Gearing Up For The Site Visit

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The college has submitted the Institutional Self Evaluation Report. Now what? There are logistical and other preparatory needs your college will need to complete prior to welcoming your visitation team to your campus. This session will discuss some dos and don’ts that will help all members of your college feel prepared for the visit including faculty (both full and part-time), classified staff, administration, students, and even your board of trustees. How do you build a climate of excitement instead of fear? Let’s find out together.
Overview

• Pre-visit Considerations
• About Your Visiting Team
• What to Expect
• Your Time to Shine
• Get Others Involved
• After the Team Leaves…
Acronym-ese

- ACCJC – Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
- WASC – Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- ISER – Institutional Self Evaluation Report
- QFE – Quality Focus Essay
- ER – Eligibility Requirement
- SLO – Student Learning Outcome
- USDE – United States Department of Education
- NACIQI – National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity
- CEO – Chief Executive Officer (College President or District Chancellor)
- CIO – Chief Instructional Officer (Vice President of Instruction or Academic Affairs)
- CBO/CFO – Chief Business/Financial Officer (Vice President of Administration)
- ALO – Accreditation Liaison Officer
Pre-visit Considerations
It starts way before the visit…

- Organizing the home team
- Organizing your evidence
- More is not better; Less is more
- Identify “the experts” at your college
Areas of Faculty Expertise

You may want to provide a faculty lead in the following areas:
• Distance Education (including an understanding of the technology behind the DE programs)
• SLO Design and Assessment
• Program Review
• Evaluation and Planning
• Governance
• Career and Technical Education
• Basic Skills/Pre-Collegiate
• Non-Credit
About Your Visiting Team
Who is on the team?

- Typically 7-10 members:
  - Faculty and Administrators (discipline, counselor, librarian, researcher, CIO, CEO, CBO, DE Coordinator, SLO Coordinator…);
  - Peers
  - Volunteers
  - ACCJC VP – new

- Before they arrive:
  - Team Training
  - Read college ISER and QFE; reviewed evidence
  - Assigned to Standards to write Team Report
  - Request meetings with college constituencies (often change…)
  - Generally draft entire report prior to arrival on campus
What do the team members do?

• **During the Visit:**
  • Work Sunday through Thursday, early morning through the evening
  • Meet with various college members
  • Visit classrooms and facilities
  • Team meetings
  • Continue writing the Team Report

• **Interpret how college story aligns to the standards**
• **Do NOT compare your college to theirs**
• **Not investigating; not the FBI**
Treat them well.

• Hospitality:
  • Provide a warm welcome upon the team’s arrival.
  • Clear your calendar as much as possible so that you can meet with them as needed. Make sure others are available, too.
  • Provide meals, snacks, and drinks.
  • Consider the comfort of their workroom – temperature, chairs, tables, adequate space, lighting, and noise. Provide tech support!!
  • Team meetings

• Collegiality:
  • Always assume good intentions
  • Respond positively to their requests
What to Expect
Before the visit…

• The Team Chair and Assistant visit the college ahead of time.
• The ALO (usually) will make sure the team has appropriate accommodations.
• The ALO or some other designee will coordinate a meeting schedule/calendar for the visit and disseminate.
During the visit...

• Usually starts Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning and ends Thursday by noon:
  • Team Welcome – faculty, administrators, classified staff, students, and board members (especially the college leaders and those closely involved with the accreditation ISER)
  • Meetings and/or Forums with team members and various college constituents.
  • Visits by team members to college committee/council meetings, classrooms (on campus and online), and facilities.
  • Exit Event – scripted, no conversation
During the visit...

• What will the team be looking for?

• Who will the team want to meet with?

• What type of meetings will team members attend?
  • Provide open forums (ideas: include students, community partners, board members, high school pathway team members, etc.)

• NEW – One of the Commission Vice Presidents will accompany the team to assist both the team and the college through the process.
Get prepped…

• Prepare your college for the visit – standing committee, education of the campus (workshops, newsletters, etc.)

• Everyone should be able to answer some basic questions

• Some critical processes and documents should be in place:
  • Program Review
  • Program Vitality Review
  • Student Learning Outcomes, including “closing the loop”
  • Active CTE Advisory Committees
  • Evidence of using data for decisions
  • SLOs on syllabi (the correct ones 😊)
“Pitfalls”

• Comparable services at other sites
• Regular and effective contact for distance education courses
• More data on SLOs or ISS are not helpful – direct data aligning to the standard is best
• Current evaluations of all employees
  • ER 20 – Integrity in Communication with the Public: Record of student grievances against the institution and ability to report complaints within 2 clicks and in BOT policy.
• Process to determine professional development needs and assess its effectiveness
• Disaggregation of data
• Integrated Planning – Allocation of resources connected to student needs
• Generally, opportunities for all employees to have a voice in processes
Making the Evidence Work

• Don’t throw in the kitchen sink – be precise
• Use documents that describe your process – you can and should use ASCCC documents on Program and Curriculum that includes the process and references
• Try to flow chart your processes very simply. The team wants to know how the information and decision-making flows.
Your Time to Shine
It’s time…

On your mark…

get set…

GO!
Don’t worry…

• Be open and honest about your college
• Highlight your accomplishments
• Share your plans for improvement
• Anticipate any weaknesses and give timeline to remedy
Get Others Involved
Be sure to include…

• Part-time Faculty
• Classified Professional Staff
• Students
After the Team Leaves…
Celebrate…

• Team will finalize the draft Team Report.
• Team chair will send draft report to college CEO to check for “errors of fact”.
• Team chair will finalize the Team Report (may consult with team members)
• Team chair will submit Team Report to the Commission.
• Commission will determine college’s accreditation status at the next Commission meeting (January for fall visits and June for spring visits)—action letters usually sent by early February or early July.
Still have questions??