DEMystifying the ReAFFIRMATION proCесс

Dr. Vivian Hobbs and Dr. Belle S. Wheelan, President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, reintroduce the idea of accreditation and what it means to FAMU.

Inside this issue:

- Letter from the SACS Director
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Message from the FAMU SACS Reaffirmation Director

We at the SACS Reaffirmation Offices of Florida A&M University are proud to introduce the first edition of the FAMU SACS Newsletter. This publication is designed to keep the FAMU family informed of the progress being made with regards to the Reaffirmation process. The FAMU SACS Office is hard at work developing a framework upon which the University can build for years to come. The goal is to put an infrastructure into place that will elevate FAMU’s preparation for SACS Reaffirmation from being reactionary and lacking in method to being proactive, automated and results-driven. Systems have begun to be established that will ensure better productivity, including the development of a FAMU SACS Operations Manual.

Additionally, new staff members have been hired to assist with other important tasks such as the development of the newsletter and the creation and maintenance of the FAMU SACS Web Portal. All of these improvements will strengthen the effectiveness of this department by enhancing its preparation for the SACS review in 2008, expanding its communication methods with the University community and ensuring that FAMU will set a standard of excellence among all SACS-accredited institutions. I am proud of the work that has been done to date, but I know that there is much left to accomplish. I look forward to serving this University through this very important Reaffirmation process and welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,
Vivian L. Hobbs, Ph.D.

SACS President Addresses FAMU Faculty, Answers Questions About Review Process

When Dr. Belle Wheelan opted to speak from the floor of the Auditorium space in the New Pharmacy Building as opposed to the stage, it quickly became evident that she was interested, not in preaching to the FAMU faculty, but in ensuring that all in attendance left with a better understanding of the SACS Commission on College’s mission and goals. In the hour long presentation, she concentrated primarily on the Commission’s focus on enhancing student learning and answered many specific questions regarding faculty credentialing. At the conclusion of her lecture, there seemed to be a more positive energy surrounding the Reaffirmation process and a renewed understanding of the purpose and importance of accreditation.

Dr. Wheelan offered as the guiding theme of her presentation the thought that the abbreviation S.A.C.S. should stand for Students Are Central to Success. And, in that vein, she discussed the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and the role the faculty will play in the development and implementation of the QEP.

Of the many questions that were posed, a large majority related directly to faculty. Wheelan answered those she could, but explained that SACS role was not to define the credentialing process for each University, but to ensure that all decisions made were justified and documented.

Ultimately, the visit from Belle Wheelan helped to refocus many on the importance of SACS to FAMU. FAMU SACS Director Dr. Vivian Hobbs was especially pleased with Dr. Wheelan’s presentation. “Wheelan offered nothing different from what we have been doing all along,” Hobbs said. “But I think coming from the SACS President it has a different urgency and importance. It was good that [the faculty] heard it from her as well.”
The current FAMU SACS Webpage, which became accessible in August, is available by link from the FAMU homepage.

The FAMU SACS Webpage: The Portal To All SACS Related Information At Florida A&M University

On August 17, 2006, the FAMU SACS webpage went live. The page, which will host much of the documentation needed to support the University’s Compliance Report to SACS, is important because it allows people to easily access information, communicate with the SACS office and be continuously involved in the Reaffirmation progress.

In its current form, the webpage is considered a “static page,” hosting only links to other static pages and having some inactive links. For the time being, the page does not have a dedicated URL but can be accessed through the FAMU homepage. The FAMU SACS webpage is scheduled to be available in its final form shortly after the launch of the new FAMU homepage.

In addition to the publicly-accessed SACS webpage, an internally accessed secure server will be available near the end of the calendar year, allowing authorized users to post and access documents to the web in real time. The internal server will be password protected using state-of-the-art security features. Currently, only the President, the SACS Director and the FAMU SACS Compliance Committee are responsible for suggesting and submitting information for inclusion on the website. (See pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter for listing of committee members.) In its final format, the SACS Web Portal will allow other stakeholders to suggest content through the website itself.

