

SACS Core Requirements

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<p>2.1 The institution has degree-granting authority from the appropriate government agency or agencies. (Degree-granting Authority)</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> To be eligible for accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, an institution must demonstrate that it is legally authorized to grant undergraduate and/or graduate degrees within appropriate geographical boundaries. This applies to all programs wherever they are offered. Because education in the United States largely operates under the jurisdiction of states, typically such authorization is granted through state legislation, sometimes by language contained in state constitutions, more often in other supplemental laws, and – more recently – through actions of state education coordinating boards.</p>	<p>Documentation of authority to offer specific degrees, including approvals in foreign countries if appropriate.</p>	<p>As appropriate, an explanation of exemptions or unusual circumstances concerning approval</p> <p>What agencies have authorized the institution to grant degrees?</p> <p>When was the authorization first or most recently approved?</p> <p>Are there any conditional approvals? If so, by whom and for what reasons?</p> <p>If the institution offers degrees in more than one state, what is the evidence of multiple authorizations?</p> <p>If the institution offers degrees internationally, what is the evidence of authorization by each individual country?</p>
<p>2.2 The institution has a governing board of at least five members that is the legal body with specific authority over the institution. The board is an active policy-making body for the institution and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are adequate to provide a sound educational program. The board is not controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from it. Both the presiding officer of the board and a majority of other voting members of the board are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Ultimate responsibility for the governance of the institution rests with an independent, qualified, empowered governing board. This board is a collective entity responsible for determining</p>	<p>Documents such as state law, articles of incorporation, bylaws, operational manuals, list of board members and officers with addresses and occupation for each, board minutes for two prior years</p>	<p>Description of the means by which the board ensures that financial resources are adequate to provide a sound educational program. Description of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interests in the institution that involved board members</p> <p>How are board members and the presiding officer elected or appointed?</p> <p>How do the process and board structure ensure compliance?</p>

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<p>the mission of the institution, ensuring that the institution’s leadership is guided by that mission, and holding in trust the well-being of the institution. The board is adequately informed about the operations of the institution to carry out its fiduciary responsibility. However, the board’s responsibility is for policy and fiscal viability, not daily operations, which is entrusted to administrative and faculty leadership. Members of the governing board act with authority only as a collective entity. (Governing Board)</p>		<p>What evidence is there that the board controls the institution? What evidence is there that board members as a corporate body focus on policy issues, CEO performance review, overall mission, and financial viability?</p> <p>How often do the board members meet and is their agenda appropriate for their responsibilities?</p>
<p>2.3 The institution has a chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is to the institution and who is not the presiding officer of the board. (Chief Executive Officer) (<i>See Commission policy “Core Requirement 2.3: Documenting an Alternate Approach.”</i>)</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> To keep administration in higher education distinct from policy making, institutions typically appoint chief executive officers, generally called presidents or chancellors, and charge them with leadership responsibilities on behalf of the institution. Even though the board of control normally has the power to employ and dismiss the chief executive officer, that individual has appropriate authority – and responsibility – to administer and execute the policies related to broad institutional issues developed by the board. The chief executive officer and those senior administrators reporting to that individual are responsible for implementing the board’s policies, evaluating them periodically, and reporting results to the board for possible revision or refinement.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> In December 2004 the Commission adopted an interpretation to this requirement applying to circumstances when an institution is part of a system and its president is also the chief executive officer of the system. Refer to COC policy, “Core Requirement 2.3: Documenting an Alternative Approach,” required for compliance (available at www.sacscoc.org).</p>	<p>Documents such as institutional bylaws and administrative or institutional policy manual, position description.</p>	<p>A description of responsibilities assumed by the chief executive officer, both within and outside the institution, with an explanation of how he/she maintains primary responsibility to the institution</p> <p>What is the name and title of the institution’s chief executive officer?</p> <p>How is the chief executive officer selected and appointed?</p> <p>How does the chief executive officer’s job description define his or her relationship to the governing board? Who is the presiding officer of the institution’s governing board?</p> <p>If the president is also the chief operating officer of the system, how does the institution ensure that there is no conflict of interest?</p>

