

UT MARTIN ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2017

Mark Your Calendars for January 8, 2018!

Our Assessment Workshop will be held on Monday, January 8, 2018 in the University Center Ballroom. Non-academic units will meet 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. and academic units will meet 1:00 – 4:00. Topics for both groups will include information about changes to the SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation* and the Fifth-Year Interim Report. In addition, non-academic units will discuss the creation and use of rubrics as assessment tools while academic units will discuss ways to enhance the transparency of course assignments in order to highlight connections between assignments and course or program student learning outcomes. Participants in the afternoon session should bring 1-2 sample assignments from their courses they would be willing to share with others for discussion.

Update from the SACSCOC Annual Meeting

SACSCOC approved the revised *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* that are effective as of December 5, 2017 (the date of approval by the membership). We will dig into some of the details of these new changes during our January workshop, but here are a few highlights:

- Previously, principles were organized into four categories: the Principle of Integrity, Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements. Revised Principles are organized into fourteen broad topics/categories. For example,

standards addressing full-time faculty, faculty qualifications, program faculty and coordination, faculty appointment and evaluation, academic freedom, and faculty development all appear in the category labeled “Faculty.”

- Six standards have been eliminated (including institutional effectiveness standards related to outreach and service), while two new standards have been added. In particular, one of the new standards asks institutions to describe their process(es) of educating students regarding ways to manage debt and repay student loans.
- Many standards have been reworded to simplify the language, clarify expectations, and/or more closely reflect current and emerging concerns within the region and at the federal level.
- There is still an expectation of a quality enhancement plan (QEP) that will concentrate on student success, but there will be some process changes in relation to the QEP that will allow greater flexibility to institutions in defining and implementing their QEPs.

SACSCOC will be posting the “official” newly-revised *Principles of Accreditation* soon. In the meantime, you can read the revisions (listed as “proposed”) on the SACSCOC website here:

<http://www.sacscoc.org/2017ProposedPrinciples.asp>. Click on “Proposed *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*” to read the revised standards. To compare the revision with the original document, look at the “Cross-walk for Reaffirmation.” If you are particularly

interested in the Fifth-Year Interim Reports, see:

- Transitional plan for Fifth-Year Interim Reports;
- Proposed Standards for Fifth-Year Interim Reports Aligned with the Proposed *Principles*; and
- Cross-walk for Fifth Year Interim Reports.

The *SACSCOC Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation* is being revised and reorganized for use with the revised *Principles of Accreditation*. According to Dr. Michael Johnson, who is revising the manual, the new document will feature expanded rationale and notes sections, lists of sample documentation, questions to consider while responding to standards, and cross-references to SACSCOC documents and other related standards within the *Principles*. The revised Resource Manual should be available on the SACSCOC website in late Spring 2018.

2017 SACSCOC Conference Handouts Currently Available

If you would like to explore handouts from sessions presented at the 2017 Annual Meeting, please go to: <http://www.sacscoc.org/2017AMHo/main.html>. This site includes links to slide presentations and handouts from most of the session presenters.

In particular, you may want to explore the materials from Dr. Brandon Busted, the Executive Director for Education and Workforce Development at Gallup. His materials reflect current research by Gallup that contrast perceptions of higher education with measurements of the impact of higher education on the well-being of college graduates. In particular, he discusses the findings of the Gallup-Purdue Index (in which UT Martin is participating).

Expanding Capacity by Supporting Attendance at SACSCOC Conferences

Chancellor Carver generously supported registration and travel costs for Dr. Brian Wagner (Department of Mathematics and Statistics) and Mr. Joe Henderson (Office of Equity and Diversity) to attend the SACSCOC Annual Meeting. Dr. Wagner and Mr. Henderson will be sharing their experiences in future *Assessment Newsletters*.

We are planning to choose two participants for each of the 2018 SACSCOC conferences. The Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation will be held July 22-25, 2018, in Atlanta, GA and will focus on improving the quality of our institutions. To see a schedule and handouts from the 2017 institute, visit:

<http://www.sacscoc.org/institute.asp>. This institute usually has a limited number of participants. Registration will open in early Spring. If you are interested in attending, please watch for our call for proposals to attend.

The 2018 SACSCOC Annual Meeting will be held December 8-11, 2018, in New Orleans, LA. We anticipate that this meeting will have numerous sessions focusing on the revised *Principles*. We will issue a call for proposals to attend this meeting in late Summer or early Fall.

