

Accreditation Basics and How Do I Get There?



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Prepared by: Joanne Rose-Johnson, President
Educational Advisors Inc.
joanne@edadvisors.com | www.edadvisors.com

Presenters

- **Joann Zakarin**, President, Advanced Training, and COE Commissioner
- **Phillip Stewart**, Chairman, NACCAS
- **Dr. Paul Bott**, Paul Bott Associates, and Vice-Chairman, ACCSCT

Objectives

- Overview of Accreditation – What it is, Why Become Accredited, How to become Accredited
- Overviews of COE, NACCAS and ACCSCT
- Introduction to the Self-Evaluation Report
- Social Responsibility of being an Accredited Institution
- Traps that schools fall into while going through accreditation

What is Accreditation?

- Accreditation is a process of assisting private career schools and colleges to become stronger and better institutions by setting **standards of educational quality**.
- It is a **self-analysis** and continuous improvement which through voluntary association with others helps educational institutions improve the quality of their programs.
- The process is **voluntary** and is an earned status.

Why would an institution want to become accredited?

- ✓ Signifies a level of meeting standards of **educational quality**
- ✓ Provides access to students for federally funded financial aid.
- ✓ Recognition by other academic institutions and employers.



What are the Main Attributes of Accreditation?

- Voluntary Process
 - Schools agree voluntarily to meet the standards and participate in the process
- Self-Analysis
 - Critical Component
 - Requires honest assessment of strengths and weaknesses
- Peer Review
- Continuous Monitoring

Accreditation and Federal Student Aid



- Accreditation is a threshold requirement for eligibility for Federal Student Aid programs

Steps to Federal Student Aid Eligibility



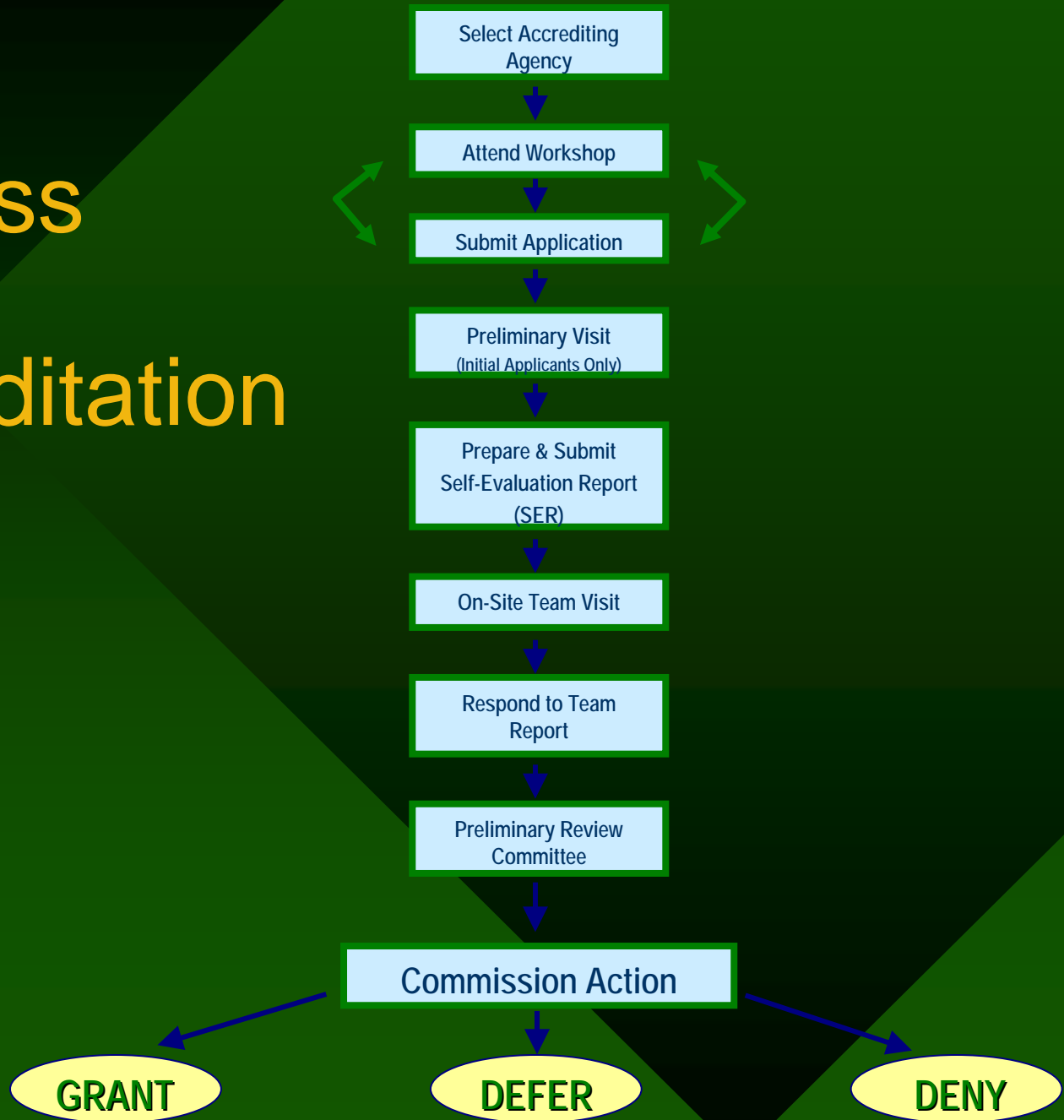
- ❖ State Approval (Licensure)
- ❖ Accreditation
- ❖ Institutional Eligibility for Federal Student Aid (Separate Process)

