



**SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
COMMISSION ON COLLEGES**

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June 14, 2007

Mr. Theodore J. Craddock
P. O. Box 6320
Lynchburg, VA 24505

Dear Mr. Craddock: *Ted*

Thank you for your letter of June 8, 2007, and for your concern about Randolph-Macon Woman's College and its well being. Please be assured that we too wish only the best for the College. Perhaps the following information will clarify the process by which the College was placed on Warning status in December 2006. The Commission on Colleges does not tell an institution how to solve issues of non-compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*, and thus we would never attempt to tell any institution that it should or should not take a specific action such as selling an art collection. It is the prerogative of an institution to determine how it will achieve and demonstrate compliance.

The Commission approved the College's offering master's degree programs in December 2005 and authorized a substantive change committee to visit the institution to review continued compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*. While at the time of approval of master's degree programs, there appeared to be little question that the institution could support the specific programs proposed, when the committee visited in Fall 2006, its review of financial health and stability of the institution, including the latest audit, revealed overall significant concerns. The committee's report was placed on the agenda for the December 2006 Commission meeting and at that time the College was placed on Warning status.

The College has been asked to submit another report for the December 2007 Commission meeting documenting that it has a sound financial base and financial stability to support the mission of the institution. The staff member responsible for the College and I have met with representatives of the institution and are communicating by telephone and email to assist them in understanding what must be included in the documentation and to assist them in any other way that we can.

At no time would I, any member of my staff, or the Commission members who make decisions relative to institutions suggest, let alone require, that the College sell its art collection. That decision would be the decision of College officials and/or the Board of Trustees. I would imagine that there are numerous ways that the College can work to demonstrate financial health and stability. If they believe that selling the art collection is a good decision for the College, then that is definitely their prerogative. However, as you note in your letter, they certainly might identify "other avenues for satisfying the Southern Association's financial concerns."



Mr. Theodore J. Craddock
June 14, 2007
Page Two

I am not at liberty to discuss further specifics of the College's financial position beyond what is disclosed on our website. Please be assured that the Commission, composed of professional educators and persons well qualified to evaluate the financial health and stability of the institution, is deliberate, thorough, and fair in reaching its decisions. It is our hope that the College will emerge from this experience a stronger institution.

If you have other questions, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President
Commission on Colleges

BSW/ABC:erp

cc: Dr. Ann B. Chard