

Perspectives on Hosting a SACSCOC Visiting Team: Leaping to a Successful On-Site Visit

SACSCOC Annual Meeting  
December 2019  
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Introduction and Welcome

- Who we are
- Why we wanted to create this presentation
- How we can help you avoid stress as a host institution

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Overview of Presentation

- Opportunities to Impress
  - Accommodations
  - Logistical Plans
  - Information Technology
  - Transportation
  - Food for the Team
- Managing the process from a "reviewer-centered" approach can reduce stress!

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## Accommodations

- Distance to campus and dining
- Reputation (read reviews)
- Visit hotel at night to gauge safety
- Availability of suitable committee workroom
- Coordinate room assignments with hotelier
- Provide a welcome letter and basket
- Ask committee members whether rooms are satisfactory



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## Scenarios: Yes or No?

- As a faith-based institution, you would like your site reviewers to experience your culture. So, rather than using a hotel you elect to house site members at a retreat center.
- When choosing a hotel, there is a chain that offers several amenities for business travellers and a luxury resort that offers several top-end amenities. You select the luxury resort.

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## Logistical Plans

- Respond promptly to document requests and provide copies of documentation in convenient format
- Equip committee workrooms with office supplies and ensure good lighting
- Ensure all required institutional personnel are available for the visit
- Provide nametags for committee members
- Ensure that committee members can navigate campus alone, or escort members from place to place
- Let the Committee Chair take the lead

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**Scenarios: Yes or No?**

- The On-Site Team requests additional documentation two weeks prior to the visit. The requested documents are provided in print and on flash drives in the hotel and campus workrooms.
- An institution is expanding to include its first off-site location. When the Substantive Change Committee visits, it is standard operating procedure for the President to welcome them. Is it okay to have someone else do the welcome so the President doesn't have to travel?

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**Information Technology**

- Equip committee workrooms with computer(s), printer, wireless access
- Make sure hotel rooms have free wireless access or that you have arranged to have wireless access charged to the institution
- Provide laptop to committee members if needed
- Assign on-call IT contact to work with committee

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**Scenarios: Yes or No?**

- The hotel workroom is small and you are concerned that bringing in a printer will make it cramped for team members. Therefore, you have a printer in the campus workroom but not in the hotel.
- To be sure all IT needs are met, you work in advance with the IT department at your school. You have an IT employee on call all day at campus and have an IT employee stay at the hotel in case there are issues there.

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## Transportation

- Divide transportation services between several institutional representatives
- Provide cell phone numbers of those taking care of transportation to the committee members
- Communicate transportation plans to each committee member
  - How will the committee members be recognized at the airport?
  - What types of needs do the committee members have as they are being transported?
  - Will more than one committee member be sharing the same ride?
- Choose your drivers carefully

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## Scenarios: Yes or No?

- Two On-Site Team members are arriving on the same flight. It is fine to have a single driver for these two.
- Two On-Site Team members are arriving within one hour of each other. It is fine to have a single driver for these two.

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## Food for the Team

- Consider dietary restrictions
- Remember that arriving team members are likely to be hungry
- Survey the committee to determine snack preferences
- Highlight local flavor over chain restaurant dining
- Discuss institutional willingness to pay for alcoholic beverages with your chair in advance of the visit
- Coordinate meal payment with SACSCOC representative prior to meal

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### Scenarios: Yes or No?

- There is a great seafood restaurant that is locally famous. While they offer only seafood, they are so good that you decide to make reservations there for the team for one evening's dinner.
- You have selected a local restaurant that is fairly small, with only one small dining area. The food is excellent and you know the team will enjoy the experience. However, because the restaurant is small you do not want your college driver to stay for dinner. You ask the team chair to call when the team is ready to be picked up.

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### A Reviewer-Centered Approach

- Meeting reviewer needs helps the team focus on what is important: Your Site Visit!
- Helps avoid last minute changes to institution plans
- Reviewers want to provide a service to the institution
- When the visit is well-planned, glitches that do occur are less disruptive

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### Bonus Ideas

- Be sure to remember the importance of including the SACSCOC representative in all emails related to the visit.
- When the reaffirmation visiting team comes, have your most entertaining faculty or staff member present the QEP with visual aids and extras. The QEP Director does not necessarily need to be the presenter, rather think about who will do the best job of engaging the team in the presentation.

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Thank you!

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