SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION
October 2013

For every Core Requirement and Comprehensive Standard mandating a policy or procedure, it is implicit that **the policy or procedure is in writing, approved through appropriate institutional processes, published in appropriate institutional documents accessible to those affected by the policy or procedure, and implemented and enforced by the institution**. For obtaining and maintaining accreditation with the Commission on Colleges, an institution must meet the following Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards:

2. CORE REQUIREMENTS		
Standards of Accreditation	**Team Member Responsible**	**Supporting Documentation**
2.1 The institution has degree-granting authority from the appropriate government agency or agencies. (**Degree-granting authority**)	M Treviño **2/15/13**	Official documentation or enabling legislation authorizing the institution to grant degrees.
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 the majority of other voting members of the board are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. (**Governing Board**)	M Treviño **2/15/13**	Minutes of board meetings for two prior years. Laws and/or policies about ethics, ethics training, ethical standards, disclosure statements and similar matters. **Enabling statute, organizational chart, and list of Board members.**

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. (See Commission policy "Core Requirement 2.3: Documenting an Alternate Approach) (**Chief Executive Officer**)	M Treviño **2/15/13**	Documents such as institutional bylaws and administrative or institutional policy manual, position description; organizational chart showing relationship between the CEO, the Chancellor and the board chair.
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**)	M Treviño **2/15/13**	Copy of the mission statement and evidence of publication. Publications in which the mission statement is published.
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**)	M Treviño V Martinez **2/15/13**	Description of IE process; documentation that shows that the process includes s systematic review that results in continuing improvement and demonstrates the extent to which the institution accomplishes its goals.
2.6 The institution is in operation and has students enrolled in degree programs. (**Continuous Operation**)	Dr. M. Ramirez **J Garcia** **2/15/13**	Enrollment data for each program offered by the institution. **Update for Fall 2013.**
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 hours or its equivalent unit. (**Program Length**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **2/15/13**	Catalog and list of degree programs with number of hours required for each.

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**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño 2/15/13	Catalog.
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**).	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Hickey M Treviño 9/6/13 4/25/14	Description and rationale for general education; publications that consistently describe the general education requirements; documentation that shows how the institution makes it clear to students the specific option for general education requirements, including mapping those designated general education courses that are considered pure humanities/fine arts in accord with the interpretation noted at left.

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. 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's Board of Trustees. 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 Alternative Approach.")* (**Course work for Degrees**) **3/8/13**	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño	Copies of contracts and consortia agreements. Description of course work provided by other organizations or institutions.
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 each of its academic programs. Upon application for candidacy, an applicant institution demonstrates that it meets the comprehensive standard for faculty qualifications. (**Faculty**)	Dr. Arenaz Deans **11/15/13** **4/11/14**	Definition of full-time faculty. The number of full-time vs. part-time faculty disaggregated by academic programs. The number of full-time vs. part-time faculty disaggregated by off-campus instructional sites and by mode of delivery. A narrative describing the role of full-time faculty supporting the adequacy of the mission of the institution, including research and service. 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 for the two terms preceding that term. (**Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2014**)

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**)	Dr. Arenaz D Ferrier **4/5/13**	Description of library collections. Description of library resources. Description of library services. Policies and procedures governing collections, services, and access to other library-related resources. Evidence that the institution's library-related resources support all its educational, research. And public service programs wherever located. Copies of contracts and agreements outlining access and services through an arrangement with another institution; description and analysis of the appropriateness of other institutions' collections and services; documentation of relevance and adequacy. User satisfaction services; comparison of data of collections to user populations; examples of recent improvements, changes, or expansions made as a result of data usage/satisfaction. Collection development and weeding policies.
2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that are intended to promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. (**Student Support Services**)	Dr. M. Ramirez J Alva **4/19/13**	Description of the various student support programs and services. Narrative relating the student support services and programs to the mission of the institution. Processes used to determine student needs/interests and examples of recent changes in services made in response. Student handbook.

2.11 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 system wide 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**)	Mr. Castillo E Martinez **F Juarez** **4/17/14**	Audited financial statements, including footnotes, for the most recently ended fiscal year prior to the due date of an institution's compliance certification, or, a Standard Review Report, with individual institutional financial information, for the most recently ended fiscal year end prior to the due date of an institution's compliance certification. A written management letter specific to the institution for the most recently ended fiscal year prior to the due date of an institution's compliance certification. Statement of Unrestricted Net Assets exclusive of plant and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year. The current annual budget (summary) and evidence of sound budget planning. Documentation of board approval of the budget. A multi-year statement of unrestricted net assets that matches audited financial statements showing the exclusion of plant assets, net of depreciation and plant-related debt resulting in UNAEP; the change in UNAEP over at least a two year period. Previous audits may be provided as well.

