SACS Compliance Certification
Team Meeting
April 30, 2008
Resources

- Handbook for Reaffirmation of Accreditation
- Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation
- Materials from SACS Annual Conference
Overview of the Accreditation Review 8-step Process

1-Orientation for Leadership Team
2-Submission of Compliance Certification
3-Off-site review of Compliance Certification
4-Focus report in response to findings
5-Submission of Quality Enhancement Plan
6-On-site review of QEP & non-compliance
7-Response to on-site Committee’s report
8-Commission's action on reaffirmation
January 2009 – Orientation of Leadership
March 15, 2010 – Compliance Certification
May 2010 – Off-site Review conducted
Summer 2010 – QEP due
Sept – Nov 2010 – On-site review
June 2011 – Commission’s action
Role of Off-site Committee

- Reviews several institutions
- Reviews for compliance to
  - all Core Requirements except #12 (QEP)
  - All Comprehensive Standards
  - Federal regulations
- Assessment conducted in two phases
  - Preliminary review by individual members
  - Committee meets in Atlanta to reach consensus & develop report of findings
Role of On-site Committee

- Determines compliance with Core requirement #12 (QEP)
- Reviews all items that the Off-site Committee found as “non-compliance” or “did not review”
- Does not review Core Requirements or Comprehensive Standards which have been judged “in compliance” by off-site committee unless concerns arise during visit that justify a review
The Leadership Team

- Membership should not be large
- Membership should include CEO, CAO, the accreditation liaison, a faculty representative
- SACS Orientation is limited to four + CFO
- Oversees the Compliance Certification
- Develops Focus Report
- Oversees development of QEP
- Informs institutional community of progress
- Oversees arrangements for on-site visit
- Ensures follow-up activity to monitor progress of QEP
Compliance Certification

“The Compliance Certification is the document completed by the institution that demonstrates its judgment of the extent of its compliance with each of the Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and federal regulations, as presented in the Principles of Accreditation.”
Leadership for Compliance Certification Analysis

Chair + relatively small number of members including:

- The accreditation liaison
- Representatives from Institutional research; finance and business; educational programs; student services; institutional effectiveness; libraries and other learning resources; enrollment management; and governance.

Achieving widespread institutional participation for the compliance review is not a goal.
Conducting the Review

Begin by carefully interpreting the Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards

Judge extent of compliance on each item
- Compliance with each aspect of the standard
- Partial Compliance, which must include a detailed action plan
- Non-Compliance with thorough explanation and detailed action plan
Documenting Compliance

Inventory available records, documents, databases, policy manuals, curriculum documentation, assessment records, committee minutes, Board minutes, planning documents, reports to external audiences, case studies, and other sources of relevant information

- Examples: catalog, org chart, bylaws, evaluations, faculty files, handbooks, documents on library holdings, DL programs, consortium memberships, financial audits, management letters, financial statements
Presentation of Documentation

- Sometimes a single document or excerpt with a brief narrative will constitute sufficient evidence.

- For complex items, a more extensive analysis must be provided, and several sources of relevant evidence may be needed. A convincing narrative explaining how the evidence supports the claim of compliance must be provided. Include a summary & interpretation of complex documents and data cited. Look for a “pattern of evidence” - a set of multiple measures/indicators that exhibit coherence and a unifying theme.
Evaluating the Evidence

- Evidence is a coherent and focused body of information supporting a judgment of compliance. It must be: Reliable, Current, Verifiable, Coherent, Objective, Relevant, & Representative

- Evidence should entail interpretation and reflection

- Evidence should combine trend & snapshot data

- Evidence should draw from multiple indicators
Forms of Reporting

- Electronic, paper, or combination
- Website or CD or DVD with hyperlinks
- Limited number of hard copies required for Off-site and On-site Committees
- If electronic, instructions for navigating and “user-friendly” organization is critical
Xitracs

- Project Management Software
  - Publish to website
  - Copy to thumb drive or DVD
  - Print paper copies