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Redesigning Regional Accreditation

The Impact on Institutional Planning

Regional accrediting bodies continue to sharpen their focus on student learning, with implications for planners.

by **Rudolph S. Jackson, Jimmy H. Davis, and Francesina R. Jackson**

Rudolph S. Jackson has worked in higher education for more than 30 years as a faculty member and administrator. As vice president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, he has developed insights regarding the accreditation process from multiple perspectives and has played an important role in planning and implementing changes to institutional reviews.

Jimmy H. Davis's over 35 years of experience in higher education, as well as his current professional responsibilities as vice president at Union University, have shaped his perspectives regarding accreditation. He has also served as a peer evaluator in the southern region. He currently teaches a doctorate-level course in planning and assessment.

Francesina R. Jackson's perceptions regarding accreditation have been shaped by her work as an administrator in teacher education programs. She has served as an evaluator with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Introduction

Regional accreditation, the “gold standard” of higher education institutional quality, has been around at least since the 1850s (Ewell 2008). In *U.S. Accreditation and the Future of Quality Assurance*, Ewell (2008) describes four distinct periods in the history of accreditation in the United States, which range from defining a college to the current age of accountability. Many suggest that we are entering a fifth period of redesign that refocuses accreditation compliance from an evaluation of institutional resources and internal operations to a distinct emphasis on outcomes. This article describes the redesign that is occurring at the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS COC), one of the six regional accrediting associations,¹ and the national implications of this redesign. Specifically, the article outlines some of the important changes in regional accreditation and their projected impact on institutional planning.

Regional accreditation takes on increasing significance when one considers that it is becoming more global. For example, SACS COC accredits institutions in Latin America and the United Arab Emirates, and the other five regional associations also accredit institutions around the world. Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that colleges and universities located in other parts of the world frequently

emulate practices developed in the United States, including accreditation processes. As a result, accreditation redesign may also have a far-reaching impact on institutional planning, regardless of an institution's regional affiliation. The SACS COC accreditation redesign requires institutions to demonstrate impact on student learning. To do so, institutions allocate resources and focus their planning on ensuring that students meet the targeted learning objectives. It is important to note that regional accreditation associations are fundamentally similar, as described in the next section.

Common Patterns Among Regional Accreditation Associations

Constitutional limitations prevent the formation of a centralized, federal system of education that exercises control over all postsecondary educational institutions in the United States. Instead, U.S. postsecondary institutions enjoy considerable autonomy, with states providing most of the oversight. To ensure a level of quality from one state to another, regional accreditation developed as a means of providing nongovernmental, peer-to-peer evaluations of institutional quality.

The regional accreditation associations are located in different geographical areas of the country and reflect the historical and cultural differences of these regions. They vary in the number of institutions they accredit from under 200 to well over 1,000. These institutions serve over 14 million students (Wolff 2005). Despite their differences, the regional associations have many similarities in that each has a published set of standards and each uses similar stages in the accreditation process: eligibility and candidacy, self-review, on-site team visit, and decision/appeal. Figure 1 outlines these common features; a discussion of each is also presented.

Eligibility and candidacy. In this stage, the institution first applies to the regional association to demonstrate that it meets the basic standards of the review process. The

eligibility application documents that the institution is licensed in a state covered by the regional association and that it meets eligibility standards, such as having a bona fide governance structure, faculty with appropriate credentials, degree-granting status, and a general education component. When the association determines that the institution has met eligibility requirements, the institution may apply for candidacy.

The self-study. Following candidacy, the institution presents evidence to show that it meets all of the association's standards for accreditation and, if successful, next develops the self-study. This begins with a review of the institution's operations from an internal perspective. The self-study assessment becomes a formal document outlining the institution's compliance with the guidelines of the accrediting association. An important component of the self-study process and report is the status of institutional effectiveness or the manner in which an institution demonstrates its ability to plan and evaluate current practices and improve its operations.

Peer review of self-study, on-site verification, and accreditation decision. Peer review and on-site visits are integral components of the verification process. Based on findings gathered from interviews, document review, and observation, the peer reviewers submit recommendations to the regional association, which then makes a final decision as to the institution's readiness to become initially accredited or to have its existing membership reaffirmed. Each of the regional accrediting associations has a mechanism by which institutions can appeal decisions.

