

Accreditation Basics and How Do I Get There?



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Objectives

- *Overview of Accreditation – What it is, Why Become Accredited, How to become Accredited*
- *Overviews of COE, NACCAS and ACCSC*
- *Introduction to the Self-Evaluation Report*
- *Social Responsibility of being an Accredited Institution*
- *Traps that schools fall into while going through accreditation*

What is Accreditation?

- Accreditation is a process of assisting private career schools and colleges to become stronger and better institutions by setting **standards of educational quality**.
- It is a **self-analysis** and continuous improvement which through voluntary association with others helps educational institutions improve the quality of their programs.
- The process is **voluntary** and is an earned status.

Why would an institution want to become accredited?

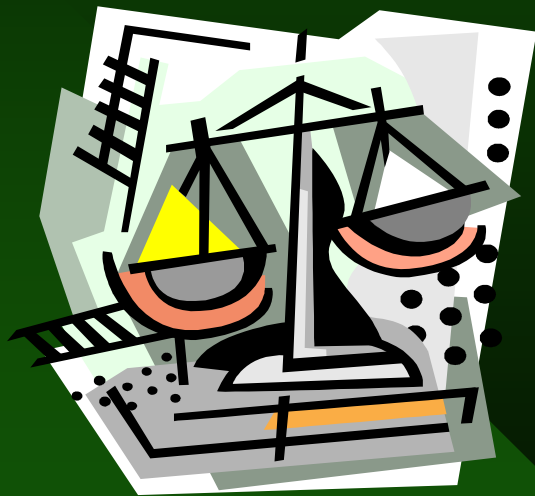
- ✓ Signifies a level of meeting standards of educational quality
- ✓ Provides access to students for federally funded financial aid.
- ✓ Recognition by other academic institutions and employers.



What are the Main Attributes of Accreditation?

- Voluntary Process
 - Schools agree voluntarily to meet the standards and participate in the process
- Self-Analysis
 - Critical Component
 - Requires honest assessment of strengths and weaknesses
- Peer Review
- Continuous Monitoring

Accreditation and Federal Student Aid



- Accreditation is a threshold requirement for eligibility for Federal Student Aid programs