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<p>2.4 The institution has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published mission statement that is specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The mission addresses teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service. (Institutional Mission)</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> A clearly defined and comprehensive mission statement is absolutely fundamental to the structure of an institution’s effectiveness review. An effective mission statement conveys the essence of institutional identity and reflects a clear understanding of the institution by the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. It is the foundation upon which the institution examines itself, allocates its resources, and plans its future. Furthermore, it guides the public’s perception of the nature of the institution. While the institutional mission statement may be brief, it nevertheless describes completely and clearly what the institution does. It conveys a sense of the institutions uniqueness and identifies the qualities, characteristics, and values that define the institution’s place, role, and distinctiveness within the diverse higher education community. Institutional integrity demands congruence between the mission statement and the institution’s governance as well as consistency in representation of the statement itself.</p> <p>The expectation of this requirement is that the mission of the institution is appropriate to higher education and that the focus is on teaching and learning. While related statements regarding institutional philosophy or vision may accompany the mission statement, it is important that the institution develop educational goals and objectives that are clearly recognized throughout the institution and are consistent with the mission. Ascertaining the level of achievement of its mission and its educational goals and objectives will be the primary focus of an institution’s assessment of effectiveness.</p> <p>The Commission recognizes that some institutions of higher education may not include research and public service explicitly in</p>	<p>Copy of mission statement</p>	<p>A brief explanation of how the mission statement was developed and approved and how it is reviewed</p> <p>What is the mission of the institution and is it clearly defined?</p> <p>How is it published and disseminated?</p> <p>How is the mission statement appropriate to an institution of higher education?</p> <p>How does the mission address teaching and learning and, if appropriate, research and public service?</p> <p>How does the mission statement describe the distinctiveness of the institution and its values?</p>

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<p>their primary mission or that they may define research and public service in different ways. To the extent that the institution considers research and public service part of its mission, it should address those mission components appropriately in the statement itself and define them within the institutional context.</p>		
<p>2.5 The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. (Institutional Effectiveness)</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> Institutional effectiveness is the systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution. The purpose of this Core Requirement is to assure that the institution has an appropriate approach to effectiveness that supports its mission. A commitment to continuous improvement is at the heart of an ongoing planning and evaluation process. It is a continuous, cyclical process that is participative, flexible, relevant, and responsive. The approach to institutional effectiveness includes all programs, services, and constituencies and is strongly linked to the decision making process at all levels, including the institutions budgeting process.</p> <p>While the requirement does not imply that all elements of the system must be undertaken simultaneously or even annually, the various activities of the institution’s planning and evaluation system are scheduled at periodic intervals that make sense for the institution and its mission. The results of diverse assessment efforts can be integrated to provide a sound basis for plans aimed at institutional improvement.</p> <p>Because the process used for institutional effectiveness permeates <i>all</i> facets of the institution, it is appropriate that a review of this Core Requirement includes the institution’s mission and effectiveness, the</p>	<p>Strategic, or master plan; documents containing goals and objectives with evidence of assessment and use of assessment results.</p>	<p>A description of the planning and assessment process with a time line revealing how and when it functions and with a list of persons and/or committees which play key roles in the process A description of how the process informs budgeting decisions</p> <p>A description of how programs and services are regularly reviewed as part of the process</p> <p>A description of how the process has resulted in improvement in services and programs at the institution. Specific examples from various departments, divisions and units of the institution</p> <p>What are the institution’s processes for systematic, ongoing, integrated, research based reviews that result in continuous improvement?</p> <p>How does the institution demonstrate a sustained, documented history of planning evaluation cycles, including the use of results for improvement, to accomplish the institution’s mission?</p>