While the six regional accrediting associations have evolved over time and now incorporate some of their own particular practices and procedures, each still seeks to assess the performance of individual institutions against standards developed collaboratively with other regional associations (Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions 2003). This collaboration results in the six associations sharing common themes in compliance standards, as shown in figure 2.

Figure 1 **Common Steps Toward Regional Accreditation**

Establish Eligibility and Candidacy	Prepare a Self-Study Addressing Compliance	Peer Review On-Site Verification Visit	On-site Committee Findings and Recommendations	Regional Body Accreditation Decision
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Figure 2 **Core Compliance Categories**

<i>Core Compliance</i>	<i>Description</i>
Philosophy/Objectives	Each campus unit and function should in some way support the institution's mission. In supporting standards of good academic practice, the institution has an opportunity to show how its philosophy and objectives support the achievement of its mission on an ongoing basis.
Governance/Management	A balanced governance structure allows the institution to be autonomous and flexible in accomplishing its mission. Good practice in this area demonstrates that the governing board, not controlled by a minority opinion, is a policy-setting entity without day-to-day oversight of the institutional operations. The governing board approves and evaluates the chief executive officer who administers and implements policy with assistance of qualified faculty and administrators.
Curriculum Development	As the faculty of an institution sets the curriculum, consideration must be given to appropriate content, quality, and effectiveness in support of the degree(s) offered. A well-established process for curriculum review should exist and be continuously assessed to ensure acceptable procedures for awarding credit and that course and program competencies are met. Additionally, the quality assurance procedures should include transfer work and methods of delivery for which the institution has responsibility.
Faculty/Staff Credentialing	Compliance standards indicate that the institution assigns responsibility for academic program coordination as well as curriculum development to persons academically qualified in the field. The institution is responsible for hiring faculty academically qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. In determining qualifications, consideration is given to such factors as the highest degree earned as well as competence, effectiveness, work experiences, and other documented support.
Financial/Physical Resources	Through the governing board and administrative structure, the institution addresses issues related to legal authority, operating control, and the stability of the institution's financial operating trends. Reports in this area include updates involving the security of a well-maintained campus environment.
Student Support Services	Student support services include all services needed to ensure an effective learning environment. This includes support for library and other learning resource needs, with access to qualified staff. Student Affairs, led by qualified personnel, supports student learning and development and maintains services that promote student rights to privacy, security, and integrity of records.
Institutional Effectiveness	As part of internal assessment procedures, each of the functional areas described above is expected to establish outcomes, assess achievement of these outcomes, and inform the planning process based upon this information. This internal review is a significant component of self-monitoring and reflects an ongoing assessment of how well an institution plans and achieves important objectives as part of its operations.

Many well-established institutions have already achieved regional accreditation. Consequently, the major emphasis in recent years has been on an institution maintaining its accredited status and good standing as a member school. This reaffirmation process promotes the public's confidence in an institution's ability to continue to adhere to established standards of good academic practice. The reaffirmation process is not a comparison between institutions; rather, it is an assessment of institutional performance against established norms based on the institution's mission and other characteristics. Hence, the reaffirmation review is institution-specific, illustrating the unique manner in which institutions within each of the regions establish and maintain student learning environments.

Since 1984, various groups have called for concrete evidence of student achievement in higher education as expressed by student learning outcomes (Association of American Colleges 1985; National Governors' Association 1986; National Institute of Education 1984). Several reports (Business-Higher Education Forum 2004; National Commission on Accountability in Higher Education 2005; U.S. Department of Education 2006) have concluded that regional accrediting associations must refocus their review from institutional resources (inputs) and practices (process) to address student learning outcomes as part of their accountability response. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has led the way in promoting the use of assessment data for institutional planning and decision making. In addition, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (2003, p. 143) states in its handbook, "Accreditation has two fundamental purposes: to certify the quality of the institution or program and to assist in the improvement of the institution or program."

