Council (or, for a Referral Report, identified by the Committee on Fifth-Year Interim Reports). It usually follows the C & R Committee's review of an institution's response to a visiting committee report.
- Audience:** The Monitoring Report and the Referral Report are reviewed by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees and are subject to the review procedures of the Commission's standing committees, including the continuation of a monitoring period, the imposition of a sanction, or a change of accreditation status.
- Report Presentation:** For a Monitoring Report, structure the response so that it addresses committee recommendations in the order that they appeared in the report. Tabs should separate each response to a recommendation.
- For each recommendation, (1) restate the number of the Core Requirement, Comprehensive Standard, or Federal Requirement, the number of the recommendation, and the recommendation exactly as it appeared in the visiting committee report; (2) provide a brief history of responses to the recommendation if more than a first response (to include an accurate summary of the original concerns of the visiting committee, a summary of each previous institutional response and an explanation of what had been requested by the Commission); (3) cite verbatim the current request of the Commission that is related to the recommendation (reference notification letter from the President of the Commission); and (4) prepare a response to the recommendation.
- For a Referral Report, structure the response so that it addresses the concerns described in the letter from the Commission's President in the order that they appeared. Tabs should separate each response to each standard cited.
- For each standard cited, (1) restate the number of the Core Requirement, Comprehensive Standard, or Federal Requirement exactly as it appeared in the letter; (2) cite verbatim the current request of the Commission that is related to the standard cited (reference notification letter from the President of the Commission); and (3) prepare a response to the recommendation.
- Due Date:** The Monitoring Report and the Referral Report are due on the date specified in the notification letter sent by the President of SACSCOC. Requests for extensions to the date must be made to the President of SACSCOC two weeks in advance of the original due date. (See Commission policy "Deadlines for Submitting Reports.")
- Number of Copies:** See the letter from the President of SACSCOC requesting the Report.

### Document History

Edited and Revised for the Principles of Accreditation: December 2003  
Updated: January 2007, January 2010, May 2010, January 2012