



October 2, 2019

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Mr. Robert L. Caslen Jr.
President
University of South Carolina - Columbia
Osborne Admin. Building, Suite 206
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Mr. Caslen:

Thank you for your response to Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover's letters of July 15, and August 19, 2019, requesting an explanation and documentation regarding your institution's ongoing compliance with Standard 4.2.f (External Influence). This request was made following receipt of unsolicited information alleging that the USC-Columbia's Board did not "*protect the institution from undue influence by external persons or bodies*" in the recent presidential search process.

After reviewing the material submitted, we have determined that there is evidence of a significant accreditation-related issue based on information that we received. Therefore: (a) the original unsolicited information and documentation, (b) the notification letter of July 5, 2019, and the subsequent letter requesting additional clarifying information and documentation dated August 19, 2019, (c) your responses to the requests for information, and (d) this letter, will be forwarded to a Committee on Compliance and Reports, a standing committee of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, for formal review in December 2019.

If you have additional information that addresses the issues identified, it must be submitted by November 4, 2019, in order to be included with the other materials being forwarded to the SACSCOC Board. I am also requesting that you send five (5) copies of the USB-flash drive supplied in your September 23rd mailing to Dr. Thomas-Glover for distribution to Board members for review. You will be informed of the decision of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees within two weeks of its meeting.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (404) 679-4512.

Sincerely,

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/LTG:rb

cc: Mr. John C. von Lehe, Jr., Chairman, USC-C Board of Trustees
Mr. Douglas D. Miles, Accreditation Liaison, USC-C
Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover, Vice President, SACSCOC