Postsecondary Schools Overview Webinar

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Three Divisions of WASC

- Accreditting Commission for Schools (K-12)
  - Public
  - Charter
  - Private
  - Religious
  - Online
  - Postsecondary
  - Supplementary

- College-Level
  - Accreditting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities
  - Accreditting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Webinar Agenda

1. Overview of WASC accreditation process for postsecondary schools
2. Explanation of accreditation “status”
3. Tips for preparing an excellent written Self-Study Report
4. Tips for hosting a successful site visit
5. Question & Answer Session
Three Components in the Accreditation Process

1. School Self-Evaluation
   * results in a written *Self-Study Report*

2. Peer Review
   * results in a site visit by outside educators and a written *Visiting Committee Report*

3. Ongoing School Improvement
   * results in a Center *Action Plan*
The Players

1. School Leadership Team
2. Self-Study Coordinator
3. Faculty and Staff (Focus Groups)
4. Governance Leaders
5. Visiting Committee
6. WASC Commission

Each has a role to play!
The Documents

Self Study Report

School Action Plan

Visiting Committee Report, Documentation & Justification Statement
WASC Expectations

- **Self-Study Report** every six years
- Host a site visit at least once every six years (3\textsuperscript{rd} year mid-cycle visit is most common)
- Analyze learning data — draw conclusions
- Review and revise the profile and Action Plan each year
- Accomplish WASC’s key expectations
WASC Accreditation Status

• The focus is on the six-year process, not a one-time event

• There is now a “probationary” status for SEPs that are not making progress

• It provides a plan for ongoing Center improvement
What About SLOs?

- Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (some call them ESLRs – Expected Schoolwide Learning Results)
- They should be observable, measurable
- They should be connected to academic benchmarks or skill development
- They should be practical, meaningful to you...they are not a public relations gimmick!
WASC “Status” instead of “Terms”

- Focus in on the six-year cycle, not a one-time event
- It reminds schools that the process is what is most important in accreditation
- It strengthens expectations with a new “probation” status
Status Options

• Six-year status with mid-cycle progress report
• Six-year status with one-day mid-cycle visit
• Six-year status with two-day mid-cycle visit
• Probation status
• Accreditation withheld

Questions?
Where are you in the Accreditation Timeline?

**Fall Visits**

- *Self-Study Report* completed 4 weeks out
- Everyone should read the *Self-Study Report*
- Finalize logistics of your visit
Spring Visits

- Collect written sections from Focus Groups to form Draft #1.
- Send the draft to the Chair for his/her input.
- Begin planning site visit schedule; find out needs for accommodations, food, and workroom space.
- Meet weekly with those who are doing the final editing of the *Self-Study Report*.
- Begin to prepare the teachers and staff for their roles and duties during the site visit.
- Revise the School Action Plan using the conclusions reached as a result of the self-study process.
How to Write an Excellent Report

1. Attractive and professional presentation
2. Complete your Self-Study Report on time
3. Step back and read draft #1, asking important questions
   ✓ Did you answer the question?
   ✓ Are your answers concise?
   ✓ Are you only describing what you do – or are you giving your evaluation of what you do?
   ✓ Do you draw conclusions?
   ✓ Did you address the indicator?
   ✓ Does your Action Plan align with your conclusions?
   ✓ What did you learn in addressing every indicator and prompt?
4. Report should be collaborative
5. Be honest and transparent
6. Do not use individual’s names in the report
7. Cite evidence where appropriate – back up what you affirm with examples, reports, assessments, etc.
8. In Action Plan, use the who, what, why format
   ✓ Who is responsible for this task?
   ✓ What do you want him/her/group specifically to do?
   ✓ Why is this task important – what is the intended result?
The principal and teachers should develop a clear assessment process so that student learning data can be gathered and analyzed, resulting in conclusions that will be used to improve the learning program for all students.
Tips on Hosting a Successful Visit

1. Communicate often with the Chair
2. Have all stakeholders read the *Self-Study Report*
3. Prepare a well-defined schedule
4. Set up a comfortable work area
5. Check out the hotel
6. Prepare your staff what the Visiting Committee will be doing during the visit
7. Prepare teachers for the Focus Group meetings
8. Make morning meetings meaningful
9. Plan for all the logistics
10. Discuss the exit meeting with your chair
11. Make the team feel wanted and appreciated
The Overarching Purposes of the Site Visit

- To validate your Self-Study Report
- To affirm your Action Plan
- To prepare your school for ongoing school improvement
Thank you for joining us today; contact me if I can be of further help to you in any way!

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