



PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE REAFFIRMATION COMMITTEE

Statement Regarding the Report

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is responsible for making the final determination on reaffirmation of accreditation based on the findings contained in this committee report, the institution's response to issues contained in the report, other assessments relevant to the review, and application of the Commission's policies and procedures. Final interpretation of the Principles of Accreditation and final action on the accreditation status of the institution rest with SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

Name of the Institution: **University of South Carolina - Aiken**

Date of the Review: **November 5-6, 2020**

SACSCOC Staff Member: **Dr. Denise Y. Young**

Chair of the Committee: **Dr. William R. Fannin - CHAIR**
Professor of Management
The University of Texas Permian Basin
Odessa, TX

Section 10: Educational Policies, Procedures, and Practices

- 10.6 An institution that offers distance or correspondence education:
- (a) ensures 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.
 - (b) has a written procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in distance and correspondence education courses or programs.
 - (c) ensures that students are notified, in writing at the time of registration or enrollment, of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity.

(Distance and correspondence education) [Off-Site/On-Site Review]

Compliance

Institutional Policy AACAF-103 explicitly addresses the verification of student identity in distance-delivered courses. The Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee found that the institution has taken multiple steps to verify the identity of students enrolled in distance education, including a system-wide secure login and passcode for access into Blackboard's course content management system and Microsoft's Office 365 (student email). The institution uses multifactor authentication as an additional safeguard to verify the identity of the student. Faculty may also use proctoring and authentication services through ProctorU and Respondus Monitor.

The institution has several written policies regarding protecting student privacy for those enrolled in online courses as required by FERPA. Policies on student privacy are available in the Academic Bulletin, the Registrar's webpage, and the Student Handbook.

At present, the institution does not have any additional student charges associated with verification of student identity. Policy AACAF-103 states that any additional cost for verification of student identity would have to be communicated to students at the time of registration or enrollment.