



**Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges**

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 St. Thomas

Date of the Review: November 4-5, 2014

COC Staff Member: Dr. Michael T. Hoefler

Chair of the Committee: Dr. George E. Capowich
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
Loyola University New Orleans
New Orleans, LA

- 3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them. **(General education competencies)**

Compliance

The general education competencies were approved in April of 2010. The ten goals and 34 competencies are clearly described in the College-Level General Education Competencies Template. The ways that these competencies align with each course is described in the Core Curriculum Review Committee curriculum map. The Curriculum Committee approved the original goals and competencies, and is charged with approving any changes. The goals and competencies are reviewed and approved by two separate committees of college faculty, charged with selecting courses that may be used to satisfy the Core Curriculum requirement. They also ensure that the courses are aligned with the Core Curriculum Goals.

The competencies are validated as being college-level by following recommendations of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the development of college-level competencies. The competencies are also consistent with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) recommended outcomes.

The general education competencies are:

Component I: Foundational Skills and Integration Through a First Year Common Experience Course

Component II: Integrating Faith, Reason and Imagination: Linking Core Theology, Philosophy, English, Science, and the Arts.

Component III: Integrating History and the Human Sciences : Linking Core History and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Component IV: Social Justice and Service Learning: Theology, Philosophy, Major Program Courses, Catholic Social Justice Program

Component V: Integration of the Major with Theology or Philosophy

Student attainment of college-level competencies has been assessed regularly by a number of methods overseen by the Core Curriculum Review Committee, and the faculty who teach general education/core curriculum courses. The Office of Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness supports assessment efforts.

Although the most recent general education competencies were approved in 2010, the previous curriculum was extensively assessed with clearly presented reports documenting the assessment.

The institution also completed an assessment to support implementation of the new general education competencies. This included three major tasks:

- Ensure the new core curriculum provided a collegiate-level general education that was a substantial component of each undergraduate degree
- Coordinate the theology and philosophy sequences, and
- Provide a course that integrates learning in the major with theology

Beginning in spring 2013, the institution implemented a new process to assess the new general education core curriculum. Because of the large number of courses involved in the general education curriculum, it was decided to include roughly a third of the courses each term on a rotating basis, so that each course will be assessed at least every two years. Detailed reports were provided for the first cycle of assessments - spring 2013, fall 2013, and spring 2014.