

Compliance Components – Student Affairs

Separate compliance components that constitute discrete issues to be addressed in developing a convincing argument for compliance in the Compliance Certification are underlined for each applicable requirement and standard. A narrative that addresses and documents some, but not all, of the compliance components is incomplete.

Suggestions: The “suggestions” provided below are guides to developing and documenting a narration that thoroughly addresses these compliance components.

Excerpts citing noncompliance: The “excerpts” are provided to assist Applicants and Candidates in identifying typical shortcomings in the narratives and documentation presented in support of an institution’s assertion of compliance; taken from reports developed by SACSCOC review committees, these excerpts are all part of some committee’s explanation of its finding of noncompliance.

Core Requirements:

2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. (**Student Support Services**)

***Suggestion:** Cross-reference assessment results in 3.3.1.3 to support promoting student learning and enhancing the development of students.*

***Suggestion:** Be certain to provide information concerning academic support services as well as other types of student support services.*

***Excerpt citing noncompliance:** “The Compliance Certification lists and describes most of the traditional essential student services including academic advising, tutorial services, judicial affairs, career services, counseling services, disability student services, health services, international and minority student services, housing and residential life, and the university center and student activities. However, evidence that the programs listed are both consistent with the mission and promote student learning and student is lacking.”*

3.3 Institutional Effectiveness

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas (**Institutional Effectiveness**):

***Suggestion:** Cross-reference the narrative and documentation developed for CR 2.5 as appropriate. Note, however, that CR 2.5 refers to planning and evaluation for the over-all institution, while CS 3.1.1 refers to educational programs and other units at the institution.*

3.3.1.3 educational support services

***Excerpt citing noncompliance:** “The institution provided a few examples of implemented and planned changes; however, the institution did not provide sufficient evidence of specific documented improvements in the educational support services based on analysis of the specific assessment results.”*

- 3.3.1.5 community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate

Excerpt citing noncompliance: “Although it is evident that in recent years the institution has made some progress in developing an assessment program in public service/outreach units, evidence provided in the compliance Certification indicates that implementation of the institution’s assessment requirements is uneven across the programs. Furthermore, information in section four of the institution’s assessment report (‘Describe how assessment results were used to improve the unit’) is frequently vague and/or refers to future actions. The institution simply did not provide sufficient evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results.”

3.9 Student Affairs and Services

- 3.9.1 The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community. **(Student rights)**
- 3.9.2 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records

[This standard applies to all types of student records, not just the transcripts typically managed by the registrar’s office.]

and maintains special security measures to protect and back up data. **(Student records)**

Excerpt citing noncompliance: “The Compliance Certification defines the purpose of FERPA, identifies offices that are likely to hold student records, defines ‘directory information,’ and references where confidentiality issues are described in institutional publications. It does not, however, state what specific safeguards or procedures are in place to protect student records and data.”

- 3.9.3 The institution employs qualified personnel to ensure the quality and effectiveness of its student affairs programs. **(Qualified staff)**

Suggestion: Prepare a roster of student affairs staff similar to the faculty roster prepared for CS 3.7.1.

Suggestion: Cross-reference documentation presented in CS 3.3.1.3 concerning the effectiveness of student affairs programs.

Excerpt citing noncompliance: “The various student services positions detailed in the table provided by the institution are mostly documented as qualified by education and/or experience to have the competence and capacity to perform their duties. One employee, however, a Financial Aid Counselor, is listed as having only a Diploma in Cosmetology; other qualifications for this particular individual were not provided. Furthermore, it is not clear whether the Director or other staff in the Counseling Center are licensed mental health providers qualified to offer the individual and group counseling provided there.”

Federal Requirements:

- 4.5 The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. (See Commission policy “Complaint Procedures Against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions.”) **(Student complaints)**

Suggestion: *Include an example of an actual complaint (with personal information blacked out) followed by the policy and procedure for written student complaints.*

Suggestion: *If the institution has multiple complaint procedures for varying types of complaints, consider providing an illustration of the handling and resolution of a case of each type.*

Excerpt citing noncompliance: *“While the institution does adequately demonstrate that it has procedures in place for handling student complaints, it does not demonstrate in the Compliance Certification that it follows those procedures. Evidence of disciplinary reports is provided, but only the number of reports is presented, not documentation of implementation of the prescribed procedures.*