



## Minutes

### Deans Council

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 - 3:00PM

Zoom Meeting

1. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Moved for acceptance- approved.
  
2. Heather Hawn- Pre-Law Minor proposal
  - a. Need more organization around pre-law studies.
  - b. Heather is licensed lawyer in NC and has been advising students who want to go to Law school. Has taught LSAC classes. Interest is growing with the CJ program.
  - c. Envision as a one hour course turning into three hour course later. Discussed with some faculty. Might need to change number of courses if going to three hours in order to meet the 120 hours
  - d. In contact with programs across the state in reference to Paralegal study. Good marketability for career potential.
  - e. Good response from Program Review.
  - f. Does not involve any new resources. One hour overload in spring semester for Heather. Could move some courses around.
  - g. Heather has had 12 students to graduate and go to law school from this course.
  - h. Program would live under Political Science.
  - i. Approval could be August for spring semester start.
  - j. Deans voted to approve proposal and move to Curriculum Committee
  
3. Audrey Martin-McCoy- Institutional effective, assessment and accreditation update
  - a. Audrey made reference to the three SACSCOC Position Statements recently received regarding finances, educational quality, and institutional effectiveness and assessment at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following points were emphasized from these documents. The full SACSCOC Position Statements are included with the meeting minutes.
    - Though decisions to be made are difficult, administrators, governing board members, and legislators have a joint responsibility for providing, safeguarding, and managing the resources under their charge when rapid declines threaten to diminish institutions' abilities to fulfill their missions. Collectively, they must address the necessity of either replacing these resources or redefining their educational programs and services in order to maintain financial stability and protect educational quality.

- Member institutions will need to describe the rationale for the decisions made as a result of this pandemic when making their cases for compliance in future SACSCOC reports.
  - Decisions regarding how to best provide adequate and appropriate access to learning resources, support services, and other operational functions will be driven by an institution's own understanding of the needs of its campus community.
  - It may be appropriate to enhance some services due to changes in student needs or to suspend, limit, or modify services due to situational restrictions or demands.
  - Some institutions are considering significant changes to academic calendars, which would require clear communication with campus constituencies and with prospective students and parents who are making decisions regarding attendance.
  - If exceptions are made to educational policies (e.g., changes to admissions policies, grading policies, etc.), it is expected that those exceptions will be clearly documented, effectively communicated, and implemented in direct response to immediate or imminent concerns.
  - As institutions navigate managing the pandemic, regular planning and assessment practices may be disrupted or altered to give attention to the immediate crisis.
  - The form, focus, and timing of institutional planning and evaluation and program assessment activities may change in substantive ways during these times. However, SACSCOC anticipates that institutions will move forward strategically, adjusting plans as needed and engaging in reflective practices that monitor the effects of decisions made on operational effectiveness and student learning.
  - Documentation of decisions and actions taken prior to the current crisis and while institutions work toward returning to normal operations will be useful in demonstrating institutions' ongoing planning, evaluation, and assessment processes.
- b. Audrey noted that the Spring 2020 Academic Plans that were drafted by faculty as a result of emergency temporary online instruction due to COVID-19 were being collected from the Academic Deans. This process reflects SACSCOC best practice of documenting decisions and actions during the pandemic. These plans are being stored in a OneDrive folder in which the Provost, Academic Deans, interim Director of Institutional Research, and Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment will have access.
  - c. Getting information uploaded for May 29 deadline. Some scanning of documents requires faculty to return to campus for available scanners.
  - d. Kim Reigle wants to know about summer course evaluations. Scott stated this has been done in the past but the existing evaluation tools are based on in-house system and not online instruction. Would it be accurate?

4. Donna Parsons –Tracking Internships
  - a. Currently there is not a system in place to track the locations of internships. No longer with the Career Center.
  - b. Donna is working with Kim Reigle and Kris Pack to provide new reporting information.
  
5. Donna Parsons – Fall Semester
  - a. IRT meetings have narrowed down to two different scenarios for fall semester.
  - b. First scenario: Start August 10 and finish before Thanksgiving with no fall break and creating space by moving some courses online for flexibility.
  - c. Second scenario: Two blocks of two terms. Much like AGS terms. Would have face to face classes front loaded in first block. Would be mini exam after each block.
  - d. Advantage of block system would provide flexibility to go back to all online later in the fall if needed. Only running half the courses at one time would allow more time for cleaning classrooms and limit the number of contacts.
  - e. Social distancing would need to accomplish six feet apart in classrooms.
  - f. Deans to make recommendation to President next week.
  - g. Audrey stated that any decisions made for fall semester need to be documented with plans and policy statements.
  
