SACS COC™

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

2018 Annual Meeting

Call for Proposals

Deadline: March 15, 2018

"New Expectations, New Opportunities:
Honoring the Past, Imagining the Future"

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana
December 8–11, 2018

"New Expectations, New Opportunities: Honoring the Past, Imagining the Future"

The 2018 SACSCOC Annual Meeting will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, a city of rebirth and revitalization. In honor of New Orleans's tricentennial year (1718–2018), the 2018 Annual Meeting Planning Committee selected the theme, **New Expectations, New Opportunities: Honoring the Past, Imagining the Future**. The Committee's goal is to pay homage to our host city's rich heritage and tenacity by taking this opportunity to highlight the historical narrative of the growth and progress of higher education in the southern region and using it as the foundation for a renewed vision for student achievement.

This year also represents the first year SACSCOC institutions will have been reviewed under the revised *Principles of Accreditation*. Although there are some changes within the accreditation standards, the mission of enhancing educational quality still exists. In light of this year of milestones, it is imperative that sessions highlight the sharing of ideas, strategies, and lessons learned that have led to institutional improvements. The 2018 Annual Meeting Planning Committee seeks proposals that feature methods that other institutions can adapt to their campuses. Submitted proposals should address the following tracks:

- **O**rganization
- **R**eflection
- **L**earning
- **E**ngagement
- **A**nalytics
- **N**etworks
- **S**pecial Topics

The following questions will aid proposal writers in understanding what areas of interest the Committee seeks to address:

Track 1: Organization

For an institution to be prepared for new opportunities, it should have a clear organizational structure, a solid fiscal foundation, and the appropriate policies to help it move forward. This foundation allows the institution to execute its mission efficiently and effectively. Proposals in this track would help answer such questions as:

- What challenges has your institution overcome to develop a sustainable business model?

- What lessons have you learned from the assessment of your institution's business model and/or financial systems?
- How has your institution changed organizationally to meet current or future needs?
- How has your institution successfully prepared for engaging in accreditation-related activities?

- How has your institution demonstrated compliance with accreditation standards related to your organizational structure, financial/physical resources, or policies?

Track 2: Reflection

Part of being prepared to move forward in higher education is the ability to analyze and utilize data effectively. When institutions take the time to reflect on their data in a meaningful way, they are able to make changes in the spirit of improvement. Institutional assessment and continuous improvement are still core components of the *Principles of Accreditation*, and each institution must demonstrate its efforts to enhance the quality of its programs and services. Proposals in this track would help answer questions similar to the following:

- What processes has your institution developed to demonstrate its commitment to assessment and continuous improvement?
- How do administrative and support offices at your institution utilize collected evidence to improve operations?
- How has your institution enhanced its assessment practices?
- How have you used assessment results to make improvements?
- How have you assessed your implemented plans for improvements?
- How has your institution used past successes or failures as lessons learned to guide new initiatives?

- How has your institution demonstrated compliance with accreditation standards related to planning and assessment?

Track 3: Learning

Institutions create expectations in learning for all students; the goal is to help all students succeed. Opportunities to improve student learning include researching and piloting a variety of pedagogical approaches. Sharing ideas and strategies in teaching and learning can help focus institutions when they struggle with how to accomplish their student learning goals. Proposals in this track would address issues such as:

- What effective instructional practices have been implemented in your classroom, online courses, or academic programs?
- How does your institution systematically support innovative teaching and learning practices?
- How have you utilized your Quality Enhancement Plan to improve student learning?
- How else has your institution demonstrated improvement in student learning?
- How has your institution demonstrated compliance with accreditation standards related to student learning, faculty, or educational programs?

Track 4: Engagement

A student's college experience focuses on more than classroom interaction. Literature tells us that extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are crucial contributors to a student's ability to persevere when challenged so that s/he can ultimately earn a degree. Faculty and staff need to be at the forefront of this engagement. Proposals in this track would address such questions as:

- What successful strategies has your institution implemented to address the Completion Agenda?
- What successful extracurricular and co-curricular initiatives have increased student success at your institution?
- How has your institution organized extracurricular and co-curricular programs and activities to improve student engagement?

- How has your institution addressed student engagement in the online classroom environment?
- How has your institution addressed student engagement at off-campus instructional sites (including high school dual-enrollment sites) and branch campuses?
- What opportunities does your institution provide to encourage engagement by all constituency groups?
- How has you institution demonstrated compliance with accreditation standards related to student achievement, learning resources, or academic/student support services?

Track 5: Analytics

Use of data and analytics can help institutions to streamline processes, make timely changes to improve the student experience, and share a compelling story with internal and external stakeholders. Proposals in this track will help answer questions like the following:

- What tools have you used to improve your collection and analysis of institutional data?
- What tools and methods do you use to share data with your institution's constituencies?
- How has data analysis been utilized in decision making at your institution?
- What types of analyses have you utilized beyond descriptive statistics?

