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Holly Kickliter

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SACS Continues USF St. Petersburg Accreditation

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(St. Petersburg, Fla.) June 30, 2008 - The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, USF St. Petersburg's regional accrediting organization, decided to continue the accreditation of USF St. Petersburg for good cause.

However, out of 89 standards required for accreditation, USF St. Petersburg has been asked to continue to provide evidence about two - the assessment and documentation of college-level competencies and student achievement. The institution has a one-year probation period to document its assessment results and demonstrate compliance with the standards.

Regional Chancellor Karen A. White said, "This decision is not a criticism of the quality of our education, the status of our programs, the validity of your degree, or the credentials of our professors."

White continued, "While disappointed in their decision, I am proud of the performance of our students and alumni of USF St. Petersburg and the efforts of the faculty and staff to measure and document the high quality of instruction and student learning."

The institution will hear from SACS later in July about the specific reason for its decision and will work with them to focus institutional efforts to continue to document its assessment results, and to demonstrate compliance with the standards.

USF St. Petersburg's initial accreditation was granted in June 2006 and marked the first time in Florida that a regional campus was separately accredited from a member institution. This achievement recognizes the maturity of the institution and the quality of its faculty and programs and makes USF the first university system in Florida with two separately accredited institutions. This accreditation recognizes the autonomous nature of USF St. Petersburg as a degree granting institution.

A site visit is anticipated in Spring 2009 to review documentation pertaining to the two standards. White said USF St. Petersburg faculty and staff would "present a compelling case" that it engages in a program of continuous improvement for the two assessment standards and that it institutes quality assurance through self-evaluation and peer review.

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