

# Core Requirements and Committee Assignments

<u>Standard</u>	<u>Responsible Committee Member</u>	<u>Subcommittee Members</u>
2.1 The institution has degree-granting authority from the appropriate government agency or agencies. <b>(Degree-granting Authority)</b>	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
2.2 The institution has a governing board of at least five members that is the legal body with specific authority over the institution. The board is an active policy-making body for the institution and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are adequate to provide a sound educational program. The board is not controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from it. Neither the presiding officer of the board nor the majority of other voting members of the board have contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. A military institution authorized and operated by the federal government to award degrees has a public board in which neither the presiding officer nor a majority of the other members are civilian employees of the military or active/retired military. The board has broad and significant influence upon the institution's programs and operations, plays an active role in policy-making, and ensures that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide a sound educational program. The board is not controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from the board except as specified by the authorizing legislation. Neither the presiding officer of the board nor the majority of other voting board members have contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. <b>(Governing Board)</b>	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
2.3 The institution has a chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is to the institution and who is not the presiding officer of the board. <b>(Chief Executive Officer)</b>	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
2.4 The institution has a clearly defined and published mission statement specific to the institution and appropriate to an institution of higher education, addressing teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service. <b>(Institutional Mission)</b>	Newt Smith	
2.5 The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of programs and services that (a) results in continuing improvement, and (b) demonstrates that the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. <b>(Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Renee Corbin; Carol Burton	

2.6 The institution is in operation and has students enrolled in degree programs. <b>(Continuous Operation)</b>	Elizabeth Frazier	
2.7 The institution		
2.7.1 offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. The institution provides a written justification and rationale for program equivalency. <b>(Program Length)</b>	Elizabeth Frazier	
2.7.2 offers degree programs that embody a coherent course of study that is compatible with its stated purpose and is based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. <b>(Program Content)</b>	Beth Lofquist	
2.7.3 requires in each undergraduate degree program the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts; social/behavioral sciences; and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. The institution provides a written justification and rationale for course equivalency. <b>(General Education)</b>	Beth Lofquist	
2.7.4 provides instruction for all course work required for at least one degree program at each level at which it awards degrees. If the institution makes arrangements for some instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia, or uses some other alternative approach to meeting this requirement, the alternative approach must be approved by the Commission on Colleges. In all cases, the institution demonstrates that it controls all aspects of its educational program. <b>(Contractual Agreements for Instruction)</b> (See Commission policy "Core Requirement 2.7.4: Documenting an Alternate Approach.")	Elizabeth Frazier	
2.8 The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution. The institution has adequate faculty resources to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. In addition, upon application for candidacy, an applicant institution demonstrates that it meets Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 for faculty qualifications. <b>(Faculty)</b>	Noelle Kehrberg; Phil Kneller	

<p>2.9 The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections as well as to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. These collections and resources are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs. <b>(Learning Resources and Services)</b></p>	<p>Eloise Hitchcock; Bob Orr; Pat Brown</p>	
<p>2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. <b>(Student Support Services)</b></p>	<p>Debbie Beck</p>	
<p>2.11 The institution has a sound financial base, demonstrated financial stability, and adequate physical resources to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services. The member institution provides the following financial statements: (a) an institutional audit (or Standard Review Report issued in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a systemwide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or Standard Review Report) guide; (b) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and (c) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board. Audit requirements for applicant institutions may be found in the Commission policy entitled "Accreditation Procedures for Applicant Institutions." <b>(Resources)*</b></p>	<p>Jeanine Newman</p>	
<p>2.12 The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan and demonstrates that the plan is part of an ongoing planning and evaluation process. <b>(Quality Enhancement Plan)</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>	
<p>☐SECTION 3: Comprehensive Standards</p>		
<p><b>INSTITUTIONAL MISSION, GOVERNANCE, AND EFFECTIVENESS</b></p>		
<p><b>3.1 Institutional Mission</b></p>		
<p>3.1.1 The institution has a clear and comprehensive mission statement that guides it; is approved by the governing board; is periodically reviewed by the board; and is communicated to the institution's constituencies.</p>	<p>Newt Smith</p>	
<p><b>3.2 Governance and Administration</b></p>		
<p>3.2.1 The governing board of the institution is responsible for the selection and the evaluation of the chief executive officer.</p>	<p>Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner</p>	

