

Using Accreditation Processes for Institutional Improvement

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Build accreditation standards into your institutional processes.

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You need accreditation for very good reasons.

Nothing about accreditation will harm the institution.

“Building it in” will save time and money.

Accreditation is based on good institutional practices.

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A Suggested Process

- Distribute standards as “good practice” statements.
- Conduct an internal audit of practices.
- “BUILD IT IN!”**
- Reflect and Reinforce

I. Curriculum Development

What would good practices look like in a curriculum development process?

- Appropriate people/offices involved: Faculty, Administration, Support Areas
- Clear roles for these groups
- Internal and External policies followed
- Curricular changes consistent with good practice: Supports the mission, Course sequences, Course rigor

SACSCOC language

CR 9.1: coherent course of study compatible with mission

CR 11.1: adequate library collections & services consistent with mission

10.4: educational programs are approved consistent with institutional policy

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SACSCOC language

10.1: academic policies adhere to principles of good academic practice and are appropriately disseminated

10.7: clear policies for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for all courses

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SACSCOC language

10.4: places primary responsibility for content, quality, and effectiveness of curriculum with faculty

6.2.c: assigns appropriate responsibility for program coordination

9.7: publishes requirements for undergraduate programs [that] conform to commonly accepted standards

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Internal Audit

Ensure mission relevance?

Ensure coherence in programs?

Ensure adequate library support?

Approval procedures in place and followed?

Records kept to verify this?

Explicit role for both faculty & administration?

Credit hours and level of instruction vetted?

Clear and appropriate catalog content?

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BUILD IT IN!

New Program/Course Proposal Forms/Process

- Explicit means to verify mission relevance
- Explicit means to verify coherence
- Explicit approval process
- Explicit attention to level and credit hour
- Consistent with own policies
- Library check-off
- Catalog content
- Minutes or other records
- Substantive Change (14.2)

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Reflection and Reinforcement

How are we strengthened?

Can we make the process more effective?

Are there benefits from the process or costs of not using the process?

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II. Student Services

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“Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs”
(joint NASPA/ACPA paper, 1998)

Engages students in active learning
Helps students develop coherent values & ethical standards
Uses systematic inquiry to improve student & institutional performance
Uses resources effectively to achieve institutional mission & goals
Forges educational partnerships that advance student learning
Builds supportive & inclusive communities

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SACSCOC language

CR 12.1: appropriate academic and student service programs, services, activities consistent with mission

12.2: an adequate number of academic and student services staff with appropriate qualifications

8.2.c: identifies expected outcomes to support student success, assesses student achievement, and provides evidence of seeking improvement

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Internal Audit

Learning/student development components articulated?

Support the broader mission & goals of educational programs?

Means to assess effectiveness?

Process used for meaningful improvement?

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BUILD IT IN!

Determine true goals as opposed to simply providing activities.

Find meaningful ways to measure results/outcomes.

Ensure the sufficiency and the competence/training of staffing.

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Reflection and Reinforcement

Programs & activities make a difference?

Need training?

Benefits from the process or costs of not using the process?

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III. Institutional Effectiveness

What would be the characteristics of a good system to ensure educational programs are effective?

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Know in advance what you hope to accomplish

Intentionally decide how best to measure success

Actually measure how successful you are

Systematically evaluate your findings

Use that information to make improvements

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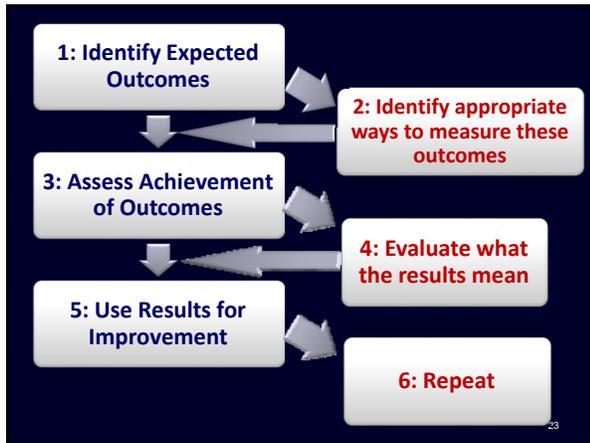
SACSCOC language

8.2 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.

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Internal Audit

- Expected outcomes identified for each program? Do these include student learning outcomes?
- Reasonable and meaningful means to assess these outcomes?
- Assessments consistently conducted?
- Process to reflect on (analyze) the findings?
- Process used to seek meaningful improvement of programs?
- Process Repeated (on some kind of defined schedule)?

BUILD IT IN!

Process, Process, Process

Expectations for participation

Determine extent of standardization

Must be meaningful to participants

Reports read by supervisors

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Reflection and Reinforcement

How are we strengthened?

Can we make the process more effective?

Are there benefits from the process or costs of not using the process?

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BUILD IT IN everywhere

Publications policies

Library

Finance and business office

Registrar and transfer of credit

Admissions

Off-campus instructional sites

Physical plant

Public safety

Information technology

Board/governance

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Use Accreditation for Institutional Improvement!

Make good use of something you need to do anyway!

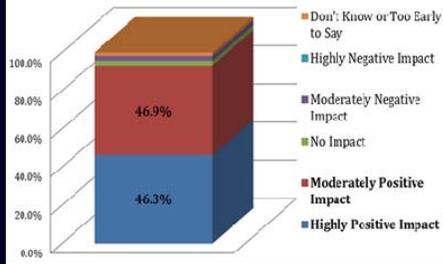
Build accreditation into daily operations.

- Improve policies.
- Improve practices.
- Improve programs.

Make accreditation itself a positive process.

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SACSCOC Reaffirmation Review Process:
Perceived Overall Impact



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