



## Pre-Conference Workshops

### Saturday, December 5, 2026

**Please note the following items that are referenced in the workshop descriptions:**

#### **Session Level:**

- **Foundational:** Sessions designed for those who are newer to a topic or seeking a solid grounding in concepts, processes, or practices that are essential to their work.
- **Advanced:** Sessions designed for those with significant experience in a topic area and feature work that goes beyond the basics to share innovative approaches, demonstrated outcomes, or transformative practices that push the field forward.
- A session may not have either of the two options listed above.

#### **Institution Level**

**Level I** – Institutions accredited to award the associate degree as the highest degree

**Level II** – Institutions accredited to award the baccalaureate degree as the highest degree

**Level III** – Institutions accredited to award the master's degree as the highest degree

**Level IV** – Institutions accredited to award the specialist degree as the highest degree

**Level V** – Institutions accredited to award doctoral degrees in three or fewer academic or professional disciplines as the highest degrees

**Level VI** – Institutions accredited to award doctoral degrees in four or more academic or professional disciplines as the highest degrees

#### **Conference Tracks:**

- Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation
- Exploring New Frontiers in Teaching and Learning
- Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance
- Exploring New Frontiers in Supporting Students
- Exploring New Frontiers Beyond the Horizon

**9:00 am – 4:00 pm**

**\$225 each (includes workshop materials, boxed lunch, and breaks)**

### **W-1: From Compliance to Culture: Building Accessible Digital Content**

**Mrs. Erin Richardson**, Director of Digital Teaching and Learning/Instructional Design Specialist,  
Meridian Community College, Meridian, MS

Digital accessibility is no longer optional. It is a federal mandate and a student equity imperative. With Title II ADA compliance deadlines either here or months away, institutions need actionable strategies, not just awareness. This hands-on workshop equips participants with a clear understanding of WCAG

2.1 AA and Section 508, practical skills for identifying and remediating common digital accessibility barriers, and a replicable model built from Meridian Community College's campus-wide implementation, including a 92% course accessibility score and measurable gains in faculty compliance. Participants should bring a laptop and one sample of their own digital content, a Canvas page, PDF, or document, to use during audit and action planning activities. They will leave with completed audit work, decision-making frameworks, and a concrete 90-day action plan.

**Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Differentiate between WCAG 2.1 AA and Section 508 requirements and explain how both apply to digital content, systems, and vendor procurement at their institutions.
- Identify the most common digital accessibility barriers in instructional and institutional materials, including documents, Canvas/LMS content, videos, and images, and determine when specific accessibility features (captions, audio descriptions, alt text, transcripts) are legally required versus best practice.
- Apply at least three practical accessibility strategies to their own teaching, training, or departmental content during the workshop and take those strategies back to their campus immediately.
- Evaluate their institution's current accessibility approach and identify priority areas for improvement using a structured self-assessment framework.
- Design or refine a sustainable, institution-specific accessibility training and implementation plan that includes policies, documentation, tools, and continuous improvement processes appropriate to their institutional context and size.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Faculty, Instructional Designers and Instructional Technologists, Accessibility Coordinators and Disability Services Staff, Department Chairs and Academic Deans, Chief Academic Officers and Provosts, Institutional Effectiveness and Compliance Officers, Accreditation Liaisons, and IT and Web Content Managers*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** D: Exploring New Frontiers in Supporting Students

## **W-2: From Root Causes to Action: Designing Systemic Innovation for Student Success**

**Dr. Brandon Smith**, Senior Associate Vice President, John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Higher Education, Hampden-Sydney, VA; **Dr. John N. Gardner**, Founder, Executive Chair, John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Higher Education, Brevard, NC; **Dr. Felita Williams**, Senior Vice President for Programs, John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Higher Education, Brevard, NC; and **Dr. Vicki McGillin**, Associate Vice President, The Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, Brevard, NC

This workshop builds on lessons from five years of Innovation Communities and four years of SACSCOC pre-conference sessions, offering new tools for persistent student success challenges. Many institutions pursue isolated fixes, even when problems span offices, policies, relationships, and routines. In this applied workshop, participants will select a familiar problem of practice, examine

current and desired results, map where the issue lives across the institution, identify root causes, and develop a plan of action. Participants will use tools such as current state analysis, 5 Whys, system constellation mapping, stakeholder mapping, and conversation practice. Each participant or team will leave with a long-term “North Star,” an action plan, and language for inviting colleagues into shared inquiry.

**Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Distinguish between a unit-level fix and a systems-level approach to institutional improvement.
- Develop a concise problem of practice statement grounded in current results, desired results, and available evidence, along with a more comprehensive vision for addressing the issues.
- Map how a persistent institutional challenge exists across offices, roles, policies, processes, technologies, and relationships.
- Use root cause inquiry to examine why current practices continue producing familiar results.
- Identify stakeholders whose authority, influence, information, or relationships are necessary for progress.
- Practice language for initiating a collegial cross-campus conversation about a shared institutional challenge.
- Create a practical action plan that can be adapted to their own campus context.

**Session Level:** Advanced

**Target Audience:** *Chief academic officers, accreditation liaison officers, institutional effectiveness leaders, assessment leaders, student success leaders, deans, associate deans, department chairs, faculty leaders, advising leaders, registrar staff, institutional research staff, student affairs leaders, planning officers, quality enhancement plan leaders, and leaders responsible for cross campus improvement initiatives.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** D: Exploring New Frontiers in Supporting Students

### **W-3: Mission Control: Data-Informed Off-Campus Site Compliance**

**Mrs. Danielle Farris**, Director of State Authorizations and Institutional Integrity, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL; and **Mrs. Ashley Toews**, Manager of Contract Administration & Strategic Support, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL

As institutions expand instructional offerings across off-campus instructional sites, dual enrollment locations, and multiple states, maintaining compliance requires more than spreadsheets and siloed communication. This interactive workshop explores how institutions can build scalable, data-informed systems to proactively monitor SACSCOC thresholds, manage state authorization obligations, and support sustainable growth. Participants will examine practical tools including schedule audit processes, dashboard development, compliance tracking systems, and cross-functional governance models designed to improve institutional oversight and operational transparency. Through case studies, applied activities, and collaborative discussions, attendees will leave with adaptable frameworks for monitoring instructional locations, mitigating compliance risk, and strengthening

communication across institutional stakeholders. The session emphasizes actionable strategies institutions can implement immediately to support sustainable compliance and continuous improvement.

**Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Evaluate approaches for tracking instructional activity to support informed institutional decision-making and planning.
- Develop proactive institutional systems for monitoring instructional activity and supporting compliance oversight.
- Evaluate strategies for using schedule audits, dashboards, and data-informed processes to strengthen institutional oversight and operational transparency.
- Design cross-functional governance and communication structures that support sustainable compliance and institutional effectiveness.
- Create an institutional action plan that supports scalable compliance infrastructure, continuous improvement, and sustainable growth.

**Session Level:** Advanced

**Target Audience:** *Accreditation Liaisons, Institutional Effectiveness Professionals, Institutional Research Staff, Compliance Officers, State Authorization Professionals, Academic Affairs Leaders*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** C: Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance

**9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**\$130 each (includes workshop materials and a refreshment break)**

**WA-1: Beyond Assessment for Minimal Compliance: Six Steps to Improve Student Learning**

**Dr. Keston H. Fulcher**, Improvement Strategist, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA; and **Ms. Riley Herr**, Doctoral Assistant, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

The spirit of SACSCOC is continuous quality improvement. However, most institutions struggle to connect assessment results with meaningful change, especially at the scale of academic degree programs or general education. A curriculum change should only be considered a curricular improvement when its positive effects on student learning can be demonstrated. This workshop introduces the award-winning Fulcher and Prendergast model for improving student learning at scale. Using real-life examples from institutions implementing this model, the presenters illustrate its six-step pathway to improvement: (a) Building a collective will to improve, (b) Developing a vision for learning, (c) Taking stock of the current state, (d) Identifying evidence-based interventions, (e) Implementing the interventions, and (f) Re-assessing to determine whether the changes improved student learning. This workshop is especially useful for attendees leading large-scale learning initiatives.

**Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Describe why learning and learning improvement are critical to the value-of-higher-education argument.
- Explain the simple model of learning improvement to a colleague: assess, effectively intervene, and reassess, with results showing greater learning than the initial assessment.
- Apply the six steps of the learning improvement process to one's own personal example.
- Match the six steps to improvement case studies.
- Identify three ways the learning improvement process could be applied to work at their home institutions.

**Session Level:** Advanced

**Target Audience:** *Experienced higher education professionals with moderate to advanced knowledge of assessment, faculty development, and learning improvement. It is especially relevant for those seeking better alignment among program- and institutional-level assessment, teaching, and learning. The primary audience includes provosts, deans, directors of assessment, directors of faculty development, general education directors, and academic degree program directors.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** B: Exploring New Frontiers in Teaching and Learning

## **WA-2: Campfires on the Moon: A Tested Survival Guide for the Accreditation Frontier**

**Dr. Delena B. Gatch**, Associate Provost, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA; **Dr. Brad Sturz**, Assistant Provost Academic Strategy and Decision Support, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA; **Ms. Barbara King**, Director of Academic Insight, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA; and **Ms. Serena Murphy**, Director of Accreditation, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA

What's your next accreditation destination? Whether navigating initial accreditation, reaffirmation, substantive change, or adventures in between, let us help you prepare for launch! This interactive workshop prepares accreditation professionals to navigate complex compliance terrain. Your "mission guides" will equip participants with a comprehensive "survival packet" of transferable templates, tools, and guides that draw from Georgia Southern University's recent back-to-back reaffirmation and substantive change visits (both resulting in zero recommendations) to provide a proven framework for operational success. Participants will engage in collaborative, hands-on activities to build a customized accreditation timeline, map expedition team roles, design an institution-wide communication plan, and explore digital dashboard strategies to streamline evidence collection - everything one needs to maximize operational efficiency and ensure successful navigation of the accreditation frontier!

**Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Formulate a customized, milestone-driven accreditation timeline designed to align institutional trajectories with upcoming compliance windows.

- Mobilize a cross-functional institutional team by mapping essential functional areas, leadership roles, and key campus support networks.
- Construct an institution-wide communication plan (walkie-talkies not included) to mitigate noise and ensure clarity for diverse stakeholders throughout the accreditation process.
- Design an integrated monitoring system utilizing operational tools, digital workflows, and dashboards to streamline evidence collection and support internal peer-review processes.
- Adapt a curated "survival packet" of resource templates, guides, and compliance toolkits to support a successful accreditation mission.

### **Session Level:**

**Target Audience:** *Individuals responsible for navigating initial accreditation, reaffirmation, or substantive change would benefit from attending this session. This includes, but is not limited to, Accreditation Liaisons as we encourage all individuals from offices overseeing institutional effectiveness, assessment, and accreditation to attend.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** A: Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation

## **WA-3: New Frontiers: Building an Assessment Framework that Engages Key Constituents**

**Dr. Lon Olson**, Assistant Vice Provost for Program Accreditation and Assessment, Texas State University, San Marco, TX; and **Mr. Darius Wiley**, Assessment Coordinator, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX

Assessment leaders must foster collaboration, ignite discussions, and encourage innovation to shape a positive, campus-wide culture of outcomes assessment and continuous improvement to ensure compliance. Specifically, this workshop guides participants in interpreting the similarities, differences, and integration of the four types of outcomes reporting expected in educational programs, general education, academic and student services, and administrative effectiveness. Participants are empowered with ideas for renewing and improving their outcomes assessment processes for each outcome type; techniques for engaging colleagues in outcomes assessment; suggestions for encouraging participation, and considerations for addressing unique challenges. Through use of a straightforward and strategic approach, along with clear expectations, strategies, and resources, participants will learn to guide stakeholders towards renewing their commitment, supporting outcomes attainment for all reporting units, and fostering a positive culture of assessment on their campuses.

### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Re-envision and reinvigorate a comprehensive outcomes assessment program to effectively achieve continuous improvement and meet SACSCOC outcomes assessment standards pertaining to student learning in educational programs, general education, academic and student services, and administrative effectiveness.
- Instruct colleagues on the framework for the various types of outcomes assessment, including concept, components, goals, and processes.

- Develop practical assessment tools, implementation processes, and support systems that enable consistent, sustainable, and evidence-based outcomes assessment across educational, administrative, and student support units.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Faculty and staff who are new to assessment and have just been assigned the role of assessment coordinator; experienced administrators who have recently had assessment added to the list of functions they are assigned to oversee; provost's or vice provosts who have had limited experience with assessment at their previous institutions; experienced assessment professionals who may have been away from the field for a time and need a refresher or are looking for ways to revitalize their assessment structure and processes.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** C: Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance

## **WA-4: Exploring New Frontiers as an IAL: Building a Sustainable Process**

**Dr. La Toya Hart**, AVP, Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness & Institutional Accreditation Liaison, Jackson State University, Jackson, MS; and **Dr. Willie Jones**, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Institutional Accreditation Liaison, Southern University at New Orleans, New Orleans, LA

Changes across the higher education landscape have transformed the role of the Institutional Accreditation Liaison (IAL) from an institutional point of contact to a strategic leader navigating Federal, state, and mission-specific institutional changes. Because compliance now requires strategic engagement, IALs must drive campus processes rather than serve as an administrative gatekeeper. Participants will explore practical strategies for managing accreditation cycles, coordinating substantive change, identifying policy gaps, strengthening documentation workflows, and fostering institutional collaboration. The session addresses the realities of navigating institutional politics, leadership transitions, competing priorities, and building a culture of continuous accreditation readiness. Participants will leave with practical tools, transferable strategies, and increased confidence to navigate the evolving IAL role while strengthening institutional processes, communication, and accreditation readiness.

### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Identify strategies for structuring and managing accreditation responsibilities.
- Create an action plan for strengthening accreditation leadership at their institutions.
- Develop strategies for building a sustainable culture of accreditation.
- Apply practical approaches to accreditation activities, including faculty processes, substantive change workflows, and institutional policy review.
- Evaluate institutional communication processes and develop strategies to strengthen cross-functional collaboration through relationship mapping and accreditation readiness.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *This session is designed for newly appointed Institutional Accreditation Liaisons (IALs), experienced liaisons seeking a refresher, and administrative leaders who support accreditation at their institutions.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** A: Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation

## **WA-5: From Compliance to Meaningful Assessment: Building a Culture of Improvement**

**Ms. Carolyn Beamer**, Associate Director, University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL; and **Dr. Angela Bryan**, Assistant Vice President, University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL

Programmatic assessment is essential for improvement, yet many institutions struggle to move beyond compliance-based reporting. This interactive workshop explores strategies for building an institutional culture focused on improving student learning through meaningful assessment. Participants will examine practical approaches for strengthening assessment processes, including meta-assessment of the process, rubric-based evaluation, inter-rater reliability, data collection, and assessment scorecards with actionable feedback. The session will also address strategies for increasing faculty engagement and encouraging the meaningful use of assessment findings to guide curricular and programmatic improvement. Through guided discussion and activities, attendees will develop a personalized action plan with implementation priorities and timelines. Participants will leave the workshop with at least one tool or strategy to strengthen programmatic assessment practices while fostering a culture of improvement.

### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Identify strategies for strengthening programmatic assessment processes through meta-assessment of process, rubric-based evaluation, sustainable feedback processes.
- Develop approaches for increasing faculty engagement and promoting the meaningful use of assessment findings to support improvement of student learning.
- Create a personalized action plan that identifies institutional priorities, implementation strategies, and timelines for enhancing assessment practices.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Institutional Effectiveness, Faculty, IR Staff, Administration, Anyone that collects and tracks assessment*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III – Master's degree

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999

**Conference Track:** C: Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance

## WA-6: From Reports to Results: A Practitioner Framework for Institutional Learning

**Dr. Naima Wells**, Executive Director of Operational Impact and Success, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL; and **Ms. Kayla Waggoner**, Student Affairs Impact & Success Specialist, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL

Institutions collect more data than ever, yet evidence often remains siloed in reports, dashboards, and offices. This three-hour workshop helps accreditation, institutional effectiveness, assessment, institutional research, and administrative leaders transform scattered data into shared evidence for planning and improvement. Using a practitioner-tested framework aligned with SACSCOC effectiveness standards, participants will learn to identify evidence barriers, strengthen cross-unit exchange, and build a practical 90-day action plan. The workshop introduces three tools: an Evidence-Use Diagnostic to identify key obstacles, a Friction Map to locate breakdowns among decisions, data, and accountability, and a 1-3-30 Evidence Brief that connects decision-making to focused evidence and action. Participants leave with a campus-specific diagnosis, a draft evidence exchange routine, and a resource-conscious improvement plan.

### Participant Learning Outcomes:

- Diagnose their institution's dominant entropy domain using empirically anchored instruments, managing cognitive load through structured diagnostic frameworks that reduce defensive posturing and increase institutional learning readiness.
- Construct adaptive evidence governance systems through four-quadrant Friction Mapping that optimizes both cognitive resources (practitioner attention, contextual expertise) and institutional resources (coordination capacity, relationship infrastructure) for sustainable improvement capability.
- Differentiate competency-oriented compliance activities from capability-building institutional learning approaches by distinguishing the three Institutional Physiology functions, Sensory (Friction Audit), Circulatory (Lateral Exchange), and Metabolic (Evidence-First Reporting), as adaptive infrastructure rather than task-completion systems.
- Draft resource-bounded 90-day implementation plans that build institutional learning capacity within existing cognitive and coordination constraints while positioning for both current SACSCOC expectations and emerging federal evidence requirements.

**Session Level:** Advanced

**Target Audience:** *Institutional Effectiveness Directors, Institutional Research Directors, Assessment Officers, Strategic Planning Officers, Accreditation Liaisons, Evidence Governance Coordinators, Data Stewardship Leads, Provost Office Staff, Chiefs of Staff, Deans with IE or Planning Responsibility, Vice Presidents for Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment Committee Chairs, QEP Directors, Continuous Improvement Officers*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** C: Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance

## WA-7: Untangle Your Planning: A Practical Framework for Institutional Planning

**Dr. Oliana Alikaj-Fierro**, Assistant Vice President for Planning, University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX; **Dr. Elsa B. Martin**, Assistant Director, Center for Institutional Evaluation, Research, and Planning, The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX; and **Dr. Toni Blum**, Vice Provost for Curriculum, Effectiveness & Improvement, University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX

Many institutions already have strong planning processes, but those efforts exist in separate areas across campus. As a result, the various institutional effectiveness standards often feel disconnected. If that sounds familiar, this workshop is for you. The good news: you don't need to reinvent the wheel. The pieces are likely there. What's missing is the connective tissue. Building on the highly positive review of UTEP's planning framework in our recent reaffirmation, this hands-on workshop shares practical strategies for linking existing planning activities into a cohesive, mission-centered framework built around continuous improvement, data-informed decision-making, operational alignment, environmental responsiveness, and systematic evaluation. Leave with a clearer vision of integrated institutional planning, a practical roadmap, and strategies you can adapt to strengthen planning and decision-making at your institution.

