



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
*Office of the Provost*

October 3, 2008

TO: Texas Tech Faculty

FROM: Jane L. Winer *Jane L. Winer*  
Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: SACS-COC Special Committee visit

A special committee appointed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC) has concluded a visit to the Texas Tech campus. The committee's visit is one of the final steps in the process for the removal of the university's probation status. Dr. Valerie Paton's report of this visit follows:

On the evening of September 24, the SACS-COC Special Committee met with the President and members of the Interim Provost's staff, Texas Tech SACS-COC Task Force, Core Curriculum Steering Committee, and Office of Planning and Assessment. At that meeting, Dr. David Ford, chairperson of the Special Committee, informed those present that the committee had determined that the institution had met the "intent of the Comprehensive Standard cited in the January 9, 2008 notification letter through the completion of the implementation timeline and by demonstrating minimal compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1." However, the committee's recommendation must be approved by the SACS-COC Committee on Compliance and Reports, the Executive Council, and then submitted to a vote by the total Commission on Colleges at the December 2008 annual meeting.

The Special Committee has recommended that a follow-up report on C.S. 3.5.1 compliance be included in Texas Tech's Fifth Year Report, which is due in March 2011. In addition, we will need to report on all of the SACS-COC Core Requirements, Federal Requirements, and the four recommendations that were made following Texas Tech's SACS-COC Reaffirmation in 2005. These recommendations were:

**CR 2.12 (Quality Enhancement Plan).** The Committee recommends that the institution develop a complete evaluation plan that includes both an evaluation of the progress on all actions (the institution's "implementation strategies") and also assesses each of the student learning outcomes.

**CS 3.3.1 (Institutional Effectiveness).** The Committee recommends that the institution provide documentation that all educational programs and administrative and educational support services have (1) identified expected outcomes, including student learning objectives for educational

programs; (2) assessed whether those outcomes were achieved; and (3) provided evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.

**CS 3.4.1 (All Educational Programs).** The Committee recommends that the institution provide (1) documentation that student learning outcomes for all academic programs have been established; and (2) evidence that the results of the assessment of student learning outcomes have led to continuous improvement in academic programs of study.

**CS 3.5.1 (Undergraduate Programs).** The Committee recommends that the institution provide (1) documentation that assessment plans for each area of the Core Curriculum have been developed; and (2) evidence that assessment of competencies within the Core Curriculum have been conducted and that the results of this assessment have enhanced and improved the Core Curriculum.

I am including these recommendations in their entirety so that the members of the Texas Tech faculty can see that there is a great deal of work to be done to prepare for the March 2011 Fifth Year Report. In particular, we must press forward with the assessment activities and resulting findings and improvements in our Core curriculum. Further, we must initiate new efforts to assess our academic programs and administrative programs. Finally, we will continue to bring institutional focus to the Quality Enhancement Plan through the Ethics Initiative and Strive for Honor campaign.

Every faculty member has a part in improving the learning experience of Texas Tech students. Our work in assessing the Core curriculum has already brought about improvements. Continued vigilance to program-level assessment and implementation of QEP initiatives is essential to being successful in our Fifth Year report, as well as creating overall institutional improvement. The Office of Assessment and Planning has been created to support the institution on these matters and will be in communication with the deans and department chairpersons about program-level assessment and new software to support faculty efforts. Please work closely with the OAP as we start our efforts to prepare for 2011 and as we integrate the practice of assessment into our culture.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation to the faculty members who led our response to the remaining recommendation. More than 70 faculty members, with representatives from every college, gave countless hours to this work. We are deeply indebted to them for their willing service and the positive outcomes that have resulted from this process.