

2028 SACSCOC Reaffirmation Leadership Team Meeting
May 27, 2026, 3:00 – 4:00pm
Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Raúl Hinojosa Jr., Mary Jo Venetis, Sarah Moore, Chandramallika Basak, Vicky Morris-Dueer, William Nichols, Amanda Smith, Stephen Spiro, Lev Gelb, Clark Meyer, Inga Musselman, Vy Trang, Angela Franklin

Absent:, Juan González, Rafael Martín, Robin Paige

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Selection and Progress: Dr. Sarah Moore provided an update on the QEP topic selection process, highlighting the unanimous decision by the topic selection committee - including Dr. Juan González, Dr. Robin Paige, Dr. Bill Nichols, and Dr. Amanda Smith - to focus on career connected learning.

Committee Formation and Input: Dr. Moore explained that the topic selection committee was formed in early spring 2026 and included participation from Dr. González, Dr. Paige, Dr. Nichols, and Dr. Amanda Smith, with Dr. Raúl Hinojosa receiving updates and feedback. The committee reviewed the Roadmap 2030 survey data and conducted focus groups to gather input from students and stakeholders.

Focus on Career Connected Learning: The committee identified career connected learning as the central theme, based on consistent feedback from both undergraduate and graduate students, as well as input from the Career Center and Career Management Center. The decision was unanimous among committee members.

QEP Next Steps and Leadership Approval: Dr. Moore outlined plans to conduct further research into best practices and high-impact strategies supporting career connected learning over summer 2026. Dr. Raúl Hinojosa noted that upcoming meetings with the Provost, Dr. Nichols, Dr. Paige, Dr. Dustin Grabsch, Dr. Moore, and himself are planned to coordinate efforts and seek leadership approval to move the QEP forward.

Student and Stakeholder Engagement: Dr. Moore and Dr. Hinojosa emphasized the importance of engaging students through focus groups and highlighted the collaborative efforts of the team, including coordination support from Vy Trang, to ensure broad input and consensus.

Reaffirmation Working Groups Organization and Timeline: Dr. Hinojosa detailed the establishment of six working groups, their roles in preparing the Compliance Certification Report (CCR), and the timeline for drafts and reviews leading up to the September 2027 submission deadline.

Working Group Structure and Roles: Dr. Hinojosa explained that each working group is assigned specific Principles of Accreditation and is responsible for drafting narratives and

collecting evidence for the CCR. Chairs and co-chairs serve as principal authors, while members assist with drafting and evidence collection.

UTD SACSCOC Website Content and Purpose: Dr. Hinojosa announced ongoing revisions to the UTD SACSCOC website by the Web Applications Technology (WAT) team. The website will serve as a resource for project teams, meeting documentation, and historical reaffirmation materials. The updated website will include sections for the 2028 reaffirmation, project team information, meeting minutes, rosters, and eventually the compliance certification report (CCR) and QEP. It will also provide access to SACSCOC resources and historical reports.

SACSCOC Principles Review and Input: Dr. Hinojosa provided updates on the delayed SACSCOC Principles review, noting that member institutions will have opportunities to provide input on proposed revisions, and emphasized the need for the group's feedback once the revisions are released. The Principles review, typically conducted in the seventh year of the cycle, is delayed but expected to have a transition period before new Principles take effect. Dr. Hinojosa anticipates minimal impact due to the university's differentiated review status. Dr. Hinojosa will circulate the proposed revisions to the group for review and input and will coordinate with the UT System accreditation liaison and other Texas accreditation liaisons to discuss implications and share insights.

Negotiated Rulemaking and Federal Accreditation Policy Changes: Dr. Hinojosa summarized the outcomes of recent federal negotiated rulemaking sessions, highlighting new regulations affecting accreditors - particularly around transfer credit policies, approval of new accreditors, cost burdens, student outcomes, and academic freedom - that will indirectly impact institutional compliance. A negotiated rulemaking committee reviewed Department of Education proposals in April and May 2026, reaching consensus on new regulations. Final rules are expected for public comment in late summer 2026, with implementation set for July 2027.

Transfer Credit Policy Changes: New regulations will require greater transparency in transfer credit policies, including clear communication to students about accepted credits, reasons for non-acceptance, and an appeals process for students.

Approval of New Accreditors: The rules streamline the process for approving new accrediting bodies, aiming to reduce the time required for new accreditors to gain approval and increase the number of recognized accreditors.

Cost Burden and Student Outcomes: There is a focus on reducing accreditation cost burdens and measuring return on investment for student services, as well as maintaining emphasis on student achievement metrics such as licensure, certification, retention, and graduation rates.

Academic Freedom and Institutional Policies: Institutions will be expected to have policies promoting academic freedom and intellectual diversity, with further details to be clarified in the final regulations.

Follow-up Tasks

SACSCOC Principles Revisions Review: Review the forthcoming proposed revisions to the SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation upon receipt, circulate them to the group, and collect input and questions for feedback to the UT System accreditation liaison group. (Dr. Hinojosa)

SACSCOC Website Update Notification: Notify the group when the updated SACSCOC reaffirmation website is ready and share the revised URL with all members. (Dr. Hinojosa)

Department of Education Rulemaking Summary Distribution: Share the Department of Education news release summarizing the negotiated rulemaking outcomes with the group for their awareness and review. (Dr. Hinojosa)