Objectives:

- Articulate the mission, purpose and authority of SACSCOC
- Recognize major college responsibilities related to SACSCOC reaccreditation
- Debunk SACSCOC Myths
- Identify and access resources needed to meet SACSCOC requirements

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

- Private, nonprofit
- Voluntary organization
- Founded in 1895 in Atlanta, Georgia, where it is still located
- Dues = Fixed Cost + Full-Time Enrollment Equivalent Variable + Educational & General Expenditure Variable

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
6 Core Values

- Integrity
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Peer Review/Self-regulation
- Accountability
- Student Learning
- Transparency
SACSCOC Structure

- College Delegate Assembly – CEO or designee from each accredited institution
- 77 Member Board – elected by the CDA
- 13 Member Executive Council
SACSCOC Administration

Belle Wheelan
President

Steven Sheeley
Vice President

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
LSCS Administration

Keri Rogers
Vice Chancellor

Debra Rockefeller
Executive Director

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
Authorization

- Department of Education
- US Secretary of Education recognizes accreditation as establishing an institution’s eligibility to participate in programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Authorization Act
SACSCOC Mission

The Commission’s mission is the enhancement of educational quality throughout the region and the improvement of the effectiveness of institutions by ensuring that they meet standards established by the higher education community that address the needs of society and students.

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
SACSCOC Mission

Accreditation by SACS Commission on Colleges signifies that the institution: (1) has a mission appropriate to higher education, (2) has resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish and sustain that mission, and (3) maintains clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees it offers, and that indicate whether its successful in achieving its stated objectives.

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
College Responsibilities

Recognize the centrality of peer review to the effectiveness of the accreditation process. The process of accreditation outlined there is based on the expectation that each accredited institution has made a commitment to:

- Comply with the Principle of Integrity (PR), Core Requirements (CR), Comprehensive Standards (CS), and Federal Requirements (FR) contained in The Principles of Accreditation and with the policies/procedures of the SACS Commission on Colleges.
- Enhance the quality of its educational programs.
- Focus on student learning.
- Ensure a “culture of integrity” in all of its operations.

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
Principle of Integrity

“The Commission on Colleges expects integrity to govern the operation of institutions and for institutions to make reasonable and responsible decisions consistent with the spirit of integrity in all matters.”

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
Core Requirements

“Core Requirements are *basic, broad-based, foundational requirements* that an institution must meet to be accredited with the Commission on Colleges. They establish a threshold of development required of an institution seeking initial or continued accreditation by the Commission and reflect the Commission’s basic expectations of candidate and member institutions.”

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
12 Core Requirements

- Governance & Authority
- Structure
- Mission
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Program Length
- Program Content
- Faculty
- Physical & Financial Resources
- Quality Enhancement Plan

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
Comprehensive Standards

The Comprehensive Standards are more specific to the operations of the institution, represent good practice in higher education, and establish a level of accomplishment expected of all member institutions.

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
14 Categories of Comprehensive Standards

- Institutional Mission - 1
- Governance & Administration – 14
- Institutional Effectiveness – 2
- Programs – 12
- Undergraduate Education Programs – 4
- Graduate Education Programs (not applicable)
- Faculty – 5
- Library & Other Learning Resources – 3
- Student Affairs & Services – 3
- Financial Resources – 4
- Physical Resources – 3
- Compliance with Commission & Other Policies - 3
Federal Requirements

Higher Education Authorization Act includes mandates that the Commission review an institution in accordance with criteria outlined in the federal regulations developed by the U.S. Department of Education.

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9 Federal Requirements

- Student Achievement
- Program Curriculum
- Publication of Policies
- Program Length
- Student Complaints
- Title IV Program Responsibilities
- Distance Education
- Definition of Credit Hours

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
10-Yr Reaffirmation Process

- **Last Monday in January**
  - Leadership Team Orientation
  - Institutional Summary Form Due

- **March 15**
  - Compliance Report Due
  - Updated Institutional Summary Due

- **2nd Full Week in May**
  - Off Site Review Conducted

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
10-yr Reaffirmation Process

- **6-Weeks Prior to On-Site**: QEP Due
- **Sept - Nov**: Optional Focused Report
- **5 months after on-site**: Updated Institutional Summary
- **3rd Week in June**: On-Site Review
- **3rd Week in June**: Response due, if necessary
- **3rd Week in June**: Review by Board

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
10-yr Reaffirmation Process

- 5th Year Interim Report
  - Mini-compliance report
  - Report on Quality Enhancement Plan assessment results and outcomes
Possible Outcomes:

- Reaffirmation without recommendations
- Reaffirmation with recommendations
- Reaffirmation with monitoring
- Warning
- Probation
- Removal of membership
Substantive Change

“Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion in the nature and scope of an accredited institution.”