2.11.2 The institution had adequate physical resources to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services (**Physical Resources**) **4/17/14**	Mr. Castillo R Gentry	Documentation of the adequacy and condition of physical resources at all locations. Facilities master plan. Financial history and narrative regarding recently completed, present, or planned capital campaigns. Facilities inventory plan. Surveys from faculty, staff, and students addressing adequacy of the institution's physical facilities. Data comparing facility needs to actual facilities available. Academic master plan or similar document for planned facilities to support academic programs. Survey results of benchmark comparisons.
2.12 The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that includes an institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment and focuses on learning outcomes and/or environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution. (**Quality Enhancement Plan**) *(Note: This requirement is not addressed by the institution in its Compliance Certification.)* **11/14/14**	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Duffy Dr. San Miguel	

3. COMPREHENSIVE STANDARDS

3.1 Institutional Mission		
3.1.1 The mission statement is current and comprehensive, accurately guides the institution's operations, is periodically reviewed and updated, is approved by the governing board, and is communicated to the institution's constituencies. (**Mission**) **5/3/13**	M Treviño	Mission statement and examples of how it is disseminated. Documentation of most recent mission review and approval. Board minutes.

3.2 Governance and Administration		
3.2.1 The governing board of the institution is responsible for the selection and the evaluation of the chief executive officer. (**CEO evaluation/ selection**)	M Treviño **5/3/13**	Documentation of the evaluation of the chief executive officer. Records of the most recent chief executive search. Written policies for the evaluation of the chief executive officer. Bylaws, appropriate manuals, board minutes, evaluation documents.
3.2.2 The legal authority and operating control of the institution are clearly defined for the following areas within the institution's governance structure: (**Governing Board Control**) **3.2.2.1** institution's mission;	M Treviño **L Paul** **5/3/13**	Charter, bylaws, or state codes or statutes indicating legal authority and operating control. Minutes or other documents demonstrating the process by which the mission was last reviewed/revised. Rules and regulations, policy manuals, bylaws, meeting minutes, and relevant correspondence for the institution.
3.2.2.2 fiscal stability of the institution;	Mr. Castillo E N Martinez **L Paul** **9/20/13**	Charter, bylaws, or state codes or statutes indicating legal authority and operating control in regard to financial stability. Minutes or other documents demonstrating the process by which institutional finances was last reviewed.
3.2.2.3 institutional policy	Mr. Castillo E N Martinez **L Paul** **9/20/13**	Charter, bylaws, or state codes or statutes indicating legal authority and operating control. Minutes or other documents demonstrating the process by which policy is reviewed, approved, and revised. Rules and regulations, policy manuals, bylaws, meeting minutes, and relevant correspondence for the institution.
3.2.3 The governing board has a policy addressing conflict of interest for its members (**Board conflict of interest**).	M Treviño **L Paul** **5/3/13**	Policy statement on conflict of interest as applies to board members. Evidence of implementation, if applicable.

3.2.4 The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies, and protects the institution from such influence. (**External influence**)	M Treviño **L Paul** **5/3/13**	Bylaws, charter, articles of organization, enabling statute, or similar document. Composition of the board and documentation of board selection. Institutional policies and bylaws that protect the institution from unwarranted intrusion by external forces. Documents and reports of board actions that have resolved issues regarding pressures by external agencies.
3.2.5 The governing board has a policy whereby members can be dismissed only for appropriate reasons and by a fair process (**Board dismissal**)	M Treviño **L Paul** **5/3/13**	Policy for dismissal of governing board members to include (1) reasons for dismissal and (2) a description of the process for removal. Examples of implementation, if applicable. Governing board policies. Governing board minutes.
3.2.6 There is a clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and practice, between the policy-making functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy. (**Board/ administration distinction**)	M Treviño **L Paul** **5/3/13**	Bylaws or official policy or other written documentation delineating responsibility for administering and implementing policy.
3.2.7 The institution has a clearly defined and published organizational structure that delineates responsibility for the administration of policies. (**Organizational structure**)	E N Martinez S Peña **L Paul** **6/28/13**	Organizational chart and publication location. Bylaws, statutes, or similar documents of the institution. Institutional publications.
3.2.8 The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience and competence to lead the institution. (**Qualified administrative/ academic officers**)	E N Martinez S Peña **6/28/13**	Organizational chart with names of those appointed to academic and administrative posts. Names, positions, position descriptions, qualification. Resumes' for senior-level academic and administrative officers.

