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PART 14

What AACSB Does in Practice

Research Professor Marc **DePree** and several colleagues had informally encouraged involved faculty and administrators to discuss the documents they copied “without proper citation” and later submitted to AACSB during reaccreditation. When ignored, Professor **DePree** and colleagues complied with University of Southern Mississippi’s Faculty Handbook. It states the following requirements:

Every student and University employee is responsible not only to abide by the highest standards of integrity and professional ethics themselves but also to report violations when they are known or reasonably suspected to have occurred. Alleged breaches of scholarly integrity are investigated promptly and fully by the University... (Faculty Handbook 2006, p. 50.) Parties having reasonable cause to believe that a University employee or student has committed an act of scholarly misconduct must first consult informally with the University Research Ombudsman. (2006, p. 93.)

AACSB also verbally encourages faculty to offer information about accredited institutions. AACSB rules specify procedures for “complaints”. Their “white paper” publications also announce an unequivocal commitment to ethics and seem to encourage communication. (E.g., see, AACSB June 25, 2004) The AACSB did not, however, have a process to request a dialogue. Instead, the AACSB required communications through “complaints”. So, Research Professor **DePree** exercised the option to file “complaints” only after he and colleagues exhausting attempts to discuss concerns internally. To Professor **DePree**, a full professor with tenure, this is like any other research issue. (See, previous series, “AACSB Accreditation: A Reliable Authority On Academic Quality?”) Of significant interest was what the AACSB would do. Its officers, like **Jerry E.**

Trapnell, Executive Vice President and Chief Accreditation Officer, have choices. And their choices are also subject to observation, documentation, and reporting.

As stated above, AACSB was involved because Dean **Harold Doty** had submitted the apparent plagiarized documents to it in partial satisfaction of reaccreditation standards. The AACSB responded to the first “complaint”, instance of apparent plagiarism, as follows:

From: "Juliane Iannarelli" <juliane@AACSB.edu>
Date: December 6, 2006 10:19:45 AM CST
To: "Marc DePree" <marcdepree@comcast.net>
Cc: "AACSB International Accreditation" <accreditation@AACSB.edu>, "Jerry Trapnell" <JerryT@AACSB.edu>
Subject: RE: Allegation of Plagiarism

Professor **DePree**,

AACSB International has received your memo dated December 1, 2006 and related documents alleging accreditation standards violations at the University.

In accordance with our complaint procedures, your complaint has been reviewed by the Chief Accreditation Officer, the Chair of the Maintenance of Accreditation Committee and the Chair of the Accounting Accreditation Committee. The Committees have determined that your complaint and supporting documentation will be provided to the members of the Peer Review Team conducting the next accreditation maintenance review at the [University]. The Peer Review Team will be asked to pay particular attention to the alleged standards violations within the context of the evidence presented in your complaint and the response from the school.

Sincerely,
Manager, Accreditation Services, AACSB International”

Clearly, the AACSB recognized the Research Professor DePree’s right to file “complaints.” By its membership in AACSB, the University of Southern Mississippi and its College of Business and School of Accountancy were obligated, but failed, to recognize the Research Professor **DePree’s** and several colleagues’ right to comply with

AACSB procedures. Alas, Professor **DeFree** and colleagues did not hear from the AACSB concerning notification of the second instance of alleged plagiarism regarding the Academic Integrity Policy.