Although the nomenclature and number of accrediting criteria vary among the regional accrediting associations, each assesses formal educational activities and evaluates governance and administration, financial stability, admissions and student personnel services, resources, student academic achievement, organizational effectiveness, and relationships with outside constituencies (The Higher Learning Commission 2003a).

Tensions Between Regulatory Functions and Institutional Improvement

The qualitative nature of several of the accreditation standards allows regional associations latitude in evaluating

a wide variety of collegiate institutions that differ in purpose, size, organization, scope of program, clientele served, support, and control (New England Association of Schools and Colleges 2005). However, the focus on the need to meet compliance standards can cause institutions to minimize the important formative nature of the accreditation process and its role in promoting quality and institutional improvement. In fact, anecdotal evidence suggests that in the past, many institutions completed the reaffirmation of accreditation and then shelved the review materials until the next decennial review. Some administrators even considered the process as jumping through hoops; occasionally, the process was viewed as confrontational. Many of the recent changes in regional accreditation have resulted from internal quality management reviews to assess the value and benefits of the accreditation process to member schools.

As a further response to the growing national assessment movement, regional accreditation associations quickly became involved in its emphasis on institutional and program improvement. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools led the way with its adoption in 1984 of an Institutional Effectiveness Standard (Miller 1998). This standard originally required higher education institutions to articulate expected program outcomes and now does the same for course outcomes. Institutions are required to measure the achievement of these outcomes and to demonstrate the use of these results to improve the program and ensure student learning. Other regional associations followed the Southern Association's approach.

Regional accreditation associations have become involved with institutional and program improvement.

For example, in 1988 the Western Association of Schools and Colleges incorporated language into its standards similar to that of the Southern Association. These changes bridged the gap between the traditional emphasis on evaluating institutional resources (inputs) and practices (process) and the new emphasis on outcomes as part of the accountability response. The accrediting process now provides institutions with ways (through the use of outcomes) to document the advancement of institutional/educational improvement. It appears that the tension between compliance and institutional advancement has been replaced with an atmosphere of mutual support.

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Recognizing the need for innovative approaches to accreditation, the Pew Charitable Trusts began providing resources to regional accreditation associations in the late 1990s to begin experimenting with different facets of the institutional review process. Pew grants were provided to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Senior College Commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The regional associations involved their members in the review process through meetings and study groups, and these self-reviews resulted in significant changes to the accreditation process (Eaton 2001).

Having six regional accrediting associations provides opportunities for experimentation and adaptation; this is reflected in the individual approaches these three associations took to reforming their processes. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association adopted two programs for maintaining accredited status: the Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality (PEAQ) and the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). Both programs include distinctive outcome components, with the AQIP giving the institution more leeway in structuring the

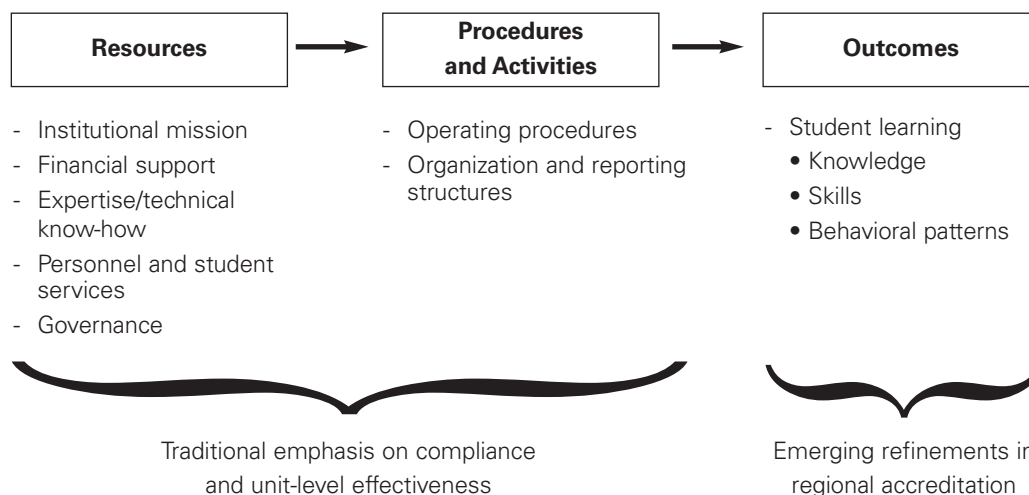
accreditation process around quality improvement principles (The Higher Learning Commission 2003b). The Senior College Commission of the Western Association adopted a three-stage accreditation process and revised its standards to place greater emphasis on student learning outcomes (Western Association of Schools and Colleges 2008).