3.2.9 The institution publishes policies regarding appointment, employment, and evaluation of all personnel. (**Personnel appointment**)	E N Martinez S Peña **6/28/13**	Policies regarding the appointment, employment, and evaluation of all personnel. Personnel manuals. Documentation that personnel are informed about the appointment, employment, and evaluation polices affecting them. Contracts, MOUs, or other agreements for outsourced services/programs. Evidence of a periodic review for the currency of such policies.
3.2.10 The institution periodically evaluates the effectiveness of its administrators. (**Administrative staff evaluations**)	E N Martinez S Peña **6/28/13**	Administrative policies fir the evaluation of administrators (redact names). Timeframes for evaluations. Examples of completed assessment forms (with names and sensitive details redacted).
3.2.11 The institution's chief executive officer has ultimate responsibility for, and exercises appropriate administrative and fiscal control over, the institution's intercollegiate athletics program. (**Control of intercollegiate athletics**)	Dr. Keck **G Zimmermann** **Dr. M. Ramirez** H Miller L Paul **7/19/13**	Job description or other formal evidence of the chief executive officer's assigned authority and responsibility for the intercollegiate athletics program. Documentation indicating the office with ultimate authority for intercollegiate athletics operating budgets and fund-raising activities. Documentation showing the working relationship between the institution's CEO and intercollegiate athletics compliance officer. Documentation of the reporting arrangements of the athletics director. Examples of the CEO's involvement in athletics administration. Relevant sections of the most recent compliance reports addressing oversight, such as those from the NCAA.
3.2.12 The institution demonstrates that its chief executive officer controls the institution's fund-raising activities. (**Fund-raising activities**)	Dr. Keck C Hein **7/19/13**	Description of the reporting relationship in fund-raising. The job description of the chief executive. Appropriate policies and procedures manual. Organizational chart.

3.2.13 For any entity organized separately from the institution and formed primarily for the purpose of supporting the institution or its programs, (1) the legal authority and operating control of the institution is clearly defined with respect to that entity; (2) the relationship of that entity to the institution and the extent of any liability arising out of that relationship is clearly described in a formal, written manner; and (3) the institution demonstrates that (a) the chief executive officer controls any fund-raising activities of that entity or (b) the fund-raising activities of that entity are defined in a formal, written manner which assures that those activities further the mission of the institution. (**Institutional-related entities**)	Dr. Keck **L Paul** **7/19/13**	Contracts or other formal agreements that define the relationship between each related entity and the institution. Charter and bylaws indicating legal authority and operating control within the institution's governance structure for related entities. Copies and bylaws and other publications for each related entity. Mission statements for each related entity.
3.2.14 The institution's policies are clear concerning ownership of materials, compensation, copyright issues, and the use of revenue derived from the creation and production of all intellectual property. These policies apply to students, faculty and staff. (**Intellectual property rights**)	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Brown **7/19/13**	Policy that govern intellectual property. Evidence that the policies are appropriately published and apply to students, faculty, and staff. Publications containing policies that govern intellectual property. Standard agreements with faculty and staff using institutional property and how royalties are affected.
3.3 Institutional Effectiveness		
3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assess the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: (**Institutional Effectiveness**)	V Martinez **4/4/14**	

3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes. **(Educational Programs)**	Program Coordinators Dr. Lindberg Dr. Blackwell Dr. Clarke Dr. A. Ramirez B. Gonzalez PARC **4/4/14**	Documentation of expected outcomes for educational programs and for student learning outcomes. Documentation of the evaluation of these outcomes. Evidence that the student support services and programs effectively meet the needs of students of all types. Documentation of the use of the findings from assessment to improve the institution. If sampling is used, (1) how the sampling is representative of the institution's mission, (2) documentation of a valid cross-section of programs, and a (3) case as to why sampling and assessment findings are an appropriate representation of the institution's programs.
3.3.1.2 administrative support services **(Administrative Support Services)**	Administrative Unit Coordinators PARC AES Committee **4/4/14**	Definition of institution's administrative support service unit. Documentation of expected outcomes for administrative support services. Documentation of the evaluation of these outcomes. Documentation of the use of the findings from assessment to improve the institution. If sampling is used, (1) how the sampling is representative of the institution's mission, (2) documentation of a valid cross-section of programs, and a (3) case as to why sampling and assessment findings are an appropriate representation of the institution's units.