Once information is approved for inclusion, it is forwarded to the FAMU SACS Editor for review and revision and then on to the Web Content Manager, who uploads documents to the site.

The new FAMU homepage is scheduled to launch on Monday, September 25, 2006. Look for the new, active FAMU SACS webpage soon thereafter.
Enhancing the Quality of Student Learning at FAMU

The concept of quality enhancement is at the heart of the SACS Commission on College’s philosophy of accreditation; this presumes each member institution to be engaged in an ongoing program of improvement and able to demonstrate how well it fulfills its stated mission. Although evaluation of an institution’s educational quality and its effectiveness in achieving its mission is a difficult task requiring careful analysis and professional judgment, an institution is expected to document quality and effectiveness in all its major aspects.

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue related to enhancing student learning and institutional effectiveness. The development of the QEP must engage the entire academic/university community. The plan must demonstrate a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the effectiveness of the learning environment. The QEP should provide information about the institution’s vision and future goals; assess improvements that have strengthened the institution; examine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and strategies pertaining to the future of the institution; discuss specific plans for accomplishing goals; and, include data and plans for evaluation.

Development of the QEP is a core requirement for SACS. Engaging the wider academic community, the QEP is based upon a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the effectiveness of the learning environment for supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution. It is used to outline a course of action for institutional improvement by addressing one or more issues that contribute to institutional quality, with special attention to student learning.

The QEP steering committee at FAMU meets weekly to develop assessment tools that will help guide what project will best survey the university for its Quality Enhancement Plan. To date, the committee has created a QEP Survey and received over 1000 responses from faculty, staff and students. The committee is also requesting proposals for the QEP. The RFP can be found on the SACS webpage or more information can be obtained by contacting the committee at QEP@famu.edu.

“The QEP must demonstrate a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the effectiveness of the learning environment.”

Faculty, Staff and Administration Gear Up for SACS

The Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS) is the primary accrediting body for Florida A&M University. SACS makes accreditation decisions based upon an institution’s ability to 1) comply with the Principles of Accreditation; 2) comply with the 15 Core Requirements; 3) comply with the 56 Comprehensive Standards; and 4) comply with the 8 additional Federal Requirements.

Because of the large number of areas needing attention with regards to the entire review process, Committees were established to address each of the standards and requirements. Each committee is comprised of a diverse population of administration, faculty and staff from various colleges, schools and departments. The chair of each committee also sits on a Compliance Committee. It is this committee, along with the SACS Director, that will be responsible for preparing the Compliance Certification Document (CCD). The CCD is submitted to SACS in September 2007 and will provide support and documentation describing the FAMU’s compliance with all SACS standards and requirements.

The following page lists all of the SACS Committees and their members.

Information regarding the QEP was provided by the QEP Steering Committee, chaired by Dr. D. Worthen.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits Florida A&M University, as well as X other institutions in the southern United States and the Caribbean.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEADERSHIP TEAM</td>
<td>Dr. Castell Bryant, President</td>
<td>Coordinating and managing internal review process; Overseeing the development of QEP; Ensuring the institutional community is engaged in and informed about the review process</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE</td>
<td>Dr. Willis Walter, Education</td>
<td>Conducts the internal review process and develops the Compliance Certification Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL MISSION, GOVERANCE</td>
<td>Dr. Elizabeth McBride, Univ.</td>
<td>Addresses Core Requirements 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6; Comprehensive Standards 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.2, 3.2.1-3.2.14; and Federal Requirements 4.5, 4.7, 4.8 from the SACS Principles of Accreditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS</td>
<td>Mr. Rufus Little, Compliance</td>
<td>Addresses Core Requirements 2.5; Comprehensive Standards 3.3, 3.3.1 from the SACS Principles of Accreditation</td>
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</table>