### Participant Learning Outcomes:

- Identify components of an integrated institutional planning framework.
- Distinguish strategic KPIs from operational metrics.
- Connect planning, budgeting, and assessment processes to institutional priorities.
- Apply planning alignment strategies within their institutional context.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Leadership, assessment and accreditation coordinators, institutional effectiveness and planning officers.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** A: Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
\$130 each (includes workshop materials and a refreshment break)

### **WP-1: Evidence That Holds Up: Reliability, Validity, and AI-Supported Assessment**

**Dr. Brian C. Leventhal**, Director, Assessment and Measurement PhD Program, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA; and **Miss Autumn Wild**, Doctoral Candidate, Assessment & Measurement PhD Program, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

Assessment data drive accreditation, improvement, and decision-making, but only when scores are reliable and interpretations are supported by appropriate validity evidence. As institutions increasingly explore the use of generative AI to support assessment work, practitioners need clear guidance on how to use these tools responsibly in ways that align with established measurement principles. This practical workshop focuses on foundational concepts of reliability and validity and demonstrates how they guide assessment practice. Through hands-on activities and guided discussion, participants learn how stronger assessment design leads to more trustworthy scores, how reliability and validity inform defensible score use, and how AI can be incorporated responsibly without replacing professional judgment. Participants leave with practical examples and guidance for strengthening assessment practice while remaining grounded in sound measurement principles.

#### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Articulate the importance of establishing clear interpretations and intended uses of assessment scores and identifying appropriate validity evidence aligned with assessment context and purpose.
- Explain reliability as evidence of score consistency.
- Identify appropriate sources of reliability evidence and evaluate consistency in both human- and AI-assisted scoring contexts.
- Describe validity as an evidentiary argument supporting specific score interpretations and uses.
- Differentiate among the five sources of validity evidence and determine which are most critical for given assessment purposes.
- Evaluate how generative artificial intelligence (AI) can support, but not replace, professional judgment in assessment practice.
- Design assessment-aligned AI prompts that support defensible interpretation of assessment results by explicitly stating intended uses and constraining inappropriate inference.
- Critically evaluate AI-generated output by identifying assumptions, limitations, and additional evidence needed for institutional decision-making.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Assessment directors, assessment coordinators, and institutional effectiveness professionals, Faculty members engaged in program level, general education, or outcomes assessment, Department chairs and program directors responsible for interpreting and acting on assessment results, Institutional research analysts whose work includes data analysis and reporting of assessment results, Student affairs and co curricular assessment professionals involved in documenting learning outcomes assessment.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** C: Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance

## **WP-2: Exploring (and Understanding) the New Frontiers of Substantive Change**

**Dr. Jeff Roberts**, Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Lone Star College System, Conroe, TX; and **Mrs. Michelle Simon**, Manager of Compliance and Accreditation, Lone Star College System, The Woodlands, TX

Substantive change can feel like wild and dangerous frontier. Many institutions fear getting lost in the wilderness, finding themselves on substantive change restriction, or worse! This workshop will define major aspects of the current sub-change policy, including OCIS (off-campus instructional sites) submissions, new program notifications/approvals, program modifications, program delivery expansions, and the closure of OCIS locations or programs. Case studies will provide participants with opportunities to apply their knowledge to identify different sub-change types. Potential pitfalls, particularly as they relate to tracking and monitoring OCIS locations, developing prospectuses, addressing dual enrollment serving locations, and program/location closures will be identified, and workshop attendees will be provided with strategies for ensuring ongoing compliance so that the frontier of sub-change can be tamed!

### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Gain an understanding of the key elements of the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy.
- Differentiate when something is a Substantive Change or not.
- Learn about the common problems and pitfalls that institutions can encounter when trying to maintain compliance with the SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy.
- Gain an understanding of an institutional-level approach to tracking and monitoring Substantive Change.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Individuals who are responsible for, or involved with, Substantive Change at their institutions.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** A: Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation

## **WP-3: Faculty Qualifications Across Frontiers: Documentation, Sufficiency, and AI**

**Dr. Belinda A. Prihoda**, Director, Institutional Compliance, Curriculum, and Effectiveness, Tyler Junior College, Tyler, TX; and **Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle**, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN

