

Discussion of Proposed Changes to the Accreditation Handbook

Overview

This agenda item presents proposed changes to the *Accreditation Handbook* for discussion. This item includes proposed changes for Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, and 9. Additional chapters will be presented at upcoming meetings.

Recommendation

This item is for information only.

Overview

The *Accreditation Handbook* must be brought up to date and aspects of the *Handbook* must be clarified or expanded upon. Many of the changes proposed in this time were proposed in 2019, but further consideration and action on any updates were halted due to a significant increase in staff workload resulting from the pandemic. Staff proposes that the COA begin discussions on these changes once again. To ensure that sufficient time and attention to detail is facilitated, staff is bringing forward at this time only Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 9. More will follow at the March and May COA items, with the intent to adopt all changes at the June COA meeting.

Chapter 3 is not being presented in tracked changes due to the extent of the changes being proposed. The most significant change to Chapter 3 is the expanded narrative about the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process. Previously, only the first three stages of the five-stage process were outlined in Chapter 3. This was because of the similarities between Stage IV of the IIA process and the Initial Program Review (IPR) process which followed the IIA section of the chapter. However, it is more appropriate and provides better clarity to users of the *Handbook* to explicate the full IIA process as separate from IPR. Additionally, Chapter 3 includes information for institutions seeking to change the status of one or more programs from Active to Inactive or Withdrawn. To make the chapter easier to navigate, staff is recommending labeling its three distinct sections and posting them separately under the Chapter 3 heading on the *Handbook* webpage, as follows:

Section A: Initial Institutional Approval

Section B: Program Approval

Section C: Program Change of Status

It is important to note that the IIA process is a Commission-adopted process so while other chapters presented in this item are open for COA editing, Section A of Chapter 3 is not.

Next Steps

Staff asks the COA to discuss the changes and suggest any areas for additional changes. Staff will make these changes and bring this item back at a future meeting for consideration.