

Part I: SACSCOC Fifth Year Narrative Style Guide

In order to keep a uniform appearance between the individual SACS standard narratives, the following style guidelines have been created for all narrative submissions pertaining to the SACSCOC Fifth Year submission. This style guide recommends writers created a draft of the narrative using the template in Part II of this document. This entire document is pre-formatted to the correct settings for narrative draft submissions. All narrative drafts must follow these requirements:

Default font settings: Arial font at 12pt. size.

Margins: 1" margins on all sides, letter-sized paper, portrait orientation.

Hyperlinks: No hyperlinks should be created in draft document. Instead the author should use a plain-text placeholder for all citations within the narrative using the following naming convention:

[Document Title, Page #, Date]

Hyperlinks will be created when program staff move a draft native into the reporting application (Strategic Planning Online). Cited documents should be named based on the following naming convention:

- Capitalize the filename using standard title-style format (i.e. "The Cat in the Hat.pdf")
- Use spaces between words; no dashes (-) or underscores (_)

All narrative draft documents must be accompanied by their cited reference documents. All documents should be in Adobe PDF. We recommend sending all documents as a single ZIP file to program staff.

Tables: Resize all tables to a width of 6.5" or less. A document formatted with the proper margins (listed above) will automatically configure the editable text area to 6.5" wide. Any table that fits the width of a single page in this configuration will be within the correct size limits. There can be no hidden rows or columns in tables.

Images: Images (including charts) embedded in the narrative document are not recommended. Please included all images and charts as separate documents with the proper citations in the narrative where desired.

The following formatting and graphics are not supported in HTML, including:

- Tables placed on the page in landscape view
- Text that runs in any direction other than left-to-right
- Graphical elements created with Word tools, including shapes, SmartArt, charts, graphs, and WordArt.

Bullets: All text should be left indented except for bullets. Bullet indentation should be the 0.25 inch (the standard setting in Microsoft Word). All text following the bullet should be aligned and indented at 0.5 inches.

Paragraph Spacing: Paragraphs should be spaced with a 12pt. setting in the “After” spacing option in Microsoft Word’s Paragraph settings menu. Do not add indentation to begin a new paragraph or additional line breaks between paragraphs/

General Content Style: Please adhere to the following general writing principles when constructing a standard narrative in order to maintain a high degree of quality and professionalism, as well as uniformity with other standard narrative writers:

- Understand your audience. Please think like a reviewer who will read your narrative, but is unfamiliar with Florida State University, its programs, its organizational structure, etc.
- Do not write in future tense.
- For narrative subsections with headers, the subsection title should be bold-faced, left-aligned.
- Spell out acronyms first before referring to the acronym. After this, you may use the acronym without prior spelling.
- Each standard narrative should stand on its own merits. Do not refer to the substance or language of another standard.
- Address all types of programs (e.g., distance learning, off-campus sites, etc.) in addition to main campus programs, where applicable.
- If a standard mandates an associated policy or procedure, then there is an official expectation that the policy or procedure is:
 - in writing and has been approved through appropriate processes
 - published in appropriate institutional documents accessible to those affected by the policy or procedure
 - implemented and enforced by Florida State University
- Reviewers will be reading, reviewing, and checking hundreds of pages. Be thorough, but concise.

- Do not use terms like “however” or “although” or others that denote we are lacking or there are exceptions to certain elements; just explain them.
- Everything that is included in text must have collaborating evidence if requested.

Part II: Narrative Draft Template

STANDARD [ADD STANDARD NUMBER]:

(Optional) Section Header

Standard narrative text goes here.

Please use a single Enter keystroke to start a new paragraph. Please do not indent at the beginning of a new paragraph.

Cited sentence format example:

This is my cited sentence. [Filename of Document, p.10, 2017]

The citation page and date modifiers are optional. The citation title must be the exact filename of the referenced digital file. The preferred format for cited documents is Adobe PDF.

Bullet list format example:

- Bullet Level 1 Example
- Bullet Level 1 Example
 - Bullet Level 2 Example
 - Bullet Level 2 Example
 - Bullet Level 3 Example
- Bullet Level 1 Example

(Optional) Next Section Header

Standard narrative text goes here.

Part III: Example of Narrative Using This Template

STANDARD 2.5:

The university engages in an institution-wide, ongoing, integrated, research-based process of planning and evaluating its mission, priorities, goals, and outcomes. The process is used to review, revise and improve activities. The process is integrated into state requirements for planning and evaluation and relies extensively on an annual program and student learning assessment process whose information is stored in a university repository.

Description of Planning and Evaluation Process

The planning and evaluation process used by Florida State University is grounded in state law and the regulations of the Florida Board of Governors, the statewide university governing body. It has been developed and used by the university in a systematic, institution-wide, research based process to shape and guide decisions aimed toward realizing the mission approved by its Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors. The mission of the university is to preserve, expand, and disseminate "knowledge in the sciences, technology, arts, humanities, and professions, while embracing a philosophy of learning strongly rooted in the liberal arts. The university is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, creative endeavors, and service." [Mission Statement, 2009] The university strategic plan links the mission of the university to specific strategic imperatives, goals and activities. State law designated Florida State University and the University of Florida as "Preeminent State Research Universities" because of high admissions standards, increased retention and graduation rates, and faculty achievement. [Laws of Florida, Chapter No. 2013-27, p. 67]