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3.3.1.3 academic and student support services **(Academic and Student Support)**	Academic and Student Support Unit Coordinators PARC AES Committee **4/4/14**	Definition of institution's academic and student support service units. Documentation of expected outcomes for academic and student support services. Documentation of the evaluation of those outcomes. Documentation of the use of the findings from assessment to improve the institution. If sampling is used, (1) how the sampling is representative of the institution's mission, (2) documentation of a valid cross-section of units, and a (3) case as to why sampling and assessment findings are an appropriate representation of the institution's units.
3.3.1.4 research within its mission, if appropriate **(Research)**	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Brown Dr. Kilburn PARC Committee **4/4/14**	Definition of institution's research mission. Documentation of expected outcomes for its research mission. Documentation of the evaluation of those outcomes. Documentation of the use of the findings from assessment to improve the institution. If sampling is used, (1) how the sampling is representative of the institution's mission, (2) documentation of a valid cross-section of programs, and a (3) case as to why sampling and assessment findings are an appropriate representation of the institution's research mission.

3.3.1.5 community/public service within its mission, if appropriate **(Community/ Public Service)**	Dr. Arenaz Kimberly Martin del Campo **Dr. M. Ramirez J Alva** PARC Committee **4/4/14**	Definition of institution's community and public service mission. Documentation of expected outcomes for its community and public service mission. Documentation of the evaluation of those outcomes. Documentation of the use of the findings from assessment to improve the institution. If sampling is used, (1) how the sampling is representative of the institution's mission, (2) documentation of a valid cross-section of programs, and a (3) case as to why sampling and assessment findings are an appropriate representation of the institution's community/public service mission.
3.3.2 The institution has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement. (**Quality Enhancement Plan**) *(Note: this requirement is not addressed by the institution in its Compliance Certification.)*	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Duffy Dr. San Miguel **11/14/14**	Quality Enhancement Plan

3.4 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
Standards for All Educational Programs   **(Includes all on-campus, off-campus and distance learning programs)**

3.4.1 The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration. (**Academic program approval**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **2/15/13**	Procedures for approving educational programs. Minutes from faculty and administrative meetings. Examples that follows the program approval process. Minutes from the curriculum committee.

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3.4.2 The institution's continuing education, outreach, and service programs are consistent with the institution's mission. (**Continuing education/service programs**)	Dr. Arenaz K Martin del Campo **4/4/14**	List/description of continuing education, outreach, and service programs. Policies regarding the role and scope of continuing education, outreach, and public service as they relate to the institution's mission. Information about the audiences served in the offering of such programs.
3.4.3 The institution publishes admissions policies consistent with its mission. (**Admissions policies**)	Dr. Ramirez **Dr. J. Brown** R Dickinson **J Garcia** **4/4/14**	Admission policies of the institution. Undergraduate and graduate catalogs that include admission policies, standards, and procedures. Institutional and specific program brochures and other recruitment materials or electronic resources stating admission policies and procedures. Documents describing how the institution evaluates applications and makes admission decisions to the institution and to programs. Minutes or other documents showing evidence that the institution has admission policies in accordance with good practices in higher education. System policy or legislation regarding admission policies and procedures.

3.4.4 The institution publishes policies that include criteria for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, Advanced Placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript. (See Commission Policy "Collaborative Academic Arrangements.) (**Acceptance of academic credit**)	Dr. Ramirez **J Garcia** **J Alva** **R Dickinson** **K Lindberg** **4/4/14**	All policies for awarding credit. Criteria used for awarding credit. Evidence that policies are published and made available. Catalog and other documents describing policies for awarding credit. A description of how decisions are made to accept and award credit from other institutions or organizations, including how the institution ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level are comparable to the institution's own degree programs. Copies of articulation or transfer agreements with other institutions or organizations, including agreements between two-year and senior institutions which involve transcription or transferring credits for coursework leading to a degree. Documents or descriptions of contracts, study abroad and student exchange agreements, or other arrangements with institutions or organizations inside or outside the United States which involve transcription or transferring credits for coursework leading to a degree. Descriptions of the process of awarding experiential credit, including how the institution ensures that coursework and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and are comparable to the institution's own degree programs.
3.4.5 The institution publishes academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice. These policies are disseminated to students, faculty, and other interested parties through publications that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution. (**Academic policies**)	M Treviño S Harmon **J Alva** **J Garcia** **4/4/14**	Institutional publications that contain academic policies. Publications that include a description of the process by which academic policies are developed and approved. Publications and other material that portray the institution to interested parties. Minutes of meetings in which academic policies are modified or approved. Examples of the process for modifying an academic policy.

