

Et Tu, SACS?

Will SACS visit USM for its violation of NCAA rules? Donnie Tyndall was fired for cause as head basketball coach by the University of Tennessee for various violations of the NCAA rules which occurred while he was at Southern Miss. According to Tennessee athletic director [Dave Hart](#), it was “highly likely” that the NCAA will determine that Tyndall committed Level 1, 2, 3 and 4 violations, justifying terminating Tyndall’s contract for cause. [Level 1](#) violations are characterized as -- “Severe breach of conduct” -- the most egregious. While these violations have been associated with violations of Prop 48 (improper payment for tuition and expenses of academically unqualified students), other sources have commented that this infraction is likely only the tip of an iceberg of USM violations of NCAA. Many believe this scandal has the potential to dwarf the University of North Carolina academic scandal, with USM’s athletes “masquerading as students” while others write papers, take exams and they are steered to “no-show” classes.

It is widely believed Tyndall is likely to be disciplined under the NCAA coach control provisions of the rules, regardless of whether he was personally responsible for the violations. While accepting responsibility for any such misconduct, Tyndall’s public statement appears to shift the burden for the NCAA violations to Southern Miss. “During my time at Southern Miss, I believed that our program followed NCAA rules and worked well with the university’s administration to maintain an atmosphere of rules compliance,” Tyndall said.

Now, sources tell usmnews.net that the Southern Miss is waiting for a call from SACS.

Let’s take a look at SACS’ ruling on the NCAA Level 1 violations by UNC-CH’s basketball program:

June 11, 2015 by [Andy Thomason](#)

[Accreditor Puts UNC-Chapel Hill on Probation in Fake-Classes Scandal](#)

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been put on a one-year probation by its accrediting agency for the longtime fake-classes scandal [exposed in full](#) last year, *The News & Observer* [reports](#).

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools’ Commission on Colleges cited seven standards that the university had not met, including academic integrity and monitoring college sports. “It’s the most serious sanction we have,” Belle S. Wheelan, the commission’s president, said of the probation, which is the most severe penalty the group can levy short of revoking accreditation.

An investigation led by a former federal prosecutor, Kenneth L. Wainstein, found last fall that about 3,100 students in the department of African and Afro-American studies, over nearly 20 years, had taken advantage of a system of fake classes that was used to keep academically struggling athletes eligible to play.

To date, we do not know what specific violations for which Tyndall and Southern Miss expect to be sanctioned. We do know that Southern Miss continues to [throw money](#) at its defense. Perhaps the SACS sanctions leveled at UNC-CH on the heels of NCAA Level 1 violations, exacerbate Southern Miss' fears of further public humiliation with its own SACS suspension.