Assessment Data: Building Blocks for Strong Libraries and Successful Accreditation Reports

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Kathryn Crowe, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
The purpose of this session is to assist you to...

• Develop strategies to leverage your assessment program in order to prepare for accreditation.

• Develop effective accreditation reports with assessment data in order to document compliance.

• Develop approaches for working with staff in the libraries and on campus in order to prepare the library-related portions of accreditation reports.
Why do academic libraries assess?

Gain data and evidence for:

• Strategic planning
• Decision making
• Improvement and changes

Demonstrate our impact on:

• Student learning and success
• Research
• Curriculum
Assessment Cycle

1. Set goal or outcome
2. Develop Assessment Strategy
3. Implement Assessment
4. Analyze results
5. Action plan for improvement
Example:

- Provide excellent customer service
- Second assessment indicated improvement
- Mystery shopper exercise
- Standards developed
- Needed more clearly defined standards
How can the library’s assessment data contribute to accreditation reports?
Assessment and Accreditation

• Demonstrate that we support institution’s purpose, academic programs, teaching, scholarship, research and service programs through:
  
  • Collections and resources  
  • Facilities  
  • Services, including Information literacy  
  • Staff resources

• Assessment and analysis of data are expected and important to the health of Library Services and to the Institution as a whole.
Documentation of IE process and relevance of Library Collections and Services

- Demonstrate adequacy and appropriateness
- Provide supporting evidence
- Show change and improvements
Types of Accreditation

- **Institutional** -- Accredit the whole institution
  - Regional Accreditors
  - National

- **Programmatic or Specialized Accreditors** -- Usually accredit programs, departments, or schools that are parts of an institution, but may also accredit freestanding professional schools and other specialized/vocational institutions

- Some are recognized by Department of Education; others are not.
  - [http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html)
Campus Relationships

• With which accreditors does your institution hold membership?
  • What is your best source of information?
  • Why does it matter?

• How are librarians involved with strategic planning, assessment, student learning?
Proactivity is smart.

- “You can’t get out what you didn’t put in.”
- Timing matters
- Collaborate with key players
  - Institutional and programmatic accreditation leaders
  - Related data owners
Working with others to prepare

• Understand the relevant standards and desired format
• Establish timetables for reporting
• Create templates (Assessment web page or LibGuide) to provide baseline information regarding the library
Not all standards are equal

• Core Requirements vs. Comprehensive Standards or Federal Requirements

• Institutional Effectiveness and Finance

• “Federally-Related Standards” are reviewed by both Off-Site and On-Site Committees
## Preliminary Data

### Top 10 Most Frequently Cited Principles in Reaffirmation Reviews: 2014 Reaffirmation Class Institutions (N=83)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Stage I: OFF-Site Committee</th>
<th>Review Stage II: ON-Site Committee</th>
<th>Review Stage III: C&amp;R</th>
<th>Board of Trustees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Requirement/Standard</td>
<td>% Institutions in Non-Compliance</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>3.7.1 (Faculty Competence)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3.3.1.1 (IE - Educational Programs)</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>2.1.1.1 (Financial Resources)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>3.4.1.1 (Academic Program Coordination)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>3.2.1.5 (IE - Community/Public Service)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>3.3.1.2 (IE - Administrative Units)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>6.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>3.7.2 (Faculty Evaluation)</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>7.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>3.3.1.3 (IE - Educational Support)</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>8.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>2.8 (Faculty)</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>3.5.1 (General Education Competencies)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Key Descriptive Statistics

**Mean** = 1.65 | **SD** = 0.4 | **Range** = 56

**Selected General Areas of Non-Compliance** (Ch. Ch. CS. FR)

- **Policy-Related Principles**: 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.7, 3.2.14, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.5, 3.4.1, 3.1.5, 3.1.3, 3.1.2, 3.1.1, 3.0.5, 4.5, 4.8, 4.3, 4.1, 4.0
- **Educational Programs/Curriculum**: 2.7, 3.4.6, 4.2, 4.4, 2.12 and 3.12
- **Faculty**: 2.8, 3.4.11, 3.5.4, 3.7
- **Institutional Effectiveness**: 2.4, 2.5, 2.1.6, 3.3.1, 3.1.3, 4.1
- **Student Services/Learning Support**: 2.9, 2.1.8, 2.8.3, 3.4.9, 4.5, 3.1.3
- **Financial and Physical Resources**: 3.1.11, 3.1.10

**Mean** = 2.5 | **SD** = 2.5 | **Median** = 2 | **Range** = 10

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Interpretation of Standards

- Know your resources
- When in doubt ask!
Tips for Developing Effective Reports

• Follow university or college guidelines
• Build a team within the Libraries and beyond
• Identify a primary editor
• Seek examples from other libraries
Avoiding Common Trouble Spots

• Quality of the Response
  • Writing
  • Building a case
  • Evidence

• Interpretation of the Standards

• Technical Issues
Quality of the Response

• Address all parts of the standard

• Provide guideposts: headings, images/tables

• Connect the dots—especially for graphs and charts

—"Evidence does not ‘speak for itself.’ Instead, it requires interpretation, integration, and reflection in the search for holistic understanding and implications for action." (Ikenberry & Kuh, 2015, pp. 2-3)
Quality of the Response

• Imagine yourself as the reader--and/or get someone else to read.
• Answer the question—no flowery language needed.
• Provide evidence to support your assertions.
• Tell your story—build your case for compliance or describe your plan for coming into compliance.
### Resources

- **Analyzing a Case for Compliance:**
  
  http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/ANALYZING%20A%20CASE%20FOR%20COMPLIANCE_SEPT2010%20_2_.pdf

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>UNACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>WEAK</th>
<th>ACCEPTABLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The narrative includes a statement of the institution’s perception of its compliance with the requirement</td>
<td>The narrative does not include a statement of the institution’s perception of its compliance with the requirement, or it is not applicable to the specific accreditation requirement.</td>
<td>The narrative includes a general statement of the institution’s perception of its compliance with the requirement but it does not address each of the components of the requirement.</td>
<td>The narrative includes a statement of the institution’s perception of its compliance with the requirement that addresses each of the components of the requirement (as necessary). The statement is focused solely on the requirement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The rationale for the assertion</td>
<td>The narrative provides no explanation of reason(s) for the assertions regarding compliance with all aspects of the requirement.</td>
<td>The narrative provides a limited discussion of the reason(s) for determining compliance with all aspects of the requirement.</td>
<td>The narrative provides a clear and concise statement of the reason(s) for the assertion regarding the institution’s perception of compliance with the requirement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The evidence supporting the assertion</td>
<td>Either no evidence is presented to support the institution’s case or the evidence provided is unacceptable because of two or more of the following characteristics:</td>
<td>Either the evidence provided is uneven in its support of the institution’s case or it is deficient because of one of the following characteristics:</td>
<td>The evidence provided sufficiently supports the institution’s case because of at least three of the following characteristics:</td>
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- It is reliable
- It is current
- It is verifiable
Technical Issues

• Test all flash drives
• Double check links—beware live links
• If you are presenting your report as a website, it will likely need to remain static for the period of review [For SACSCOC—YES]
• Write the narrative to stand alone; link supporting documentation
• Consider key excerpts with links to full documentation
Serve as an Evaluator or Observer

http://www.sacscoc.org/evalinfoform.asp
Additional resources


• ACRL standards [http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards](http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards)
Questions?

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• Kathryn Crowe kmcrowe@uncg.edu