Introduction to Programmatic and Institutional Accreditation Standards

Presenter:

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Discussion Question

Where in the world are you?
Objectives

- Explain purpose of accreditation
- Define institutional and programmatic accreditation
- Describe differences between institutional and programmatic accreditation
- Describe quality assurance commonalities across accreditation standards
- Identify resources to assist in meeting and exceeding accreditation standards
Discussion Question

What is your impression of accreditation in the United States?
Purpose of Accreditation

In the United States, accreditation is used to assure quality in educational programs and institutions. Accreditation is a voluntary, non-governmental process of peer review. It requires an educational program or institution to meet certain defined standards or criteria. Accreditation is sometimes confused with certification. In general, programs and institutions are accredited, and individuals are certified.

Purpose of Accreditation (cont.)

• The accreditation process provides an institution with an opportunity to:
  – Examine the mission statement to determine whether the values and aspirations of the college are accurately reflected
  – Review goals, programs, and services to determine the extent to which the mission is reflected
  – Evaluate the effectiveness of programs, operations, and services
  – Strive for higher levels of performance beyond minimum requirements of accreditation

The accreditation process provides an institution with an opportunity to:

- Enhance and increase documentation and evidence that demonstrates continuous improvement
- Reinforce to all constituents that accreditation is an ongoing process
- Strengthen involvement of all constituents in enhancing institutional quality and effectiveness
- Demonstrate accountability to all constituents

Discussion Question

Why pursue institutional or programmatic accreditation?
Benefits of Programmatic and Institutional Accreditation

- Accountability
- Transparency
- Public Demonstration of Quality
- Value Added
- Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement
- Comparability to Other Programs or Institutions
Discussion Questions

What accreditations do your institutions currently hold?
Institutional Accreditation

- The review includes an evaluation of the institution's mission and compliance with standards and criteria related to governance and administration, financial stability, admissions and student personnel services, institutional resources, student academic achievement, institutional effectiveness, and relationships with constituencies inside and outside the institution.
  - Assesses if each of an institution's parts is contributing to the achievement of the institution's objectives, although not necessarily all at the same level of quality

- The review process focuses on institution as an entity.

From: United States Department of Education (USDE) [http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg2.html#U.S](http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg2.html#U.S)
Institutional Accrediting Agencies*

- Regional Accrediting Agencies are the most commonly accepted type of accreditation for postsecondary academic institutions in the US.
- The following Regional Accrediting Agencies are recognized by the US Department of Education:
  - Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education (MSACS/CHE)
  - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NEASC)
  - North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, The Higher Learning Commission (NCACS/HLC)
  - Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
  - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACS)
  - Western Association of Colleges and Schools, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (WASC)

*This is not an exhaustive list of institutional accrediting agencies.

Institutional Accrediting Agencies

Regional Accreditation Map

NEASC NCACCS MSACS NWCCCU SACS WASC

mba-options.com
Programmatic Accreditation

- Accreditation applies to programs, departments, or schools that are parts of an institution. The accredited unit may be as large as a college or school within a university or as small as a curriculum within a discipline.
  - Specific standards for curricula and course content are applied.

- Units are usually reviewed within an institution of higher education that is accredited by one of the regional accrediting agencies.
  - Exceptions are professional schools and other specialized or vocational institutions of higher education that are freestanding in their operations.
  - May also function in the capacity of an "institutional" accrediting agency. In addition, a number of accrediting agencies accredit educational programs within non-educational settings, such as hospitals.

Accreditation helps to ensure that graduates are prepared for licensure in jurisdictions requiring specific program content.

- In some professions, licensure is a nearly universal requirement (medicine, law, and teaching are good examples). In other professions, great disparities in licensure requirements exist from state to state. However, state regulations vary markedly with respect to the requirements for licensure. In some jurisdictions, graduation from an “accredited” program is required.

- Accreditation standards are set by programmatic accrediting agencies with input from practitioners and professionals in the field.

Programmatic Accrediting Agencies*

- AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)
- Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)
- Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
- Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA)
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (AAMFT/COAMFTE)
- American Council for Construction Education (ACCE)
- American Culinary Federation's Education Foundation, Inc. (ACFEF) Accrediting Commission
- Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)
- Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE)
- Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
- Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME)

* This is not an exhaustive list of programmatic accrediting agencies.
Programmatic Accrediting Agencies* (cont.)

- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB)
- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)
- Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE)
- Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)
- Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME)
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
- Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)
- Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA)
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)
- Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA)
- Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE)

* This is not an exhaustive list of programmatic accrediting agencies.
Programmatic Accrediting Agencies* (cont.)

- Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE)
- National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)
- National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA)
- National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)
- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
- National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. (NLNAC)

* This is not an exhaustive list of programmatic accrediting agencies.
Discussion Questions

Are there different types of accreditation within your region or country? What are the implications for having different accreditation standards across your region or country?
Common Quality Assurance Components: Across Accreditation Standards

- Assessment/Student Learning Outcomes
- Admissions
- Financial Capacity
- Faculty Qualifications
- Information Resources
- Governance
Common Quality Assurance Components: Examples

- **Assessment/Student Learning Outcomes**
  
  - **Programmatic Standard:** “The program is effective in fulfilling its mission, goals, and expected aggregate student and faculty outcomes. Actual aggregate student outcomes are consistent with the mission, goals, and expected student outcomes. Actual alumni satisfaction data and the accomplishments of graduates of the program attest to the effectiveness of the program. Actual aggregate faculty outcomes are consistent with the mission, goals, and expected faculty outcomes. Data on program effectiveness are used to foster ongoing program improvement.” (CCNE Standards for Accreditation, 2009, p. 17)

  - **Institutional Standard:** “The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.” (HLC Handbook of Accreditation, 2003, p.3)
Common Quality Assurance Components: Examples (cont.)

- **Governance**
  - **Programmatic Standard**: “Governance: The program must demonstrate that all faculty, staff, and students have equitable opportunities to participate in program and institutional governance.” (NAAB, 2009, p.15)
  - **Institutional Standard**: “The institution’s faculty exercises effective academic leadership and acts consistently to ensure both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of the institution’s educational purposes and character.” (WASC, 2008, p.20)
Accreditation Resources and Tools - Online

- General Listing of Programmatic and Institutional Accrediting Agencies

- Preparing Programmatic Self-Study (ABET)
  - [http://www.abet.org/Linked%20Documents-UPDATE/Presentations/ABET%20SUMMIT%20PLENARY%2010-6-09.pdf](http://www.abet.org/Linked%20Documents-UPDATE/Presentations/ABET%20SUMMIT%20PLENARY%2010-6-09.pdf)

- Accreditation/Compliance Document Checklist (WASC)

- Guidelines and Principles on Good Practice (HLC)
  - [http://ncahlc.org/information-for-institutions/publications.html](http://ncahlc.org/information-for-institutions/publications.html)

- Code for Good Practice in Accreditation (NASAD)
Accreditation Resources and Tools – Online (cont.)

▪ Institutional Effectiveness
  — MSCHE
  [http://www.msche.org/publications_view.asp?idPublicationType=5&txtPublicationType=Guidelines+for+Institutional+Improvement]

▪ Institutional Worksheet for Preliminary Self-Review (WASC)
  — [http://www.wascsenior.org/findit/findit/findit.php#search_page]

▪ Developing Accreditation Process and Procedure Documents (SACS)

▪ Catalog/ Publications Guidelines (Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools)
  — [http://www.acics.org/publications/criteria.aspx#AppC]

▪ Transfer of Credit
  — AACRAO’s Transfer Credit Practices Online, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.
  [http://www.aacrao.org/publications.aspx]
Accreditation Resources and Tools – Online (cont.)

- Programmatic & Institutional Assessment & Student Learning Outcomes
  - ACBSP Outcomes Assessment [http://www.acbsp.org/p/cm/ld/fid=74](http://www.acbsp.org/p/cm/ld/fid=74)
  - Coppin State University, Middle States Commission on Higher Education [http://www.coppin.edu/middlestates/BESTOA05.pdf](http://www.coppin.edu/middlestates/BESTOA05.pdf)
  - North Carolina State University Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment [http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm](http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm)
  - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools [http://sacscoc.org/handbooks.asp](http://sacscoc.org/handbooks.asp)
Thank You

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact us.

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References

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- Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) at http://www.comta.org/
- United States Department of Education at http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accred/accreditation_pg2.html#U.S.
- University of Minnesota Crookston at http://www3.crk.umn.edu/planning/nca/faq.html
- University of Minnesota Duluth at http://www.d.umn.edu/hlc/faq.html#9