6. Scott Pearson- Kinnamon Fund
  - a. A. Warfield applied for this grant and was awarded but travel was cancelled.
  - b. Wants to defer use to next academic year.
  - c. Scott will contact the Business Office and Advancement about the funding.

Adjourn – Next Meeting  
June 3, 2020 @ 3pm



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## **THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC ON HIGHER EDUCATION DURING A TIME OF WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY**

### **A Position Statement**

The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant financial challenges for colleges and universities across the nation. The short- and long-term effects are not yet known. Clearly, however, there are serious implications for current and future revenue streams and resources. Given that the global pandemic occurred mid-term during the spring of 2020, institutions had little opportunity to plan effectively for the financial implications.

SACSCOC is aware of the financial challenges faced by member institutions and acknowledges the broad-scale economic events over which institutions have no control. It also recognizes that there are institution-specific choices within the control of individual colleges and universities. Though decisions to be made are difficult, administrators, governing board members, and legislators have a joint responsibility for providing, safeguarding, and managing the resources under their charge when rapid declines threaten to diminish institutions' abilities to fulfill their missions. Collectively, they must address the necessity of either replacing these resources or redefining their educational programs and services in order to maintain financial stability and protect educational quality.

SACSCOC expects each of its accredited institutions to manage its resources to effectively maintain the quality of its programs and services while successfully addressing current and redefined goals. Member institutions will need to describe the rationale for the decisions made as a result of this pandemic when making their cases for compliance in future SACSCOC reports. While decisions during a crisis are tough, they are necessary to ensure institutional financial stability and long-term vitality and viability. Without this commitment, institutions and their programs are placed in jeopardy.

#### **Document History**

*Endorsed: SACSCOC Executive Council, 2020*

# MAINTAINING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY DURING THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

## A Position Statement

Beginning spring 2020, SACSCOC member institutions have maintained a focus on their educational missions while dealing with a multitude of logistical and very real human challenges in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. It is unclear how long institutions will need to modify operations in response to the pandemic; however, it is clear that administrators, faculty, and staff have a shared responsibility for ensuring that the quality of students' learning experiences is preserved, that technology is used in meaningful ways to engage students and facilitate learning, that grades are an accurate reflection of student attainment, and that appropriate support services are available. This is a time when more support than ever is needed for students, faculty, and staff.

SACSCOC acknowledges the significant and substantial work of its accredited institutions in making thoughtful decisions and providing the necessary structure and support to uphold their educational missions. Decisions regarding how to best provide adequate and appropriate access to learning resources, support services, and other operational functions will be driven by an institution's own understanding of the needs of its campus community. Although for most member institutions, many resources and services are already available online, for others, new methods of working and learning at a distance are required. It may be appropriate to enhance some services due to changes in student needs or to suspend, limit, or modify services due to situational restrictions or demands.

The crisis created by the pandemic also has prompted many institutions to consider innovative solutions to sustain operations and instruction. Some institutions are considering significant changes to academic calendars, which would require clear communication with campus constituencies and with prospective students and parents who are making decisions regarding attendance. If exceptions are made to educational policies (e.g., changes to admissions policies, grading policies, etc.), it is expected that those exceptions will be clearly documented, effectively communicated, and implemented in direct response to immediate or imminent concerns. Institutions also may be contemplating new collaborative arrangements and contracted services. SACSCOC encourages institutional leadership to consider any potential implications for substantive change reporting and ongoing compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation* if new partnerships are developed. During this time of uncertainty, SACSCOC continues to uphold its commitment to excellence and to support of its member institutions as they continue to monitor and adjust their strategies to protect the integrity of their institutional missions, academic programs, and learning environments.

### Document History

*Endorsed: SACSCOC Executive Council, 2020*

# **THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC ON INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT**

## **A Position Statement**

During the global COVID-19 pandemic, institutions are having to renegotiate their approaches to institutional effectiveness processes. Sound institutional planning and assessment form a cornerstone of assurance for educational quality. The ability of institutions to respond effectively in this fluid environment often depends upon the strength of the institution's long-standing engagement with ongoing and comprehensive planning, including risk management and business continuity planning. As institutions navigate managing the pandemic, regular planning and assessment practices may be disrupted or altered to give attention to the immediate crisis. The form, focus, and timing of institutional planning and evaluation and program assessment activities may change in substantive ways during these times. However, SACSCOC anticipates that institutions will move forward strategically, adjusting plans as needed and engaging in reflective practices that monitor the effects of decisions made on operational effectiveness and student learning. Documentation of decisions and actions taken prior to the current crisis and while institutions work toward returning to normal operations will be useful in demonstrating institutions' ongoing planning, evaluation, and assessment processes.

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