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<p>commitment of leadership to integrate planning and continuous improvement, and its approach to documenting the evidence of its process.</p> <p>Note: Even though the concept of institutional effectiveness may not be explicitly referenced in all of the comprehensive standards, the accreditation process assumes that all programs and services wherever offered within the context of the institution's activity are reviewed as part of the institutional effectiveness process.</p>		<p>Is there appropriate institutional research and budgetary support for assessment programs throughout the institution?</p> <p>What is the evidence that data from various sources concerning the effectiveness of programs and services are being used to make decisions for improvement?</p> <p>How is the institutional effectiveness process related to the budget?</p> <p>Are appropriate internal and external constituents and stakeholders involved in the planning and assessment process?</p>
<p>2.6 The institution is in operation and has students enrolled in degree programs. (Continuous Operation)</p> <p>Rationale: The Commission on Colleges accredits degree-granting institutions in the southern region of the United States. In order to be evaluated for accreditation by the Commission, an institution needs to be a functioning organization with students enrolled in degree programs.</p>	<p>Enrollment data for each program offered by the institution</p>	<p>How long has the institution been in operation?</p> <p>How many students are currently enrolled in degree programs?</p>
<p>2.7.1 The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification for all degrees that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit. (Program Length)</p>	<p>Catalog and list of degree programs with number of hours required for each</p>	<p>A description of the system and a rationale that justifies equivalency if the institution uses a system that differs from the credit hour system of 60, 120, or 30.</p> <p>How does the institution identify the minimum number of credit hours required for degrees at each level?</p>

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<p><i>Rationale:</i> The requirement reflects the generally accepted means of determining academic credit required for degrees in higher education. The requirement uses as its basis the semester credit hour or its equivalency. In instances where an institution relies on other means of determining “academic credit” other than semester hours, it must demonstrate that its approach adheres to generally accepted practices described by this Core Requirement.</p>		<p>What are the institution’s policies and procedures related to the establishment of new programs and do they include reference to minimum length for programs at each level? If an academic unit other than semester hours is used, what is the unit equivalency to semester hours and how does the institution make this determination?</p>
<p>2.7.2 The institution offers degree programs that embody a coherent course of study that is compatible with its stated mission and is based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. (Program Content)</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> Programs offered by the institution are directly connected to its mission and to fields of study appropriate to higher education. In order to guide students through the continuous process of learning, the content of the program demands increasing levels of knowledge integration. Coherence is a critical component of a program and should demonstrate an appropriate sequencing of courses, not a mere bundling of credits, so that the student learning is progressively more advanced in terms of assignments and scholarship required and demonstrates progressive advancement in a field of study that allows students to integrate knowledge and grow in critical skills.</p>	<p>Catalog</p>	<p>Rationale concerning the appropriateness and coherence of requirements in degree programs</p> <p>Rationale concerning compatibility of programs with stated purpose</p> <p>What evidence exists that the institution offers degree programs consistent with its stated mission?</p> <p>How does the institution ensure that each of its degree programs demonstrates coherence in sequencing, increasing complexity, and linkages between and among program components?</p> <p>How does the institution demonstrate that its programs are appropriate to higher education?</p>

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<p>2.7.3 In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification if it allows for fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit of general education courses. (General Education)</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> This core requirement establishes five key principles regarding general education courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General education courses are college-level • General education courses present a breadth of knowledge to promote intellectual inquiry • General education is based on a coherent rationale • Each course or experience is evaluated within the institution’s overall rationale for general education • The general education component constitutes a minimum number of semester hours <p>It is essential to understand the general education component of the degree program within the context of the institution’s mission and within the expectations of a college-level institution. Through general education, students encounter the basic content and methodology of the principal areas of knowledge: humanities and fine arts, social and behavioral sciences, and natural sciences and mathematics. Courses in these areas introduce a breadth of knowledge and reinforce</p>	<p>Catalog and list of program requirements with general education requirements for each major or concentration (if there is not a common core requirement)</p>	<p>Description of and rationale for the general education program</p> <p>A justification that demonstrates how the general education program is equivalent if the institution uses a system that differs from the credit hour system</p> <p>What evidence is found of an institutional rationale for general education that serves as the basis for including selected courses?</p> <p>How does the institution ensure that the student’s breadth of knowledge acquired through the general education component of the degree program is sufficient and appropriate to its mission?</p> <p>By what measures does the institution ensure that general education represents a substantial component of the undergraduate degree program?</p> <p>What process is used to ensure that general education courses address the goals of the general education component?</p> <p>What criteria does the institution use to assure that the required skill level meets collegiate standards?</p>

