

# The Growing Role of Assessment in Accreditation: Changes in Middle States Standards



Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of  
Pennsylvania  
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# Mission Statement of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

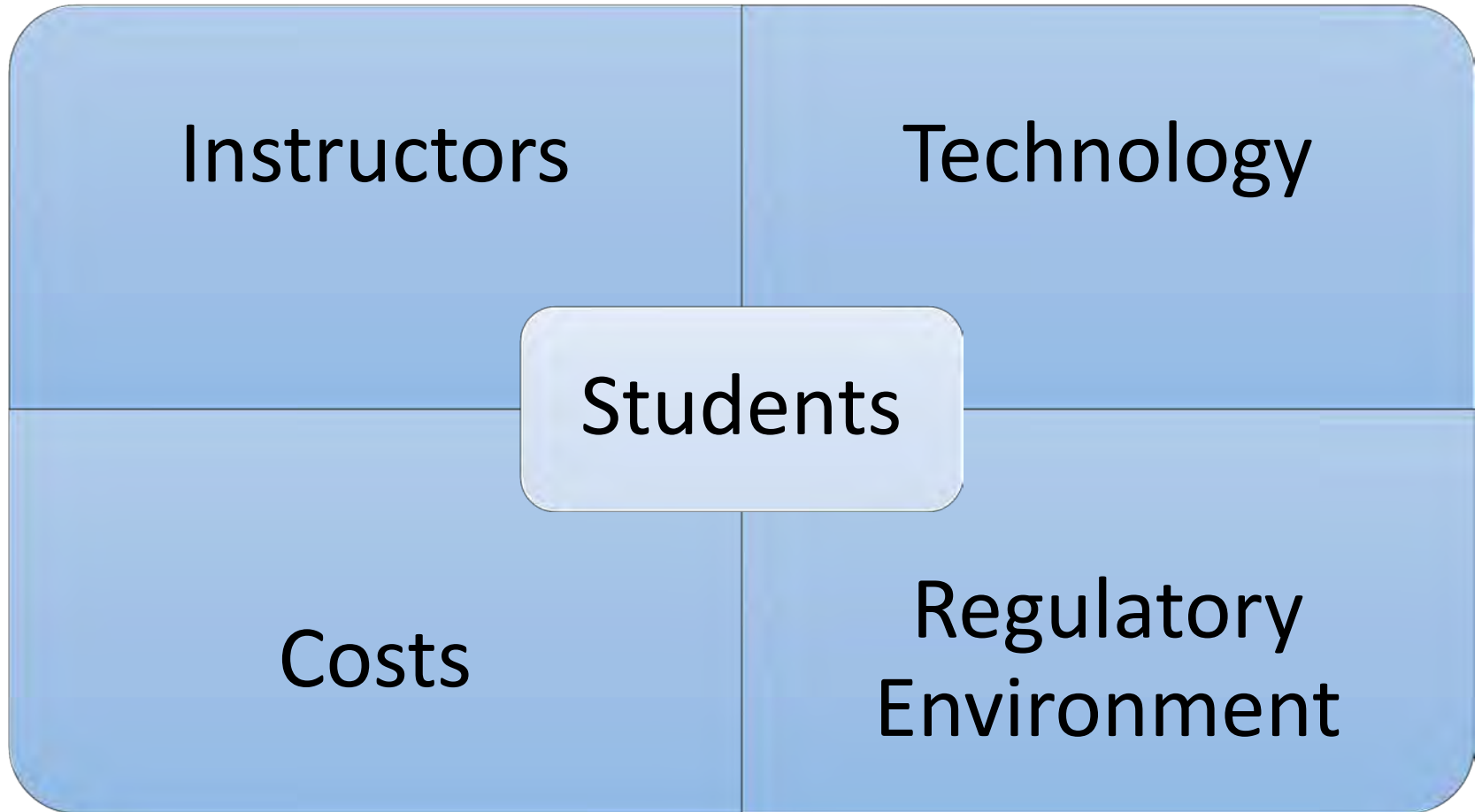
The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is a voluntary, non-governmental, membership association that is dedicated to **quality assurance and improvement** through accreditation via **peer evaluation**. Middle States accreditation instills **public confidence** in institutional **mission, goals, performance, and resources** through its rigorous accreditation standards and their enforcement.