3.4.6 The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery. (**Practice for awarding credit**)	Dr. Ramirez **J Garcia** **4/4/14**	Written practices for establishing and evaluating the amount and level of credit to be awarded for a course. Faculty handbook or other documents that explain the process for determining the amount and level of credit. Minutes of meetings demonstrating the decision making
3.4.7 The institution ensures the quality of educational programs and courses offered through consortial relationships or contractual agreements, ensures ongoing compliance with the *Principles*, and periodically evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the mission of the institution. (**Consortial relationships/contractual agreements**)	Dr. Arenaz **4/4/14**	Copies of signed contracts and consortial agreements. Evidence that the institution evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the purpose of the institution. Documents that clearly stipulate the responsibility of each party to ensure program and course quality. Documents that clearly stipulate the responsibility of the SACSCOC institution to ensure ongoing compliance with the standards/requirements as applicable to the program.
3.4.8 The institution awards academic credit for course work taken on a noncredit basis only when there is documentation that the noncredit course work is equivalent to a designated credit experience. (**Noncredit to credit**)	Dr. Ramirez **J Garcia** **4/4/14**	Appropriate policy statements describing the process for determining that noncredit course work is equivalent to credit coursework. Evidence that policies are published, implemented, and enforced.
3.4.9 The institution provides appropriate academic support services. (**Academic support services**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño J Madrigal D Ferrier C Hickey Dr. Abrego **M Peña** **3/7/14**	Description of academic support services. Publications and websites (e.g., academic support services) explaining how support services are provided and how services can be accessed. Data on the frequency of usage of academic support services by students and faculty. Surveys indicating that student and faculty needs are being met.

3.4.10 The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty. (**Responsibility for curriculum**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **3/7/14**	Practices addressing the role and responsibility of faculty for curriculum. Minutes or bylaws that document the roles and responsibility of faculty in determining the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum. Curriculum evaluations conducted by faculty showing attention to curriculum quality and effectiveness. Examples of curricular changes which trace and illustrate an effective process.
3.4.11 For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration. (**Academic program coordination**)	Dr. Arenaz Deans Chairs V. Martinez **3/7/14**	List of program coordinators, their area of responsibility, and their qualifications for coordinating the designated program. Description of coordinator responsibilities. Definition of the term "field" as it applies to the institution's academic programs.
3.4.12 The institution's use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology (**Technology use**)	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Abrego **Dr. Gaskins** **3/7/14**	Documents that contain policies and procedures for the use of technology to enhance student learning. Evidence that the use of technology in teaching and learning is appropriate and effective. Evidence that students and faculty have sufficient opportunity for access and training in the use of technology. Schedules and usage patterns could be presented. Evidence that the institution assesses competencies of students in the use of technology and uses the results for continuous program improvements. Evidence that the institution is monitoring technology resources to provide necessary support for faculty and students.

3.5 Standards Specific to Undergraduate Educational Programs		
3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them **(General education competencies)**	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Hickey V Martinez C Wheeler Y Howard **2/7/14**	Identification of competencies. Justification that all competencies are at the college level and the degree to which students have attained them are acceptable. Evidence of the extent to which students of undergraduate degree programs have attained the college-level competencies. Follow up studies of graduates.
3.5.2 At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. (*See Commission policy "Collaborative Academic Arrangements."*) (**Institutional credits for a degree**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **5/31/13**	Degree completion policies. Evidence that verifies that at least 25 percent of the credits required for the degree have been earned at the institution. Process for monitoring the amount of credit earned at the institution. Policies, procedures, and any operational manuals regarding the awarding of credit. Examples of the implementation of these policies.
3.5.3 The institution publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, including its general education components. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (See Commission policy "The Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees.") (**Undergraduate program requirements**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **11/15/13**	For all educational programs, evidence that the institution has published documents that describe the general education and program completion requirements. For program requirements, (1) comparison of education programs with similar programs offered at peer institutions, (2) programmatic/specialized accreditation, and (3) external program reviews.
3.5.4 At least 25 percent of the course hours in each major at the baccalaureate level are taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate, or the equivalent of the terminal degree. **(Terminal degrees of faculty)**	Dr. Arenaz Deans Chairs **11/15/13**	List of faculty in each major who hold the appropriate terminal degree. Evidence verifying that at least 25 percent of courses or course hours required for a major are taught by faculty members holding a terminal degree. Definitions and listing of majors. Evidence that disaggregation data includes consideration of location and modality of course work.