The remaining discussion focuses on the experiences and innovations of the Southern Association Commission on Colleges (SACS COC). The objective is to illustrate how an intentional shift toward an expected outcome of student learning can have a profound effect on institutional planning as an institution reaffirms its accreditation.

Systems Planning and Institutional Assessment

This section focuses on the shift in documenting outcomes through the use of systems planning. This analytical concept has been used to better understand complex relationships, ranging from basic interactions between individuals (White 2006) to the evaluation of student learning styles (Graf and Kinshuk 2008). An important feature of this concept is that it can be used to illustrate the alignment of resources and the way in which a prescribed course of action leads to the achievement of specific objectives or outcomes. In the example of regional accreditation, the systems model shown in figure 3 illustrates the interconnection between traditional accrediting methods and some of the recent assessment trends that emphasize outcomes.

Figure 3 **A Systems View of Regional Accreditation**



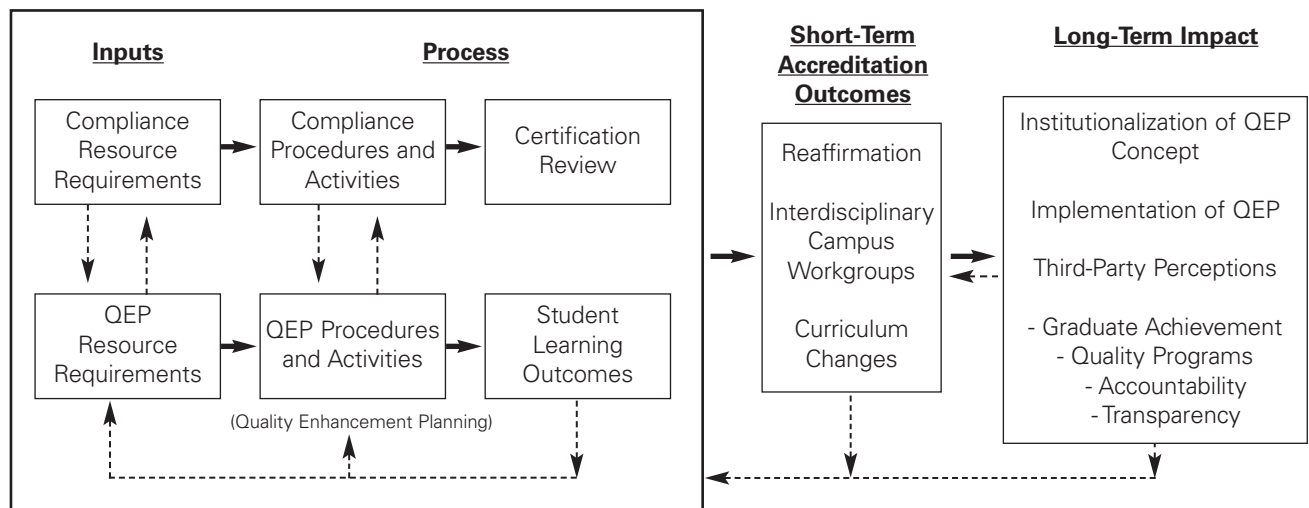
Based on the manner in which assessments have traditionally been conducted, an outcomes focus is often embedded in the compliance standards that institutions address, particularly in light of the emphasis on the effectiveness of each area of operations (e.g., academic/administrative units). Institutional effectiveness, as described in figure 2, includes a series of assessments designed to measure how well various units achieve set targets and objectives. Typically, these assessments denote the progress being made in meeting planning targets, including the use of results to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of unit operations. The results themselves may reflect program and curriculum relevancy, faculty performance and productivity, adequacy of overall financial support, and the performance of other campus operations.