3.2.2 The legal authority and operating control of the institution are clearly defined for the following areas within the institution's governance structure:		
3.2.2.1 institution's mission;		
3.2.2.2 fiscal stability of the institution;	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.2.3 institutional policy, including policies concerning related and affiliated corporate entities and all auxiliary services; and	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.2.4 related foundations (athletic, research, etc.) and other corporate entities whose primary purpose is to support the institution and/or its programs.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.3 The board has a policy addressing conflict of interest for its members.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.4 The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies, and protects the institution from such influence.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.5 Members of the governing board can be dismissed only for cause and by due process.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.6 There is a clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and practice, between the policy-making functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.7 The institution has a clearly defined and published organizational structure that delineates responsibility for the administration of policies.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.8 The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to lead the institution.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.9 The institution defines and publishes policies regarding appointment and employment of faculty and staff.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.10 The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its administrators, including the chief executive officer, on a periodic basis.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.11 The institution's chief executive officer has ultimate responsibility for, and exercises appropriate administrative and fiscal control over, the institution's intercollegiate athletics program.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.12 The institution's chief executive officer has ultimate control of the institution's fund-raising activities.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner	
3.2.13 Any institution-related foundation not controlled by the institution has a contractual or other formal agreement that (a) accurately describes the relationship between the institution and the foundation, and (b) describes any liability associated with that relationship. In all cases, the institution ensures that the relationship is consistent with its mission.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner; Jeanine Newman	
3.2.14 The institution's policies are clear concerning ownership of materials, compensation, copyright issues, and the use of revenue derived from the creation and production of all intellectual property. This applies to students, faculty, and staff.	Dianne Lynch; MaryAnn Lochner; Newt Smith; Pat Brown	
<b>3.3 Institutional Effectiveness</b>		

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.	Renee Corbin; Debbie Beck; Billie Ogletree; Newt Smith	
<b>PROGRAMS</b>		
<b>3.4 Educational Programs: <i>All Educational Programs (includes all on-campus, off-campus, and distance learning programs and course work)</i></b>		
3.4.1 The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded (a) is approved by the faculty and the administration, and (b) establishes and evaluates program and learning outcomes.	Renee Corbin; Newt Smith; LeVon Wilson	
3.4.2 The institution's continuing education, outreach, and service programs are consistent with the institution's mission.	Pat Brown	
3.4.3 The institution publishes admissions policies consistent with its mission.	Fred Hinson	
3.4.4 The institution has a defined and published policy for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, advanced placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript. ( <i>See Commission policy "The Transfer or Transcribing of Academic Credit."</i> )	Fred Hinson; Elizabeth Frazier	
3.4.5 The institution publishes academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice. These are disseminated to students, faculty, and other interested parties through publications that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution.	Steve Baxley; Elizabeth Frazier	
3.4.6 The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery.	Elizabeth Frazier	
3.4.7 The institution ensures the quality of educational programs/courses offered through consortia relationships or contractual agreements, ensures ongoing compliance with the comprehensive requirements, and evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the purpose of the institution.	Elizabeth Frazier	
3.4.8 The institution awards academic credit for course work taken on a noncredit basis only when there is documentation that the noncredit course work is equivalent to a designated credit experience.	Pat Brown	
3.4.9 The institution provides appropriate academic support services.	Steve Baxley	
3.4.10 The institution defines and publishes general education requirements for its undergraduate programs and major program requirements for all its programs. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs.	Beth Lofquist	

