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Office of University Communications

December 22, 2011



BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.— Gardner-Webb University President Dr. Frank Bonner was recently elected to the Board of Trustees for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Commission on Colleges. The Commission is the regional accrediting body for approximately 800 higher education degree-granting institutions in the Southern states. Bonner’s term begins January 2012 and concludes December 31, 2014.

As a trustee, Bonner will help determine Commission policy, establish accreditation standards, and oversee the accreditation process of higher education institutions in the Southeast. He will also serve on one of the Commission’s standing committees, the Committee on Compliance and Reports. That Committee reviews institutional reports and makes recommendations about those schools’ accreditation status.

“I am excited about this opportunity to serve and the responsibility it brings to work for the quality of higher education in the Southeast,” Bonner said. His desire to serve with SACS, he said, is born out of a principled belief in regional accreditation.

“The great strength of our system of regional accreditation is that, unlike some other systems in the world, it is democratically governed and based on peer-review. That means that all member institutions not only take responsibility for integrity and quality in their own institutions, but share in the Commission’s overall accountability for integrity and quality in higher education throughout the region,” Bonner said. “We make ourselves accountable not only to the U.S. Department of Education, but to the public, to the higher education community, and, most important, to our students.”

Bonner has been heavily involved in accreditation work through SACS, serving on 31 accreditation committees, including 22 as committee chair. He has also chaired four NCAA Division I Recertification visiting committees. Bonner currently serves as the vice president of the Big South Conference, vice chair/chair elect of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities, and a member the Executive Committee of the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities.

Bonner is a model of civic service outside the higher education community, currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Boy Scouts of America Piedmont Council. He is a past chair of the Cleveland County Chamber, a Rotary past president, a previous Paul Harris Fellow, and he has been a board member for numerous organizations. He also teaches Sunday School and serves as a deacon at First Baptist Church, Shelby, N.C.

For more information about the SACS Commission on Colleges, visit sacscoc.org.