

# NAVIGATING THE FIFTH-YEAR INTERIM REPORT



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Conference  
Galveston, TX  
June 7, 2011

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## Over the next hour, we will...

- Review the Fifth Year Interim Review Process
- Have a Closer Look at the 14 Standards & How to Avoiding Common Trouble Spots
- Discuss Crafting the QEP Impact Report
- Q & A

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## Why a Fifth-Year Interim Review Process?

- Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA)
  - Reg 602.19(b) Speaks to accrediting agencies monitoring their accredited institutions to ensure ongoing compliance.
  - Reg 602.22(c)(2) Calls for accrediting agencies having an effective mechanism for conducting, at reasonable intervals, visits to additional locations of institutions that operate more than three additional locations.
- There are variances in review cycles among accrediting bodies.

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## So how does this process work?

- **NOTIFICATION:** Institutions are notified about eleven months prior to the due date for the report.
- **SUBMISSION:** Fifth-Year Interim Reports are submitted mid-March or mid-September.
- **REVIEW:** Report will be reviewed by the Fifth Year Interim Review Committee, which meets each June and December.
- **RESULTS:** A letter will go out to the reviewed institutions the following month, informing them of the results of the review.
- **FOLLOW UP:**
  - If there are no issues for follow up—the process ends here.
  - If there are issues, an institution would be asked to provide an additional report that will go to Compliance & Reports Committee, addressing the specific areas noted.

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## Components of the Report

- Part I: Signatures Attesting to Integrity
- Part II: Abbreviated Institutional Summary Form Prepared for Commission Reviews
- Part III: Fifth-Year Compliance Certification
- Part IV: Additional Report (*applicable only to select institutions*)
- Part V: Impact Report of the Quality Enhancement Plan
- An institution may be requested to host a committee charged to review new, but unvisited, off-campus sites initiated since the institution's previous reaffirmation. An institution was notified of this at the time it received its letter from Dr. Wheelan regarding the Fifth-Year Interim Report.

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## A Closer Look at Part III

Responding to 14 areas:

1. CR 2.8 Number of Full-time Faculty
2. CR 2.10 Student Support Programs
3. CS 3.2.8 Qualified Administrators and Academic Officers
4. CS 3.3.1.1 Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs, to include Student Learning Outcomes
5. CS 3.4.3 Admissions Policies
6. CS 3.4.11 Qualified Academic Coordinators

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- 6. CS 3.11.3 Physical Facilities
- 7. FR 4.1 Student Achievement
- 8. FR 4.2 Program Curriculum
- 9. FR 4.3 Publication of Policies
- 10. FR 4.4 Program Length
- 11. FR 4.5 Student Complaints
- 12. FR 4.6 Recruitment Materials
- 13. FR 4.7 Title IV Program Responsibilities and CS 3.10.3 Financial Audits

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Snapshot of Areas that the (39) 2015 Track A Institutions Were Cited		
CS 3.3.1.1	28	72%
CR 2.8	19	49%
FR 4.4	16	41%
CS 3.4.11	12	31%
CS 3.10.3/FR 4.7	9	23%
FR 4.5	7	18%
CS 3.2.8	5	13%
FR 4.3	4	10%
FR 4.6	4	10%
CR 2.10	3	8%
FR 4.1	2	5%
FR 4.2	1	3%
CS 3.4.3	0	0%
CS 3.11.3	0	0%
QEP Impact Report	13	33%

*\*Items shaded in orange were most cited for the 2013 & 2014 cohorts.*

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## CR 2.8 Number of Full-time Faculty

### Common Issues:

- Not providing faculty data disaggregated down to the program or discipline level
- Not explaining what the data mean or not presenting a case for why the number of faculty is adequate
- Not addressing faculty loads




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### CR 2.8 Tips:

- Disaggregate full-time faculty by program/discipline/mode/location; include information on faculty teaching in all programs, including those teaching via distance education and at off-campus sites.
- Explain why the number is adequate, if indeed it is, or describe the plan for coming into compliance if the number is not adequate.
- Provide information regarding faculty loads and expectations for faculty outside of the classroom like committee work, service, advising, curriculum development, etc.

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### CR 2.10 Student Support Programs

#### Common Issues:

- The institution's website and/or catalog details numerous services not mentioned in the report.
- Student Support Program descriptions are confusing, jargon-laden, or inadequately explained.
- No mention is made of how support is provided to distance education and off-campus site students.

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### CR 2.10 Tips:

- Clearly describe the Student Support Services provided.
- Explain how the services meet the needs of your students, including those enrolled in programs offered via distance education and at off-campus sites.




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### CS 3.2.8 Qualified Administrators and Academic Officers

Common Issues:

- Giving a list of names and degrees, or set of vitae with no explanation
- Not providing an organizational chart to help evaluators understand who oversees what
- Providing degree level information (MA, PhD) without listing major

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### CR 3.2.8 Tips:

- Provide an organizational chart.
- Describe the qualifications the administrators and academic officers, building a case for why they are qualified for their respective roles.
- Provide documentation like current vitae.
- Consider using the faculty roster form.




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### CS 3.3.1.1 Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs

Common Issues:

- Lack of defined student learning outcomes and/or methods for assessing the outcomes
- Limited/Immature data
- Non-representative sampling
- Not addressing distance education and off-campus site programs




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### CS 3.3.1.1 Tips:

- Focus on educational programs and student learning outcomes
- Use mature data
  - If using a new system, use data from the previous system, if necessary and possible, to demonstrate ongoing compliance
- If presenting a sampling, use a representative sampling and include a rationale for what makes the sample reasonable and representative of the programs offered
- Include data on programs offered at off-campus sites and via distance learning - consider comparability

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### CS 3.4.3 Admissions Policies

#### Common Issue:

- Information provided in the report does not match that given in the catalog and/or website

#### Tips:

- Provide a clear and consistent narrative regarding admissions policies.
- Address special admissions policies for specific programs as well as the institutional admissions policy.




