

**SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION**

Academic programs and other working units may seek out specialized accreditation to further improve the quality of programs and services for students and the institution. Program or unit leaders should follow the process defined in the accompanying procedure.

By definition of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education, "Specialized accreditation...applies to the evaluation of programs, departments, or schools which usually are parts of a total collegiate or other postsecondary institution. The unit accredited may be as large as a college or school within a university or as small as a curriculum within a discipline. Most of the specialized accrediting agencies review units within a postsecondary institution which is accredited by one of the regional accrediting commissions. However, certain of the specialized accrediting agencies accredit professional schools and other specialized or vocational or other postsecondary institutions which are free-standing in their operations. Thus, a "specialized" or "programmatic" accrediting agency may also function in the capacity of an "institutional" accrediting agency."

Adopted      June 14, 2018

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*Process for Programs or Departments Seeking or Reaffirming Specialized Accreditation*

1. Content experts in the academic department or working unit should initiate the process below.
2. Complete and submit the Specialized Accreditation Template. Forms can be obtained from Planning, Improvement and Innovation (PI&I)
3. Seek approval from the supervising Vice President to begin initial investigation into specialized accreditation.
4. Vice President and Director of PI&I will identify Primary Contact.
5. The Primary Contact will identify accreditation requirements and share with Vice President and Director of PI&I.
6. The Primary Contact will identify major timelines and plan milestone checkpoints and share with involved parties.
7. The Primary Contact will work with Director of PI&I to build documentation storage space.
8. The Primary Contact will begin gathering documentation. Director of PI&I must be invited to all meetings.
9. The Primary Contact will conduct a review of completion of accreditation requirements; invite Director of PI&I, Supervising VP, Chair or Supervisor, and President.
10. The President, Supervising VP, Chair or Supervisor of program, Director of PI&I, and the Primary Contact will approve and sign off on the documents for submission.
11. The Primary Contact will submit to accrediting body by deadline indicated.
12. The Primary Contact will work with PI&I to host site visit. PI&I staff will assist with:
  - a. Date selection to include President, VP, and others
  - b. Travel and hotel arrangements
  - c. Facility and food arrangements
  - d. Access to document storage site

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13. The Primary Contact will conduct a review of feedback from the accrediting body; invite President, Supervising VP, Chair or Supervisor, and Director of PI&I.
14. The Primary Contact will notify involved parties of further communication and/or decisions from the accrediting body.
15. The Primary Contact will determine the need for public notification and work with Director of PI&I to ensure completion of this step.
16. Supervising VP will inform the Board regarding accreditation.

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