Surviving the Accreditation Process

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Dr. Diana Johnson, NorthWest Arkansas Community College
She serves currently as the Executive Director of High School Relations at NorthWest Arkansas Community College. She has worked in higher education for over 20 years. She is currently serving as the NACEP Board Secretary.

Lynn Burbank, University of Minnesota-Duluth
She recently retired from her position as director of the Continuing Education Department at the University of Minnesota Duluth. She led its College in the Schools program through initial NACEP accreditation in 2005 and re-accreditation in 2012. She is a past president of the NACEP Board of Directors and has served as a peer reviewer since 2006.
About CEP

- College
  - Four campuses

- Program
  - Established 1985
  - 35 High schools
  - 22 disciplines
  - 55 unique courses
  - 13,995 credits
  - 42 faculty mentors ("liaisons")
  - 106 high school instructors
Initial Steps

M State’s decision to pursue accreditation.

Initial Steps

• Self study
• Review/study the Accreditation Guide
• Create CEP handbook →
• Create discipline/course grid →
• Conduct surveys
**Bridging the Gaps & Celebrating Achievements**

**Gaps**
- New teacher orientation →
- Creating and documenting ALL procedures

**Achievements**
- Success Report
- Organized * Thorough * Transparent

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**CONCURRENT TEACHER ORIENTATION**

*Documentation of teacher orientation is required for new teachers, which should be done at the pre-class mentor meeting. This form is optional for teachers that are not new to the CE Program. Please submit this checklist and meeting notes with your mentor report.*

Instructor: __________________ High School: __________________
Mentor: __________________ Date: __________

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

- Concurrent Enrollment Program overview
- Review the Concurrent Enrollment Handbook [www.mnscu.edu/concurrent](http://www.mnscu.edu/concurrent). Include the review of topics such as FERPA, course caps, and the student agreement of understanding.
- Mentor/mentee relationship
  - Number of visits and how they will occur, mentor reports, etc.
- Instructor roles and responsibilities
- Syllabus requirements
  - A sample syllabus and syllabus checklist and template can be found at [www.mnscu.edu/concurrent](http://www.mnscu.edu/concurrent)
- Book requirements (suggestions)
- Concurrent Enrollment Day

**DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC AGENDA**

- Course outcomes
- Course curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Course philosophy
- Assignments and assessments
- Grading
- Other:
Timeline

✓ Attend the Accreditation Institute at NACEP
✓ Begin surveys *immediately*
✓ Review Accreditation Guide
✓ Begin communicating your plan/expectations to faculty, IR, administration
✓ Compile data/evidence/signed forms

Tips

✓ You can never start too early
✓ Be organized, concise and thorough
✓ Be careful and thoughtful when writing each standard's coversheet
✓ Assume your reviewers know nothing – explain everything in FINE detail
✓ Be able to defend your program at the MACRO and MIRCO levels
NWACC Re-accreditation Process

- Staff served as peer reviewers – Great training!
- 2 years prior to submitting the reaccreditation process began taking inventory
- Began prepping faculty liaisons, academic chairs and academic deans
- Attended NACEP Accreditation Institutes at the conference and in state; brought key faculty
- 1 year out – set up a shared electronic file to save documents. Backed up on a thumb drive
- 6 months out started putting packet together to exactly match the NACEP drop box folders
- Reviewed packet
  - Staff
  - Institutional Research
  - Others from across campus
Things we did right...

• Started early
• Valued by college leadership
• Attended Accreditation Institutes
OMG moments

- One year out we discovered that we need to separate our new faculty training from our on-going faculty development.
- Our review team was primarily made up of 4 year institution representatives. Different expectations.
What Now?

After getting feedback from the accreditation process we are having some lengthy conversations on the professional development and the engagement of our academic divisions.

Need to improve our own record keeping
- Checklists for new instructors
- Site visit forms
- Signatures
From the other side....Tips from a Peer Reviewer

• Peer Reviewers Want You to Succeed

• Ask Questions

• Evidence & Description Are Key

• Explain & Document Differences

• Be Candid about Program Challenges
Peer Reviewers continued...

• Provide Complete Evidence in Each Folder
• Additional Reviewer Requests Are a "Given"
• More Evidence Is Better
• Collect & Organize Documentation Routinely
• Questions/Comments?
Upcoming Events:

September 15th: Entering the Starting Gate for Credential Attainment

September 20th: Tackling Concurrent Enrollment as a Small Program (MNCEP)

October 4th: Perkins in Practice (ACT)

October 16-18th: National Conference and Preconference Workshops, Louisville