THE ACADEMIC AUDIT
A PROCESS OF CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

TBR OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
FALL 2012

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Quality is not an act, it is a habit.

Aristotle
Greek Philosopher, Scientist, and Physician (384 BC - 322 BC)

WHAT IS THE ACADEMIC AUDIT?

A faculty-driven model of ongoing self-reflection, peer feedback, collaboration, and teamwork based on structured conversation to improve quality processes in teaching and learning … and hence student success.

William Massy
ACADEMIC AUDIT
UNDERLYING QUALITY PRINCIPLES

1. Define quality in terms of **OUTCOMES**
2. Focus on **PROCESS**
3. Work **COLLABORATIVELY**
4. Base decisions on **EVIDENCE**
5. Strive for **COHERENCE**
6. Learn from **BEST PRACTICE**
7. Make **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT** a priority

THE ACADEMIC AUDIT
AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

• 3.3 Institutional Effectiveness – SACS/COC
  • 3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas:
    • 3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

THE ACADEMIC AUDIT
AND PERFORMANCE FUNDING

• Accepted by THEC since 2005 as a means of program evaluation for non-accreditable degree and certificate programs
• PF Summary Sheet provides the program’s score, which is computed into the PF formula
• New for the 2010-2015 cycle: Follow-up to previous Academic Audit criteria – Section 7 (see Handbook page 24)
ACADEMIC AUDIT SCHEDULE

1. The Self Study – fall semester
2. The Self Study Report – due February 1, 2013
3. The Auditor Site Visit – March 18 – April 19, 2013
4. Implementation of Initiatives – ongoing

See Timeline: p. 7 in Handbook

CONDUCTING THE SELF STUDY

- Form Self Study Team & identify Team Leader
- Assign key roles - focal area leaders, editor
- Set schedule with due dates
- Identify Stakeholders – whose input do you want?
- Select sources of evidence
- Nominate peers for Academic Auditor Team

CONDUCTING THE SELF STUDY

Collect input from faculty, stakeholders and students for each focal area
- Structured Conversations
- Conference calls
- Surveys
- D2L Class
- Google Docs
- Other?
WRITING THE SELF STUDY REPORT

- Write focal area sections
- Draft self study report
- Prioritize improvement initiatives into matrix
- Complete Appendices [one may be web-links]
- Finalize self study report
- Send to TBR: by Friday, February 1, 2013

THE SELF STUDY PROCESS

ORGANIZATION BY FOCAL AREA

1. Learning Objectives
2. Curriculum and Co-Curriculum
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Student Learning Assessment
5. Quality Assurance

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FOCAL AREA 1: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What do we want our students to know AND why?
2. How do we determine what our students should understand and demonstrate (student learning outcomes) for courses and our program of study as a whole?
3. What processes are in place by which we regularly evaluate our Learning Objectives?
GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FOCAL AREA 2: CURRICULUM AND CO-CURRICULUM

1. What processes do we follow to assure that our curriculum is coherent (sensibly sequenced)?
2. What activities beyond course assignments do we promote to reinforce our curriculum?

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FOCAL AREA 3: TEACHING & LEARNING

1. What do we do collaboratively to improve our teaching? Is this a formal or informal process?
2. How do we connect with our students to be assured that learning is taking place?
3. How do we identify and share best practices in the teaching of our subject?

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FOCAL AREA 4: STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT

1. Do our assessments of student learning measure student mastery of our learning objectives (student learning outcomes)?
2. How do we use assessment data to improve teaching and learning?
GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FOCAL AREA 5: QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. What processes and practices beyond the program level promote quality in teaching and learning?
2. What services and resources beyond the program level promote quality in teaching and learning?

THE SELF STUDY REPORT TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Overall Performance
3. Performance by Focal Area
4. Potential Initiatives
5. Matrix of Improvement Initiatives
6. (for 2nd time programs) – Follow-up report
7. Appendix

SELF STUDY REPORT: INTRODUCTION

1. Brief history of the program
2. Role & scope – purpose/mission
3. Demographics
4. Distinguishing characteristics (Cohort structure? Dual admission? Etc.)
5. How self-study was performed
SELF STUDY REPORT:
OVERALL PERFORMANCE

1. Executive Summary or Abstract
2. Strengths
3. Key Findings

SELF STUDY REPORT:
PERFORMANCE BY FOCAL AREA

- One to three pages on each Focal Area
- Keep impersonal (“anonymous”)
- Cite strengths in that area especially the processes in place that help assure quality
- Include one or two illustrative examples or anecdotes
- Identify potential areas for improvement

SELF STUDY REPORT:
POTENTIAL INITIATIVES

1. Summarize all opportunities for improvement identified in report
2. Prioritize potential improvements into Matrix of Improvement Initiatives (Keep to no more than 5)
   NOTE: Focus on those that are feasible and would positively enhance student learning
### SELF STUDY REPORT: MATRIX OF IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

**SEE HANDBOOK PAGE 10**

1. **Initiative**
2. **Objective**
3. **Who will lead? Who will be engaged?**
4. **Performance Indicators**
5. **Timetable for implementation and follow-through**

### SELF STUDY REPORT: APPENDIX

1. Select the most relevant and helpful additional information
2. Limit text Appendices to ten (10) pages [more for graduate programs]
3. A list of relevant web page links may be provided as one of the Appendices

### THE AUDITOR TEAM REVIEW PROCESS

1. Two to four member team of peers from TBR institutions or other institutions
2. The team reviews the Self Study Report & Appendices then forms guiding questions
3. One day on-site visit including conversations with Faculty and Students
4. Immediate Feedback – oral report by the team on day of site visit (exit session)
5. Written report submitted by team
ACADEMIC AUDIT REVIEW

1. To what purpose is the Academic Audit process?
2. When is the Self Study due to TBR?
3. Who should be involved in the Self Study Process?
4. In the Academic Audit model, how many focal areas are there?
5. How does a program benefit from the Academic Audit process?

ACADEMIC AUDIT RESOURCES

For additional information contact:
Dr. Randy Schulte
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Office: 615-365-1505 FAX: 615-366-3903
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Or go to
www.tbr.edu – click on Academic Initiatives then Academic Audit