

Accreditation 101B: Strategies to Institutionalize the Accreditation Requirements



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Accreditation 101B: Strategies to Institutionalize the Accreditation Requirements



The Rationale:

- You're familiar with the standards and have been drafted into an accreditation leadership position at your college.
- Your institution has received recommendations or been put on sanction.



Accreditation 101B: Strategies to Institutionalize the Accreditation Requirements



The Plan for Today:

1. Strategies to abate the planning of the accreditation process and abate the spike in workload during the writing of the self-evaluation
2. What to do when the institution receives recommendations or sanctions



Abating the Accreditation Workload

After our last accreditation visit in 2010, my institution evaluated how it developed and wrote the self-evaluation.

Many of the ideas in this talk crystallized in the letter I wrote in response to that evaluation...

Here are some main points...



Dear Monterey Peninsula College,

We just had our visit and we're elated to learn we meet all accreditation standards

We received some recommendations that we came to expect

But got several commendations as well....Whoo-hoo!

Abating the Accreditation Workload



But my main point in writing this letter is to convey some ideas about how to make the process easier

If not carefully controlled, the self-evaluation creates a huge spike in work load

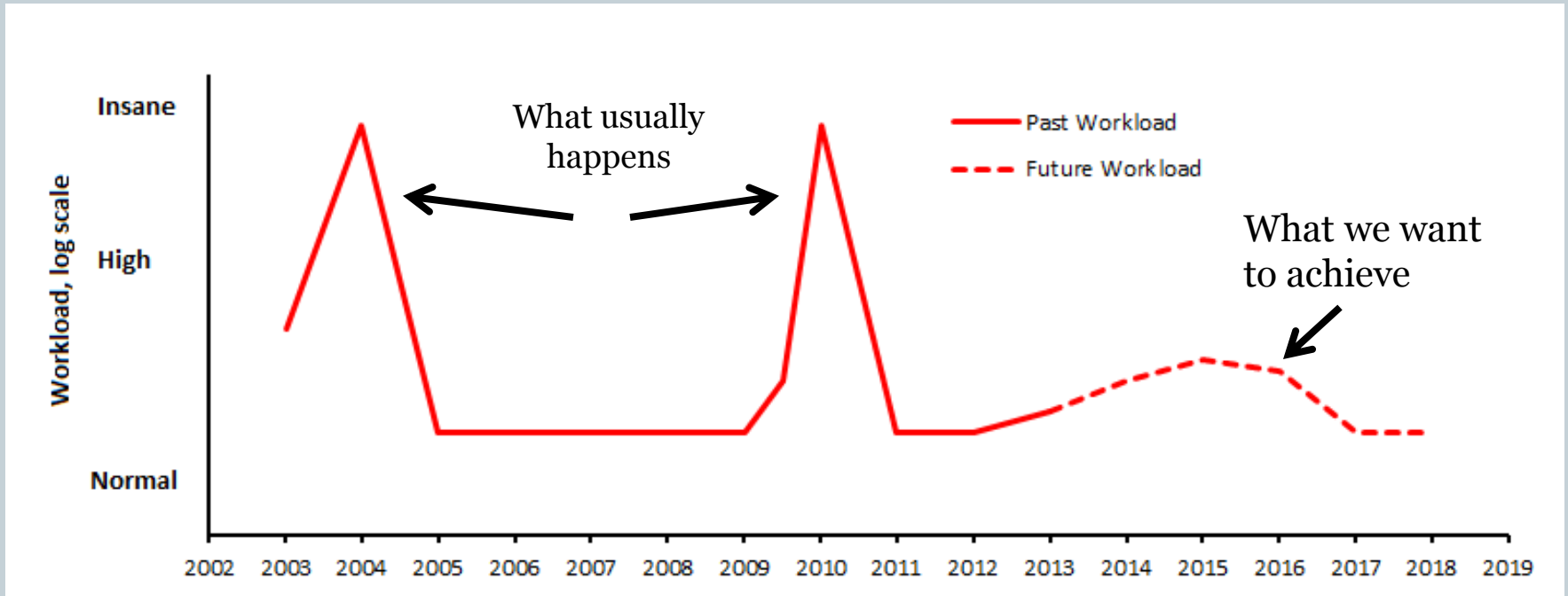
It would be better to plan for what will be needed, and to spread that work out over a longer period



Abating the Accreditation Workload



Typical Self-Study Timeline



Abating the Accreditation Workload



What **Didn't Work**:

Distributing the entire project over many different independent teams
Caused uncertainty over

- What to write
- How to approach the standards
- Which aspect of the institution to write about
- What evidence to use

Result: much confusion and repetition



Abating the Accreditation Workload



Planning

Get a small leadership group together; this is a real working group

- Accreditation Liaison Officer
- Faculty co-chair
- Researcher
- Academic Senate
- Data People



Abating the Accreditation Workload



Planning – Leadership Group

Establish the “Institution Story”

Examples from Monterey Peninsula College:

- Basic Skills
- Development of an Ed Center and Public Safety Training Center
- Cost cutting to close a \$2.5M budget deficit. What was chosen and why?
- Increasing capacity for wider access to quantitative information.

Abating the Accreditation Workload



Planning – Leadership Group

Locate evidence and store in a central place

Evidence supports

- All standards
- Institution Story



At MPC, each member of the Leadership Group is currently creating an evidence list for one of the four standards.