What is the process to become accredited?

- ✓ Determine the accrediting agency best suited for your institution
- ✓ Review agency standards to determine eligibility

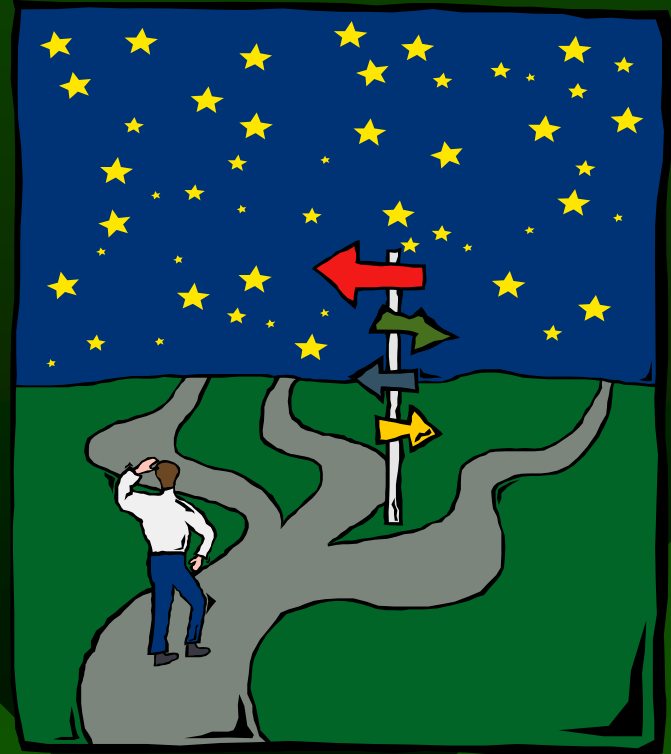


Process of Accreditation



How do I know which agency is right for my institution?

- Considerations
 - Recognition
 - Institutional/Program
 - Eligibility Requirements
 - Scope
 - Geographic
 - Subject Matter
 - Membership
 - Resources
 - Staffing
 - Website
 - Materials
 - Responsiveness



- ✓ The institution should review the agency's scope of recognition by the DOE to determine what agency best serves their academic profile.

Example: An institution offering only cosmetology programs would likely find a best fit with NACCAS, COE or ACCSCT.

- ✓ Evaluate current programs and plans for future expansion.

Accreditation Organizations “Big 7”

- ABHES – www.abhes.org
- ACCET – www.accet.org
- **ACCSCT – www.accsct.org**
- ACICS – www.acics.org
- **COE – www.council.org**
- DETC – www.detc.org
- **NACCAS – www.naccas.org**



While each agency has established their own set of guidelines and procedures, all follow standards consistent with quality, improvement and accountability as set forth by the United States Department of Education. While each agency's standards may be stated differently, they all focus on the following areas:

- ✓ Institutional Mission and Objectives
- ✓ Management and Administrative Capability, Operations
- ✓ Financial Structure and Soundness
- ✓ Admissions and Recruitment Policies and Practices
- ✓ Educational Programs, Equipment, Faculty (Qualifications), Professional Development, Instructional Space and Facilities
- ✓ Institutional Effectiveness and Planning
- ✓ Outcomes (Retention, Placement, Licensure Rates)
- ✓ Constituent Input (Students, Graduates, Employers, Advisory Boards)

What is the Cost of Accreditation?

Approximate Agency Costs:

- Accreditation Workshop \$500 (does not include travel and associated costs)
- Pre-Application \$500- \$1200
- Application \$500- \$1300
- Visit fee \$5000 ++

Additional Costs:

- Manpower Costs
- Outside Specialist Costs (Attorneys, CPAs, Accreditation Consultants)
- Audits/Reviews of Financial Statements
- Facility/Educational Resources/Curriculum Improvement Costs

How should I plan for accreditation?

