



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

ENROLLMENT GROWTH OF AN INSTITUTION

Policy Statement

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), in accord with federal policy, is required to have processes and procedures for the on-going monitoring of the overall growth of institutions it accredits. This is to ensure that institutions with significant growth continue to maintain the quality of educational programs and services offered and to comply with SACSCOC's *Principles of Accreditation*. To this end, federal policy requires the following:

1. SACSCOC is required to monitor the overall growth of its accredited institutions. At least annually, it is required to collect headcount data from each of its institutions.
2. If an institution that offers distance education or correspondence courses has experienced an increase in headcount enrollment of 50 percent or more within one institutional fiscal year, federal policy requires SACSCOC to report that information to the U. S. Secretary of Education within 30 days of acquiring such data. SACSCOC will report institutions with an increase in headcount enrollment of 50 percent or more within 30 days of the Commission acquiring and verifying such data. The collection and verification of profile data will not exceed 60 days of the due date of the profile. Institutions will be informed of such notification to the U.S. Department of Education.

For purposes of meeting this federal requirement, the following definitions apply:

- **Correspondence courses** are part of a formal educational process under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student; courses are typically self-paced.
 - **Distance education** is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or other digital media if used as part of the distance learning course or program.
3. If an institution experiences significant full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment growth, SACSCOC is obligated to monitor the growth of the institution's programs. Significant enrollment growth is a total FTE enrollment increase of 40 percent or more within one year as reported on the Institutional Profile for General and Enrollment Information. SACSCOC's definition of full-time equivalent enrollment is outlined on the profile form.

Procedures

1. SACSCOC will collect headcount and full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment data on its annual Institutional Profile for General and Enrollment Information form distributed each year by November 30 and due the next year by January 15.
2. SACSCOC staff will review enrollment data submitted by the institution and identify/verify significant growth in headcount and full-time equivalent enrollment.
3. Institutions experiencing a total full-time equivalent enrollment increase of 40 percent or more within one year will be asked to complete the “Institutional Report on FTE Enrollment Increases by Program” (see Appendix) which requires an institution to delineate FTE by educational program.

Upon receipt of the “Institutional Report on FTE Enrollment Increases by Program” (see Appendix), SACSCOC staff will review and verify the data submitted. SACSCOC staff may:

1. Accept the report as information with no additional follow up.
2. Request additional information from the institution. If there is evidence of non-compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*,
 - a. the SACSCOC President may authorize a special committee to review the institution’s ongoing compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*.
 - b. Staff may forward the report to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for review and possible action. Upon review, the Board may (1) accelerate the institution’s next reaffirmation review, (2) authorize a special committee to visit the institution to ensure ongoing compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*, or (3) monitor the institution’s ongoing compliance.

If a special committee is authorized to review the institution’s ongoing compliance, SACSCOC will ask the institution to complete a document in advance of the visit that focuses on the review of the educational programs experiencing significant growth. The report of the Committee and the institution’s response to the findings of the Committee will be forwarded to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for review and action.

If the SACSCOC Board votes to accelerate the institution’s reaffirmation date, the institution’s reaffirmation class may change, and the institution’s reaffirmation cycle immediately following will be ten years, pending any additional reviews on enrollment growth. A reaffirmation cycle cannot be accelerated to a date less than three years following Board action on enrollment growth.

Document History

Approved: Board of Trustees, June 2011

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APPENDIX



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**INSTITUTIONAL REPORT ON
FTE ENROLLMENT INCREASES BY PROGRAM**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Institution

By signing below, we attest to the following:

That _____ (*name of institution*) has provided an accurate description of the institution's recent enrollment growth and a complete and accurate listing of all programs offered by the institution, the locations where they are offered, and the means by which they are offered.

Accreditation Liaison

Name, Title, Phone number, and email address of Accreditation Liaison

Signature _____

Date

Chief Executive Officer

Name, Title, Phone number, and email address of Chief Executive Officer

Signature _____

Date

Submission date of this completed document:

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Directions: *Please address the following and attach the information to this form.*

