

# Merger 101: One Institution's Experience Merging SACSCOC and non-SACSCOC Institutions

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## Sullivan University

- ▶ Founded in 1962
- ▶ Private, proprietary owned by the Sullivan Family
- ▶ Locations throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky
- ▶ SACSCOC-accredited since 1979
- ▶ Level V Institution offering two doctoral programs
  - ▶ **UNDERGRADUATE:** Business Programs; Nursing and Allied Health; Technology; Hospitality; Legal Studies; Pharmacy and Health Sciences
  - ▶ **GRADUATE:** Master's in business and IT-related programs; Master's in Physician Assistant; Ph.D. in Management; Doctor of Pharmacy
- ▶ Enrollment
- ▶ Programs licensed, approved or accredited by 21 other bodies.
- ▶ Pre-merger, Sullivan University was the flagship institution of three school brands owned by the Sullivan University System, Inc. Post-merger, Sullivan University is the only school brand.



## Spencerian College

- ▶ Founded in 1892 as the Spencerian Commercial School by Enos Spencer
- ▶ ACICS accredited until 2017; then ABHES accredited until merger
- ▶ Certificate, Diploma, Associate and Bachelor degrees
- ▶ Nursing and Allied Health Programs
- ▶ Owned by the Sullivan Family for over 40 years



## Sullivan College of Technology and Design

- ▶ Founded in 1961 as the Louisville Technical Institute
- ▶ ACICS accredited until merger
- ▶ Certificate, Diploma, Associate and Bachelor degrees
- ▶ Advanced manufacturing; HVAC-R; Interior Design; Dynamic Web Development; CADD
- ▶ Owned by the Sullivan Family for over 30 years



## The Merger -

### How did we get to a decision to merge?

- ▶ Ownership, Administration and the Board had discussed for 10+ years
- ▶ In February 2017, during a normal meeting, the Board decided to pursue the merger
- ▶ In March 2017, a conference call was held with SACSCOC officials to discuss the process
- ▶ Shortly thereafter, a Prospectus was submitted
- ▶ Prospectus went to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees in June 2017
- ▶ In September 2017, a Substantive Change Committee visited
  - ▶ One Recommendation followed for what became 13.3, Financial Responsibility
  - ▶ Timing prevented review by the Board in December 2017
- ▶ In June 2018, the SACSCOC Board voted to approve merger of the three institutions into the singular Sullivan University
- ▶ Now, to the details...

## Preparation - For Substantive Change

- ▶ Development of new organizational structure
  - ▶ The New SU
  - ▶ Pre-merger, merges (COP/PA, online/main)
- ▶ Refinement of policies and procedures
  - ▶ Workgroups to explore best practices among the institutions
- ▶ Communication to all constituencies
  - ▶ Various methods
- ▶ Preparation to work with other regulators

## Academic Affairs - Accreditation, Compliance & Licensing

- ▶ Institutional Accreditation Requirements
  - ▶ Three different institutional accrediting body standards
  - ▶ Establish common ground
  - ▶ Translate standards to standards
  - ▶ Preparation for Substantive Change visit
- ▶ Programmatic Accreditation Requirements
  - ▶ Chicken and the egg
  - ▶ Programs licensed, approved or accredited by 21 other bodies
  - ▶ Various ways to measure credits, contact and/or platform hours

## Academic Affairs - Faculty & Academic Leadership

- ▶ Institutional requirements - credentials
- ▶ Programmatic requirements
- ▶ Not Designed for Transfer (NDT)
- ▶ Responsibilities
  - ▶ Cultural differences
    - ▶ Job descriptions
  - ▶ Academic Leadership Teaching Load Rubric
    - ▶ Common ground
  - ▶ Faculty teaching load variances
    - ▶ Cultural
    - ▶ Curricular

## Academic Affairs - Program Design, Delivery & Assessment

- ▶ Program Design
  - ▶ Standardize: Program Mapping/Design, Course Mapping
  - ▶ Training: Program reviews, program costs, etc.
- ▶ Delivery
  - ▶ Merge online and residential
  - ▶ Standardize & define (hybrid, online, etc.)
- ▶ Assessment
  - ▶ Changes to Planning & Evaluation Coordinating Council (PECC)
    - ▶ Assessment Plan - Description, assessment, budget, resources, & improvement
    - ▶ Evaluation - PECC serves as a formative evaluation resource
    - ▶ Seven Step Improvement Circle, achievement/progress, & satisfaction
    - ▶ Change in structure and coaching model implementation

## Significant Challenges - Issues to be aware of & avoid through planning

- ▶ Cultural resistance
- ▶ Timing
- ▶ Communication
  - ▶ Messages and desired effect
  - ▶ Institutional, locational & individual
- ▶ What would we have done differently?

## Questions & Answers



Thank you for joining us today!



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