- **Planning and Expectations**
 - **Understand your mission and goals for growth and development.**
 - Accreditation is part of the journey not the whole journey
 - **Get Educated**
 - **Plan, Plan, Plan**
 - **Document, Document, Document**

Research Accreditation Carefully

- ✓ Start with the Standards
- ✓ Complete Internal Compliance Study
- ✓ Anticipate changes and costs (faculty, personnel, resource materials).
- ✓ Develop a Plan and Timeline
- ✓ Consider eligibility requirements such as
 - ✓ In scope
 - ✓ 2 years in operation as a licensed institution
 - ✓ At least one graduate from the longest program
 - ✓ Two years of reviewed financial statements demonstrating soundness

How long does the process take?

Anywhere from 12-18 months

Factors:

Knowledge of Process

Quality of Submissions

Flexibility

Follow Up

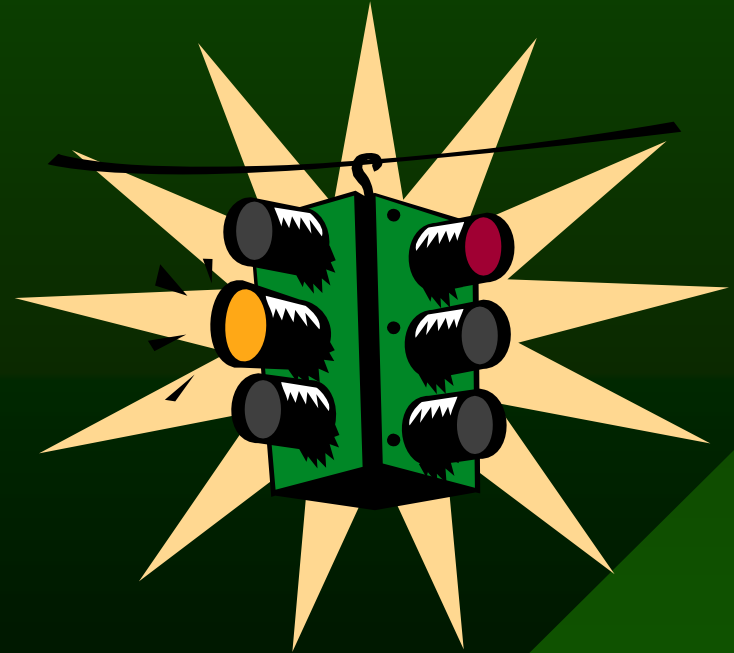
Willingness to Change

Financials



Where do schools run into obstacles?

- Unclear Mission
- Weak or improperly prepared financial statements
- Poor planning
- Lack of follow-up
- Lack of involvement



How Should I Plan for Accreditation?



DO

Do the Process Well
(Staff Training)

DOCUMENT

If "it" isn't documented,
"it" did not occur

DEMONSTRATE

Prepare to Demonstrate
Performance
(Student Outcomes)

COE

Council on Occupational Education

- ✓ Targeted postsecondary institutional accredited members include:
 - Public technical education institutions
 - Private non-profit and for-profit job preparation (vocational) schools
 - Job Corps Centers
 - Military technical training centers
 - National defense schools
 - Federal agency institutions
 - Corporate and Industry training units
- ✓ Approves programs through the associate degree level.
- ✓ Next Accreditation Workshop: July 10-11, 2008

San Antonio, TX

NACCAS

National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences

- **A national agency for the institutional accreditation of postsecondary schools and departments of cosmetology arts and sciences.**
- **Next accreditation workshop: May 9-10, 2008 - Las Vegas, NV**

ACCSCCT

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology

- ✓ Accredits schools with programs up to masters degrees. School must be able to demonstrate that students have been training at the institution for at least two consecutive years, and that the longest program offered at the time of application has had a graduating class.
- ✓ Institutions may apply for accreditation if their primary objective is vocational training. Eligible institutions must be postsecondary, proprietary (or nonprofit) institutions that are licensed by the state in which they are located.
- ✓ Next Accreditation Workshop: July 10-11, 2008 – Arlington, VA

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

[Educational Advisors Inc.](#)

(562) 436-3900 – joanne@edadvisors.com

www.edadvisors.com

[ACCSCT](#)

(703) 247-4212 – www.accsct.org

[COE](#)

(770) 396-3898 – www.council.org

[NACCAS](#)

(703) 600-7600 – www.naccas.org