

**EXCERPT FROM THE PRELIMINARY REPORT  
OF THE REAFFIRMATION COMMITTEE**

**Statement Regarding the Report**

*The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is responsible for making the final determination on reaffirmation of accreditation based on the findings contained in this committee report, the institution's response to issues contained in the report, other assessments relevant to the review, and application of the Commission's policies and procedures. Final interpretation of the Principles of Accreditation and final action on the accreditation status of the institution rest with SACSCOC Board of Trustees.*

**Name of the Institution:**            **University of South Carolina - Columbia**

**Date of the Review:**                **November 3-4, 2020**

**SACSCOC Staff Member:**        **Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover**

**Chair of the Committee:**         **Dr. Timothy S. Brophy**  
**Director, Institutional Assessment**  
**and Professor, Music Education**  
**University of Florida**  
**Gainesville, FL 32606**

## 6.4

### Academic Freedom

- 6.4 The institution publishes and implements appropriate policies and procedures for preserving and protecting academic freedom.  
(*Academic freedom*)

#### **Non-Compliance**

The institution's response is in violation of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policy, "Reports Submitted for SACSCOC Review," by including live links in its response and electronic documentation that is not consistently bookmarked, indexed, and searchable.

The institution publishes and implements appropriate policies and procedures for preserving and protecting academic freedom at an acceptable level. The institution adheres in principle to the American Association of University Professors' "Statement of Academic Freedom." The privilege of academic freedom is protected through the grievance process and extends beyond those with tenure. Publication is via the Faculty Manual, which articulate the Faculty Grievance Policy and Due Process Rights. The Office of the University Ombudsman was established to serve as a neutral and confidential resource for faculty concerns and conflicts and the Faculty Civility Advocate mediates conflicts between faculty. These are consistent with prevailing common practices. All faculty regardless of tenure status are guaranteed protection in their pursuit of excellence in research, teaching, and service, as outlined in the Faculty Manual. An illustrative example of related policy use and implementation could not be found, nor was there provided a valid explanation for this.