# Foundational Aspects

- 1. Define, maintain, and promote **educational excellence**
- 2. **Respect for mission** and unique types of institutions that make up its membership
- 3. Quality assurance via **peer evaluation**
- 4. Instills **public confidence** in institutional mission, goals, performance, and resources
- 5. **Accountability** to multiple publics



# Why Revise?



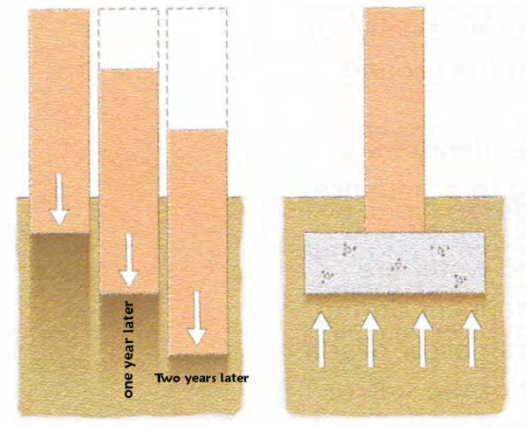
# Disruptive Innovation



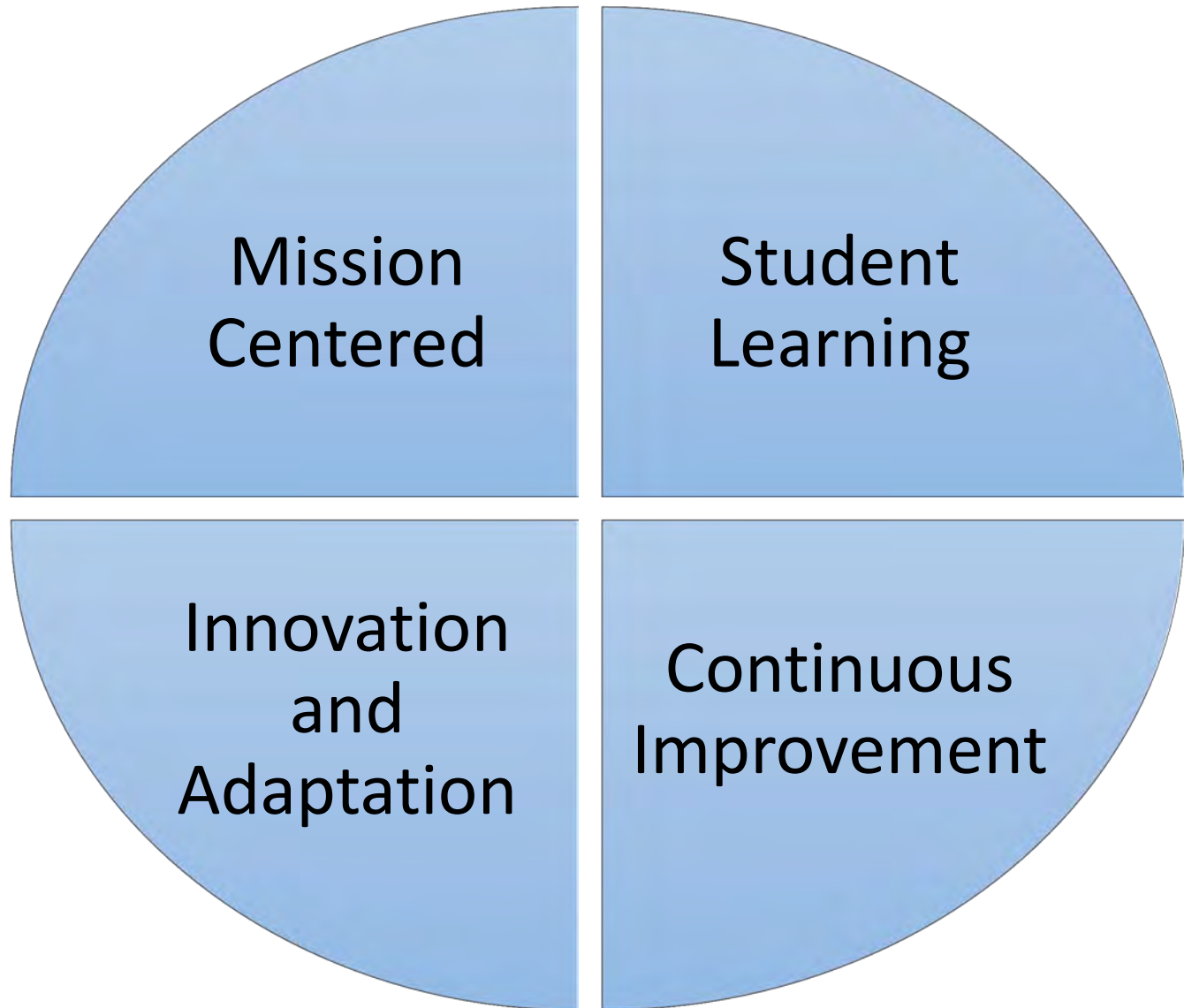


# Foundational Principles

- Mission-centric standards that acknowledge the diversity of institutions
- **Focus on the student learning experience**
- **Emphasis on continuous improvement**
- Support of innovation as an essential part of higher education



# Guiding Principles





# Content Principles

1. Shorter; only necessary criteria included
2. Student centered
3. Engagement in a national conversation on continuous quality improvement
4. Respectful of the diversity of Middle States institutions
5. Attentive to a need to balance regulation/compliance and institutional improvement
6. **Structured so that assessment functions as an engine for the management of institutional effectiveness and student learning**

