Focusing on the Focused Report:
A ‘Giant Leap’ toward Reaffirmation
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Objectives
Participants will
✓ Understand the purpose of the Focused Report and the advantages of submitting one
✓ Understand reasons for non compliance ratings given by Off-Site Committees
✓ Know how to develop well-written, appropriately-documented, and FOCUSED responses that satisfactorily address ratings of non compliance

Attendees: Where are you in the Reaffirmation process?
❖ Between Off Site Review and On Site Review—writing or preparing to write a Focused Report
❖ Drafting/Writing Compliance Certification
❖ Planning/organizing for upcoming Reaffirmation process
Purpose of the Focused Report

❖ Optional report written after the Off Site Review & before the On Site Review
❖ The Focused Report gives an institution a second opportunity to make its case for compliance
❖ The Focused Report should focus only on those standards that are marked as non compliant

Principles Most Frequently Marked as Non Compliant

Most Frequently Cited Principles

➢ 6.2.a Faculty Qualifications
➢ 8.2.a Student Outcomes – Educational Programs
➢ 8.2.b Student Outcomes – Gen Ed
➢ 8.2.c Student Outcomes – Academic and Student Services
➢ 13.2* Financial Documents
➢ 6.1* Full-time Faculty
Responsibilities of the On Site Reaffirmation Committee

- Confirm, in person, compliance with designated principles (marked with an asterisk)
- Determine compliance for principles deemed not in compliance by the Off Site Reaffirmation Committee
- Evaluate the acceptability of the QEP

Audience for the Focused Report

On Site Reaffirmation Committee Members are committed to
- Open-mindedness
- Objectivity

The On Site Reaffirmation Committee will judge compliance based on the
- Institution’s Compliance Certification
- Off Site Committee’s Report
- Institution’s Focused Report
- Institution’s QEP
- Interviews conducted & documents examined during the On Site visit
The Focused Report:

A ‘New Opportunity’
to Demonstrate Compliance

Focused Report:
Ineffective Responses
❖ Repeating or quoting text from the original Compliance Certification
❖ Arguing with the Off Site Reaffirmation Committee’s findings

Focused Report:
Effective Responses
❖ Providing clearer, more detailed explanations
❖ Supplying additional, updated, or new information and/or documentation
❖ Elaborating
Preparing to Write

❖ Be certain you understand the reason for each negative rating from the Off Site Review Team
❖ Be objective; reread the pertinent section from your original report from the standpoint of someone who knows nothing about your institution

Reasons for Non-Compliance Ratings

Common Reasons for Noncompliance
1. Failure to adhere to the standard or requirement
2. No evidence of clear policy and/or procedure
3. Confusing or contradictory information submitted
4. Failure to address all components of a standard
5. Insufficient or unconvincing documentation of compliance
Failure to Adhere to a Standard or Requirement

Example of an Off Site Committee Finding:

❖ University policy does not ensure that students complete 25% of the required credit hours for the undergraduate degree at the institution (9.4)

No Evidence of Clear Policy or Procedure

Example:
6.3 Faculty Evaluation
Applies to Full-time and Part-Time, Permanent as well as Temporary, Faculty

Confusing or Contradictory Information Presented

Examples:
• Degree Programs
• Information on Facilities (Number of Residence Halls, Off-Site Locations, etc.)
• Organizational Chart
Failure to Address All Components of a Standard

Example:
13.2 The member institution provides the following financial statements: (a) an institutional audit for the most recent fiscal year ... (b) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets ... and (c) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal proceedings, and is approved by the governing board.

Insufficient or Unconvincing Documentation

Example:
4.2.c The governing board selects and regularly evaluates the institution’s chief executive officer.

Documentation that might be provided:
* Board By-laws showing Board’s authority to select CEO
* Board minutes showing selection of current CEO
* Summary of process for and frequency of CEO evaluation
* Copy of most recent evaluations or Board minutes documenting evaluations

Insufficient or Unconvincing Documentation

Example:
Off-Site Team Comment on Comprehensive Standard 5.2.c: The University has not presented convincing evidence that the President has ultimate responsibility for and exercises appropriate control over intercollegiate athletics.

Documentation that might be presented:
✓ Organizational Chart
✓ Entries from President’s Calendar showing meetings with Athletics Director, FAR, etc.
✓ Minutes from meetings with Athletics Director, FAR, Coaches
Insufficient or Unconvincing Documentation

7.3 Administrative Effectiveness
8.2.a Student Outcomes: Educational Programs
8.2.b Student Outcomes: General Education
8.2.c Student Outcomes: Academic & Student Services

Typical Problems:
• Institution provides samples but does not explain how they present a valid cross section of programs
• Institution describes assessment measures and results but does not identify goals/targets or changes made to effect improvement
• Institution provides dated data

Insufficient or Unconvincing Documentation

6.2.a Qualifications of faculty members

6.2.b Sufficient number of full-time faculty to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity, and review

Insufficient or Unconvincing Documentation

6.2.b Sufficient Number of FT Faculty

Problems:
• Percentage of credit hours taught by FT faculty is not disaggregated by program
• Inadequate description of faculty responsibilities (i.e., include expectations for advising, scholarship & service as well as teaching load)
• Inadequate evidence that FT faculty are able to meet scholarship & service expectations
Summary
❖ Keep the report FOCUSED. Address only those standards identified by the Off Site Committee as non-compliant and only those parts of the standard that were not satisfactorily addressed in the original Compliance Report.
❖ Be concise, but detailed. The response to each non-compliant principle should be no more than 3 pages.
❖ REMEMBER YOUR AUDIENCE.

Questions?
Comments?
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