Please note that the list of SACS committees and its members was last revised in June 2006. Some more recent changes may or may not be reflected here. Should you have any serious concerns about this list or have some special skill that you would like to contribute through committee involvement, please email the SACS office at Vivian.Hobbs@famu.edu.
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: ALL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
Responsibilities:
• Addresses Core Requirements 2.7.1-2.7.4; Comprehensive Standards 3.4, 3.4.1-3.4.14; Federal Requirements 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 from the SACS Principles of Accreditation

Chair: Dr. Verian Thomas, CESTA
Other Committee Members:
Dr. Deanna Burney, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Dorothy Henderson, General Studies
Dr. Cynthia M. Harris, Institute of Public Health
Dr. Maria Hinds, Allied Health
Dr. Mark Howse, Secondary Education
Mr. Leonard Inge, Continuing Education
Mr. Michael James, Registrar
Dr. Bernadette Kelley, Secondary Education
Mr. Joseph Roache, Instructional Media Center
Dr. Kenneth Perry, ITS
Dr. Rhonda Porter, Secondary Education
Dr. Richard Rome, Architecture
Dr. Dhyana Ziegler, Instructional Media Center
Dr. Gwendolyn Williams, Industrial Arts
Dr. Henry Williams, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Sheryl Shivers-Blackwell, SBI

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Dr. Deanna Burney, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Dorothy Henderson, General Studies
Dr. Cynthia M. Harris, Institute of Public Health
Dr. Maria Hinds, Allied Health
Dr. Mark Howse, Secondary Education
Mr. Leonard Inge, Continuing Education
Mr. Michael James, Registrar
Dr. Bernadette Kelley, Secondary Education
Mr. Joseph Roache, Instructional Media Center
Dr. Kenneth Perry, ITS
Dr. Rhonda Porter, Secondary Education
Dr. Richard Rome, Architecture
Dr. Dhyana Ziegler, Instructional Media Center
Dr. Gwendolyn Williams, Industrial Arts
Dr. Henry Williams, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Sheryl Shivers-Blackwell, SBI

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS
Responsibilities:
• Addresses Core Requirements 2.7.1-2.7.4; Comprehensive Standards 3.4, 3.4.1-3.4.14; Federal Requirements 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 from the SACS Principles of Accreditation

Chair: Dr. Valencia Matthews, Arts & Sciences
Other Committee Members:
Dr. Sam Awoniyi, Engineering
Dr. Yves Anglade, CESTA
Dr. Al Baldwin, Allied Health
Dr. Genyne Boston, Arts & Sciences
Dr. George Clark, SBI
Dr. Eileen Cormier, Nursing
Dr. Mitwe Musings, Land Grant Matching
Dr. Arleen Pabon, Architecture
Dr. Donald Palm, Pharmacy
Dr. Cornelia Porter, Nursing
Dr. Karen Soliman, Pharmacy
Dr. Eric Toran, Physical Therapy

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: GRADUATE AND POST-BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS
Responsibilities:
• Addresses Core Requirements 2.7.1-2.7.4; Comprehensive Standards 3.4, 3.4.1-3.4.14; Federal Requirements 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 from the SACS Principles of Accreditation

Chair: Dr. Chanta Haywood, Graduate Studies
Other Committee Members:
Dr. Elizabeth Davenport, Educational Leadership
Dr. Maurice Edington, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Shawnta Friday-Stroud, SBI
Dr. David Jackson, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Patrick Johnson, Respiratory Therapy
Ms. Cornelia Taylor, Library
Dr. Angela Thornton, Pharmacy
Dr. Roselyn Williams, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Dreamal Worthen, CESTA
Dr. Vivian Hobbs, SACS

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY
Responsibilities:
• Addresses Core Requirements 2.8; Comprehensive Standards 3.2.9, 3.7, 3.7.1-3.7.5 from the SACS Principles of Accreditation

