

Update on Accreditation Status
of
Paine College, Augusta, Georgia

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On September 19, 2016, the leadership of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) agreed to a Consent Order Granting Preliminary Injunction that reinstated the accreditation of Paine College, located in Augusta, Georgia, with SACSCOC. Paine College continued as a member on Probation pending further Order of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. In an opinion and order signed on October 11, 2018, the Honorable Thomas H. Thrash, Jr., United States District Judge, granted the Motion for Summary Judgment filed by SACSCOC and denied the Motion for Partial Summary Judgment requested by Paine College. The Clerk of Court entered final judgment in favor of SACSCOC and against Paine College. Paine College requested the Court to alter or amend that judgment and order.

On February 8, 2019, the Court ruled the Clerk erroneously entered final judgment in favor of SACSCOC based on the October 11, 2018, order. The Court ruled that its previous order granted SACSCOC Summary Judgment on all federal claims and did not rule on Paine College's attorneys' fees claim; but, the attorneys' fees claim is now dismissed for lack of jurisdiction. The Court further ruled that the Clerk is directed to reenter final judgment in favor of SACSCOC and against Paine College, that Paine College has 30 days from entry of judgment to file a notice of appeal, and that the Preliminary Injunction reinstating the accreditation of Paine College remains in effect for 30 days and, if Paine College files a timely appeal, for the pendency of the appeal.

SACSCOC is the regional commission responsible for accrediting degree-granting institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and some institutions in Latin America. The Board of Trustees of SACS Commission on Colleges is the representative body of the 793-member College Delegate Assembly and is charged with carrying out the accreditation process. To gain or maintain accreditation, an institution must comply with Commission policies and with all standards contained in the *Principles of Accreditation*.