

# Directions and Guidelines for Completion of Part III of the Fifth-Year Interim Report

## Part III: The Fifth-Year Compliance Certification

### CONDUCTING THE COMPLIANCE REVIEW AND DOCUMENTING COMPLIANCE

1. Refer to the *Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation of Accreditation* for (1) conducting the compliance review, (2) documenting compliance, (3) evaluating the evidence supporting compliance, and (4) making the case for compliance .

For an electronic version of the *Handbook*, access <http://www.sacscoc.org/handbooks.asp>, click onto *Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation of Accreditation*

2. Refer to the *Resource Manual* for the rationale of the standard, relevant questions, required documentation, and information referencing other SACSCOC documents and policies. This document can be accessed at <http://www.sacscoc.org/handbooks.asp>
3. Reminders:
  - Provide a concise, clear, and complete report. Ensure that documentation is appropriate for demonstrating fulfillment of the requirement. Specify actions that have been taken and document completion.
  - Ensure that your narrative explains the use of the documentation and how the documentation supports compliance.
  - Provide definitive evidence, not documents that only address the process.
  - Specify actions that have been taken and provide documentation that such actions have been completed.
  - When possible and appropriate, provide samples of evidence of compliance rather than all documents pertaining to all activities associated with compliance. Sampling should include a representation of programs and services in accord with an institution's mission and should explain the method used for the sample selection.
  - When a requirement requests that the institution have a policy, provide examples of policy implementation.
  - Integrate the evaluation and analysis of ***compliance for all distance and correspondence learning programs and off-site programs and services*** described in Part II of your Report. Focus particularly on CR 2.8, CR 2.10, CS 3.3.1.1, CS 3.4.11, and FR 4.2 – 4.9.

## REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION FORMAT

- Materials may be submitted in print form, on DVD/CD, flash/thumb drive. ***If an audit has been requested, it must be submitted in print form only.***
- If print documents are submitted, copy all documents front and back, double space the copy, and use no less than a 10 point font. Do not submit documents in a three-ring binder; staple or soft bind the document.
- If electronic documents are submitted, all documents must be included on the electronic device. Each device smaller than 4"x 4" must be submitted in a paper or plastic envelope not smaller than 4"x 4" and the envelope must be labeled with the name of the institution, the title of the report, and the list of document contents. The device itself must be labeled with the name of the institution and the name of the report. Submit the name and contact numbers of an individual who can be contacted if readers have problems accessing the documents on the electronic devices.

Be sure to check the electronic device before mailing it to the Commission office to ensure that all intended documents are included. It also would be helpful to field test access to the electronic documents by individuals unfamiliar with the institution.

- When possible, excerpt passages from text and incorporate the narrative into the report instead of sending an entire document. Provide definitive evidence, not documents that only address the process.
- Reread the report before submission and eliminate all narrative that is not relevant to the focus of the report.
- For guidance regarding the institution's response to Part III, refer to the Commission's *Resource Manual*.
- ***Provide SEVEN copies of the Report by the date designated in your letter from the Commission President.***

## **ADDENDUM**

### **FIFTH-YEAR INTERIM REPORT SUPPORT FOR COMPREHENSIVE STANDARD 3.10.2 AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENT 4.7**

#### **COMPREHENSIVE STANDARD 3.10.2**

*The institution audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations.*

What types of documentation, or patterns of evidence, would document compliance with the standard?

- Most recent external audit of federal financial aid programs.
- Most recent external audit of state financial aid programs.
- If public, documentation from auditor indicating audit schedule and frequency.
- Recent copies of correspondence received from the U.S. Department of Education related to delays in receiving, or not receiving, federal awards audit information.

#### **FEDERAL REQUIREMENT 4.7**

*The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the 1998 Higher Education Amendments.*

What types of documentation, or patterns of evidence, would document compliance with the standard?

- Most recent OMB A-133 financial aid audit report
- Institutional response to findings in the financial aid audit report
- Copies of recent correspondence from the U.S. Department of Education
- Copies of institutional response to U.S. Department of Education correspondence
- Details regarding negotiated settlement agreements for the payoff of any fines or monies owed in connection with program or fiscal audits
- Copies of any reports on compliance from the U.S. Department of Education