



University of South Florida

Accreditation Style Guide

Introduction

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requires that its member institutions represent their status with the Commission identically in all statements about their accreditation status, in both internally developed and published communications and media (Principle 14.1 - Publication of Accreditation Status), and in communications and media developed for dissemination to outside agencies (SACSCOC Principle 14.4 - Representation to Other Agencies).

Principle 14.1 states that:

An institution is responsible for representing accurately to the public its status and relationship with SACSCOC. Providing information on accreditation status makes it possible for anyone to inquire about the accreditation status of the institution, to ask questions about the accreditation process, or to pursue procedures for filing complaints against an institution.

Principle 14.4 states that:

The Commission requires candidate and member institutions holding accredited or candidacy (pre-accredited) status from more than one U.S. Department of Education–recognized institutional accrediting agency to keep each agency apprised of any change in its status with one or another agency. Any institution seeking or holding accreditation from more than one USDOE-recognized institutional accrediting agency must describe itself in identical terms to each agency with regard to purpose, governance, programs, degrees, diplomas, certificates, personnel, finances, and constituents, and must keep each USDOE recognized accrediting body, including SACSCOC, apprised of any change in its status with one or another accrediting agency.

This style guide provides the exact wording that must be used in all USF communications that state USF's accreditation status.

ACCURATE NAME AND ABBREVIATION FOR ALL COMMUNICATIONS

The appropriate style for referencing our accreditor's name is:

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
- It is also appropriate, but not required, to include the abbreviation (SACSCOC) following the full name of the accreditor, like this: Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

WHAT NOT TO DO:

- When using the abbreviation, do not use 'SACS'. Always use the full name and/or abbreviation in reports, presentations, documents (digital and hardcopy), and all other internal and publicly disseminated media.
- Do not refer to our accreditor as a regional accreditor after July 1, 2020. On that date, all previous regional accreditors become national accreditors.

ACCURATE REPRESENTATION IN OFFICIAL USF DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

USF documents (catalogs, handbooks, etc.) and websites that include statements about the university's institutional accreditation must represent USF's status with SACSCOC using the following language:

The University of South Florida is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate's, baccalaureate, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. The University of South Florida also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of the University of South Florida may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

ACCURATE REPRESENTATION IN FLYERS AND OTHER RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

It is acceptable to reference accreditation by SACSCOC in flyers and other recruiting materials without the full statement, as follows:

The University of South Florida is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

or, if space allows,

The University of South Florida is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, baccalaureate, master, education specialist, and doctoral degrees.

ACCURATE REPRESENTATION IN ACCREDITATION REPORT NARRATIVES TO PROFESSIONAL AND DISCIPLINARY ACCREDITORS

When writing narrative reports or other communications to professional or disciplinary accreditors that include statements about the university's institutional accreditation, we must represent USF's status with SACSCOC in the initial reference within the narrative using the following language:

The University of South Florida is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate's, baccalaureate, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. The University of South Florida also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of the University of South Florida may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

Subsequent references. Subsequent references to accreditation within the same narrative may use one of the following shortened references:

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
- SACSCOC