

Del Mar College's

Self-Study 2000:

12, December 31, 1999

A newsletter devoted to the successful reaffirmation of Del Mar's accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in December of 2000.

From the Self-Study Director:

The end of the fall semester and the hurry of the holidays are always distracting. But notice the countdown number to the right of this column. The date for the SACS's committee's visit to the College is quickly approaching. By the time classes begin in January, we will have less than a month to make final preparations.

Before February 14 comes, some Del Mar employees will be involved in arranging interviews, transportation, and computers for the visiting team; others in looking for ways to clean up our heavily-used buildings and grounds. **English**

What are you doing to get ready? The SACS team chairman, Dr. Frank Friedman, says that the members will want to hear from a wide variety of employees, students, and Regents. If you're still not sure what you can do to prepare for the team's arrival, here is a final list of questions that you can ask yourself in the next few weeks.

1. Did you serve on a self-study committee or make any suggestions about changes to the draft committee reports? Were your suggestions listened to? Do you think that our self-study teams investigated College policies and practices thoroughly enough?
2. Do you know where to find the mission statement of the College (and the one for your office)? How do your daily work activities support the mission of the College?
3. Has your supervisor discussed the results of the self-study with you and your fellow employees? Do you know what the *Self-Study Report* and the *(See Next Column, Please.)*

Countdown:

The Reaffirmation Visiting Committee from SACS will arrive on Del Mar's campus in:

45 days

Are you ready?

The Visiting Team's First Day On Campus Will Be February 15, 2000.

Addendum say about your office?

4. Do you get the budget support you need to do your work?
5. In your work area, do you have enough space? --the appropriate tools? --the right kind of maintenance support at the right time?
6. Do you have written goals for your classes? How do you know that your students have reached those goals?
7. How well does the College support your classes (e.g., through the library, student development services, computer technology)?

After the Visit....

What Next?

After the self-study visit is over, February 18, 2000, our campus will undoubtedly breathe a collective sigh of relief. Thousands of hours have been spent in committee meetings and interviews and in writing and rewriting two large documents for the visiting committee: the *Self-Study Report* and the *Addendum to the Self-Study Report*. The light at the end of the tunnel grows brighter.

However, SACS requires at least one more significant document before the 1997-2000 self-study can be put to rest. Every institution must produce, within five months of the SACS visit, a response to all of the recommendations in the visiting team's report. The College has already begun responding to the recommendations made in its own *Report*: those responses are online in the *Addendum*. But the visiting team's report will contain its own set of recommendations and suggestions. Some of them will be the same as those identified by the self-study committees; others will be new. We hope that the visiting committee's report will contain fewer recommendations than the College's own *Report*, since many of the College's will have been carried out by the time the visiting team arrives. In any case, for each recommendation the College will have to demonstrate convincingly that it is taking action to remedy the noncompliance.

Representatives from Southern Polytechnic State University presented a seminar at the December SACS conference in Atlanta, in which they discussed their institution's response to a recent SACS visit. For each recommendation from the visiting committee, the institution

1. Created an individual action plan
2. Created a schedule for the response
3. Designated the person(s) responsible.
4. Provided the necessary resources.

(See Next Column, Please.)

For More Information
about SACS:
www.sacs.org

(Continued from Previous Column.)

These four steps are similar to the ones that Del Mar took as it prepared the *Addendum*.

Polytechnic State ensured that their response was systematic by appointing a task force charged with the responsibility of producing the response. For every recommendation, the task force produced a form that included the four steps listed above, as well as the exact recommendation made by the visiting team and the part of the *Criteria* that the recommendation applied to.

Additionally, the presenters pointed out a significant difference between the response to the visiting committee's report and the *Addendum*, which has already been produced: the visiting committee uses the *Addendum* to help it determine the extent to which an institution has already corrected problems of compliance with the *Criteria*--and whether or not a recommendation is still called for.

The response to the visiting team's report, however, is never seen by the visiting team (except the chair). The response is read by the SACS Criteria & Reports Committee, which uses it to make the final determination of whether or not an institution's accreditation will be reaffirmed.



To review the self-study calendar, meeting minutes, and other links, please see the self-study webpages. Link through Del Mar's homepage, **www.delmar.edu**; then look under Instructional Programs or Administrative Resources.

In addition, the complete texts of the *Self-Study Report* and the *Addendum* are now online in PDF format.