![Graph showing the relationship between the significance of change and level of notification & approval.](image-url)
Procedures for Sub-C

- **Procedure 1** – Changes requiring notification and approval prior to implementation

- **Procedure 2** – Changes requiring notification only

- **Procedure 3** – Closing a program, site, branch campus or institution

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Procedure 1 Changes

- Initiating coursework, certificates, or programs of study at a different level than those previously approved by SACSCOC.

- Initiating certificate programs for workforce development.

- Initiating other certificate programs.

- Initiating an off-campus (additional) site (site-based/classroom group instruction) at which students can earn at least 50% of the credits toward an educational program.

- Initiating degree completion programs.

- Initiating a branch campus.

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Procedure 1 Changes

- Initiating distance learning or correspondence courses and programs by which students can earn at least 50% of a program’s credits through delivery in a format other than face-to-face.

- Expanding at the institution’s current degree level (significant departure from current programs).

- Initiating a significant change in the established mission of the institution.

- Changing from clock hours to credit hours.

- Changing significantly the length of a program, substantially increasing the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program.
Procedure 1 Changes

- Relocating a main or branch campus.
- Initiating a collaborative academic program with another institution not accredited by SACSCOC.
- Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs.
Procedure 2 Changes

- For site-based/classroom group instruction (where the instructor is present:

  - Initiating an off-campus site at which a student may earn at least 25% but less than 50% of credits toward a program.

  - Moving an approved off-campus instructional site within the same geographic area to serve essentially the same pool of students.

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Procedure 2 Changes

For distance learning/technology-based group or individual instruction (where the instructor and student are geographically separated), offering for the first time credit courses via distance learning/technology-based instruction by which students can obtain at least 25% but less than 50% of their credits toward an educational program.
Procedure 2 Changes

Initiating program/courses delivered through contractual agreement or a consortium. This provision does not apply to articulation agreements with other institutions, clinical agreements, or internship agreements.
Procedure 2 Changes

Repackaging of an existing approved curriculum to create a new degree level (e.g. creating an associate’s degree option from an existing bachelor’s degree)
SACSCOC Myths & Realities

Source: Busting Myths About SACSCOC
Dr. Michael S. Johnson
Senior Vice President/Chief of Staff

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
MYTH: Peer Review teams are comprised of SACSCOC employees who simply go from institution to institution.

REALITY: Teams are comprised of faculty, staff and administrator volunteers from institutions within the region.

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
MYTH: Under the Principles, faculty have no direct stake in the accreditation process.

REALITY: Several standards pertain to the role of faculty. See especially CS 3.4.1, CS 3.4.10, CS 3.7.4. It is hard to imagine a successful Quality Enhancement Plan that does not have major faculty involvement.
MYTH: Sampling is not considered a viable means of assessment.

REALITY: Not only is it considered viable, it is strongly encouraged by SACSCOC.
MYTH: Only positive outcomes should be reported by an institution – especially in CS 3.3.1.1, Institutional Effectiveness for Educational Programs.

REALITY: If only positive outcomes are reported, the institution would have no real basis to justify making any improvements.

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MYTH: Every institution is ‘failing’ Institutional Effectiveness especially CR 2.5 and CS 3.3.1.

REALITY: Core Requirement 2.5 is not cited often.

Off-Site Non-Compliance: 31%
On-Site Recommendation: 6%
C & R Monitoring Report: 5%

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
MYTH: Every institution is ‘failing’ Institutional Effectiveness especially CR 2.5 and CS 3.3.1.

REALITY: CS 3.3.1 – especially 3.3.1.1 – remains a major issue for many institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Process</th>
<th>CS 3.3.1.1 IE – Educational Programs</th>
<th>CS 3.3.1.2 IE – Administrative Services</th>
<th>CS 3.3.1.3 IE – Academic &amp; Student Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Off-Site (N=157)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Site (N=156)</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;R (N=156)</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MYTH: Student Support Services do not need to identify student learning outcomes.

REALITY: Developing a student means there are learning outcomes – changes in values, knowledge, etc. So if there is a co-curricular learning element to such programs, there should be student learning outcomes (Orientation, personal development workshops, etc.).

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
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MYTH: Part-time faculty do not need the same level of qualifications as full-time faculty.

MYTH: Dual enrollment faculty do not need the same level of qualifications as full-time faculty.

MYTH: Faculty at international sites do not need the same level of qualifications as full-time faculty.
REALITY: The *Principles* make no distinction for different instructor qualifications by location, mode of delivery, or type of contract.
MYTH: There is a magical number that determines sufficient number of full-time faculty (CR 2.8).

REALITY: There is a requirement that every off-campus site and every distance learning program has full-time faculty teaching in each program.
SACSCOC Resources


- **Substantive Change Policy Statement**

- **Fifth Year Interim Report**

Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, LSC – Tomball, September 2013
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Lone Star College – Tomball
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THANKS!

Not LAN!