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<p>cognitive skills and affective learning opportunities for each student. It is important that institutions rely on their curricular reviews to determine the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education offerings. (See also the discussion for CS 3.4.10.)</p> <p>Note: The Commission’s standing interpretation is that a course in basic composition that does not contain a literature component or a course in oral communication may not be used as the sole designated course in humanities/fine arts.</p>		<p>Do all degree programs include at least one course from the three required areas of study?</p>
<p>2.7.4 The institution provides instruction for all course work required for at least one degree program at each level at which it awards degrees.</p> <p>If the institution does not provide instruction for all such course work and (1) makes arrangements for some instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia or (2) uses some other alternative approach to meeting this requirement, the alternative approach must be approved by the Commission on Colleges. In both cases, the institution demonstrates that it controls all aspects of its educational program. (See Commission policy “Core Requirement 2.7.4: Documenting an Alternate Approach.”) (Course work for Degrees)</p> <p>Rationale: This standard expects an institution to offer instruction for all coursework required for at least one degree program offered at each level at which it awards degrees. When this is not the case and part of the instruction is provided by another accredited institution, then the alternative approach must be approved by the Commission and the institution must demonstrate that it controls the quality of its programs. The rationale for each approach follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The institution proved instruction for all coursework required for at least one degree program at each level at which it awards degrees. The expectation is that the institution provides instruction for all coursework required for at least one degree program at each level at which it 		<p>Does the institution provide instruction for all coursework required for at least one degree program offered at each level at which it awards degrees?</p> <p>If yes, what evidence exists that it provides all instruction?</p> <p>If no, what alternative arrangement or consortium or contract does the institution have for provision of coursework which it does not offer? How does the institution maintain responsibility and control of the coursework (content and learning outcomes) accepted through an alternative means or through a consortium or contract? What evidence is provided that such arrangements are evaluated regularly? Has the Commission on Colleges approved the consortium or contract, if necessary?</p>

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<p>awards a degree or degrees in order to control and ensure the quality of the program, to maintain the integrity of each level of degree offered, and to carry out its mission.</p> <p>2. If the institution makes arrangements for some instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia, or uses some other alternative approach to meeting this requirement, the alternative approach must be approved by the Commission on Colleges. In all cases, the institution demonstrates that it controls all aspects of its educational program. In accord with Commission policy, “Core Requirement 2.7.4: Documenting an Alternative Approach,” an institution may choose to offer a degree program at a level at which it does not provide instruction for all coursework for at least one degree program. For example, the institution may award a baccalaureate degree in one or more programs, but it does not offer all the coursework for any degree program for which it awards the baccalaureate degree. Instead, it may choose to enter into a consortium or contractual arrangement or use another alternative approach by which it accepts from another source some coursework required for the degree or degrees.</p> <p>In order to gain approval from the Commission for such arrangements, the institution describes the arrangement and demonstrates that although it does not offer all coursework for the program or programs at a particular degree level, it assumes responsibility for and maintains control of all aspects of the degree program or programs. It is important that the institution assess the competencies of students relative to the coursework accepted from another source and ensure that the learning outcomes are consistent with expected outcomes had the institution offered the coursework. The responsibility for the integrity of programs or coursework accepted through an alternative means rests with the institution awarding the degree or degrees. (See</p>		

