

SECTION 2: Mission

- 2.1** The institution has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published mission specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The mission addresses teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service. (*Institutional mission*) [CR]

Rationale and Notes

A clearly defined and comprehensive mission guides the public's perception of the institution. It conveys a sense of the institution's uniqueness and identifies the qualities, characteristics, and values that define the institution's role and distinctiveness within the diverse higher education community. Fundamental to the structure of an institution's effectiveness, the mission reflects a clear understanding of the institution by its governing board, administration, faculty, students, staff, and all constituents.

Institutional integrity demands congruence between the mission statement and the institution's governance as well as consistency in representation of the statement itself. The expectation is that the institution's mission is appropriate to higher education and that the focus is on teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service. The institution's mission should reflect the full scope of educational programs offered. It is important that the institution develop educational goals and objectives that are clearly recognized throughout the institution and are consistent with the mission. Ascertaining the level of achievement of its mission and its educational goals and objectives will be the primary focus of an institution's assessment of effectiveness.

SACSCOC recognizes that some institutions may not include research and public service explicitly in their primary mission and that they may define research and public service in different ways. To the extent that the institution considers research and public service part of its mission, it should address those mission components appropriately in the statement and define them within the institutional context.

Institutions often will have vision or purpose statements (or statements with other names) that accompany a mission statement for purposes of this standard; these accompanying statements are often necessary to demonstrate compliance. This is especially true of institutions that may have a "business card" mission statement.

NOTE

Publication may include either or both hard copy and digital/electronic formats.

Questions to Consider

- What constitutes the published "mission" of the institution? Is it a single statement or a broader collection of statements?
- Where is the statement published? Is the language of the mission consistent across publications?

- How is the mission statement appropriate to an institution of higher education?
- How does the mission address teaching and learning and, if appropriate, research and/or public service?
- How does the mission statement describe the distinctiveness of the institution and its values?
- How does the mission statement reflect the educational programs and levels of degrees offered by the institution?

Sample Documentation

- A copy of the mission statement.
- Evidence it is published, and that the language of the statement is consistent across different places where it is published.

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

SACSCOC policies: [Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards](#)
 [Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs](#)
 [Distance and Correspondence Education](#)
 [Institutional Obligations for Public Disclosure](#)
 [Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and
 Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status](#)
 [Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions](#)

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

Standard 4.2.a *(Mission review)*
 Standard 4.3 *(Multi-level governance)*
 Standard 5.3.a *(Institution-related entities)*
 CR 6.1 *(Full-time faculty)*
 Standard 6.5 *(Faculty development)*
 CR 7.1 *(Institutional planning)*
 CR 8.1 *(Student achievement)*
 CR 9.1 *(Program content)*
 Standard 10.5 *(Admissions policies and practices)*
 Standard 10.8 *(Evaluating and awarding academic credit)*
 CR 12.1 *(Student support services)*
 Standard 12.2 *(Student support services staff)*
 CR 13.1 *(Financial resources)*
 Standard 13.7 *(Physical resources)*