

Ways to Engage Faculty Effectively in the Accreditation Process

The involvement of faculty in the Accreditation process is one of the challenges faced by the Deanship of Quality and administrators of the College. Ever wondered how to engage faculty in the accreditation process?

Strategies for engaging faculty and ensuring program success during the accreditation preparation and onsite review visit.

- Create a culture where accreditation is not a dull word. For example, use Accreditation terminologies during college / department / committee meetings, make accreditation processes “normal” and familiar in your day-to-day work.
- Appreciate and acknowledge how accreditation can help be a better faculty member and a better Program. The more you become familiar with the Standards and Criteria / objectives, you will recognize how curriculum flows into Program Learning outcomes and you will realise how the each of Accrediting bodies focus on student learning / program learning outcomes, helps you to be better and more effective faculty.
- Usage of Accreditation Standards and Criteria as a framework for orienting new faculty which will support them throughout the Teaching and Learning process.
- Keep it simple, don't overthink the accreditation process. The Standards and objectives are simply statements of good educational and academic practice. The Standards and Criteria are designed to help programs achieve and maintain quality.
- Make them aware that being part of the team, developing knowledge, understanding and involving in Accreditation activities can lead them to Professional development and career advancement. Experienced faculty with deeper understanding of selected Standards within the specific context of program can become observer, external program reviewer, advisory review for a college / Program and even can become part of the Accreditation body as a member of Advisory board.
- Encourage faculty to become peer evaluators for the Accrediting bodies (Academic / Professional) and provide support for them to participate in site visits. Being a peer evaluator is an effective way to increase knowledge of the Standards and Criteria, learn from peers serving with you on the site visit team, and learn from the Colleges / programs you visit and review.
- The accreditation process is not a one-man show. Share accountability for maintaining accreditation readiness. Sharing accountability helps ensure the program is always ready for a visit, and it can help minimize the chaos that sometimes occurs before an accreditation visit. It also provides a means for faculty to provide service to the program and develop leadership skills.
- Administrators should listen to faculty and be open to their ideas, learn to appreciate their creativity and be willing to accept / take a few risks when faculty suggest new ways of doing things. If we want to prepare our students for a dynamic external environment, we need to be willing to make our academic programs more dynamic and move beyond “*this is the way we've always done it*” mentality. Don't be afraid to try new approaches. Celebrate innovation.
- Nominate faculty members to attend Accrediting bodies - conference, trainings and be part of their forum. It's an opportunity for attendees to interact with other college faculty, administrators, educators and develop a deeper understanding of the Standards, their experiences and challenges of successful implementation.