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### CS 3.4.11 Qualified Academic Coordinators

#### Common Issues:

- Not providing a rationale for why an individual is qualified to coordinate a program, and oversee the development and review of the curriculum
- Listing a coordinator's degree with no reference to major

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### CS 3.4.11 Tips

- Identify coordinators for all programs, including those offered at off-campus sites and via distance learning.
- List coordinator's degree and major.
- Make a case for the coordinator's qualifications to oversee the development of the program.
- Consider using faculty roster form.




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### CS 3.11.3 Physical Facilities

#### Common Issues:

- Data presented indicated a lack of adequate physical facilities
- Not discussing physical facilities for off-campus sites

#### Tips:

- Include supporting documentation such as current Facilities Master Plan, space utilization reports, facilities maintenance schedules.
- Address facilities at off-campus sites.

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### FR 4.1 Student Achievement

#### Common Issue:

- Using select program graduation rates alone to evaluate overall student achievement

#### Tip:

- Include a variety of measures, when possible, including general and program-specific graduation rates, job placement rates, course completion rates, and/or licensure exam pass rates.




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## FR 4.2 Program Curriculum

### Common Issues:

- Not offering a rationale for the appropriateness of the programs offered
- Not providing supporting documentation
- Not addressing distance education and off-campus sites

### Tips:

- Explain how the mission and the curricula are related.
- Document how the curriculum is developed, including distance education and off-campus site programs.

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## FR 4.3 Publication of Policies

### Common Issue:

- Variations exist between published versions of the grading policies, refund policies and/or academic calendars

### Tips:

- Verify that all versions of published academic calendars, grading, and refund policies are current and accurate.
- Address how this information is disseminated to distance education and off-campus site students.

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## FR 4.4 Program Length

### Common Issues:

- Not explaining how comparability is assured between traditional and accelerated/compressed programs
- Program length exceeds those allowed by internal or system policy
- Discrepancies exist between the length of program as presented and as described in the catalog

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### FR 4.4 Tips:

- Identify measures of program length for all programs, including those offered at off-campus sites and via distance learning.
- Describe why those measures are appropriate, including those for compressed/accelerated programs.
- Make sure that program lengths are within the appropriate ranges.
- Verify that program length information is published accurately.

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### FR 4.5 Student Complaints

Common Issues:

- No evidence of implementation provided
- Inappropriate example (e.g., a complaint from a parent)
- Not addressing how a complaint from students enrolled in distance education programs or at off-campus locations is handled




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### FR 4.5 Tips:

- Provide a copy of student complaint policies.
- Provide real examples (student names redacted) that document and illustrate how complaints are resolved.
- Address how complaints are handled from students enrolled at off-campus sites and via distance education.

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## FR 4.6 Recruitment Materials

### Common Issue:

- Recruitment presentations are not addressed

### Tip:

- Address how the institution ensures that recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent institutional practices and policies.




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## FR 4.7 Title IV Program Responsibilities and CS 3.10.3 Financial Audits

### Common Issues:

- Audit results are not yet available.
- The institution has responded to audit issues with a plan but has not yet received the USDOE letter accepting the plan.

### Tips:

- Work with auditors well in advance to ensure that audit is available by report due date.
- Present evidence of financial aid audits as required by *state* regulations, not just federal, in CS 3.10.3.

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## QEP Impact Reports

### Common Issues:

- Failure to launch due to leadership and/or resource issues
- Not presenting the goals or outcomes of the project
- Not describing the implementation of the project, regardless of changes from original plan
- Not collecting and/or using data to assess the impact on student learning




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## QEP Impact Report Tips:

- Address all of the elements
- The title and a brief description of the institution's Quality Enhancement Plan as initially presented
- A succinct list of the initial goals and intended outcomes of the QEP
- A discussion of changes made to the QEP and the reasons for making those changes
- A description of the QEP's direct impact on student learning including the achievement of goals and outcomes, and unanticipated outcomes of the QEP, if any

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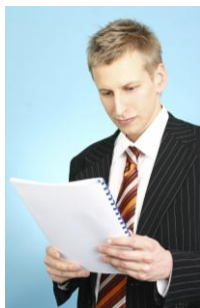
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## QEP Impact Report

*Use your 10 pages wisely*

- Reviewers are looking to see that the institution...
  - ✓ Adequately documented the implementation of the QEP regardless of the changes needed throughout its delivery
  - ✓ Provided adequate documentation of the assessment of the QEP's impact on student learning
  - ✓ Demonstrated sustained support for the QEP




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## Words of Wisdom from Fifth-Year Report Evaluators

- *Your narrative and evidence for each standard should be as comprehensive as your narrative/ evidence in your Compliance Certification Report.*
- Follow all of the directions.
- Use outside readers to identify and reduce institution-specific jargon and blind-spots as well as assist with editing.
- Provide an analysis of data, not just a data dump.
- Make sure all electronic devices and links work!
- Serve as an evaluator, if you can.

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## Also...

- Write clearly and succinctly.
- Use pointed examples.
- Save the reader time by pointing directly to the specific supporting documentation - excerpting when it makes sense.
- When in doubt, ask your SACSCOC Vice President for advice.
- Use sampling, when appropriate, and explain your rationale for how you have established that sample.

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## So what's in it for me and my institution?

- Fifth-Year Review is an excellent opportunity to refocus on compliance and introduce new campus community members to accreditation concepts.
- Completion of a cycle; marks conclusion of the reporting on your QEP




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## Questions?

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