- What other ways have analytics been helpful for your institution?
- How has data analysis/analytics affected improvement at your institution?

Track 6: Networks

No institution works alone; we share our successes and collaborate on approaches to solve our shared challenges. We need each other if we are going to move beyond the expectations we have for ourselves. Within and outside of our institutions, we can learn from each other to create a better learning environment for our students. Proposals in this track would examine questions like:

- What successful initiative have you developed as the result of a cross-institutional collaboration?
- What steps/practices have you taken to develop and administer successful dual-enrollment partnerships?
- How have interdisciplinary partnerships on or off campus helped your institution to achieve its mission?
- How else have networks enabled your institution to achieve its strategic goals?
- How have you assessed the success of partnerships and collaborative efforts?

Track 7: Special Topics

A number of current issues in higher education dominate the cover stories of journals, periodicals, and websites. Proposals in this track should stimulate discussion and engage participants in sharing methods to address current issues facing higher education.

Guidelines for Proposal Submission

To download the proposal submission requirements, please go to www.sacscoc.org/aamain.asp and click on *Proposal Submission Form*. Submit your proposal on or before March 15, 2018.

The 2018 SACSCOC Annual Meeting program will feature more than 200 different sessions, including workshops, concurrent sessions, group discussions, and poster sessions. Consider the appropriate format of your session that will best ensure that participants can achieve the learning outcomes. Below is a description of each session format:

- **Workshops** will consist of full-day (6 hours) and half-day (3 hours) sessions and include active learning led by experienced professionals. A schedule of activities to be conducted during the allotted time must be included in the proposal. In addition, the content must include both didactic and applied instruction that is relevant to accreditation and/or the theme. Workshop presenters should be knowledgeable in their fields and capable of presenting the content in creative ways and applying it to real problems in academia.

- **Concurrent sessions** will offer practical applications to address challenging areas in higher education and/or accreditation (what worked and what did not work). It is imperative that the content extend beyond "this is how we did it" to the discussion being generalizable to other institutions. Most concurrent sessions will be 60 minutes and should include at least 5–10 minutes for questions from the audience. A few topics may warrant 90 minutes, provided they are fully justified and include an active learning component.

- **Poster sessions** (1 hour) will combine text and graphics to create a visually appealing presentation. The poster should clearly portray the what, why, and how of the initiative or research. Poster sessions are presented during the opening reception in a separate area of the Expo Hall.

- **Group discussions** (1 hour) will include an open discussion between a knowledgeable facilitator and a small group on a topic relevant to accreditation,

emerging trends in higher education, or hot topics in academe. Lectures and formal presentations will not be considered.

Target Audience and Content Level

Each proposal should identify the target audience that will benefit most from participating in the session. Sessions will be offered for:

- Presidents and chancellors
- Provosts, vice presidents, and deans
- Accreditation Liaisons and Leadership Team members
- Academic program coordinators and faculty
- Institutional research/institutional effectiveness staff members
- Staff members in student services, finance, library, and instructional technology
- State systems personnel
- Other personnel who would like to stay informed of developments in accreditation and higher education

Each proposal should also indicate the anticipated content level of the topic (beginner, intermediate, or advanced) as defined below:

- **Beginner** content is designed to cover basic topics in accreditation or higher education. Familiarity with the *Principles of Accreditation* may be helpful; however, in most cases, prior knowledge is not assumed.

- **Intermediate** content should address theory and practice in topics in accreditation or higher education for participants with some related work experience.

- **Advanced** content examines highly developed or complex topics, knowledge, or skills for participants with several years of related work experience. Usually advanced sessions provide an opportunity for participants to apply the content to a real problem or to analyze some of the concepts presented.

Below are the accreditation tracks that reflect the membership institutions:

- **Track A institutions** offer undergraduate degrees only.
- **Track B institutions** offer undergraduate and graduate degrees or graduate degrees only.

Outline of Proposals

All proposals should be well developed and consider the questions below. Incomplete documentation will not be reviewed.

- **Proposal title.** Does the title describe the content accurately, clearly, and succinctly?

- **Description.** Does the description accurately and concisely describe what will be covered in the session?

- **Rationale and relevance of the topic.** Does the proposal make a compelling argument and represent an issue of immediate importance to the field of higher education?

- **Organization of the session.** Does the proposal include a clear outline of the content of the session, including realistic timeframes for each segment?

- **Participant learning outcomes.** Are the learning outcomes realistic, clearly stated, and reflect what participants will learn in the session? Do the outcomes align with the description and organization of the session?

- **Active Learning (workshops and 90-minute concurrent sessions only).** Does the proposal suggest meaningful, varied activities for participants that appropriately support the participant learning outcomes?

2018 SACSCOC Annual Meeting Program Planning Committee

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