Admittedly, assessments in these areas describe performance, but are best viewed as unit-level or internal outcomes, demonstrating how functional areas operate on an ongoing basis. Systems analysis, in this case, is much broader and provides an opportunity to view reaffirmation in holistic terms, further illustrating the extent to which institutions consider specific outcomes in aligning resources and operating practices. The overarching question becomes, “What does the institution actually accomplish or what is the outcome of its combined internal operations?”

As part of the process of rethinking and refining regional oversight for higher education institutions, SACS COC has incorporated elements of an outcomes component into the reaffirmation process as a way of making formal peer review more meaningful. This longitudinal approach provides a framework that illustrates the interconnections between each of the three main systems components: inputs, process, and the prominence of student learning outcomes in the accreditation process, as shown in figure 4.

After the revised set of standards (known as the Principles of Accreditation) was formally approved in 2001, it was piloted among a select group of eight institutions that broadly reflected the characteristics of the entire membership of accredited schools. Based on this experience, SACS COC redesigned the entire scope of its operations to incorporate student learning outcomes as a major focus in reaffirming all member schools. During this stage of development, an institution with only initial membership was not required to meet the new outcomes standard; however, it was still deemed important for these institutions to thoroughly address each of the compliance standards. Reaffirmation of accreditation became the point at which member schools addressed the full range of accrediting standards for both compliance and the inclusion of a plan to enhance student learning.

Figure 4 **An Integrated System of Compliance and Outcomes**



Student learning and quality enhancement. As part of the outcomes phase of reaffirmation, SACS COC requires institutions to present a well-constructed plan that identifies strategies to produce measurable improvement(s) in student learning in one (or more) of three areas:

- What do students know in terms of increased knowledge?
- What skill(s) can students demonstrate?
- What behavioral changes have students made relative to how they think?

A reaffirmation plan that focuses on any of these areas offers the institution several options to align student learning with different fields of academic study or discipline. This new accreditation requirement is called the Quality Enhancement Plan (or the QEP as it has come to be known in the southern region). To date, the list of QEP topics selected by institutions reflects several common themes, such as writing skills, critical thinking, student engagement, and promoting international understanding. Institutions may choose to address the same or similar sets of student learning objectives using an array of competing strategies. For example, one institution seeking to improve student writing skills may choose to address this outcome in the traditional classroom environment while another might design its plan around the use of academic support services, including counseling and/or self-paced instruction.

In developing the QEP, all institutions are expected to (1) identify clearly focused and articulated learning objectives; (2) provide a compelling rationale for the plan, demonstrating the institution's capability and commitment to implementing the plan; and (3) identify an assessment procedure to measure student learning outcomes.

As regional accrediting associations continue the shift toward outcomes assessment, SACS COC, like other regional players, has retained a strong commitment to addressing compliance standards. SACS COC requires each institution to provide a self-assessed compliance certification that proves it meets or satisfies all accrediting standards. While compliance has been shown to be an important component of accreditation, the transformative component of the process is its emphasis on student learning outcomes and the dramatic impact it can have on the institutional review process, as shown in figure 4. The integrated system of compliance and outcomes illustrates the importance of feedback whereby accreditation outcomes influence input and process components. In essence, results of the short- and long-term impacts can dictate refinements to the QEP and compliance activities.

Accountability, Transparency, and Student Learning

A recent analysis of educational trends points to an increasing focus on accountability, transparency, and student learning (U.S. Department of Education 2006). The innovations occurring in the southern region are aimed at promoting and incorporating these three principles as part of the accreditation procedure. Specifically, the SACS COC on-site review represents a strategic point at which these three principles converge.

To illustrate, even before the formal on-site review is conducted, institutions routinely circulate and vet ideas related to a proposed enhancement project with member institutions that have either already undergone reaffirmation or with cohort institutions seeking reaffirmation at the same time. This early exchange of information spotlights one of the positive features of the peer review process: institutions provide reciprocal support on a noncompetitive basis regarding organization and planning strategies that have been found to be best practices in this phase of accreditation.

