



# PREPARING A LIBRARY FOR SACSCOC REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION

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## Items covered in today's presentation

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- SACS-COC
- Library's role
- Documentation needed
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Question and Answer time

# What is SACS-COC?

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Southern Association of Colleges and  
Schools Commission on Colleges

The mission of the SACS-COC is to  
assure the educational quality and  
improve the effectiveness of its  
member institutions.



## What is SACS-COC?

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- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the **regional body for the accreditation** of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. It serves as the **common denominator of shared values and practices** among the diverse institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, **Louisiana**, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and **Latin America and other international sites** approved by the Commission on Colleges that award **associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees**. The Commission also accepts applications from other international institutions of higher education.

(emphasis added)

# Fundamental Characteristics of Accreditation

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- Participation is voluntary
- Member institutions develop, amend, and approve requirements
- Process is appropriate to the type of institution
- Accreditation is a form of self-regulation
- Accreditation requires institutional commitment and engagement
- Accreditation is based upon a peer review process
- Accreditation acknowledges prerogative to articulate mission
- Accreditation requires institutional commitment to quality enhancement
- Accreditation expects a balanced governing structure
- Accreditation expects support structures and resources

# COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

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Completion of the Compliance Certification requires three actions by the institution for each of the standards:

- (1) determining the level of compliance,
- (2) attaching documentation that supports the level of compliance indicated, and
- (3) developing a narrative that summarizes, links, and interprets the documentation as it builds a case in support of the level of compliance indicated.

## COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION (continued)

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- A “backwards looking” document that demonstrates the university’s current and prior years compliance with the principles
  - Core Requirements - "Basic," "broad-based," and "foundational" requirements that "establish a threshold of development required of an institution seeking initial or continued accreditation
  - Comprehensive Standards - These standards are "more specific to the operations of the institution, represent good practices in higher education, and establish a level of accomplishment expected of all member institutions."
  - Federal Requirements - As required by Title IV of the Higher Education Act

## Resources

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- The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement
  - <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2012PrinciplesOfAcreditation.pdf>
- SACSCOC Resource Manual
  - <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Resource%20Manual.pdf>
- SACSCOC Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation
  - <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Handbook%20for%20Institutions%20seeking%20reaffirmation.pdf>



# Principles of Accreditation

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- There are 91 principles the university has to address for reaffirmation of accreditation
- The Libraries is responsible for

## FOUR PRINCIPLES

- Principle 2.9 (Core Requirement)
- Principle 3.8.1 (Comprehensive Standard)
- Principle 3.8.2 (Comprehensive Standard)
- Principle 3.8.3 (Comprehensive Standard)

## Additional Principles

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...and a few additional principles that you learn about as you go along.

- Principle 3.3.1.3 – Institutional Effectiveness: Student Support Services
- Principle 4.5 – Procedures Addressing Student Complaints

## Libraries' Role Principle 2.9

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The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered.

Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its *educational, research, and public service programs*.

(emphasis added)

## Libraries' Role Principle 3.8.1

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The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its *teaching, research, and service mission*.

(emphasis added)

## Libraries' Role Principle 3.8.2

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The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources.

## Libraries' Role Principle 3.8.3

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The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff—with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources—to accomplish the mission of the institution.

# Documentation Needed

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- EVERYTHING YOU CAN THINK OF
- Seriously; and you still might need more. No joke.



# Documentation Needed

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- Principle 2.9 ended with over 100 supporting documents
- Samples of assessment and changes made because of assessment
- Samples of expenditures
- Usage data
- Circulation statistics
- Organization chart of Libraries' employees
- CVs of all faculty and department heads
- All qualifications/positions of faculty and department heads
- Any materials supporting distance learning/distance education
- Building plans/floor plans
- Information literacy enrollment
- Reference transaction statistics



# Opportunities and Challenges

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- See gaps in services
- See areas of superior services
- Opportunity to align future library endeavors with accreditation requirements
- Greater knowledge of each units' role within the library
- Greater knowledge of the libraries' role within the university
- Greater knowledge of the impact of libraries within higher education
- Not a streamlined process
- SACS requirements aren't particularly clearly defined
- Must write judiciously
- More than 2+ years of diligent work
- Demanding deadlines
- Gaining support and buy-in from all employees

# Question and Answer Time!

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Thank you for listening.

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