

***THE PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION:
Foundations for Quality Enhancement***

Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
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FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The U.S. Secretary of Education recognizes accreditation by the Commission on Colleges in establishing the eligibility of higher education institutions to participate in programs authorized under Title IV of the *1998 Higher Education Amendments* and other federal programs. Through its periodic review of institutions of higher education, the Commission assures the public that it is a reliable authority on the quality of education provided by its member institutions.

The federal statute includes mandates that the Commission review an institution in accordance with criteria outlined in the regulations of the *Amendments* developed by the U.S. Department of Education. As part of the review process, institutions are required to document compliance with those criteria and the Commission is obligated to consider such compliance when the institution is reviewed for initial membership or continued accreditation.

- 4.1 The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates. **(Student achievement)**
- 4.2 The institution's curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded. **(Program curriculum)**
- 4.3 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies. **(Publication of policies)**
- 4.4 Program length is appropriate for each of the institution's educational programs. **(Program length)**
- 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)**

- 4.6 Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices and policies. (**Recruitment materials**)
- 4.7 The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the *1998 Higher Education Amendments*. (In reviewing the institution's compliance with these program responsibilities, the Commission relies on documentation forwarded to it by the U.S. Department of Education.) (**Title IV program responsibilities**)