Other efforts are made to promote open peer review, one of which is to list the topic and abstract from each institution's QEP on the SACS COC Web site. The association is careful, however, not to endorse any of the institutional plans or procedures. Yet, posting topics and abstracts represents increased transparency and provides opportunities for interested parties to examine the purpose and scope of targeted student learning activities and the projected demand for and use of institutional resources.

The Accreditation Process and Questions of Value and Efficacy

There are two sources of recent information that offer insight into the experiences of institutions undergoing the accreditation process, as well as emerging perceptions of member schools regarding the development of a QEP: (1) a survey administered by the Needs Assessment Task Force and Peer Review Advisory Board (Needs Assessment Task Force 2009) and (2) case impact reports from three of the eight pilot schools. These two sources highlight and describe experiences with and insights about the new process in terms of efficacy and the impact on institutional outcomes.

The task force survey. The work of the task force is centered squarely on assessing value, quality, and the consistency of the accreditation process in the southern

region. As part of this work, the task force administered an anonymous online survey to representatives of member institutions that had recently undergone at least one phase of the accreditation review. Of the 37 percent of institutions responding to the survey, many had been involved in some aspect of reaffirmation, either from the standpoint of a compliance evaluation and/or an on-site review of their QEP (Needs Assessment Task Force 2009).

The emphasis of this discussion is on describing major themes of concern and support for the new process as articulated by the survey responses. One of the survey questions asked specifically, "What programs, procedures, and/or practices should the Commission on Colleges implement?" Respondents addressed core themes based on their own perceptions and experiences. For example, one respondent expressed what he/she saw as a disconnect between the two phases of accreditation review, namely the off-site and on-site reviews that respectively focus on compliance issues and the assessment of the institution's QEP. This respondent stated:

The current Compliance Certification and QEP efforts are intended to complement each other, but in practice they tend to operate parallel to one another. A more cohesive approach would alleviate the perception that there are two separate activities and would clarify that they are part of the same reaffirmation process.

Figure 4 illustrates the reciprocal interaction between the compliance review and the development of the QEP. Success at both stages of review is necessary to achieve the immediate and desired macro-level outcomes, including institutional reaffirmation. Faculty and administrators are expected to play a major role in bringing together different academic groups and resources into what are often described as interdisciplinary settings to effect curricular improvements that promote student learning.

There is a purposeful link between compliance evaluation and learning outcomes.

Rather than being two separate review components, there is a purposeful link between compliance evaluation and learning outcomes. Compliance procedures and activities emphasize plans related to the institution's operations,

including the QEP. As conceptualized, the QEP demonstrates the manner in which institutions bring together resources to achieve specific student learning outcomes.

Another comment from the survey suggests that some participants may view the process of implementing the QEP as pass/fail, especially if planned student learning outcomes are not achieved. The respondent stated:

The QEP process should be evaluated as to its merit. Institutions have taken on substantial projects for this core requirement (for reaffirmation) and their achievements should be examined. If the results do not indicate significant improvements in the quality of the learning experience, consideration should be given to "rethinking" this requirement as it exists.

SACS COC understood at the early stages of introducing the QEP concept that institutions operate within dynamic social and economic environments, often with little or no control over events. Because of this level of uncertainty, member schools cannot be held to standards of absolute success in achieving stated objectives, but rather to standards of integrity, adhering to the best educational practices, and employing due diligence in efforts to improve student learning. Hence, the value of the QEP should also be assessed over a period of time.

Lessons from pilot cases. As part of the monitoring process, three of the eight pilot institutions have submitted follow-up or impact reports. The purpose of these reports is to highlight and chronicle the experiences and successes that these institutions have had in implementing their plans. The reports also represent the kind of reporting schedule that all member schools are expected to follow after being reaffirmed. Of the three reporting institutions, two are state supported and one is a private, religiously-affiliated, historically black college. Even though these institutions range in student enrollment from 900 to 16,000, the authors identified similarities in the effect the QEP has had on their institutional planning (Jackson 2009).

It is important to point out that as part of the pilot process, institutions were not held to the strict standard of developing student learning outcomes, but more to educational standards that might facilitate the process of student learning. Many of the pilot outcomes emphasized themes such as retention and course completion. In systems terms, these outcomes are representative of

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what is described in figure 4 as the long-term impact of the QEP. As the pilot schools began implementing their plans, it became apparent to SACS officials that the underlying focus on student learning could facilitate institutional planning by emphasizing a common thematic approach. However, institutions could still develop plans that were meaningful and consistent with their unique missions.

