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So You Want to Be an Institutional Accreditation Liaison! What Should You Expect?

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Learning Outcome

1. A new or aspiring Accreditation Liaison will be better equipped after this session to be effective in that role.
Learning Outcome Corollary
2. Your boss will have a better idea what is involved in this administrative assignment (and hopefully appreciate you more).

Session Outline
1. Background: What Skills/Knowledge Do you Need to Have?
2. What to Expect in a Typical Year
4. Questions and Comments

The Problem
• We have no idea how often Accreditation Liaisons turnover in SACSCOC institutions.
• SACSCOC offers Information Sessions for recently appointed IALs, but by that point you’ve already “volunteered.”
The Problem
• If other institutions are like the ones where we have experience, there is no professional development for a new Accreditation Liaison provided by the institution.
• So, what kind of skills and knowledge do you need for the job?

Knowledge of the Principles
• You need to know what the Principles say so you can develop the “There’s a SACSCOC Principle about that” intuition.
So You Want to Be an Institutional Accreditation Liaison! What Should You Expect?

Background: What Skills/Knowledge Do you Need to Have?

Experience with the SACSCOC review process
- There is no better way to understand the Principles and how they apply than doing Committee work.
- Off-Site Committee work is the best way to get a quick, intense dose of experience.

Familiarity with Substantive Change
A lot of what you will be doing (if not most of it) will be managing Substantive Change at your institution.

Familiarity with Substantive Change
- Determining what is and is not a Substantive Change.
- Managing Substantive Change paperwork.
- Keeping well-intentioned people from creating Unreported Substantive Change disasters.
So You Want to Be an Institutional Accreditation Liaison! What Should You Expect?

Background: What Skills/Knowledge Do you Need to Have?

**Familiarity with Substantive Change**

- Print out the Substantive Change Policy, put it in a binder, and keep it close.
- It is 30 pages long!

In this case, I do follow my own advice!!

**Familiarity with Substantive Change**

- Take advantage of the great Webinars sponsored by the Substantive Change Office.
Part II: What to Expect in a Typical Year

August

• New Faculty arrive!
• At some institutions, the Accreditation Liaison is the person who checks faculty credentials and files the appropriate paperwork.

September

• At many institutions, Curriculum Proposals are due in September or October.
• You need a consultative role in this process.
• The next slide is a page from UMHB’s Curriculum Proposal Form. I call this the “Speed Bump” Method of Avoiding Unintentional Substantive Changes.
So You Want to Be an Institutional Accreditation Liaison! What Should You Expect?

What to Expect in a Typical Year

October
- Go to the Substantive Change workshop.
- I realize that, ironically, none of these are in October, but that’s not always the case.

November
- Track B Off-Site Clusters.
- Get on the registry and let your VP know that you would love to do some Committee work in Atlanta some November.
So You Want to Be an Institutional Accreditation Liaison! What Should You Expect?

What to Expect in a Typical Year

December
  • It’s The Most Wonderful Time of the Year: SACSCOC Annual Meeting.
  • Enrollment Indicators due. Knock that out before your Christmas Break.

January
  • Rest. You’ll need it.

February
  • At many institutions, Curriculum Proposals are have another window of opportunity in the Spring semester.
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What to Expect in a Typical Year

March
• The Call for Papers for the Annual Meeting typically occurs in March. It’s a good deal! Give it a try.
• Another round of Substantive Change workshops occur in the Spring.

April, May, June
• Track A Off-Site clusters occur in April.
• My experience is that April and May are the busiest time of year on a University campus, but not with SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison business.
• June slows down at my campus, and once again, no Accreditation Liaison business.

July
• Financial Indicators are due. Don’t be intimidated by the prodigious set of instructions.
Part III: Scenarios: What Would You Do?

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Your Provost just called....

- You have two off-campus sites where an approved M.Ed. is delivered. Several years ago, it was just a course here and there. Now—way, way more than 50% of the M.Ed. is being delivered at both them, and it has been that way for at least 5 years.
- What should you do?

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Your Provost just called....

- First, stay calm....
- Friend, you have an Unreported Substantive Change on your hands.
- You need to consult pp. 24-25 of the Substantive Change policy.
So You Want to Be an Institutional Accreditation Liaison! What Should You Expect?
Scenarios: What Would You Do?

This is just the first part. It goes on for another page.

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Your Provost just called….

• It’s October. Your 5th Year Interim Report is due on March 15. Your Provost tells you that the most of the administrative support services (7.3) have no effectiveness reports, and really haven’t bothered with them since your last reaffirmation.
• What should you do?

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• First, stay calm….
• How did this happen? There has likely been a lot of turnover.
• If there are goals and outcomes, then you might be able to piece together enough data for the most recent year.
• It is far more likely that you need to tell your President why the institution is getting ready to get some kind of negative action.
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Scenarios: What Would You Do?

Your Provost just called:

- The On-Site Review Committee just left. A faculty member in English who has been employed for 6 years has been determined to be not qualified to teach English.
- What should you do?

First, stay calm....
- How did this happen? Why were you not consulted about faculty credentials?
- You have two problems to fix: personnel (the faculty member) and procedure (systematic credentials review).

Call HR and/or the University attorney
- You can non-renew the contract, but whose fault is this? Is the faculty member tenured?
- Start calculating how much this might cost the University.
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Scenarios: What Would You Do?

• Hear my confession: I’m a hypocrite.
• At UMHB, we have a very informal system of credentials review, which I wouldn’t recommend, but so far it has worked well.
• There is no formal review by me prior to contract acceptance.
• We trust the Deans to be able to make the call or refer questionable cases to the Provost’s Office.

Complying With 14.2 Does Not Have to be Difficult!

Questions
Comments
Concerns

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