Chair: Dr. Marian Smith, Education
Other Committee Members:
Dr. Adeline Evans, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Nancy Fontaine, Education
Dr. Vera Harper, SBI
Mr. Leonard Inge, Continuing Education
Dr. Patrick Johnson, Respiratory Therapy
Ms. Cornelia Taylor, Library
Dr. Angela Thornton, Pharmacy
Dr. Roselyn Williams, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Dreamal Worthen, CESTA
Dr. Vivian Hobbs, SACS
COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES
Responsibilities:
- Addresses Core Requirements 2.9; Comprehensive Standards 3.8, 3.8.1-3.8.3
Chair: Dr. Lauren Sapp, Library
Other Committee Members:
Ms. Carolyn Bivens, Library
Mr. Emmett Denny, Library
Mrs. Joyce Johnson, Library
Mr. Edward Mitchell, Computer Systems
Mr. Joseph Roache, IMC
Dr. Ruth Swan, Library
Mrs. M. Jean Williams Adams, Library
Mrs. Brenda Wright, Library

COMMITTEE ON STUDENT AFFAIRS AND SERVICES
Responsibilities:
- Addresses Core Requirements 2.10; Comprehensive Standards 3.4.3, 3.4.9, 3.9.1-3.9.3; Federal Requirements 4.5, 4.6
Chair: Dr. Vincent June, Student Affairs
Other Committee Members:
Dr. Yolando Bogan, Education
Ms. Kimberly Davis, Admissions
Mr. Michael James, Registrar
Mr. Henry Kirby, Student Affairs
Mr. James McMillian, Fiscal Affairs

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES
Responsibilities:
- Addresses Core Requirements 2.11; Comprehensive Standards 3.2.2.2-3.2.2.4, 3.2.13, 3.10, 3.10.1-3.10.7
Chairs: Dr. Grace Ali, Fiscal Affairs and Mr. Tony Stallworth, Facilities Planning
Other Committee Members:
Mr. Joseph Bakkar, Administrative
Mr. Larry Henderson, EIT
Mr. Buddy Barker, Purchasing
Mr. Ronald Joe, Development
Mr. John Kirby, Student Affairs
Ms. Joyce Mann, Budget
Dr. Kenneth Perry, ITS
Mr. Michael Smith, Financial Services
Mrs. Phyllis Watson, Fiscal Affairs
Dr. Janie Greenleaf, Human Resources
Dr. Andy Balogh, Environmental Health
Mr. Kendall Jones, Physical Plant

COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS
Responsibilities:
- Addresses Federal Requirements 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8
Chair: Dr. Cynthia Hughes-Harris, Allied Health
Other Committee Members:
Dr. Rufus Ellis, Education
Mrs. Carrie Gavin, Equal Opportunity Program
Dr. Kirk Gavin, Title III
Dr. Uche Ohia, Assessment
Mr. James McMillian, Financial Affairs
Dr. Keith Jackson, Sponsored Research
Mrs. Jackye Maxey, Governmental Relations

COMMITTEE ON QEP
Responsibilities:
- Develop Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
- Assess effectiveness of QEP
Ex-Officio: Dr. Debra Austin, Provost
Chair: Dr. Dreamal Worthen, CESTA
Other Committee Members:
Dr. Michael, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Tiki Suarez, SBI
Dr. Marcia Owens, Academic Affairs
Dr. Uche Ohia, Assessment
Dr. Jason Black, Arts & Sciences
Mr. Larry Henderson, EIT
Dr. Joe Ann Houston, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Henry P. Williams, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Barbara Barnes, Education
Dr. Kirk Gavin, Title III
Mr. Harold Henderson, General Studies
Dr. Dhyana Ziegler, Instructional Media Center
Mr. Joe Roache, Instructional Media Center
Mr. Reginald Perry, Engineering
Mrs. Phyllis Watson, Fiscal Affairs
Dr. Veronica Yon, Arts & Sciences
Dr. Lauren Sapp, Library
Dr. Vivian Hobbs, SACS
Dr. Maurice Edington, Arts & Sciences
Mrs. Beverly Barrington, EIT
TEST YOUR SACS IQ

Answer these questions to discover how much you know about the SACS Reaffirmation process or learn facts about the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and FAMU.

