

SACS Compliance Certification Team Meeting Minutes
2/13/08

Present: Sophia Andres, Narita Holmes Bradley, Bill Fannin, Doug Hale, Roy Hurst, Melanie Nicholas, Rebecca Oekerman, Robert Perry, Karen Smith, Leslie Toombs, Denise Watts, Bobbie Williams, Travis Woodward

Not Present: Kelly Kinnard, Maureen Page, Teresa Sewell

I. Review of Minutes from 30 January 2008 Meeting

There was a brief review of the last meeting's minutes. There were no changes.

II. Discussion of Membership of Compliance Team Subcommittees and Student Members of Compliance Team

Members need to have a list of subcommittee members ready for the next meeting. The names of students who wished to volunteer for the committee were noted. A question about whether or not minutes should be kept for the meetings of the subcommittees was answered in the affirmative. Minutes will be returned to the SACS Office at the conclusion of the process.

It was noted that many of the numbers in the appendix to the *Handbook for Reaffirmation* did not match up with the corresponding standards in the *Principles*. SACS reordered the standards in December 2006. It will be necessary to look for your principles in the appendix. While there are a couple of new standards and standards with textual revisions, the overwhelming majority of the principles are still in the appendix just in a different place.

III. Review of Pre-Audit Status of Compliance Certification

Documentation was not a strong element in the pre-audits returned to the SACS Office.

There may be a real issue with documentation (or the lack thereof) on campus. Dr. Oekerman emphasized that it is not too late to produce missing documentation. Cases in which documentation appears to be lacking or the institution appears not to be in compliance with one of the principles needs to be reported to Dr. Oekerman, Dr. Smith or the SACS Office quickly so that efforts to ameliorate the deficiency can be initiated.

Dr. Watts reminded committee members that all elements of a standard must be met in order for UTPB to be considered to be in compliance with a principle. The pre-audit revealed several areas where UTPB is or might be non-compliant with the *Principles*. Other areas of potential non-compliance are normally revealed during the investigation process.

There are significant differences between the last review (2000) and this one. The differences include significant changes to the standards for accreditation and the process for reaffirmation. Dr. Fannin also noted that documentation must be posted electronically for this new review format. Dr. Andres then asked if the first drafts of the standards could be due at the end of May rather than the beginning (so as not to interfere with finals). Dr. Watts responded that this would be fine. Dr. Andres then asked whether any comparably sized UT campuses (e.g. UT Tyler) had already gone through compliance certification. Dr. Watts stated that UT Pan Am had, but that there was nothing wrong with looking at larger institutions as examples.

Dr. Watts reiterated that members must write to the actual wording of the *Principles* rather than the "essence", and that every element identified as compliant must be documented. A discussion of what constitutes documentation ensued. Dr. Watts pointed out that according to SACS, documentation must be written, approved, published, and implemented. She then noted that it is not strange for smaller institutions to initially lack sufficient documentation, but that documentation must be developed for a successful SACS review. Dr. Andres then asked whether the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* was going to be revised by the end of May. Dr. Fannin responded that, hopefully, it would be.

IV. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 27 at 10:30 a.m. **Remember that names of subcommittee members are due at that meeting.** If you are unable to attend, please see that subcommittee member names are returned to Dr. Oekerman or Dr. Smith before the meeting.