

Debrief of 2008-09 Site Visits with Commission Consultants

August 2009

Overview of this Report

This report provides background information for the discussion among the COA members and the Commission's accreditation consultants.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

Between 2002-03 and 2006-07, only joint NCATE/CTC site visits for accreditation were conducted. In the 2007-08 year, the Commission's revised accreditation system began to be implemented, including fourteen site visits, some of which were joint NCATE/CTC. At the end of the 07-08 year's accreditation activities, the individuals who served as Team Leads as well as the Commission's accreditation staff met with the COA for a discussion.

In the 2008-09 year, fifteen reports were developed during the accreditation visits for submission to the COA. For each visit the Team Lead and Commission consultant presented the accreditation report to the COA. The COA discussions and subsequent accreditation decisions have generated discussions between the COA and Commission staff about various aspects of the implementation of accreditation system.

In response to these discussions, Commission staff suggested, and the COA agreed, that a meeting be held between the COA and the Commission's accreditation consultants to discuss effective practices that provide the COA sufficient information to make quality accreditation decisions and that provide institutions appropriate information for preparing for site visits or to remove stipulations placed by COA action. It is anticipated that suggestions from COA and Commission's professional staff generated in this discussion will be incorporated into future BIR trainings, focused Team Lead trainings, and to guide the on-going professional development of Commission consultants. This discussion also addresses the accreditation system's requirements for on-going data collection regarding the implementation of the accreditation system that results in improvements to the system.

During the meeting, the COA and Commission consultants will discuss the following topics and questions.

1. The discussions that teams have when coming to a decision about a standard.
2. The discussions that teams have when coming to consensus on making an accreditation recommendation.
3. The accreditation report sections that describe the standard findings and the information that supports that standard finding. What is too much information and what is insufficient information?

4. The rationale statements that teams develop to explain to the COA, the institution and the public why that specific accreditation recommendation was made. What is too much information in the rationale and what is insufficient information?
5. The level of detail needed in stipulation statements. How can we establish some level of consistency in formulating stipulation statements that meet the needs of both the institution and the COA?

In preparation for the meeting, COA members are asked to identify examples from the fifteen 2008-09 site visit reports that illustrate clear, detailed, objective and accurate text for each of the topics listed above.

Next Steps

A number of activities designed to support the implementation of the revised accreditation system are planned for the 2009-10 year. It is anticipated that the discussion between the COA and the Commission accreditation consultants will help inform and guide the preparation for the following activities:

- ! A meeting for those BIR members identified as Team Leads will take place prior to the 2009-10 site visits (Wednesday, October 7, 2009) to allow the group of team leads to fully understand the role of the team lead, role of the Commission consultant, and to prepare for their visits. If a team lead is not able to attend the meeting, the audio of the meeting will be archived and available on the Commission's website, or a phone meeting will take place with the team lead prior to the site visit.
- ! Update Training for current members of the BIR will be provided to orient members to the revised accreditation system, revisit important information from the BIR training, and recalibrate individuals on the Commission's standards and the level of evidence expected when considering program findings and accreditation recommendations. These include the meetings listed below.
 - o Common Standards Cluster team members: Tuesday, January 19, 2010
 - o Programs Cluster team members: Monday, October 5, 2009 and January 2010
 - o NCATE Cluster team members: Friday, October 9, 2009
- ! An additional BIR training is scheduled for January 2010. Currently the BIR has approximately 300 members, 140 of whom attended training in the past two years.

Staff will take the information and suggestions from the COA discussion and work to develop improved accreditation procedures for the 2009-10 site visits.