

Wabash College
Accreditation Committee Newsletter
February 2012

Our Institutional Self-Study: The Process and the Product

The Higher Learning Commission builds its comprehensive evaluations for accreditation on two major processes: institutional self-study and peer evaluation. The self-study process is intended to foster an institution's continuous improvement by providing evidence to the Commission that it fulfills the [five criteria for accreditation](#).

What's the Process?

Our self-study process is led by the Accreditation Committee, a standing committee that features the Registrar and Associate Dean of the College, a staff member, and representation from each academic division. Early preparations for the self-study included review of the accreditation criteria and collection of pertinent documents in 2008-2009; meeting with constituency groups in spring 2010; re-engaging examination of department learning goals in 2010-2011; and providing an overview of accreditation for the Board of Trustees in May 2011.

What's the Purpose?

The Accreditation Committee developed a set of goals to guide the self-study process:

1. To use the self-study process and re-accreditation request as an opportunity to reflect on and evaluate the entire institution while placing particular focus on the achievements and changes since the last self-study as well as attention to our strengths, challenges, and opportunities.
2. To more fully involve the campus in the self-study process and create better awareness of the meaning of accreditation.
3. To produce a self-study that will help guide the campus in assessment and planning activities in the coming years, including ways to advance academic assessment and reflect on and inform strategic planning.
4. To achieve re-accreditation from the North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission.

What's the Product?

Composition of a draft document has proceeded as follows:

- In spring and summer 2011, Accreditation Committee members drafted content outlines for each criterion and reviewed supporting documents that had been collected to that point.
- In summer 2011, the Accreditation Committee sought additional resources and reports from senior staff and faculty involved in specific programs and efforts relevant to the re-accreditation effort.
- In fall 2011, the Accreditation Committee revised, expanded, and reviewed content outlines, complete with supporting documents, and began writing the self-study.
- In February 2012, a preliminary draft of the self-study was presented to the senior staff for feedback.

How may I contribute?

In March, a full draft of the self-study will be disseminated for review and discussion. Focus groups will be conducted to gain feedback, and individuals with expertise in particular areas will be asked to review portions of the document for revision.

The Accreditation Committee looks forward to working with you on completion of the Self-Study, and campus-wide distribution of that document in July of this year.

If you have questions, suggestions or concerns we invite you to contact a member of the Accreditation Committee:
[Bobby Horton](#), [John Lamborn](#), [Todd McDorman](#), [Julie Olsen](#) and [Ann Taylor](#) .