

FAQs: SACS On-Site Visit

What does “SACS” stand for?

Many at SACS prefer it be called “the Commission” for its proper name: The Commission on Colleges of The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, but “SACS” has stuck.

Why is good standing with SACS important?

Good standing with SACS is vitally important to the present and future life of our university. Without regional accreditation, our reputation and ability to attract students would suffer severe damage. Also, we would lose federal financial aid dollars.

Why is a SACS team coming to our campus?

As a part of the ten-year accreditation reaffirmation, all regionally-accredited schools have an on-site visit.

What is the primary purpose of the visit?

SEU has already submitted three major reports to the Commission, including the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The team will be on campus to finalize their judgments regarding our compliance with SACS and federal policies, and to evaluate our QEP.

Who is on the SACS visiting team?

The team is made of administrators and faculty from other schools similar to SEU in size and educational philosophy. One member of the team is a SACS employee, whose role is to make the team aware of Commission policies.

When and how long will they be on campus?

The team will be on campus about two days. Their first meeting will be at noon on Tuesday February 22, and they will depart by noon on Thursday.

How will the visit and the team’s time be organized?

Based on the written materials they have already received, and any resulting concerns, the Chairman of the team will request meetings with campus personnel and/or committees. The schedule of meetings will likely be set prior to the visit, but the team can request meetings as they desire after arriving on campus.

What will the visit likely accomplish?

The committee will have already formed opinions regarding the QEP and compliance issues prior to their arrival. They will have already begun to write their reports. In some cases, the visit may give us one last opportunity to provide additional explanation and/or documentation regarding issues the committee is concerned about.

What will occur following the visit?

At the end of the visit, the team will supply a draft report of their findings, listing any issues of non-compliance that remain unresolved. For many of these issues, the school will still have an opportunity to rectify the Commission’s concerns by providing an additional report prior to the Commission’s summer meeting in July. Often, rather than official sanction in the form of a warning or probation, the college will be allowed to provide additional Monitoring Reports for up to two years following the visit. If Core Requirements or Federal Requirements remain unresolved, public sanctions will be levied.