Steps to Federal Student Aid Eligibility



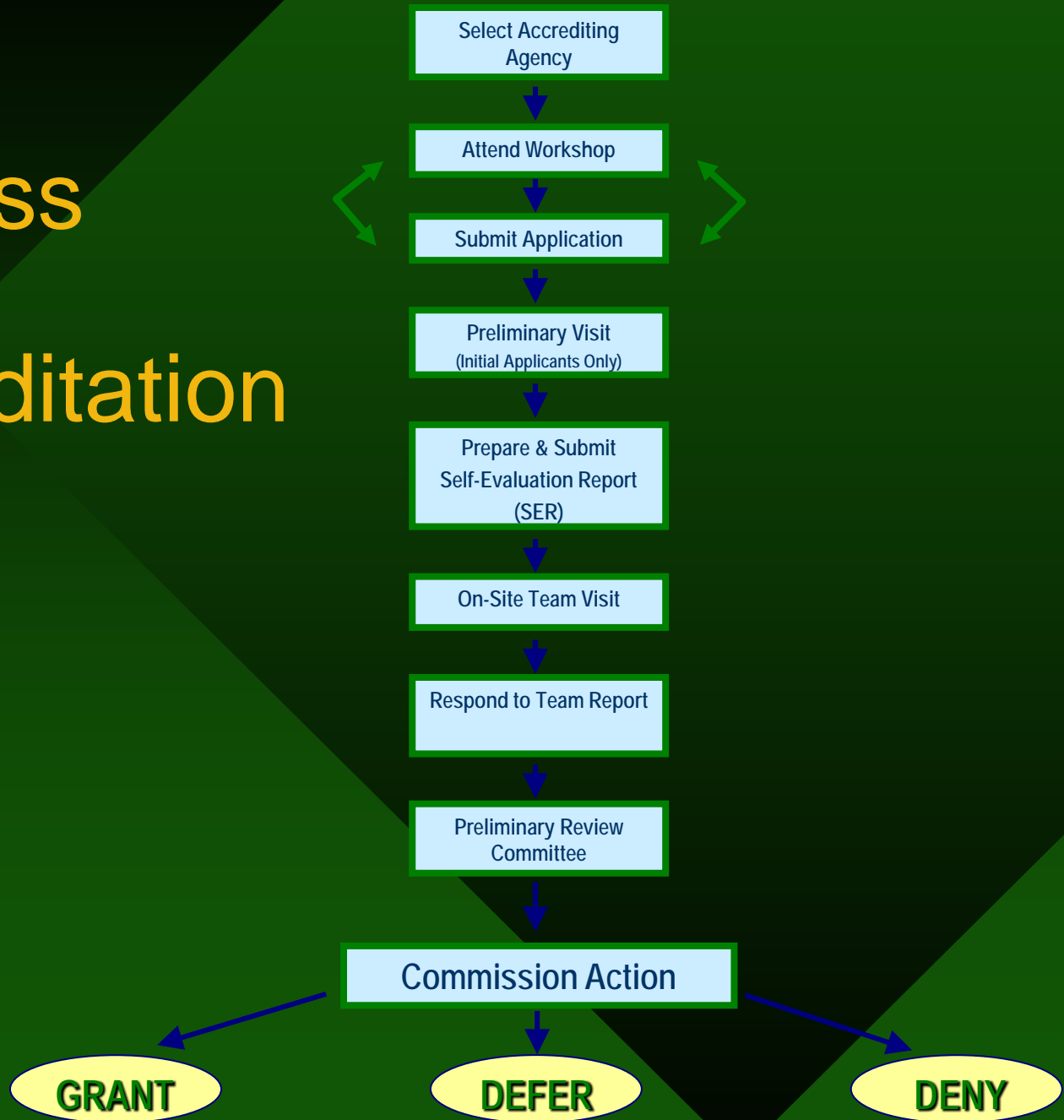
- ❖ State Approval (Licensure)
- ❖ Accreditation
- ❖ Institutional Eligibility for Federal Student Aid (Separate Process)

What is the process to become accredited?

- ✓ Determine the accrediting agency best suited for your institution
- ✓ Review agency standards to determine eligibility

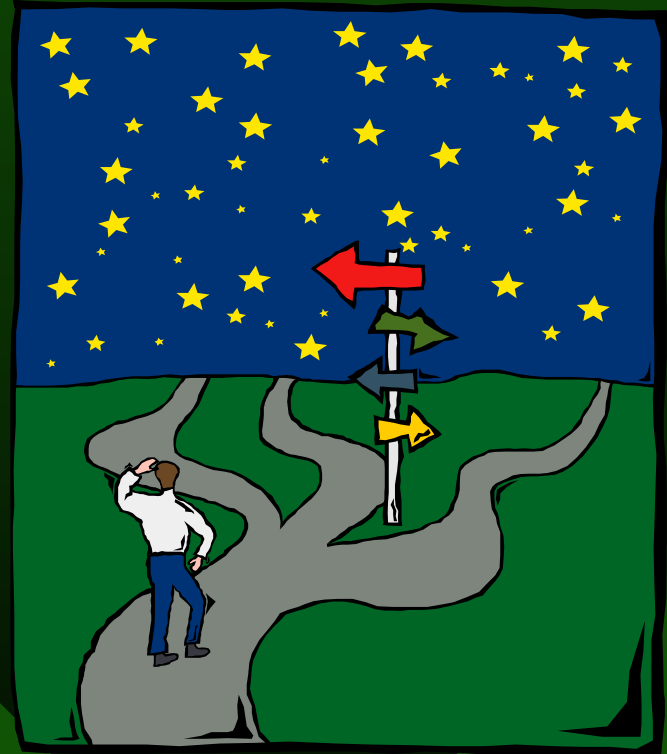


Process of Accreditation



How do I know which agency is right for my institution?

- Considerations
 - Recognition
 - Institutional/Program
 - Eligibility Requirements
 - Scope
 - Geographic
 - Subject Matter
 - Membership
 - Resources
 - Staffing
 - Website
 - Materials
 - Responsiveness



- ✓ The institution should review the agency's scope of recognition by the DOE to determine what agency best serves their academic profile. Example: An institution offering only cosmetology programs would likely find a best fit with NACCAS, COE or ACCSC.
- ✓ Evaluate current programs and plans for future expansion.

