

## **Student Success Subcommittee Update**

D. Eubanks, Chair

2/27/2021

At its July 2020 meeting, NACIQI created a subcommittee to look at the impact of changes to the 2019 handbook for accreditors, and the underlying rules adopted November 1, 2019. These changes are in regard to the documentation of student achievement standards. Specifically, 602.16(a)(1) previously required that “standards effectively address the quality of institutions or programs” but now reads “The agency's accreditation standards must set forth clear expectations for the institutions or programs it accredits.” Accordingly, the revision to the handbook now emphasizes the importance of documentation, asking for (page 8) “Citation for pages within the agency’s standards and policies manual(s) that describe the standards set by the agency for measuring student achievement. These pages must describe the way the agency evaluates adherence to those requirements and the way it enforces compliance.”

As chair of the subcommittee I will now give a brief overview of the work to date.

The other members of the subcommittee are Roslyn Artis, Jennifer Blum, Wally Boston, Jill Derby, Robert Mayes, Mary Ellen Petrisko, and Robert Shireman. This list includes new NACIQI members, replacing Anne Neal and Rick O'Donnell who were called away by other obligations, and Ralph Wolff, whose term on NACIQI expired. We are particularly indebted to Ralph, who was part of the negotiated rule-making, and made many valuable contributions.

Members have met online in various combinations, demonstrating enthusiasm for this work and a wealth of expertise. I also talked with Herman Bounds, the Director of the Accreditation Group for Post Secondary Education, and came away optimistic that the project can be beneficial to all parties concerned. Our conversation also affirmed the goal of providing a service to accreditors by clarifying expectations for documenting student achievement.

At my request, Department staff produced and redacted documentation on the student achievement standard from past ACCSC, HLC, Middle States, and WASC reports. These are agency narratives and supporting materials for the student achievement standard taken from renewal applications to the Department, including policies, institutional self-studies, visiting team reports, official correspondence, and other materials. Together these comprise about ten thousand pages of electronic documents. Special thanks to Valerie Lefor for managing that data and solving some access problems. After receiving this material in November, I have reviewed more than ninety percent of it and have extracted several hundred pages of excerpts with citations.

The next step is for the subcommittee to synthesize this information and make initial judgments based on the review materials. Specifically, do past reporting practices by agencies satisfy the new rule for documenting student achievement standards, OR should agencies be alerted to the likelihood of changing expectations?

I anticipate asking for voluntary feedback about student achievement policies and practice from the agencies represented in the review materials well as from external experts in related fields. Such feedback will be essential to ensure that the subcommittee’s work fairly reflects the complexities of

student achievement reporting and its relationship to agency standards and policy manuals. I understand that similar inquiries were made as part of the governance subcommittee's work.

I anticipate that we will have a substantive report by July with findings, if not recommendations.