

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

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Texas Southern, Optimistic About SACS

Texas Southern University is looking forward to the opportunity to prove its strength in handling university governance and fiscal integrity so that the University can be removed from probation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Texas Southern officials received word at the annual meeting of the Commission last week that when certain financial audits and reports are finalized and submitted demonstrating control over finances, the probation will be lifted, most likely at their next meeting in June 2009.

TSU's President of only 10 months Dr. John Rudley, made the SACS probation issue one of his top priorities. "It is gratifying that the committee found no cause to cite the University for violations in the areas of integrity or governance," stated Rudley. "Even though great strides have been made," Rudley continues, "there is still plenty of work to be done. I don't want people to think for a minute that this was easy for us. We are completing the 2007 and 2008 independent audits requested and will have the additional fiscal reviews completed by mid-semester this spring."

TSU was placed on probation in 2007. The Commission requested a First Monitoring Report in September and authorized a Special Visiting Committee to come to the University in October of this year. Based on the information provided by the University in the report and on its own investigations, the committee found no cause to question the integrity of the University's operations or the validity of its governing structure. The committee did make 12 recommendations to the University regarding finance, the physical plant, and the condition of learning resources, especially in regard to the Robert J. Terry Library. The University's response to the committee's report caused the Commission at its meeting in San Antonio to reduce the number recommendations to which the University must respond in the Second Monitoring Report which will be due on April 14, 2009. Rudley anticipates the commission will lift the probation in June 2009.

Under TSU's new leadership, the team marshaled all requested documents, reports and audits and is expecting great outcomes next year. New fiscal processes and procedures are being put in place at the Regents' and administrative levels to ensure that any future SACS reviews will result in a positive review.

Texas Southern University remains a fully accredited institution. The issues raised by SACS are not specifically related to the University's academic programming and the action taken by SACS does not negatively impact the education of students or their ability to secure federal aid.

