



July 15, 2019

Dr. Harris Pastides  
President  
University of South Carolina - Columbia  
206 Osborne Building  
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Dr. Pastides,

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' policy, "Unsolicited Information," (available at [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)) stipulates that the Commission give appropriate consideration to significant accreditation-related unsolicited information revealed about an institution between periods of scheduled review. This policy provides that an institution be afforded the opportunity to respond to concerns raised by the review of the unsolicited information.

I am writing you today because a July 9, 2019, article by staff of *WLTX* (Columbia, SC) regarding the current process for hiring a new CEO raises questions about the University of South Carolina's ongoing compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*. In particular, the article highlights concerns about the institution's compliance with Standard 4.2.f which states that the "*governing board protects the institution from undue influence by external persons or bodies*".

I am aware that the South Carolina State Statutes designates the Governor as the Ex Officio Chairman of the Board. However, your Bylaws also state that it is the responsibility of the individual Board members to "*Recognize that the legal authority of the Board to govern and direct the University System rests with the collective Board and not individual Board members*".

In light of these circumstances, and in accordance with the Commission's policy and procedure, I am requesting that the institution prepare a report that explains and documents the extent of compliance with the following standard of the *Principles of Accreditation*:

**Standard 4.2.f (External influence)**

*This standard expects the institution's governing board to protect the institution from undue influence by external persons or bodies.*

Please submit to my office **two** copies of the institution's response to this letter by August 10, 2019. A copy of the *Principles* is enclosed.

In accordance with Commission policy on the receipt of unsolicited information, the institution's response will be reviewed, and if Commission staff determines that the information is of factual substance and is accreditation related, the information and documentation, along with the institution's response will be forwarded to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for formal review.



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Or, it is possible that the President of SACSCOC could authorize a Special Committee to review the institution.

If you would care to discuss this with me, please feel free to contact me at (404) 994-6607 or via email at [lthomas-glover@sacscoc.org](mailto:lthomas-glover@sacscoc.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Thomas-Glover", is written over the typed name and title.

Linda Thomas-Glover, Ph.D  
Vice President

LTG:kf

cc: Dr. Belle S. Wheelan, President, SACSCOC