

Highlighting Policy Issues in Peer Review

Institutional Integrity

Member schools are expected to understand and appreciate the reciprocal nature of “integrity” as part of the process of accreditation and reaffirmation. The same high standards expected of each member school in its dealings with COC and the public is a mirror image of what each institution can expect from the Commission and its representatives. <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/integrity.pdf>

Substantive Change/Unreported Substantive Changes

To achieve an institutional mission, many officials have submitted what is commonly referred to as a Substantive Change. This simply reflects a significant change in the typical operating procedures of an institution (e.g., additional resource requirements and new ways of addressing the institution’s mission). Some institutional changes require a simple notification while others call for a detailed explanation regarding the nature or magnitude of a change. In observing the substantive change policy, an institution may be cited for not reporting important operational changes. Such citations are not intended as punitive measures but are designed to encourage accurate reports concerning the scope of accreditation to the general public and other constituencies.

<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Substantive%20change%20policy.pdf>

Third-Party Comments

In its dealings with the public, the Commission on Colleges engenders a spirit of openness and transparency. In this regard, comments forwarded to the Commission from various sources concerning the activities and operations at any college or university may be useful. Such comments are objectively considered in connection with the good standing of member schools.

<http://www.sacscoc.org/ThirdPartyCommentsinfo.asp>

Distance Learning

With the growing market demands for education and related services, member schools are finding new ways of addressing these demands. In addition to campus-based or traditional delivery modes, institutions have increasingly begun to employ innovative distance education techniques and channels by and through which to offer education, both domestic as well as an array of international arrangements. The aim of the Commission is to assure quality and appropriateness of these services from a student perspective.

<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/distance%20education.pdf>