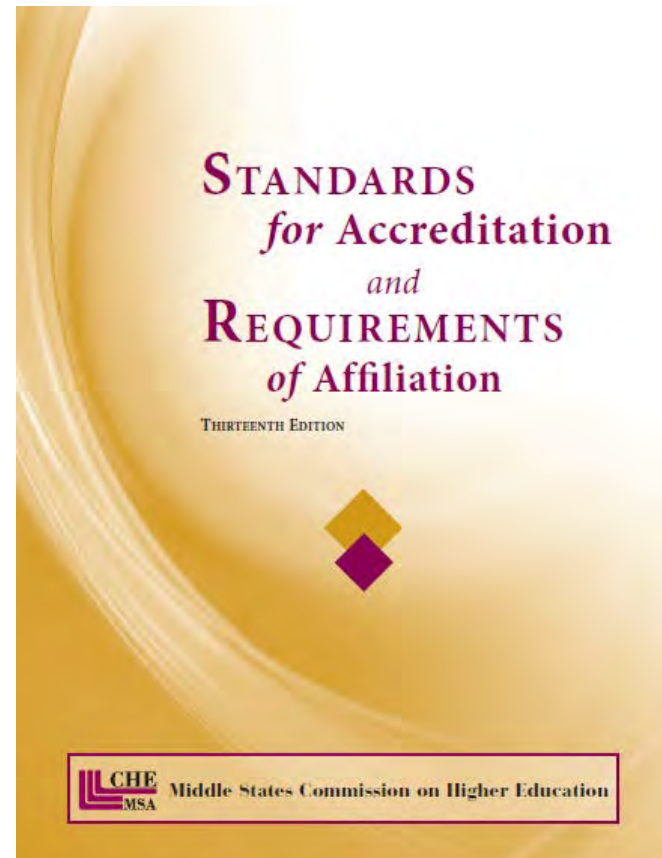


# Revision Process

- 1. Assessment Taskforce (2012)
- 2. Revision Committee (2013)
- 3. Surveys of multiple constituents
- 4. Organization of diverse committee
- 5. Listening sessions—ACE, CEA, ACTA, Lumina Foundation, National Student Clearinghouse, representatives of systems, etc.
- 6. Listening sessions—Puerto Rico, Pittsburgh, District of Columbia, Albany, Harrisburg, etc.
- 7. Final revisions
- 8. Vote by member institutions

# Product

- 1. 11 pages
- 2. Preamble shows continuity and relevance
- 3. Requirements of Affiliation expanded
- 4. Simplicity—1 to 2 sentences followed by criteria
- 5. Structure—centrality of mission, student-centeredness
- 6. **Assessment built into every standard**



# PREAMBLE

"An institution of higher education is a community dedicated to students, to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, to the study and clarification of values, and to the advancement of the society it serves. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), through accreditation mandates that its member institutions meet rigorous and comprehensive standards, which are addressed in the context of the mission of each institution and within the culture of ethical practices and institutional integrity expected of accredited institutions. In meeting the quality standards of MSCHE accreditation, institutions earn accredited status and this permits them to state with confidence: "Our students are well-served, society is well-served."

An accredited institution of higher education



has an appropriate **mission** (Standard I),



lives it with **integrity** (Standard II),



delivers an effective **student learning experience** (Standard III) and



supports the overall **student experience**, both inside and outside of the classroom (Standard IV).

An accredited institution of higher education



assesses its own **educational effectiveness** (Standard V),



uses **planning and resources to ensure institutional improvement** (Standard VI) and



is characterized by effective **governance, leadership, and administration** (Standard VII).

# Requirements of Affiliation

To be eligible for, to achieve, and to maintain accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, an institution must demonstrate that it fully meets the following Requirements of Affiliation. Compliance is expected to be continuous and will be validated periodically, typically at the time of institutional self-study and during any other evaluation of the institution's compliance. Once eligibility is verified, an institution then must demonstrate that it meets the standards for accreditation.