Abating the Accreditation Workload



Planning – Leadership Group

Create “Handrails” = Institutional Story + Evidence

Give this to each team **before** they start.

Reduces the amount of repetitive research and writing

Each team then adds their own detail and additional evidence.



Abating the Accreditation Workload



Planning – Institutional Scale

Problem:

Trying to keep track of all that evidence.

“What evidence was that decision based upon?”

Solution:

- *Link data/evidence/SLOs to each action item in the agendas and minutes for governance groups*
- *You'll have a mini database of evidence and major decisions*

Abating the Accreditation Workload



Planning – Institutional Scale

Some colleges are assigning an
“Accreditation Coordinator”

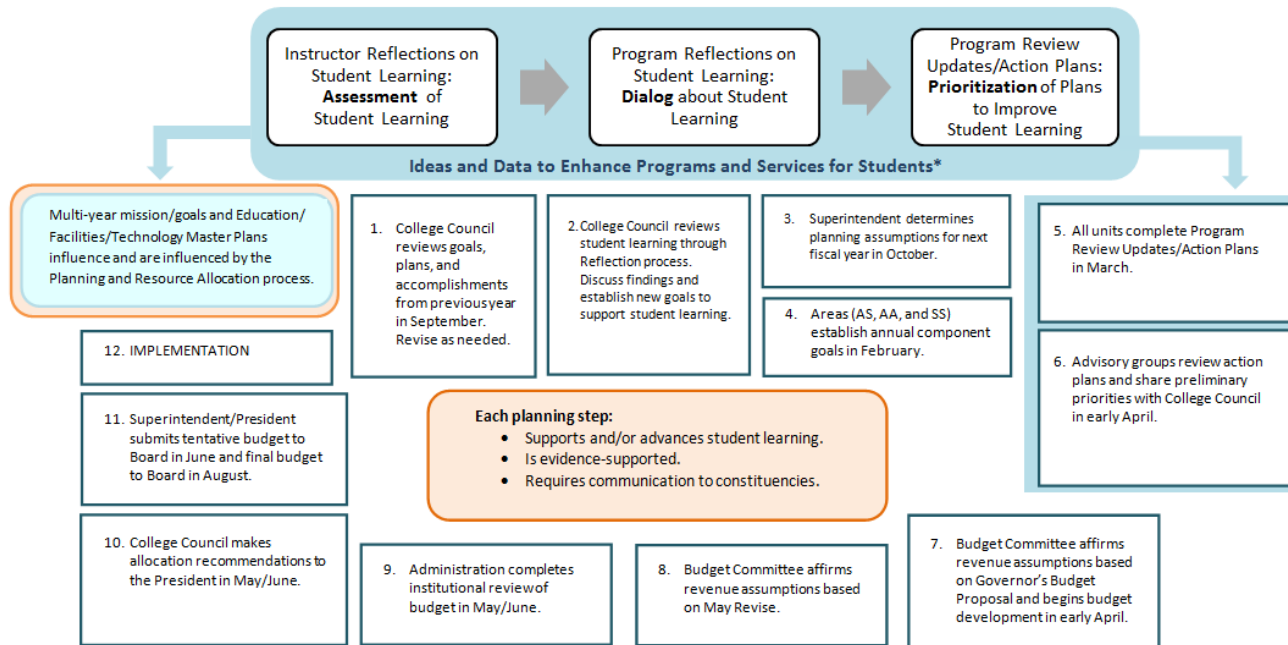
- Goes to all governance meetings
- Keeps track of major decisions and accreditation evidence
- Informs governance groups of accreditation requirements



Abating the Accreditation Workload



Monterey Peninsula College Planning and Resource Allocation Process



Planning – Institutional Scale

- Create a schedule for planning and resource allocation
- Stick to it
- Forces the institution to always do the things it says it will

Abating the Accreditation Workload



Team Assignments

Create teams, but make one person responsible for entire standards or major sections.

- May require shifting of responsibilities
- Trying to stitch together writing from many authors is less efficient in the long run
- Give teams the “handrails” – the evidence and the Institutional Story



Abating the Accreditation Workload

Writing

Instruct teams to approach like a science paper:

- Lay out evidence
- Know the conclusion, i.e., the Institutional Story
- Then write about it
- Make a reasonable schedule and stick to it
- Stagger the due dates, not all at the same time



The Devil is in
the Details

Tips for a successful
self-study process

- ✓ *Remember that the visiting team does not know your institution*
- ✓ *Write the self-study like teaching a class—the visiting team are your students. Don't make the team search for evidence!*

Abating the Accreditation Workload



Institutional Review

Self-Evaluation needs:

- Improvement through review and revision, revision, revision
- Institutional buy-in
- Widespread knowledge of the story and evidence

Practical advice:

- *Emphasize the evaluation, not the description*
- *In governance committees, ask one or two people to read the draft and report out*
- *We asked everybody to read it. That didn't work.*

Responding to Recommendations/Sanctions



It's a mini-accelerated self-study!



**KEEP
CALM
AND
PLEASE
HURRY UP**

Appoint a small leadership team

Each recommendation should have a “lead” person

Meet weekly (or more)

Backwards map your timeline to Governing Board approval of your final (possible summer work) and