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3.6 Standards Specific to Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Professional Programs		
3.6.1 The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs. (**Post-baccalaureate program rigor**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **5/31/13**	Publications that show differentiation between undergraduate and post-baccalaureate programs. Course syllabi describing the advanced body of learning to be accomplished through completion of the post-baccalaureate course work.
3.6.2 The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences. (**Graduate curriculum**)	Dr. Arenaz Deans Chairs **5/31/13**	Publications containing program requirements. Course syllabi. Examples of independent research projects, portfolios, case studies, theses, dissertations, or other examples by graduate students. Use of examples in CS 3.3.1.1 that show student knowledge of literature in the discipline.
3.6.3 At least one-third of the credits toward a graduate or post-baccalaureate professional degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. (See Commission policy "Collaborative Academic Arrangements.") (**Institutional credits for a graduate degree**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **5/31/13**	Degree completion policies. Evidence that verifies that at least one-third of the credits required for the degree have been earned at the institution. Process for monitoring the amount of credit earned at the institution. Policies, procedures, and any operation manuals regarding the awarding of credit. Examples of the implementation of those policies.
3.6.4 The institution defines and publishes requirements for its graduate and post-baccalaureate professional programs. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (**Post-baccalaureate program requirements**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **5/31/13**	For all educational programs, evidence that the institution has published documents that describe the program completion requirements. For program requirements, (1) comparative data for programs with peer institutions, (2) programmatic/specialized accreditation, and (3) external program reviews.

3.7 Faculty		
3.7.1 The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experience in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty. (See Commission guidelines "faculty Credentials.") (**Faculty competence**)	Dr. Arenaz Deans Chairs **11/15/13** **4/11/14**	A complete roster of faculty, qualifications, and teaching assignments (See Commission "Faculty Roster Form for Full-time and Part-time Faculty" and directions for completing the form.) Guidelines governing the qualifications of faculty members necessary to carry out the mission of the institution and the process for their selection that ensures these qualifications. A file portfolio on each faculty member which includes pertinent up-to-date information describing the qualifications of the faculty members such as transcripts, curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations, and institutional qualification justifications in nonstandard situations. Guidelines for identifying the instructor of record.
3.7.2 The institution regularly evaluates the effectiveness of each faculty member in accord with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status. (**Faculty evaluation**)	Deans Chairs V Martinez **4/11/14**	Documentation and publications that include the process and criteria used for faculty evaluation. Evidence that shows that evaluations are taking place regularly and being used to measure performance and effectiveness. Sample of completed evaluation forms and procedures (names and sensitive details may be redacted)

3.7.3 The institution provides ongoing professional development of faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners. (**Faculty development**)	Deans Chairs **M Uribe** PROF Center **4/11/14**	Evidence that members of the faculty are involved in professional development. Policies and procedures governing faculty professional development. Descriptions of ongoing professional development activities supported by the institution. Description of resources allocated by the institution in support of ongoing faculty professional development. Description of how faculty share their professional development experience with other members of the faculty.
3.7.4 The institution ensures adequate procedures for the safeguard and protecting of academic freedom. (**Academic freedom**)	Deans Dr. Arenaz **4/11/14**	Publications that include the institution's academic freedom policies. Any evidence regarding institutional academic freedom issues.
3.7.5 The institution publishes policies on the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic and governance matters. (**Faculty role in governance**)	Dr. Arenaz **Dr. A. Ramirez** **4/11/14**	Policies regarding the role of the faculty in academic and governance matters. Publications describing these policies.

3.8 Library and Other Learning Resources		
3.8.1 The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission. (**Learning/information resources**)	D Ferrier R Hinojosa J Maxstadt **3/7/14**	Document describing facilities, services, and learning/information resources and how they support programs and disciplines. Mission statement of the library, learning resource center, or other similar support services. Evaluations of educational program needs and how the institution addresses facilities, services, and learning/information resources to address those needs. Findings from user surveys and comparisons with peer institutions.

3.8.2 The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources. (**Instruction of library use**)	D Ferrier J Maxstadt **4/11/14**	Documentation of the availability and type of instruction. Documentation of the assessment of the instruction. Reports of library instructional activity that demonstrate broad participation in the instructional program by all segments of the institution at all teaching locations.
3.8.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff – with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources – to accomplish the mission of the institution. (**Qualified staff**)	D Ferrier **3/7/14**	Roster of library/learning resource staff and documentation of their qualification. Position descriptions and any professional development support. Evidence that personnel use opportunities for professional growth and training.

3.9 Student Affairs and Services		
3.9.1 The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community. (**Student rights**)	Dr. Ramirez J Alva **J Garcia** **2/7/14**	Statement of student rights and responsibilities. Methods of dissemination of statement on student rights and responsibilities.
3.9.2 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student records and maintains special security measures to protect and back up data (**Student records**)	Dr. Ramirez O Reyna B Gaskins **C Barrios** **2/7/14**	The policies and procedures governing student records, their security, integrity, and confidentiality, their use, and their release. Security measures adopted by the institution that apply to the protection and backs up of data.
3.9.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff – with appropriate education or experience in the student affairs area – to accomplish the mission of the institution. (**Qualified staff**)	Dr. Ramirez G Gonzalez **2/7/14**	Roster of student affairs staff and documentation of their qualifications. Student affairs organizational chart. Position descriptions. Evidence that members of the student affairs staff have opportunities for professional growth and training and that they take advantage of them.