**#8**

The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes

**#9**

The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality

**#10**

Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessment

# The Seven Standards

I. Mission and Goals

II. Ethics and Integrity

III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

IV. Support of the Student Experience

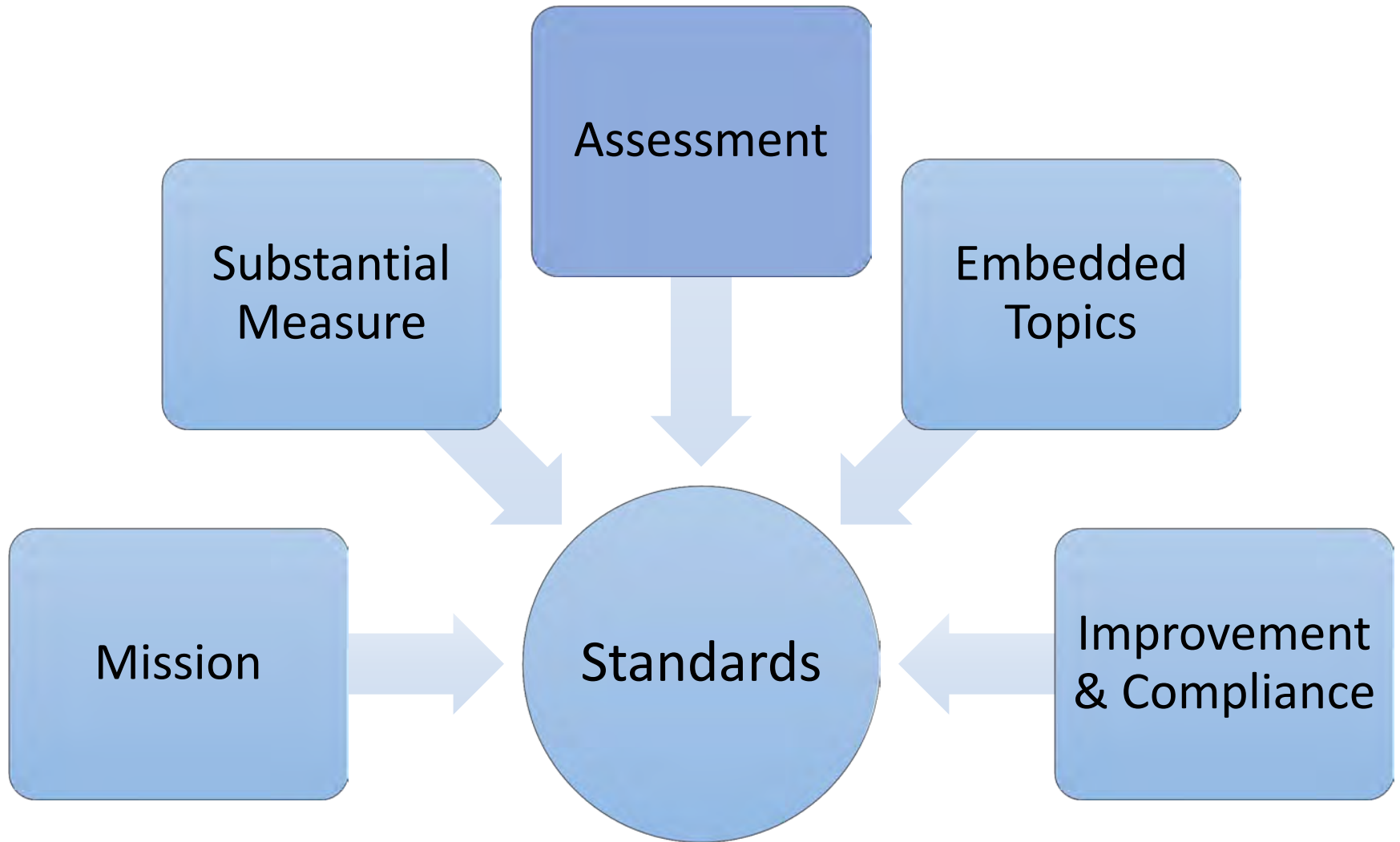
V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment

VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration

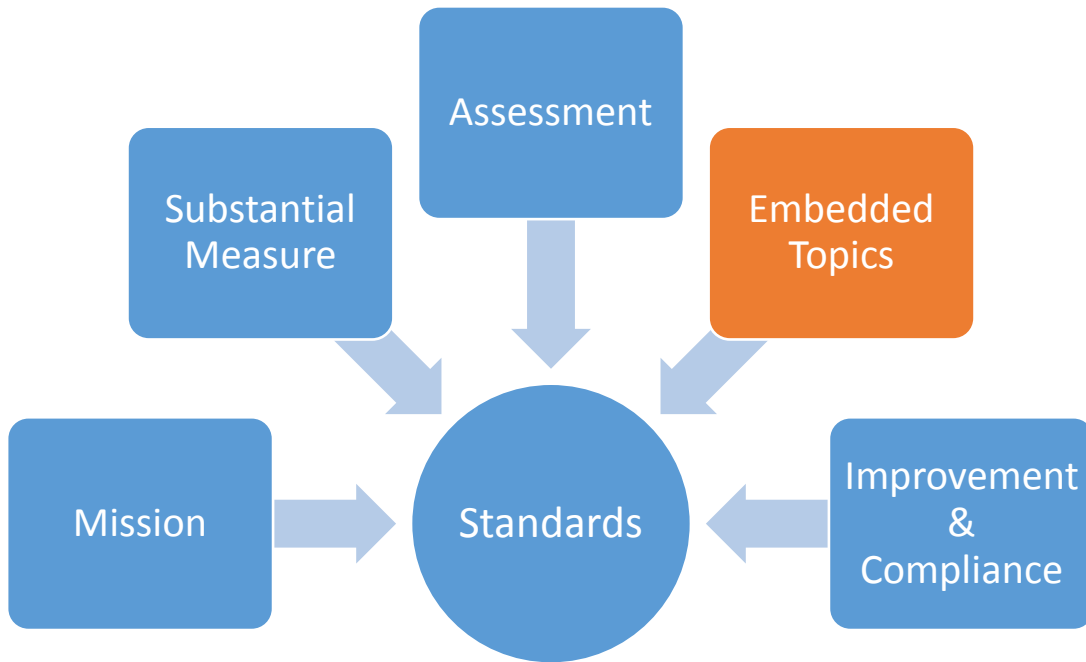


# Key Elements of the Standards





# Key Elements of the Standards




Embedded throughout the Standards:

- The role of **faculty**
- Instructional **rigor** regardless of level, modality or location
- Student **access** and institutional **affordability**
- **Innovative** practices
- The role of **third-party vendors**

# Implementation of the Standards

***Collaborative  
Implementation Project  
(CIP) (2016-2017 cohort)***



***Self-study cohort  
2017-2018 and  
beyond***

## Process/Document

## What's New?

**Self Study Design**

**Emphasis on linking institutional mission, goals and objectives with standards and working group; much more like “comprehensive with special emphasis” approach to self study**

**Documentation Roadmap**

**Completion is required in order to separate compliance and documentation aspects of reaccreditation with actual peer review process**

