

SACS Is Here!

“SACS is coming; SACS is coming!” has been heard on and about the DSC campus for several months, but the statement is no longer true. SACS is here! With the arrival, on February first, of **Dr. Donald Crump**, Associate Executive Director of the SACS Commission on Colleges, Dalton State College officially “kicked off” the self-study procedure necessary to assure compliance with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) conditions of eligibility for accreditation.

Although the Self-Study is required for reaffirmation of accreditation every ten years, it is also an opportunity to look at what we’re doing and how well we’re doing it, something that every organization should do periodically. And, in spite of the great job we’re doing, the result is bound to be a more efficient and better focused institution.

Between now and April of 2003, over 100 of our colleagues – faculty, staff, students, alumni, and DSC Foundation trustees – organized into nine principal committees will be gathering and analyzing data concerning every function of the institution from the physical plant through teaching classes to administrative functions. This is the Self-Study Program. It isn’t the SACS Self-Study Program, as it’s often called; its the DSC Self-Study Program and the College will be the organization profiting from it. If the procedure is an audit, it’s a self-audit, which we control and from which we get the benefits. And the benefits will come not just from reporting all the things we do wonderfully well - and there are many of these – but also from identifying things we could do more efficiently and effectively. The study’s primary concern will be whether each operation serves to support the College’s mission and does so in the most effective fashion.

The Self-Study will need the aid and cooperation of almost everyone on campus and at the extended campus sites. And, taking the

liberty to speak for everyone who is involved in the process, I hope the study will be carried out with a minimum of disturbance and for the maximum good. The study procedure and results will be always available for perusal; and questions, suggestions, and sympathy will be always welcome.

Frank Beesley
DSC Self-Study Program

Calendar of Self-Study Events 2001

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| Feb.-Mar. | Principal committees begin data collection for the Self-Study |
| May 1 | Principal committee preliminary reports sent to the Steering Committee for review and action |
| Nov. 5 | Complete division, department, unit, and committee final reports |

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| Jan. 15 | Send Self-Study Progress Report to Commission on Colleges staff member - Dr. Donald Crump |
| Apr. 15 | Complete first draft of Self-Study Report |
| Sept. | Complete the final draft of the Self-Study Report |

Want to know more about SACS?
Visit the home page:
<http://www.sacs.org>

Things to Know about SACS -

(Southern Association of Colleges and Schools)

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| <p>1. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the accrediting organization for Dalton State College, is not an organization independent from the institutions for which it provides accreditation. The College Delegate Assembly, which directs all SACS operations, is composed of one voting delegate from each of the member institutions—some 780 colleges and universities in 11 Southern states. The SACS staff simply carries out policy set by the CDA and the SACS Commission on Colleges.</p> <p>2. Our accreditation is important because of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. schools that are not accredited are not eligible to receive most federal and state funds;b. in order that students may transfer credits for courses taken, especially outside the University System of Georgia;c. to gain recognition in a variety of ways from other colleges and universities;d. to gain recognition from business, government, and industry, which equates to jobs for our graduates. <p>3. The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools initially accredited Dalton Junior College to award the associate degree in 1969. Accreditation was reaffirmed in 1973, 1984, and 1994.</p> <p>4. Each member (accredited) institution must complete a self-study each ten years, to be completed just prior to a SACS visiting committee inspection to verify that the institution meets the criteria for reaffirmation of accreditation.</p> <p>5. The SACS visiting committee consists of faculty and staff from peer institutions, not SACS employees, although they are accompanied by a SACS liaison representative. Members of the DSC faculty and staff have served as visiting-committee members at other colleges that are SACS accredited.</p> <p>6. The self-study required prior to the visiting committee inspection requires up to two-and-a-half years to complete and results in a book length report.</p> | <p>7. The self-study concerns all functions the college is involved in, with focus upon how each function serves the college's mission. Therefore, everyone, in one way or another is involved. The nine self-study committees who will do the data collection and who will write the Self-Study Report contain over 100 members of faculty, staff, student body, alumni, and DSC Foundation trustees.</p> <p>8. Who is performing the DSC Self-Study? A list of principal committees and their chairs and editors was e-mailed to faculty and staff in January. If you would like another copy, notify Frank Beesley by e-mail or phone (2588). A copy of the Self-Study Organization Table will soon be available at the Self-Study Web-site.</p> <p>9. The SACS visiting committees have, in the past few years, become especially concerned that all units of accredited institutions are assessing performance, analyzing the assessment, taking action based upon that analysis and reassessing to determine the effect of the action taken. The visiting committees are inspecting to ascertain whether all divisions, departments, sections, etc. are continuously performing this performance evaluation cycle and have the documentation to prove it. It's called "institutional effectiveness" and it's a current hot item.</p> <p>10. When will the Self-Study be completed? The Steering Committee expects to complete the final DSC Self-Study Report by April 2002. A period will follow in which the recommendations in the Report are addressed and as many as possible satisfied. Then an addendum to the report must be completed showing what was done in response to the recommendations.</p> <p>11. When will SACS come to DSC? The SACS Visiting Committee will arrive on our campus in late March or early April 2003 and will be here for four days. With the support of everyone on campus, the Self-Study Committees expect this visit to show what a great job we do!</p> |
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