

# Western Piedmont inspected by accreditation association

By LINDA PHILLIPS  
News Herald Staff Writer

Western Piedmont Community College has been under close scrutiny the past three days, baring its strengths and weaknesses to a team of professionals representing the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), an accreditation association.

The 10 members of the SACS team have to come to WPCC in search of positive academic, administrative, financial, organizational and physical evidence that will allow them to nominate the college for SACS accreditation re-affirmation when the regional annual meeting convenes in New Orleans this December.

WPCC was accredited by SACS, an independent institutional commission, in 1968 and was approved again in 1973 after a 5-year new-member probationary period.

After an initial accreditation and the follow-up approval, SACS-accredited institutions are re-affirmed once every 10 years. This year, Western Piedmont is trying for its first 10th year re-affirmation of accreditation status.

The SACS team, composed of experts in each of the areas being examined at the institution, arrived at WPCC on Sunday and continued its indepth research until Tuesday.

Wednesday morning, the team presented recommendations and suggestions about the college to the faculty and staff, including 13 recommendations and 25 suggestions.

According to SACS team chairman, Dr. John Teel, who is from Brunswick Junior College in Brunswick, Ga., this report is unofficial and does not indicate one way or the other whether the college will be re-affirmed in December.

## ★ From page one

quality education in the southeast."

"There are five of these associations throughout the country," McGalliard said. "And I have heard that the southeast is the most rigorous of the lot. Of course, it's all subject to opinion, but I believe that the strongest regional professional associations are found here. It seems that we tend to be more rigid and perhaps a bit more conservative. But then, maybe I'm just influenced by regional pride."

In addition to colleges, SACS accredits elementary and secondary schools as well as occupational schools. It is an

"We cannot talk about the re-affirmation until it is made public in December," said Teele. "This is to protect the reputation of the institution. But I can tell you that we have been very, very favorably impressed with Western Piedmont Community College."

Following the report Wednesday morning, college president Dr. Jim Richardson thanked the committee members for their work and told them that none of their findings was a surprise except for the library report which contained five recommendations and four suggestions.

"We're not shocked by your report—except for the recommendations concerning the library," said Richardson. "As I understand it, we do not have to respond to these suggestions except by letter to the board, but we will. We will respond to see that these changes are made to the best of our ability," he said.

"Our problem here is money, as you can see. Out of 13 recommendations, I would say that 11 or 12 of them could be eliminated right away with the appropriate state and federal monies," said Richardson.

The SACS-team study always follows an extensive 18-month self-study already done by the college faculty. Roy McGalliard, English instructor, was the chairman of the indepth self-study done at WPCC.

According to McGalliard, the SACS review is a positive program.

"We have top educators here—they're all from universities and colleges also accredited by SACS—and as they review, they give us alternative ideas for the way we can do things," said McGalliard. "This delegation looks for educational minimums that are designed to guarantee

★ Please turn to page 8A

independent agency, not federally or state operated.

Burke County public schools are accredited by the SACS elementary and secondary schools division.

Members of the WPCC visiting team were from Brunswick Junior College, Brunswick, Ga.; George C. Wallace State Community College, Selma, Ala.; Polk Community College, Winter Haven, Fla.; Shelton State Community College, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; Jefferson State Junior College, Birmingham, Ala.; Eastern Shore Community College, Melfa, Va.; Texas State Technical Institute, Waco, Tex.; Edison Community College, Fort Myers, Fla.; Gulf Coast Community College, Panama City, Fla.; Wytheville Community College, Wytheville, Va.