

MEMORANDUM

TO: SACSCOC Membership

FROM: Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D., President

DATE: June 29, 2021

SUBJECT: Updates

Greetings and happy summer! I hope each of you gets an opportunity for some well-deserved down time this summer. After the year we just finished, there is no doubt we all need some rest and relaxation.

I am writing to you today to give you some updates related to SACSCOC Board actions and goings on at the Commission. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

SACSCOC BOARD MEETING UPDATES

At the March meeting of the Executive Council, it was announced that Dr. James Stewart from Alabama had resigned from the SACSCOC Board. Dr. Dionne Rossier-Mims, Campus Vice Chancellor at Troy University in Phenix City, AL, was appointed to fill this unexpired term that ends December 31, 2021. She is eligible for re-election during the upcoming nomination process.

Other appointments include:

1. AUDIT/FINANCE COMMITTEE:
Jay Marr, Chair, President, Sullivan University
Vivia Fowler, President, Wesleyan College
Jim Yeonopolus, Chancellor, Central Texas College
2. INVESTMENT COMMITTEE
David Rudd, Chair, President, The University of Memphis
Matteel Knowles, Vice President for Student Services, Greenville Technical College
Blaine Hansen, Vice President for Planning and External Relations, Lees-McRae College

These are all current members of the Executive Council.

3. Appointments to the Appeals Committee (due to vacancies):
Glenda Colagross, President, Northwest Shoals Community College
Tim Brophy, Director of Institutional Assessment and Professor of Music, University of Florida
4. Differentiated Review Committee
Timmy James, Associate Dean of Academic Programs, Northwest Shoals Community College
Roger Myers, Reference and Instruction Librarian & Associate Professor, Maryville College

The Council also approved revisions to two (2) policies: the “Substantive Change Policy and Procedures,” and the Flexibilities Policy. These modifications continue the alignment of our policies and procedures with recent changes in federal regulations.

At its meeting in June, the Executive Council approved or considered the following items:

1. Approved the proposed FY 2022 SACSCOC budget. Subsequently, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approved the budget as well.
2. The Council received a report from the SACSCOC Investment Committee, reviewing investments by Fifth-Third Institutional Services, the group that has served as SACSCOC’s financial consultants for several years.
3. In September 2020, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approved the policy on [Arbitration of Adverse Actions](#). Adherence to the new Arbitration Policy is a condition of membership. Any institution that is dropped from membership by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees and loses their Appeal must engage in arbitration prior to any legal action.

This policy requires a pool of 12 Arbitrators be available for the parties to select to serve as a panel of three to hear their respective concerns. Fifty-four (54) nominations were received from the membership. Twelve (12) individuals were identified to serve staggered three-year terms. The Council concurred with the 12 recommended nominees, and they will be contacted regarding their willingness to serve in this capacity.

4. The Differentiated Review Process for the Class of 2024 is underway. Institutions wishing to participate in this process must express their interest by July 1. In October, a peer review group will recommend that the Executive Council approve the participation of those institutions that have met the criteria and those approved will be notified before Orientation in December.
5. Approved recommending accepting applications for membership from institutions outside of the ‘traditional’ Southern region. The SACSCOC Board approved the recommendation.
6. The Council reviewed staff reports on the following:
 - (1) an overview of SACSCOC Strategic Planning activities
 - (2) Substantive Change Office activities, which continue to increase, but are being handled efficiently
 - (3) the Office of Training and Research
 - (4) the Joint Paper with SACS CASI on the importance of transfer of credit

Upon the recommendation of the Executive Council, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approved eight (8) policies. They are listed below and are available on our website:

(1) [Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#)

This policy has been completely rewritten to bring SACSCOC into compliance with U.S. Department of Education regulations. Dr. Kevin Sightler and his staff are conducting webinars to explain changes to the policy. Please see our website for details.

With the changes to the Substantive Change Policy, effective IMMEDIATELY, please send all substantive change requests to the attention of Dr. Kevin Sightler, Director of Substantive Change, instead of to my attention.

(2) [SACSCOC Flexibilities Policy regarding COVID-19](#)

(3) [Administrative Procedures for C&R Meetings](#)

(4) [Ethical Obligations of SACSCOC Board Members](#)

(5) [Integrity and Institutional Obligations to SACSCOC](#)

(6) [Seeking Accreditation at Higher or Lower Degree Level](#)

(7) [Reports Submitted for SACSCOC Review](#)

(8) [Mergers and Acquisitions Policy](#)

In addition, in December 2020, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approved revisions to the [Dues, Fees and Expenses Policy](#) which include changes to or new fees. Effective July 1, 2021:

- A review of a Fifth-Year Interim Report by the Fifth-Year Interim Reports Committee is \$3,500 (flat fee billed to the institution).
- A substantive change for a merger/consolidation or acquisition between two or more SACSCOC member institutions is \$5,000 per institution.
- The incidental fee for committee members on evaluation committees is \$300 for the committee chair and \$150 for each committee member.

Reminders

- Please remember that you can update a new CEO or new Institutional Accreditation Liaison in the Institutional Portal. Please let my office know if the former CEO is still with the institution in a different position or has left the institution so that we can update their record as well.

- Please remember to maintain CURRENT links for your student achievement data and program list with CIP codes at all times in the Institutional Portal.
- Please remember that an institution with Dual Enrollment programs has the responsibility for documenting that it has a validation process for courses being accepted from the high school as being of college-level quality.
- When preparing a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), it is important for institutions to ensure that the Plan has substance and focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success.

SACSCOC Personnel Updates

- Vice Presidents Dr. Steven Sheeley and Dr. Charles Taylor have indicated their intention to retire effective at the end of January 2022. Job announcements will be shared with you in August 2021. I ask that you share the announcement across your institution.
- Additionally, Mrs. Rita Bell, Executive Assistant to the President, who has worked at SACSCOC for 44 years, has announced her intent to retire as well. Her position will be advertised in September. We also have three support positions (Secretarial) and a new Help Desk position in Computer Operations available. If you know of anyone interested in and qualified for any of these positions, please direct them to our website.
- Lastly, the Executive Council performed my annual evaluation and approved the addition of another year to my contract which extends it to 2024. I am truly grateful for the faith the Council continues to have in me and look forward to working with each of you during the coming years.

I hope you have a wonderful summer and, as always, if we can be of assistance to you, please let us know.