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<p>Commission policy described above for specific directions for addressing compliance.)</p> <p>In all cases, if the institution provides instruction for all course work or if it has alternative arrangements for offering a degree program, it is the responsibility of the institution to control the quality of that program.</p>		
<p>2.8 The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs.</p> <p>Upon application for candidacy, an applicant institution demonstrates that it meets the comprehensive standard for faculty qualifications. (Faculty)</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> Adequacy of faculty resources is necessary to ensure the quality and integrity of an institution’s academic programs. Moreover, the mission of the institution will govern the type of faculty employed, including the number of full-time faculty members. The achievement of the institution’s mission with respect to teaching, research, and/or service will require a critical mass or permanent, full-time, qualified faculty to provide direction and oversight of academic programs. The number of such faculty will need to be sufficient to fulfill basic faculty functions or curriculum design, development and evaluation; teaching; identification and assessment of appropriate student learning outcomes; student advising; research and creative activity; and institutional and professional service. The work of the core faculty may be supplemented and enhanced by judicious assignment of part-time faculty and graduate teaching assistants whose special qualifications broaden and enrich the curriculum and increase learning opportunities for students.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> This requirement addresses the adequacy of faculty personnel, not the adequacy of academic support services and resources.</p>	<p>Completed official Commission roster for instructional staff, listing all full-time and part-time faculty teaching credit courses during the academic term the compliance certification is submitted and the two terms preceding that term</p>	<p>Evidence that faculty resources and qualifications are adequate and appropriate to ensure the quality of the academic programs offered</p> <p>What are the institution’s definitions of terms such as full-time faculty, regular/permanent faculty, student-faculty ratio?</p> <p>How does the mission of the institution determine the number and type of faculty employed?</p> <p>How does the institution determine the number of full-time faculty needed to achieve its mission?</p> <p>What is the responsibility of the full-time faculty and do they constitute a sufficient resource for carrying out basic faculty functions? What are the ways in which members of the institution other than full-time faculty carry out some of these functions?</p> <p>What are the institution’s policies on employment of part-time or adjunct faculty?</p>

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<p>2.9 The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs. (Learning Resources and Services)</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> The purpose of this Core Requirement is to ensure that an institution's students and faculty have access to appropriate collections and other learning resources that support all educational programs wherever they are offered and at the appropriate degree level. The levels and types of degrees offered by an institution determine the nature and extent of resources needed to support the full range of its academic programs. In order to support adequately the institution's curriculum and mission, an institution may arrange for its students and faculty to have convenient access to the resources of another institution, or to resources that are jointly accessed by a consortium of institutions.</p>	<p>Data concerning physical facilities for learning resources</p> <p>Data concerning collections and electronic access at the institution and arrangements with other institutions or organizations</p> <p>Data concerning other information resources available to students at their learning locations</p>	<p>Description of the adequacy of learning resources for all credit coursework and programs that the institution offers</p> <p>What are the library resources and are they appropriate to support the educational programs offered?</p> <p>How does the institution provide access to library/learning resources not owned by the institution?</p> <p>How does the institution manage resource relationships outside its direct control while also ensuring relevance to its academic program?</p> <p>What access to collections and services is provided for off-campus sites and distance learning courses?</p> <p>How does the institution determine adequacy and relevancy of library/learning resources to support all its educational, research, and service needs?</p>
<p>2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. (Student Support Services)</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> Appropriate student support programs and services enhance the educational development of students at all levels. The expectation of this requirement is that institutions recognize this important component of student learning and student development and that, in the context of their mission, provide a comprehensive and appropriate range of support services and programs at all locations.</p>	<p>Description and data concerning student support programs and services</p> <p>Student handbook</p>	<p>Explanation of how student support programs and services promote student learning and meet the needs of students</p> <p>What are the student support programs and services provided by the institution that serve all levels of students?</p>

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		<p>How do the student support programs and services effectively promote the mission of the institution for all types of students?</p> <p>How do student support programs and services promote student learning and enhance their development?</p> <p>How are the student support programs and services assessed for their effectiveness and adequacy? What is evidence that the programs are effective?</p>
<p>2.11.1 The institution has a sound financial base and demonstrated financial stability to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services. The member institution provides the following financial statements: (1) an institutional audit (or Standard Review Report issued in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a systemwide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or Standard Review Report) guide; (2) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and (3) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board. Audit requirements for applicant institutions may be found in the Commission policy “Accreditation Procedures for Applicant Institutions.” (Financial Resources)</p>	<p>Separate institutional audit and management letter for the fiscal year ending prior to the submission of the compliance certification. If this audit is not available because of the timing of the certification submission date, it should be provided prior to the visit of the on-site committee. Previous audited may be provided as well.</p> <p>Description of the budget planning procedure, minutes of the board meeting documenting approval of the budget, and the schedule of changes in unrestricted net assets, excluding plant and plant-related debt.</p>	<p>Evidence of adequate and stable financial support for all aspects of the operation of the institution.</p> <p>How does the institution demonstrate a pattern of financial stability?</p> <p>How does the institution fund tuition discounts?</p> <p>How does the institution demonstrate that the physical resources of the institution are adequate in quality, quantity, and condition to meet the scope and purpose of programs and services?</p> <p>Are audited financial statements, or standard review reports, prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and all FASB or GASB standards?</p>

