Progress on the Pathway to Accreditation

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Progress on the Pathway to Accreditation

• Introduction and Background – Martha Mock, AWG Chair
• The Pathway – Stephanie Smith Lee, AWG Past Chair
  • Highlights of 4 standards
• Our Current Location on the Pathway – Martha
  • NCC Accreditation Workgroup
• Future Directions – Debra Hart, Think College, NCC
  • What you can do to prepare
Importance of Program Accreditation

• Benchmarks are useful for quality assurance and improvement.
• Valuable for institutions of higher education, college programs, accrediting agencies, students with ID and their parents.
• Implementation will validate and strengthen programs.
• Accreditation is how all higher education programs are held accountable.
• In 2008 through the HEOA, Congress called for the establishment of the NCC Accreditation Workgroup.
2017
Field Test of model standards

2018-19
Revisions made based on field test

2019
Accreditation Agency Search

2019
Student Learning Outcomes Committee

2021
Second Report to Congress
Report on Model Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability: Progress on the Path to Education, Employment, and Community Living

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REPORT TO:
United States Secretary of Education
United States Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor
National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity

The National Coordinating Center Accreditation Workgroup
May 2021
Highlights of Key Accreditation Standards

• Person-Centered Planning
• SAP policy includes criteria for evaluating student progress in academics, socialization, independent living, and career development
• Program level Student Learning Outcomes
• Individualized Learning Plans for students in catalog classes
Curriculum Standard 2:

The program utilizes and documents a person-centered planning approach that provides for maximum choice for the student within the inclusive program of study.
Guidance

...person-centered planning (PCP) is used as a framework to plan activities, courses, supports, problem-solving, etc. that include specific goals that serve as an action plan to achieve the student’s vision for his or her future.... The PCP is a “living document” that is reviewed and, if needed, updated each “academic unit”.... The PCP must include a description of “what works” for the student, including learning strategies, accommodations, and individualized supports and services. There is no expectation or requirement that the PCP be a lengthy document.
Student Achievement Standard 1:

The program has established a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy that includes criteria for evaluating student progress in academics, socialization, independent living, and career development, and the impact of such evaluation on student advancement towards program completion. The program specifies how students advance through a full course of study and maintain satisfactory academic progress.
Student Achievement Standard 2:

The program has established a program level Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment plan and a process that allows it to measure student achievement in varied domains including academics, socialization, independent living, and career development.
Student Achievement Standard 3:

The program provides individualized learning plans for the student, for each college catalog course attended by the student, that identifies: what the student is expected to learn; how the student will be evaluated; and supports, strategies, accommodations or modifications that are needed for the student to master essential learning.
NCC Accreditation Workgroup

2021-2025

- Develop Draft Process
- Develop Application, Tools, Materials
- Pilot the Process, Tools & Materials
- Gain Input from Stakeholders

AWG Members Small Sub-Groups

Guidance Manual

Feedback from IHE Programs and Accreditors

Pilot Recruitment

Site-Visit Guidelines

Training for Peer Reviewers

Gather information about development of accrediting organization and possibility of national recognition
Program Accreditation Process (draft)

• Step 1 – Program Reviews Pre-Accreditation Tools
• Step 2 – Pre-Accreditation Technical Assistance Workshop
• Step 3 – Self-Assessment Occurs
• Step 4 – Submits Application for Accreditation
• Step 5 – Accreditation Organization Reviews the Application for Readiness
• Step 6 - Program Completes & Submits the Self-Study
• Step 7 - Accreditation Organization Provides Peer Accreditation Reviewers
• Step 8 - Accreditation Site-Visit Occurs
• Step 9 - Peer Accreditation Reviewers Complete Site-Visit Report
• Step 10 - Accreditation Organization Board Members Make Accreditation Determination
NCC Resources and Tools

• Developed to ‘get to know’ the standards
  • Introductory overview
  • Pre-accreditation self assessment
  • Evidence checklist
  • System for organizing evidence
How can the Standards be used NOW?

• Use them now for continuous quality improvement

• Students and families can utilize them when conducting a college search

• Find out what systems or tools the university currently uses to collect data for accreditation

• Establish a data collection system within the program

• Create or update program assessment plans for Student Learning

• Ensure that all program policies, procedures and handbooks are updated

• Choose a few Program Accreditation Standards to begin a review on the program
Our Future Direction

• Pilot the accreditation process with *recruited programs*
• Refine and finalize the process based on feedback from pilots and others in the field of inclusive higher education
• Refine and finalize the Accreditation Determination Report format
• Provide recommendations to any newly developed accrediting organization