II.6 Development of the Self-Study

A special committee convened by the program to develop the Self-Study usually plans and oversees the entire process. It is expected that faculty, staff, students, and alumni, and other constituent groups will also participate in the development of the Self-Study. Many programs work with an external editor to ensure that the final Self-Study is clear and accurate.

In determining the best approach to the organization of the Self-Study and what to include, the Standards provide the best framework. The narrative provides analysis of the supporting evidence as it relates to each of the standard elements. Evidence is developed by conducting assessment and evaluation of specific objectives, benchmarks, and/or targets that measure program-level student learning outcomes. The evidence needs to demonstrate continuous planning and evaluation processes. It is beneficial to approach the comprehensive review as a planning and evaluation activity that is essential for the improvement of the school and program as well as for the creation of the Self-Study. The document should demonstrate how the comprehensive review process fits within the school's and program's ongoing planning and outcomes-assessment processes.

When preparing the Self-Study, refer to previous narrative reports submitted to the COA and all COA correspondence since the last comprehensive review, including responses to previous narrative reports and requests for special reports. Address all issues or questions raised by the Committee in that correspondence. Continually building on previous narrative reports can reduce the amount of time needed to develop the Self-Study. Faculty will not need to devote as much time to writing the Self-Study because documentation and evidence will have been developed and gathered through the biennial narrative reports.

The Program Head provides a draft of the Self-Study to the OA Director, the ERP Chair, and all members of the ERP four months before the site visit. The purpose of the review of the draft Self-Study by the ERP is to provide constructive feedback so that the final Self-Study tells the program's story in the most persuasive way possible and enables the ERP to evaluate the program most effectively.

The draft should be as close as possible to the final version in content and format. It is reviewed and discussed in a conference call with the Program Head, the OA Director, and the ERP Chair. The purpose of the call is to better ensure that the final Self-Study will fully address the *Standards* and that its development is proceeding in accordance with the Plan for the Self-Study presented and discussed one year before the visit. The ERP Chair shares the panel feedback on the conference call with the Program Head and the OA Director and may also share the feedback in writing.

The review visit may be postponed for up to one year if the ERP Chair and/or Director of the Office for Accreditation determine that the Plan for the Self-Study, the draft of the Self-Study, or the final Self-Study does not meet the requirements specified in AP3.

Revised June 3, 2019