3.4.11 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student academic records and maintains special security measures to protect and back up data.	Elizabeth Frazier; Edna Waldrop	
3.4.12 The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty.	Beth Lofquist; Fred Hinson; Newt Smith	
3.4.13 For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration.	Noelle Kehrberg; Edna Waldrop; Kathleen Brennan	
3.4.14 The institution's use of technology enhances student learning, is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs, and ensures that students have access to and training in the use of technology.	Bob Orr; Pat Brown	
<b>3.5 Educational Programs: <i>Undergraduate Programs</i></b>		
3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies.	BethLofquist; Fred Hinson;	
3.5.2 The institution awards degrees only to those students who have earned at least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree through instruction offered by that institution. ( <i>See Commission policy "The Transfer or Transcribing of Academic Credit."</i> )	Elizabeth Frazier	
<b>3.6 Educational Programs: <i>Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Professional Programs</i></b>		
3.6.1 The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, and its master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs.	Josie Bewsey; Fred Hinson	
3.6.2 The institution ensures that its graduate instruction and resources foster independent learning, enabling the graduate to contribute to a profession or field of study.	Josie Bewsey; Fred Hinson	
3.6.3 The majority of credits toward a graduate or a post-baccalaureate professional degree is earned through the institution awarding the degree. In the case of graduate and post-baccalaureate professional degree programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortia arrangements, the student earns a majority of credits from the participating institutions. ( <i>See Commission policy "The Transfer or Transcribing of Academic Credit."</i> )	Josie Bewsey; Fred Hinson	
<b>3.7 Faculty</b>		

3.7.1 The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline in accordance with the guidelines listed below. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.	Noelle Kehrberg; Irene Welch; Kathleen Brennan; Edna Waldrop; Kathy Wong	
3.7.2 The institution regularly evaluates the effectiveness of each faculty member in accord with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status.	Irene Welch; Noelle Kehrberg; Kathleen Brennan; Kathy Wong	
3.7.3 The institution provides evidence of ongoing professional development of faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners.	Beth Lofquist; Kathleen Brennan;	
3.7.4 The institution ensures adequate procedures for safeguarding and protecting academic freedom.	MaryAnn Lochner; Newt Smith	
3.7.5 The institution publishes policies on the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic and governance matters.	MaryAnn Lochner; Newt Smith	
<b>3.8 Library and Other Learning Resources</b>		
3.8.1 The institution provides facilities, services, and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission.	Eloise Hitchcock; Bob Orr	
3.8.2 The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources.	Eloise Hitchcock; Bob Orr	
3.8.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff—with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/ information resources—to accomplish the mission of the institution.	Eloise Hitchcock; Bob Orr	
<b>3.9 Student Affairs and Services</b>		
3.9.1 The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community.	Debbie Beck; Steve Baxley	
3.9.2 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student records.	Debbie Beck; Steve Baxley; Elizabeth Frazier	
3.9.3 The institution provides services supporting its mission with qualified personnel to ensure the quality and effectiveness of its student affairs programs.	Debbie Beck	
<b>RESOURCES</b>		
<b>3.10 Financial and Physical Resources</b>	<b>Jeanine Newman; Nancy Dillard</b>	
3.10.1 The institution's recent financial history demonstrates financial stability.		

3.10.2 The institution provides financial statements and related documents, including multiple measures for determining financial health as requested by the Commission, which accurately and appropriately represent the total operation of the institution.		
3.10.3 The institution audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations.		
3.10.4 The institution exercises appropriate control over all its financial and physical resources.		
3.10.5 The institution maintains financial control over externally funded or sponsored research and programs.		
3.10.6 The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all members of the campus community.		
3.10.7 The institution operates and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, that are adequate to serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities.		
<input type="checkbox"/> SECTION 4: Federal Requirements		
4.1 When evaluating success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution's mission, the institution includes, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates.	Carol Burton; Renee Corbin	
4.2 The institution maintains a curriculum that is directly related and appropriate to its purpose and goals and to diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded.	Elizabeth Frazier	
4.3 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies.	Elizabeth Frazier; Steve Baxley	
4.4 The institution demonstrates that program length is appropriate for each of the degrees offered.	Elizabeth Frazier;	
4.5 The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. ( <i>See Commission policy "Complaint Procedures for the Commission or its Accredited Institutions."</i> )	MaryAnn Lochner; Steve Baxley; Fred Hinson	
4.6 Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices and policies.	Fred Hinson	

<p>4.7 The institution publishes the name of its primary accreditor and its address and phone number. (The publication of this information is presented so that it is clear that inquiries to the Commission should relate only to the accreditation status of the institution, and not to general admission information.)</p>	<p>Carol Burton</p>	
<p>4.8 The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the <i>1998 Higher Education Amendments</i>. (In reviewing the institution's compliance with these program responsibilities, the Commission relies on documentation forwarded to it by the U.S. Secretary of Education.)</p>	<p>MaryAnn Lochner; Carol Burton; Nancy Dillard</p>	