TRUE OR FALSE.

1. FAMU was the first HBCU to receive accreditation from SACS.
2. SACS grants accreditation to schools in the Southeast and Latin America.
3. The SACS Director is solely responsible for preparing the SACS Compliance Certification Document.
4. SACS will determine FAMU’s accreditation from reviewing the report only.
5. If FAMU does not comply with SACS Standards in any one area, SACS will not reaffirm the University.

ANSWERS:

1. True.
2. True.
3. False. The entire university is involved in developing the CCD. Committees were established for this specific purpose.
4. False. SACS will review the CCD, but will visit the University 6 months later to follow-up on concerns and to look at the QEP.
5. False. If there is an area in which the University does not comply, accreditation will not automatically be lost. The University will be given an opportunity to correct concern areas and re-report to SACS.

Learn more about SACS and its history by visiting them on the web at https://www.sacs-coc.org

FACTS AND MYTH

The FAMU SACS Office staff is aware that, to many, SACS is a four letter word and that, to others, it is simply a mystery. So, in future editions of the FAMU SACS Monitor, the SACS Director will answer any questions the FAMU community may have about the process and about what progress the University has made in preparing for the visit. Please forward all of your questions and concerns to this office so that they may be addressed by an informed party. The goal of the FAMU SACS office is to not only prepare for the SACS Review, but also to arm all concerned FAMUans with important knowledge about their school.

Send all of your questions and comments to janelle.jennings@famu.edu, call the FAMU SACS office at (850) 599-8317, or just stop by 207 SBI South. Your feedback is welcomed.
ABOUT THE FAMU SACS NEWSLETTER

The mission of the FAMU SACS Office is to ensure Florida A & M University's continu-
ance as a school of prestige, honor and prominence within the region, nation and world by
assuring an adherence to the policies and processes set forth by the university's governing
accreditation body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The FAMU
SACS Newsletter was created to achieve this end. This newsletter will be a bi-monthly
publication available electronically on the FAMU SACS website and in print in some loca-
tions. All content for the newsletter is determined by the FAMU SACS Director, Dr.
Vivian Hobbs. Questions, comments or concerns about the newsletter must be submitted
in writing to the FAMU SACS Office.

WHAT IS SACS AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Commission on Col-
leges of the Southern Associa-
tion of Colleges and Schools is
the recognized regional accred-
iting body in the eleven U.S.
Southern states (Alabama, Flor-
da, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisi-
a, Mississippi, North Caro-
lina, South Carolina, Tennes-
see, Texas and Virginia) and in Latin America for those institu-
tions of higher education that
award associate, baccalaureate,
master’s or doctoral degrees.
The Commission on Colleges is
the representative body of the
College Delegate Assembly and
is charged with carrying out the
accreditation process. To gain
or maintain accreditation with
the Commission on Colleges, an
institution must comply
with the standards contained in
the Principles of Accredita-
tion: Foundations for Quality Enhance-
ment and with the policies and
procedures of the Commission
on Colleges. The Commission
on Colleges applies the require-
ments of its Principles to all
applicant, candidate, and mem-
ber institutions, regardless of
type of institution (public, pri-

tate for-profit, private not-for-
profit). The Principles of Accredita-
tion provides consistent guide-
lines for peer review, represent-
ing the collective judgment of
the membership on standards
appropriate for the assurance of
quality in higher education.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Email:
janelle_jennings@famu.edu

IMPORTANT SACS DATES

October 2006: Response to Recommendations due to SACS
December 2006: FAMU SACS Leadership presents response to recommen-
dation
September 2007: Compliance Certification Document due to SACS
February 2008: On-Site Review Committee Visit

The information in this article was taken from the SACS-COC webpage. Visit http://www.sacs-
coc.org for more details.