

PERIODIC REVIEW OF ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS

Accreditation is viewed by the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions as a continuing status that, once confirmed, is removed only for cause and then with scrupulous observance of due process. A responsible accrediting program necessarily includes periodic review of accredited institutions both for their benefit and for the fulfillment of the Commission's accountability to the academic community and to the public. The nature and timing of such reviews vary in accordance with the circumstances at a given institution and with the Commission's judgment as to how it can best serve the institution's needs while simultaneously meeting its broader responsibilities.

At its best, the periodic review of accredited institutions is a creative means of assisting them in the continuous assessment of their educational objectives and their success in fulfilling institutional goals. The more self-study and evaluation are seen as directly related to institutional viability and quality, the more productive the self-study and evaluation process will be.

The Commission utilizes a variety of mechanisms to periodically review the accreditation status of member institutions. At least once every ten years all institutions must undergo a comprehensive evaluation against the full array of the Commission's standards and policies for the purpose of reaffirming institutional accreditation. Preceded by institutional self-study, these evaluations are undertaken by a visiting team whose findings and recommendations are reviewed by the Commission.

The Commission on Technical and Career Institutions mandates as a matter of policy that all of its accredited institutions must undergo a focused visit no later than five years following a decennial or initial accreditation visit. The institution bears the responsibility for preparing a focused visit report to be distributed to the Commission office and to members of the focused visit team no later than four weeks prior to the date of the on-site visit by the team. The purpose of the focused visit report and the ensuing visit is to inform the Commission of significant developments and progress made by the institution since its most recent decennial on-site visit to include any progress reports or other actions required of the institution by Commission policy or specific action.

Annually every institution is required to submit a report that provides not only statistical data related to such matters as enrollment and finances, but also information about off-campus programming, contractual relationships, and any significant developments at the institution in the past year that may have a bearing on its accredited status. At its discretion, the Commission may and often does require from individual institutions, reports on specified topics. This focused report may be followed by a limited on-site evaluation for the purpose of validating the contents of the report.

If an institution undergoes a substantive change, or if its educational effectiveness is seriously questioned, the Commission, at any time, reserves the right to review that institution's accreditation without regard to any previously indicated time pattern.