



EXPECTATIONS FOR ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS

Accreditation is the education community's means of self-regulation through quality assurance and continuous improvement. The accreditation process is intended to strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of education, making it worthy of the public's confidence and minimizing the scope of external control. In order to be deserving of this public trust, accredited institutions must affirm their accreditation by abiding by the following expectations:

Section 1: General Expectations for Accredited Institutions

Accredited institutions:

- a. Operate in the public interest and in accordance with ethical practice and the Middle States Standards for Accreditation.
- b. Recognize that the extent to which each educational institution accepts and fulfills the responsibilities inherent in the accreditation process is a measure of its concern for freedom, independence, and quality in education and its commitment to striving for and achieving excellence in its endeavors.
- c. Demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement in student learning and the institution's capacity to produce the levels of learning desired and expected by its community of stakeholders.
- d. Promote honest and open analysis in this collegial activity by receiving Middle States evaluators with openness and candor and by providing access to institutional documents and records.
- e. Respond appropriately to any monitoring issues and stipulations that might be included with the institution's accreditation.
- f. Maintain, in writing, clearly specified objectives that are consistent with the institution's mission and are able to demonstrate progress in achieving those objectives.

Section 2: Expectations for Meeting Requirements of the Commissions

Accredited institutions:

- a. Meet and continue to meet the Middle States Standards for Accreditation on which their accreditation is based.
- b. Fulfill all requirements of the accreditation protocol used for self-study and accreditation.
- c. File written reports in a timely manner as required by the Commission(s).
- d. Host special visits and comply with special requirements of the Commission(s).
- e. File special reports as required by the Commission(s).
- f. Submit a Membership Data Form to update the institution's statistical data and contact information.
- g. Pay annual membership dues and applicable fees in a timely manner.
- h. Inform the Commission(s) of substantive changes that occur during the term of accreditation.
- i. Adhere to Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools' policies.

Section 3: Expectations for Participation in the Work of the Commissions

Accredited institutions:

- a. Submit an annual nomination to the Commissions, listing members of the institution's professional staff recommended and willing to serve on accreditation visiting teams.
- b. Release at least one staff member per year, when requested, to serve on an accreditation visiting team to another member institution.

- c. Involve administrators, members of the faculty and staff, students, and other appropriate members of the institution's community of stakeholders in the self-study and accreditation processes.

Section 4: Expectations for Relationships with Constituencies and the Public

Accredited institutions:

- a. Employ accreditation practices that are ethical and respect the rights and responsibilities of the faculty and staff, students, administrators, board members, and all others related to the institution.
- b. Under the leadership of the head of the institution, distribute reports of accreditation activities and other correspondence from the Commission(s) regarding the institution's accreditation status to the institution's governing body and to other appropriate parties.

Section 5: Ethical Criteria for Admission to Accredited and Candidate Institutions. Accredited and Candidate institutions shall not discriminate in their admission of students on the basis of race, ethnic background, gender, sexual preference, or handicapping condition. Nor shall they discriminate on the basis of religion unless the institution is officially faith-based and publicly states that it admits students mainly from communicants of that religion. Institutions that have been designed specifically to serve a single gender or that are supported by a state or federal agency to serve a specialized group of students shall not be considered discriminatory.