**Compliance Review**

**Completion is required, but separate (as much as possible) from peer review process**

**Self Study Document**

**Focus on institutional mission, goals and objectives with linkage to the standards**

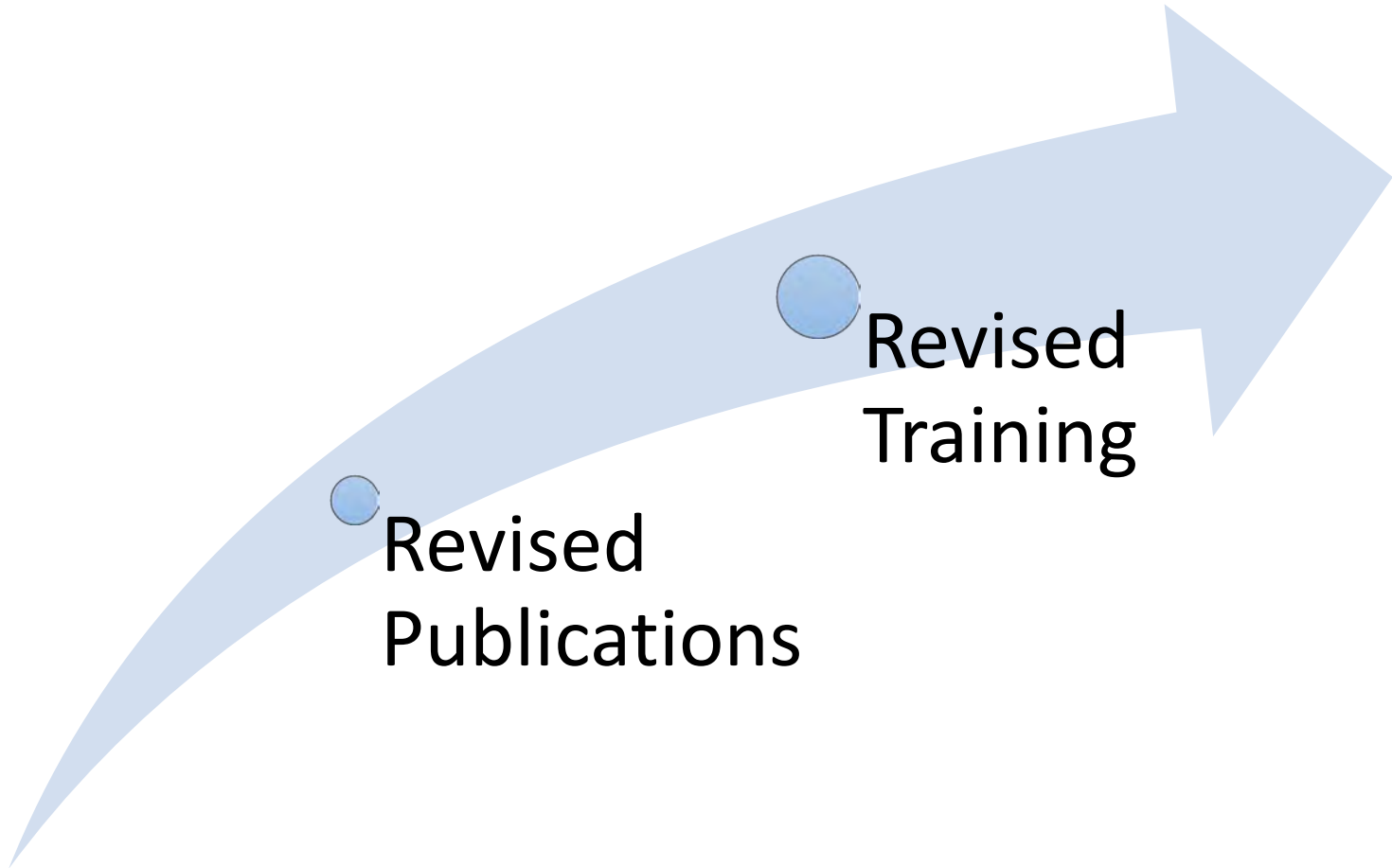
# Simultaneous Process Review

What is the optimal timing of the accreditation cycle?

How can the Commission make better and more efficient use of institutional data?

How can institutions establish better linkages between the self-study and ongoing institutional improvement processes?

# Moving Forward





# Basic Assessment Expectations

A play in two parts...

Part I :  
Assessment Expectations Within All  
Standards

<u>New Standard</u>	<u>Assessment Expectations</u>
<b>Standard I:</b> Mission and Goals	<b>Criterion 4.</b> “Periodic assessment of mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable.”
<b>Standard II:</b> Ethics and Integrity	<b>Criterion 9:</b> “Periodic assessment of ethics and integrity as evidenced in institutional processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented.”
<b>Standard III:</b> Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	<b>Criterion 8:</b> “Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs in providing student learning opportunities.”
<b>Standard IV:</b> Support of the Student Learning Experience	<b>Criterion 6:</b> “Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience.”
<b>Standard V:</b> Educational Effectiveness Assessment	<b>Criterion 5:</b> “Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment processes for the improvement of educational effectiveness.”
<b>Standard VI:</b> Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	<b>Criterion 9:</b> “Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes, and availability of resources.”
<b>Standard VII:</b> Governance, Leadership, and Administration	<b>Criterion 5:</b> “Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration.”

Part II :  
Assessment Expectations Across the  
Institution

<u>New Standard</u>	<u>Assessment Expectations</u>
<b>Standard I:</b> Mission and Goals	<b>Criterion 1 (g):</b> “Clearly defined mission and goals that...are periodically evaluated.”
<b>Standard III:</b> Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	<b>Criterion 2</b> “Student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals....
<b>Standard VI:</b> Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	<b>Criterion 1:</b> “Institutional objectives, both institution-wide and for individual units, that are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation.”
	<b>Criterion 2:</b> “Clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that provide for constituent participation, and incorporate the use of assessment results.”
	<b>Criterion 8:</b> “Strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources required to support the institution’s mission and goals.”