RESOURCES		
3.10 Financial Resources		
3.10.1 The institution's recent financial history demonstrates financial stability. (**Financial stability**)	Mr. Castillo E N Martinez C Hein **E Martinez** **M Treviño** **4/17/14**	Copies of the most recent 3-5 years of audited financial statements. Most recent 3-5 year schedule of changes in unrestricted net assets, excluding investment gains and losses; 3-5 year schedule of changes in total net assets; 3-5 year schedule of gifts and grants. Most recent 3-5 year history of enrollment, FTE and unduplicated headcount. Most recent 3-5 year history on endowment returns and annual payments or spending rates. Most recent 3-5 year history on short-term and log-term debt. Policies governing endowment management. Most recent 3-5 years of fundraising data.
3.10.2 The institution audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. (**Financial aid audits**)	Mr. Castillo E N Martinez **Dr. M. Ramirez** L Elizondo **4/17/14**	Audits of Financial Aid programs. Audits of financial aid programs for the past three years. Institutional responses to all audits and/or findings. Copies of all correspondence received from the U.S. Department of Education for the past three years.
3.10.3 The institution exercises appropriate control over all its financial resources. (**Control of finances**)	Mr. Castillo E N Martinez E Martinez F Juarez **4/17/14**	Management letters. Internal audit and risk management reports. Institutional policies related to internal controls/audits. Investment policy. Documentation of budget reporting to appropriate constituencies, including members of the board. Documentation of the qualifications of staff responsible for control of institutional finances.
3.10.4 The institution maintains financial control over externally funded or sponsored research programs. (**Control of sponsored research/external funds**)	Mr. Castillo E N Martinez J Brown J Kilburn J Cisneros **4/17/14**	Federal audits and management letters. Grants policies and procedures governing externally funded programs. Indirect cost policy. Grants accounting documentation.

3.11 **Physical Resources**		
3.11.1 The institution exercises appropriate control over all its physical resources. (**Control of physical resources**)	Mr. Castillo R Gentry **E N Martinez** **4/17/14**	Internal audit and risk management reports. Management letters. Documentation of regular physical inventories. Institutional policies related to purchasing, including methods for recording, tracking, and disposal of assets. Links to various planning and control documents.
3.11.2 The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all members of the campus community. (**Institutional environment**)	Mr. Castillo **Dr. M. Ramirez** P Keck F San Miguel A Dominguez **4/17/14**	Evidence that the institution had qualified staff to carry out the safety, security, and health plans of the institution. Current safety, emergency, and disaster plans. Emergency procedures. Inspection reports (e.g., health, safety, etc.
3.11.3 The institution operates and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, that appropriately serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities. (**Physical facilities**)	Mr. Castillo R Gentry **4/17/14**	Plan for routine, preventative, and deferred maintenance. Facilities satisfaction survey results. Most recent 3-5 years annual capital budget. Evidence that the institution has facilities that adequately support the mission of the institution. A video or other visual means to provide a "walking tour" of all the institution's facilities. Facilities master plan including a campus map.
3.12 **Institutional Responsibility for Commission Policies**		
3.12.1 The institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the Commission's substantive change policy and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes. (See Commission policy "Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions.") (**Substantive change**)	Dr. Keck Dr. Arenaz **2/14/14**	Copies of correspondence documenting submission of notification/approval for substantive changes instituted since the last decennial review by the Commission. Copy of the institution's internal procedure outlining the process for notifying the Commission regarding substantive change.
3.13 **Responsibility for Compliance with other Commission Policies**		
3.13.1 The institution complies with the policies of the Commission on Colleges. (**Policy compliance**)	Dr. Keck Dr. Arenaz **L. Paul** **2/14/14**	Suggested documentation listed in the Compliance Certification for each of the specific policies.

3.14 Representation of status with the Commission		
3.14.1 A member or candidate institution represents its accredited status accurately and publishes the name, address, and telephone number of the Commission in accordance with the Commission requirements and federal policy. (**Publication of accreditation status**)	M Treviño **2/14/14**	Examples of publications, both print and electronic.

4. FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS
The U.S. Secretary of Education recognizes accreditation by SACS Commission on Colleges in establishing the eligibility of higher education institutions to participate in programs authorized under Title IV of the *Higher Education Act*, as amended, and other federal programs. Through its periodic review of institutions of higher education, the Commission assures the public that it is a reliable authority on the quality of education provided by its member. The federal statute 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. As part of the review process, institutions are required to document compliance with those criteria and the Commission is obligated to consider such compliance when the institution is reviewed for initial membership or continued accreditation. Implicit in every Federal Requirement mandating a policy or procedure is the expectation that the policy or procedure is in writing and has been approved though appropriate institutional processes, published in appropriate institutional documents accessible to those affected by the policy or procedure, and implemented and enforced by the institution.

4.1 The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission. Criteria may include: enrollment data; retention, graduation, course completion, and placement rates; state licensing examinations; student portfolios; or other means of demonstrating achievement of goals. (**Student achievement**)	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Ramirez C Wheeler Program Coordinators **2/14/14**	Documentation of appropriate criteria used to determine successful student achievement. Documentation of the expected threshold of achievement for each criterion and the rationale for why each is appropriate. Documentation of data used to demonstrate achievement of goals. Sample documentation of student achievement such as trend data showing course completion by discipline, pass rates on state licensing exams, job placement rates by degree program, and others. Documentation of the institution actively following up with students who have graduated.
4.2 The institution's curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the mission and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates or degrees awarded. (**Program curriculum**)	Dr. Arenaz M Treviño **2/14/14**	Evidence that the curriculum is directly related to the mission of the institution. Evidence that the curriculum is appropriate and consistent with good practices in higher education. Evidence that the curriculum is developed by faculty and approved by the appropriate governing bodies.
4.3 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies. (**Publication of policies**)	Dr. Ramirez **J Garcia** **2/14/14**	Publications that include information about academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies.
4.4 Program length is appropriate for each of the institution's educational programs. (**Program length**)	Dr. Arenaz Deans M Treviño **2/14/14**	Publications that describe the length of all educational programs. Documentation of the criteria used in determining program length. Processes used to determine program length. Evidence supporting program length that is significantly different from accepted practices.

4.5 The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. (See Commission policy "Complaints Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions.") (**Student complaints**)	Dr. Arenaz Dr. Ramirez J Alva **2/14/14**	Policies and procedures for addressing student complaints. Evidence that the published policies and procedures are followed when resolving student complaints. An example of a student complaint resolution (with sensitive information redacted). See CS 3.13 for additional requirements applicable to complaints. Evidence that complaint policies and procedures are published and disseminated.
4.6 Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices and policies. (**Recruitment materials**)	Dr. Ramirez J Garcia **2/14/14**	Copies of recruitment materials, publications, and presentations. Documents that provide evidence of practices for ongoing accuracy.
4.7 The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the most recent *Higher Education Act* as amended. (In reviewing the institution's compliance with these program responsibilities, the Commission relies on documentation forwarded to it by the U.S. Department of Education.) (**Title IV Program responsibilities**)	Dr. Ray Keck Dr. Ramirez **J Castillo** L Elizondo 2/14/14	Most recent federal awards/financial aid audit. Copies of all recent, relevant correspondence from the U.S. Department of Education. Copies of institutional response to U.S. Department of Education correspondence. 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. Current Program Participation Agreement.
4.8 An institution that offers distance or correspondence education documents each of the following: (**Distance and correspondence education**)		

4.8.1 demonstrates that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by verifying the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as (a) a secure login and pass code, (b) proctored examinations, or (c) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification. **(Distance Education Participant Identification)**	Dr. Abrego B Gaskins C Barrios M Peña **2/14/14**	Method(s) used by the institution verifying the identity of the student enrolled in distance or correspondence education courses or programs.
4.8.2 has a written procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in distance and correspondence education courses or programs. **(Distance Education Privacy Protection)**	Dr. Abrego B Gaskins C Barrios M Peña	Written procedure regarding the protection of privacy of the student enrolled in distance or correspondence education courses or programs.
4.8.3 has a written procedure distributed at the time of registration or enrollment that notifies students of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity. **(Distance Education Additional Charges)**	Dr. Abrego B Gaskins C Barrios M Peña **2/14/14**	Written procedure addressing the notification of projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity.
4.9 The institution has policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for courses and programs that conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education and to Commission policy. (See Commission policy "Credit Hours.") (**Definition of credit hours**)	Dr. Arenaz **2/14/14**	Policy for determining credit hours awarded, including the definition of a credit hour used by the institution. Evidence that the institution consistently apples its definition in the awarding of credit for courses and programs. Descriptions of processes and criteria used to award credit for courses and programs outside the commonly accepted practices in higher education.

Added upon Leadership Team Review
Updated due to personnel changes
Most cited by offsite/on site review committees
Reviewed by on site committee