Accreditation Organizations “Big 7”

- ABHES – www.abhes.org
- ACCET – www.accet.org
- **ACCSC – www.accsc.org**
- ACICS – www.acics.org
- **COE – www.council.org**
- DEAC – www.deac.org
- **NACCAS – www.naccas.org**



While each agency has established their own set of guidelines and procedures, all follow standards consistent with quality, improvement and accountability as set forth by the United States Department of Education. While each agency's standards may be stated differently, they all focus on the following areas:

- ✓ *Institutional Mission and Objectives*
- ✓ *Management and Administrative Capability, Operations*
- ✓ *Financial Structure and Soundness*
- ✓ *Admissions and Recruitment Policies and Practices*
- ✓ *Educational Programs, Equipment, Faculty (Qualifications), Professional Development, Instructional Space and Facilities*
- ✓ *Institutional Effectiveness and Planning*
- ✓ *Outcomes (Retention, Placement, Licensure Rates)*
- ✓ *Constituent Input (Students, Graduates, Employers, Advisory Boards)*

How should I plan for accreditation?

- Planning and Expectations
 - *Understand your mission and goals for growth and development.*
 - *Accreditation is part of the journey not the whole journey*
 - *Get Educated*
 - *Plan, Plan, Plan*
 - *Document, Document, Document*

Research Accreditation Carefully

- ✓ Start with the Standards
- ✓ Complete Internal Compliance Study
- ✓ Anticipate changes and costs (faculty, personnel, resource materials).
- ✓ Develop a Plan and Timeline
- ✓ Consider eligibility requirements such as
 - ✓ In scope
 - ✓ 2 years in operation as a licensed institution
 - ✓ At least one graduate from the longest program
 - ✓ Two years of reviewed financial statements demonstrating soundness

How long does the process take?

Anywhere from 12-24 months

Factors:

Knowledge of Process

Quality of Submissions

Flexibility

Follow Up

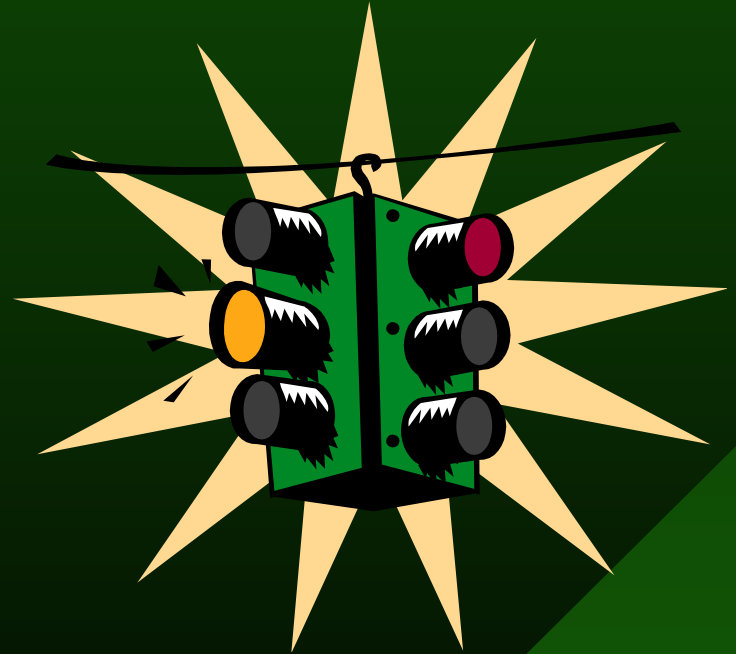
Willingness to Change

Financials



Where do schools run into obstacles?

- Unclear Mission
- Weak or improperly prepared financial statements
- Poor planning
- Lack of follow-up
- Lack of involvement



How Should I Plan for Accreditation?



DO

Do the Process Well
(Staff Training)

DOCUMENT

If "it" isn't documented,
"it" did not occur

DEMONSTRATE

Prepare to Demonstrate
Performance
(Student Outcomes)