

APSU Information for SACSCOC Reaffirmation 2023-2024

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Note: this document does not include the new QEP plan

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Information on APSU Reaffirmation

SACSCOC Information:

APSU's regional accrediting agency, SACSCOC, requires universities to participate in a reaffirmation process every 10 years to ensure compliance with their standards. Reaffirmation consists of the following:

Preparation by the Institution:

- The institution must provide two separate documents:
 - Compliance Certification Report
 - document completed by the institution that demonstrates its judgment of the extent of its compliance with each of the Core Requirements and Standards
 - submitted fifteen (15) months in advance of an institution's scheduled reaffirmation
 - Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
 - submitted six weeks in advance of the On-Site Reaffirmation Review Committee

Review by the Commission on Colleges:

- The Off-Site Reaffirmation Review
 - Composed of a chair and normally eight to ten peer evaluators
 - Serves as an evaluative committee in the reaffirmation process.
 - Meets in Atlanta, Georgia, and reviews Compliance Certifications of a group of institutions to determine whether each institution is in compliance with all Core Requirements and Standards (except 7.2).
 - At the conclusion of the review, they will prepare a report, recording and explaining its preliminary findings about compliance.
 - The report is forwarded to the respective institution's On-Site Reaffirmation Committee.
- The On-Site Reaffirmation Review
 - Consists of peers and serves as an evaluative committee
 - Conducts a focused evaluation at the campus to finalize issues of compliance with the Core Requirements and Standards, evaluate the QEP, and provide consultation regarding the issues addressed in the QEP.
 - At the conclusion of its visit, will finalize the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee, a written report of its findings noting areas of noncompliance.
 - The Report of the Reaffirmation Committee, along with the institution's response to areas of noncompliance, is forwarded to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for review and action on reaffirmation of accreditation.
- Review by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees

- The Committees on Compliance and Reports (C&R), standing committees of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, review reports prepared by evaluation committees and the institutional responses to those reports.
- A C&R Committee's recommendation regarding an institution's reaffirmation of accreditation is forwarded to the Executive Council for review.
- The Executive Council recommends action to the full Board of Trustees, which makes the final decision on reaffirmation and any monitoring activities that it may require of an institution.
- The full Board of Trustees convenes twice a year.

See SACSCOC website for details on the process: <https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/reaffirmation-process/>

See SACSCOC website for institution resources: <https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/institution-resources/>

How the Reaffirmation Process Applies to APSU:

APSU's Compliance Certification Report (all 72 standards, not just the subset of Fifth Year) has an approximate due date of the first week of **September 2023**.

APSU will obtain feedback (report) from the SACSCOC Committee in early **November 2023**.

Focused Reports (if preliminarily marked out of compliance by the SACSCOC Committee in November 2023 will be due 6 weeks prior to APSU's on-site reaffirmation visit that will occur sometime between mid-January to mid-April 2024.

In order to prepare for the Compliance Certification Report, APSU will conduct an internal readiness audit to self-identify any compliance gaps so those areas can be addressed prior to writing and submitting the report.

Note on SACSCOC's Differentiated Review Process

Please note that SACSCOC offers a Differentiated Review Process for institutions that qualify. More information is available in their policy at the link below:

<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2020/01/Differentiated-Review.pdf>

At the creation of this document in 2020, it is too early for APSU to apply for consideration of participation in the Differentiated Review Process. However, the plan is to apply when allowed to do so and see if SACSCOC states that we qualify.

Overview of Timeline:

Phase I: Fall 2020 - Spring 2021

- Conduct Phase I Internal Readiness Audit - complete by **February 2021**
- Focus on the standards that were not in the 5th Year Interim Report
 - Ensure compliance and adequate evidence
 - Plan for addressing any gaps in compliance
 - Keep good notes during audit to make correcting any issues easier
- Keep an eye on Phase II which revisits standards covered in the 5th Year Interim Report
- Address compliance gaps as they are discovered
 - If possible, start correcting issues ASAP
 - Officially begin addressing by **March 2021**

Phase II: Fall 2021 - Spring 2022

- Conduct Phase II Internal Readiness Audit - complete by **February 2022**
- Focus on correcting any ongoing issues from Phase I and revisiting standards that were covered in the 5th Year Interim Report to ensure compliance and adequate evidence.
- Address any remaining compliance gaps identified by the Internal Readiness Audit Phase I and II by **March 2022** in preparation for writing the report and providing evidence
- Phase II and Phase III will overlap slightly as the writers prepare for the report

Phase III: Late Spring 2022 - Summer 2023

- Write the Reaffirmation Compliance Certification Report in **Fall 2022**
- Updating Evidence for Fall 2023
 - Keep clear and accurate notes of any evidence that will need to be updated prior to submitting the report to SACSCOC
 - Most evidence will probably be okay from the previous academic year but org chart, bulletins, academic calendar and handbooks need to be updated or
 - could add updated versions on Xitracs evidence landing page - see if this exists (talk to Brandi)
 - Possible note in cover letter that evidence is based on 2021-2022 but give pathway to where to find the latest evidence
- Internal Review Team reviews and provides feedback on first draft
- Reaffirmation Compliance Certification Report is due first week of **September 2023**
- Consider asking Senior Leadership Team to review the report in addition to the Provost & President
- Make final revisions to the Reaffirmation Compliance Certification Report based on feedback from the Provost, President, and if applicable, other members of Senior Leadership Team

Phase IV & IV: Fall 2023 - Spring 2024

- Prepare report for electronic submission to SACSCOC

- Finalize & ship Reaffirmation Compliance Certification Report by **Wednesday, September 4, 2023**
- Onsite Visit **mid-January to mid-April 2024**

Location of Documents:

APSU documents for the reaffirmation process are located at:

AcadAffairs\SACSCOC\Reaffirmation 2023-2024

See the “Reaffirmation Report Detailed Timeline” for more information on timeline expectations, located at:

AcadAffairs\SACSCOC\Reaffirmation 2023 2024\Planning\Timeline\Reaffirmation Report Detailed Timeline

See the “Reaffirmation Calendar Timeline” for more information on timeline expectations in a calendar format, located at:

AcadAffairs\SACSCOC\Reaffirmation 2023 2024\Planning\Timeline\Reaffirmation Calendar Timeline

See the “Comparison of SACSCOC Standards Across Reports” for a crosswalk of SACSCOC standards across recent APSU reports, located at:

AcadAffairs\SACSCOC\Reaffirmation 2023 2024\Planning\Comparison of SACSCOC Standards Across Reports