Faculty qualifications, sufficiency of full-time faculty, and program coordination remain foundational compliance expectations even as accreditation language, state mandates, and federal priorities

evolve. Institutions demonstrate compliance through whatever combination of policies, processes, and procedures fits their context. Those that build durable frameworks for documenting alternative justifications, defining sufficiency, and assigning coordination responsibility can absorb change without scrambling. This half-day workshop guides participants through documentation practices and a hands-on review of sample faculty rosters, drawing on both community college and university perspectives. Participants will also explore how a custom AI tool can support credentialing analysis while protecting sensitive data and will leave with a draft prompt and supporting documentation plan adaptable to their own institution. Bring your faculty qualifications documentation, or use the sample provided.

#### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Analyze the implications of the revised Principles for faculty qualification practices.
- Evaluate existing institutional policies and procedures for alignment with emerging standards.
- Develop or refine frameworks for assessing faculty qualifications using multiple measures of academic and professional preparation.
- Identify documentation and evidence practices that support consistent institutional decision-making and accreditation compliance.
- Create action steps to prepare their institutions for implementation of the revised standards.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Accreditation Liaisons, Institutional Effectiveness staff, Compliance Officers, Provosts and Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Chairs, Faculty Credentialing Coordinators, Human Resources staff who support faculty credentialing, and Directors of Curriculum*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** A: Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation

### **WP-4: Houston: We Are a Go for Launching a Successful On-Site Review**

**Mr. Stuart A. Miller**, Assistant Director for Academic Data Acquisitions & Reporting, Auburn University, Auburn, AL; **Dr. Mark DeGoti**, SACSCOC Liaison, Auburn University, Auburn, AL; and **Dr. Diane Waryas Hughey**, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Rice University, Houston, TX

Auburn University and Rice University recently completed their SACSCOC decennial reviews, including successful on-site visits. In this interactive workshop, members of both accreditation teams will offer a cross-institutional perspective from a large public and a private research university. Presenters will share practical strategies and lessons learned to help participants prepare their campus communities for an effective on-site visit. The session will explore how institutions identify potential compliance concerns, establish preparation priorities, identify campus partners, develop briefing materials, and prepare stakeholders for committee interactions, while also highlighting emerging updates to SACSCOC standards and expectations. Presenters will compare shared practices and key differences shaped by institutional context. Participants from institutions of any size will leave with practical tools and a flexible roadmap.

**Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Apply best practices for preparing for and hosting a SACSCOC on-site accreditation visit, including identifying areas of compliance risk, determining visit priorities, and adapting approaches to different institutional contexts (e.g., large public and private universities).
- Develop and refine strategies for identifying key campus stakeholders and meeting participants, with attention to how institutional structure and culture shape these decisions.
- Anticipate likely committee questions and design preparation approaches that support confident, productive conversations between committee members and campus representatives.
- Create a practical plan for structuring and facilitating preparation meetings ("briefing sessions") that effectively prepare participants for their on-site engagements.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Accreditation Liaisons, On-Site Visit Chair or Committee members, and institutions in the 1-2 year prior to their reaffirmation site visit*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** A: Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation

## **WP-5: Mission Control for Reaffirmation: Building Teams, Tools, and Strategies**

**Dr. Divya Bhati**, Associate Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness, Strategic Planning and Assessment, University of Houston-Downtown, Houston, TX

Decennial reaffirmation is a high-stakes mission requiring meticulous coordination and a "Mission Control" framework for institutional leadership. This workshop demonstrates how one institution successfully managed a decentralized process, engaging over 100 faculty and staff, to navigate the Compliance Certification Report (CCR) and the subsequent on-site visit. By fostering broad-based ownership, the reaffirmation process was transformed from a perceived "compliance burden" into a catalyst for institutional accountability and resilience. Participants will leave with a practical "toolbox" of strategies for document management, committee structures, and stakeholder engagement to guide their own institutions safely through the accreditation frontier.

**Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Identify key organizational structures needed to coordinate a decentralized reaffirmation process.
- Develop a committee and responsibility framework that supports broad-based institutional participation.
- Apply practical strategies for organizing accreditation evidence, documentation, and communication workflows.
- Evaluate approaches for engaging faculty and staff in reaffirmation activities while maintaining accountability and momentum.

- Develop an action-oriented reaffirmation implementation plan that can be adapted to their institution's structure, resources, and accreditation timeline.

**Session Level:** Foundational

**Target Audience:** *Campus professionals directly involved in accreditation, planning, and institutional improvement, including Accreditation Liaisons, members of reaffirmation or self-study steering committees, and institutional effectiveness, assessment, and institutional research staff. It will also benefit academic administrators such as provosts, associate provosts, deans, and department chairs, as well as faculty assessment coordinators and leaders of administrative or student support units who contribute evidence for compliance and improvement efforts. The session is especially useful for individuals responsible for coordinating people, processes, and documentation across campus during reaffirmation.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** A: Exploring New Frontiers in the Foundations of Accreditation

## **WP-6: Program Evaluation for Economic Health and Academic Excellence**

**Dr. Matt Wiley**, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Victoria College, Victoria, TX; and **Mrs. Rachel Winkenwerder**, Associate Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Learning Technologies, Victoria College, Victoria, TX

Developing academic excellence in curricula and economic vitality for communities and graduates represents the next frontier of student access, completion, and post-completion success. Program evaluation supports this work by aligning with performance-based funding (PBF), accreditation and regulatory standards, and service-area economic realities. This workshop moves beyond theory, showcasing a collaborative workflow between academic leadership and institutional effectiveness that integrates evaluative assessment with labor market data to build high-value credentials. Participants will learn to calculate regional success floors, automate CIP-to-SOC validation, and redesign lower-opportunity programs into engines of both academic quality and economic mobility.

### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Analyze labor data to align CIP programs with SOC demand, service-area needs, and living-wage benchmarks.
- Develop student and institutional ROI thresholds using economic and credential-value data.
- Evaluate program performance (PLOs, enrollment, ABC rates) against defined standards of quality.
- Construct a redesign model for lower-opportunity programs by integrating labor-market demand, ROI thresholds, and program assessment results.

**Session Level:** Advanced

**Target Audience:** *Chief Academic Officers, Deans, Program Chairs, and institutional effectiveness leadership.*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999

**Conference Track:** C: Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance

### **WP-7: Telling Your Institution's Story – The Commission's Vision Insights Dashboard (VID)**

**Dr. Godfrey Fuji Noe**, Coordinator of Training and Research, The Commission, Decatur, GA; **Dr. Alexei Matveev**, Director of Training and Research, The Commission, Decatur, GA; and **Ms. Camille Johnson**, Training and Research Specialist, The Commission, Decatur, GA

This workshop will teach participants how to create, frame and tell their institutional story via the VID. In addition, the participants will provide insights, suggestions and feedback on how to ensure the dashboard is helpful, useable, useful and used. Participants will also provide insights, feedback and possible directions for future versions of the dashboard, and new data learning experiences.

#### **Participant Learning Outcomes:**

- Attendees will be able to enumerate the purpose of the VID.
- Attendees will be able to identify and explain the purpose of VID components, how they are calculated and what the particular item conveys.
- Attendees will be able to integrate VID data, and their institutional context into a narrative that conveys the institution's strengths, aspirations and current work.
- Attendees will identify, enumerate and utilize data-to-narrative principles to construct institutional narrative.

#### **Session Level:**

**Target Audience:** *Institutional Researchers, Presidents, Public Relations Staff, Academic Leadership, Student Services, Provosts, Institutional Effectiveness and Compliance Officers, and Accreditation Liaisons*

**Institution Level(s):** I, II, III, IV, V, VI

**Institution Size(s):** Under 500; 1,000 – 4,999; 5,000 – 9,999; 10,000 – 19,999; 20,000 and above

**Conference Track:** C: Exploring New Frontiers in Demonstrating Quality and Relevance