General Questions about TRACS

How will becoming TRACS accredited affect Bennett?
TRACS, like SACSCOC, is a highly respected accrediting association recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. On March 14, Bennett College participated in the Application Orientation with TRACS. We do not have to change our curriculum, hiring procedures, and/or recruitment strategies in order to qualify for TRACS accreditation. The College does not anticipate any significant changes in continuing to fulfill its institutional mission. As Bennett applies for TRACS accreditation, Bennett will continue to maintain SACSCOC accreditation.

How long will it take to obtain accreditation with TRACS?
Bennett College will move as quickly as possible to obtain accreditation with TRACS and expects this process to take approximately 12 months. The next phase in the accreditation process is to submit the application, which we hope to do as soon as our Fiscal Year 2018-19 annual audit is finalized in September 2019. We have requested an accelerated review, which means that Bennett’s goal is to complete this process and have TRACS accreditation by June 30, 2020.

If Bennett is accredited by TRACS, will students be eligible for federal financial aid, Pell Grants, and federal work study? Will the College receive Title III and Title IV?
As a TRACS institution, Bennett will be eligible for Title III and Title IV funding and students will continue to be eligible for federal financial aid, including Pell Grants and federal work-study.

What does it mean to have a Faith Statement as required by TRACS?
Bennett College was founded in the basement of Warnersville Methodist Church in 1873, and Bennett continues to be affiliated with the United Methodist Church. TRACS expects that its member institutions are rooted in Christian faith. Bennett College’s founding in and affiliation with the United Methodist Church meets their expectations.

TRACS does not require its member institutions to have faculty, staff, and students sign a faith statement, belong to a particular faith or any faith.

What’s next if Bennett loses the lawsuit with SACSCOC?
Bennett remains accredited by SACSCOC during the lawsuit. There is a possibility that Bennett’s lawsuit against SACSCOC will not be successful, in which case the college plans to be accredited by TRACS. Either way, Bennett will be accredited by SACSCOC or TRACS or both.
In February 2019, Bennett started the process of seeking accreditation from the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS). Bennett’s goal for completing this process is June 30, 2020.

What are the institution’s costs associated with seeking a new accreditation body?
The TRACS application fee is $7,000 and the annual dues are based upon student enrollment. For annual dues for institutions holding the candidate status with Bennett’s current enrollment is $9,600. For a complete list of TRACS fees, please click the link https://www.tracs.org/documents/2018-19FeeChart_000.pdf

What will be the expected impact on students who continue their studies at Bennett College?
Bennett College is committed to providing a quality education and there is no impact on students’ studies. Faculty and staff are continuing to provide the highest level of customer service, classroom engagement, and opportunities for student and campus life. As we continue with the appeals process, Bennett remains accredited through SACSCOC.

Questions about TRACS and Program Accreditation (Teacher Education and Social Work Program)
If Bennett loses its SACSCOC accreditation, how will it affect Education and Social Work major majors?
Education Majors
The Council for the Association of Educator Preparation (CAEP), a professional accreditor reviewing institutions which prepare teachers and other educators, recognizes institutions that are accredited by TRACS.

Social Work Majors
The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) does not recognize programs within an institution that are only recognized by national accrediting bodies. The Higher Education Opportunity Act states that accrediting agencies require institutions to have a teach-out plan in the event that the agency acts to withdraw, suspend or terminate the accreditation or candidacy status of an institution (www.nwccu.org). This means that all students formally admitted into the social work program according to the Bennett College Social Work Department’s admission procedures will be allowed to complete their requirements for graduation and graduate with a BSW degree accredited by SACSCOC at Bennett or through another accredited partner. If a student stops out during the teach-out process, the College is not obligated to provide a teach-out plan for the student.

The development of a new BS degree in the Human Services is currently being considered given the projected growth of employment in this area “which is much faster than the average of all occupations. (www.bls.gov). This new degree program would allow Bennett College students to complete coursework and obtain a degree that would prepare them for (explain what this new degree is good for).
Are there other TRACS institutions that have Teacher Education Preparation programs? If so, who?
Numerous TRACS institutions have Teacher Education Preparation programs. Some of the more notable ones are Bob Jones University (BJU), Pensacola Christian College (PCC) and College of the Ozarks (COO). BJU and COO are dually accredited with a regional accreditor and with TRACS. PCC holds only TRACS accreditation.

Are there other TRACS institutions that have Social Work programs? If so, who?
There are no current member institutions accredited with TRACS that offer Social Work programs.

If Bennett becomes TRACS accredited only, what is the future of the Social Work Department?
Like SACSCOC, TRACS is an institutional accreditor, not a programmatic accreditor. This means that the institution as a whole (including all educational programs offered) is included in the Self-Study and evaluation processes. The Social Work program will be included in the TRACS accreditation process as will all other programs offered by the College.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) does not recognize programs within an institution that are only recognized by national accrediting bodies. When Bennett is TRACS accredited only, we can offer a non-accredited major in Social Work.