The impact reports described the goals and strategies of each institution's QEP, the assessments used to measure the achievement of goals, and the planning strategies adopted during implementation. The number of impact reports completed to date is small. The three discussed here are presented as cases to provide direction and insight to other institutions launching bids for reaffirmation. Even though student learning outcomes were not initially stipulated for the pilot schools, several important themes were identified in the impact reports:

- Institutions reported positive student outcomes, both cognitive and social. For example, one institution reported that student participation in undergraduate research projects increased from as few as 13 students during the first year of the project (2001) to 74 students during the 2009 academic period. Another institution reported that the college's student in-course retention rate had increased by approximately 4 percent by the time of its on-site visit, and that the rate had grown by more than 10 percent since initiating the QEP.
- Institutions reported unanticipated positive outcomes for faculty and staff. Some of the significant changes reported included:
 - increased faculty use of data for planning course modifications;
 - increase in faculty professional development activities focused on institutional goals and priorities;
 - incorporation of QEP components into the overall institutional strategic planning process;
 - increased faculty interactions between disciplines to achieve QEP objectives; and
 - the filtering down to the course level of the QEP process of identifying appropriate assessment instruments to measure student learning and course configuration.

One institution reported that both faculty and staff have become more accustomed to requesting, interpreting, and using data from the college research office to make

data-informed decisions. This represents a shift in orientation to emphasizing the use of data "to improve and not only to prove." Another pilot institution summarized its experience by stating:

The QEP has been a transformational gift. It has prompted an infrastructure by which we continue to enhance student learning and strive to improve what we do. The QEP is an ongoing, integral component of the college's Performance Excellence Model as the institution continues on its performance excellence journey. The QEP has definitely helped to move the college in the direction of becoming a more data-informed, learning-centered institution.

As the number of QEP impact reports increases, SACS COC expects to develop a rich reservoir of information that will have important implications both for regional members and for higher education in general in terms of promoting student learning and the role of the QEP as a transformative component in the planning process.

Implications of Accreditation Refinements on Institutional Planning

The innovative nature of the refined SACS COC institutional review process has had several unintended and positive effects on institutions, as demonstrated by the impact reports from the pilot schools. For example, figure 4 shows that an expanded emphasis on student learning can influence institutional program and curricular changes, including instructional strategies and assessment procedures. This has certainly been the case for institutions developing a QEP.

Currently, institutions recognize the inherent value of interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning. However, merging of different knowledge bases may make it difficult to assess learning using traditional procedures. It appears that interdisciplinary approaches demand more performance-based assessment measures (Mansilla and Duraising 2007; Stowe and Eder 2002). Bringing academic units together on an interdisciplinary basis may have long-term benefits that result in institutionalizing planning patterns and activities and creating collaborative structures for addressing student learning.

Yet another impact of the focus on student learning has been to more consciously scrutinize the instructional

process. Rather than spotlighting what faculty members do, the emphasis is now on student performance and how student behavior and characteristics ensure learning. This shift also emphasizes how faculty members' behavior and/or characteristics facilitate learning.

Just as the vision for accrediting associations has evolved over time to address critical issues confronting the academy, these associations must once again find ways to guide member schools as they face unprecedented challenges in planning for and addressing student needs. Clearly, the trend toward transparency, accountability, and student learning directs institutions to operate differently today than they have in the past. As institutions are challenged to change and plan for the future, regional accreditation continues to serve as a beacon, retaining its pivotal role in ensuring higher education quality. Increased knowledge of, appreciation for, and understanding of current accreditation principles will enable institutions to better plan and allocate resources to achieve their goals. ❏

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Note

1. The six regional accrediting associations are the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands); the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont); the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Department of Defense schools, and colleges and schools in sovereign U.S. tribal nations); the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington); the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Latin America, and the United Arab Emirates); and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (California, Hawaii, and the Pacific Basin).