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<p><u>Rationale:</u> Although missions vary among institutions of higher education, a sound financial base and a pattern of financial stability, along with the effective use of its financial resources, provide the foundation for the ongoing accomplishment of an institution’s mission regardless of changing economic conditions. Adequate resources allow for deliberate consideration of the effective use of resources to fulfill that mission.</p> <p>Adequate physical resources are essential to the educational environment and include well-maintained buildings and grounds that are safe and appropriate for the scope of the institution’s programs and services.</p> <p>It is reasonable that the general public, governmental entities, and current and prospective students expect sufficient financial resources necessary to fulfill the institution’s mission as an ongoing concern.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> The financial statements noted in CR 2.11 are necessary, as a minimum, to provide documentation of financial resources and stability.</p>		<p>How is the institution’s budget approved?</p> <p>How do current assets adequately meet current liabilities?</p>
<p>2.11.2 The institution has adequate physical resources to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services. (Physical Resources)</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Adequate physical resources are essential to the educational environment and include well-maintained buildings and grounds that are safe and appropriate for the scope of the institution’s programs and services.</p> <p>It is reasonable that the general public, governmental entities, and current and prospective students expect sufficient physical resources necessary to fulfill the institution’s mission as an ongoing concern.</p>		<p>How does the institution demonstrate that the physical resources of the institution are adequate in quality, quantity, and condition to meet the scope and purpose of programs and services?</p>
<p>2.12 The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that (1) includes a broad-based institutional process identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment, (2) focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution, (3)</p>		<p>Has the institution identified and provided a clear and concise description of a significant issue(s) directly related to student learning?</p>

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<p>demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP, (4) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP, and (5) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement. (Quality Enhancement Plan) <i>(Note: This requirement is not addressed by the institution in its Compliance Certification.)</i></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> The <i>Principles of Accreditation</i> attests to the commitment of the Commission on Colleges to the enhancement of the quality of higher education and to the proposition that student learning is at the heart of the mission of all institutions of higher learning. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a component of the accreditation process that reflects and affirms both of these commitments. Developing a QEP as part of the reaffirmation process is an opportunity and an impetus for an institution to enhance overall institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue or issues the institution considers important to improving student learning.</p> <p>The QEP describes a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue(s) directly related to enhancing student learning. Student learning is defined broadly in the context of the QEP and may address a wide range of topics or issues but, in all cases, the goals and evaluation strategies need to be clearly and directly linked to improving the quality of student learning. In order to ensure that the QEP is implemented, the institution integrates it into its ongoing planning and evaluation process.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> The QEP is a course of action that is specific to an institution and its mission. It is intended to be customized and designed to meet the needs of the particular institution. It is an opportunity for an institution to be creative in an area related to compliance with <i>Principles</i>. Therefore, although an institution may want to study QEP's completed by other institutions, and institution's QEP should reflect the needs of the institution and be customized to accomplish its goals.</p>		<p>What are the goals of the QEP and how do they relate to student learning?</p> <p>What are the intended benefits of the QEP to the institution and to the student?</p> <p>What resources (personnel, financial, physical, academic, etc.) are necessary for the successful implementation of the QEP?</p> <p>How will the progress of the QEP be monitored? (timelines, administration, and oversight of its implementation by qualified individuals, etc.)</p> <p>What are the evaluation strategies identified by the institution that will determine the success of the institution's QEP? How will evaluation findings be used to improve student learning?</p>

SACS Core Requirements

Requirements, Standards and Regulations and Rationale	Supporting Document Examples	Evidence, Questions to Consider
<p>At the time of the on-site review, the Commission expects an institution to have in place all components that are characteristic to any workable plan: (1) a focused topic (directly related to student learning), (2) clear goals, (3) adequate resources in place to implement the plan, (4) evaluation strategies for determining the achievement of goals, and (5) evidence of community development and support of the plan.</p>		