Why Accreditation
(especially for DoD Schools)

Accreditation of DoD Schools
DoD Instruction 1400.25-V410 paragraph 3.m.,
dated September 25, 2013, Incorporating Change
1, Effective August 2, 2021 states:

“It is DoD policy to: Implement TE&PD activities
and programs for civilian employees at the
highest possible level of academic quality and
cost-effectiveness, consistent with the standards
established by external accreditation and
certification entities recognized by the U.S.
Department of Education when applicable
standards exist, or standards established by
DoD when external standards do not exist or are
inappropriate.”
Accreditation

• A status granted to an educational institution or program that has been found to meet or exceed stated standards and criteria of educational quality and student achievement

• Uniquely American and overseen by Department of Education and/or Council for Higher Education accreditation (CHEA)

• Conducted by a peer review against the stated standards and criteria

• Applies to institutions or programs, not individuals

• Types of accreditation
  − Programmatic or specialized (program within a postsecondary institution)
  − Institutional (considers educational offerings as well other institutional characteristics such as student services, financial status, administrative structure, facilities, and equipment)

Purpose

• Assure the quality of the institution or program

• Demonstrate to stakeholders and customers (including the taxpayer) the value of the institution or program

• Assist in the continuous improvement of the institution or program

• Put a “stamp of approval” on graduates

• Facilitate an emerging “culture of evidence”
Accreditation Benefits

- Review of internal controls
- Forum to share ideas and innovation
- Foundation for self-assessment
- Opportunity for continuous improvement

External SEAL OF QUALITY

Why Council on Occupational Education

- National institutional accrediting agency for postsecondary occupational education institutions
  - Non-degree-granting
  - Applied associate degree-granting
- Recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a reliable authority on the quality of education offered by the institutions it has accredited
- Aligned with type of learning and development provided by Federal and DoD Schools

COE Mission
Assuring quality and integrity in career and technical education

Flexible in adapting standards and criteria for Federal and DoD schools
COE Standards

Evaluates entire institution
Looks at OUR processes and are we following them

Institutional/Community Characteristics
Std 1 – Institutional Mission
Std 2 – Educational Programs
Std 3 – Program Outcomes
Std 4 – Strategic Planning
Std 5 – Learning Resources
Std 6 – Physical Resources & Technical Infrastructure
Std 7 – Financial Resources
Std 8 – Human Resources
Std 9 – Organizational Structure
Std 10 – Student Services and Activities

Substantive Changes

• Application for a planned substantive change must be submitted for approval no later than 90 working days prior to the change being implemented
  - Change of a branch to a main campus
  - Change of location
  - Merger of two or more institutions
  - Establishment of a branch campus
  - Establishment of an extension campus
• Failure to implement approved substantive changes within 180 days of approval results in revocation of the initial approval
• Must notify commission within five working days after unplanned substantive change occurs
  - Loss of accreditation or placed on probation by another accrediting agency
  - Loss of good standing with a regulatory or governing body
  - Findings of a regulatory/oversight agency which may affect operations and/or institutional stability
  - Permanent or temporary closing of the main campus or an additional site
  - Substantial disruption of classes caused by any number of means to include natural disasters that may cause degradation in operations or temporary displacement of students to alternative learning sites
  - Unplanned change of location

A moratorium will be placed on the acceptance, processing, and approval of ALL substantive changes beginning 6 months prior to the scheduled dates of accreditation team visits through the date the commission grants initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation.
Innovation

• COE welcomes and encourages perceptive and imaginative experimentation aimed at increasing effectiveness of the institution

• Such innovative approaches must be consistent with
  - Institution’s mission and goals
  - COE’s mission, goals, and objectives

• Where innovative or experimental program may be at variance with accreditation criteria, the institution must request Commission concurrence prior to implementation

• Concurrence shall be based on institution’s ability to
  - Identify specific criteria that cannot be applied to the innovation
  - Propose alternate ways to assess the effectiveness of the innovation in achieving objectives related to the criteria that cannot be applied to the innovation

Keep this in mind if your institution moves to other types of learning delivery

Steps to Seek Accreditation or Reaffirmation

1. Submit a letter of intent to seek candidacy with COE
2. Attend a candidate academy (Feb, June, Oct) within 18 months of estimated date of accreditation visit
3. Submit a candidate application
4. Host a candidate team visit; receive report and provide response to findings
5. Gain candidacy approval by the COE commission (Commission meets March, Jun, Sept, & Dec)
6. Conduct Self-Study Assessment and prepare report (takes 6 – 12 months)
7. Host a preliminary visit (30 days prior to team visit)
8. Host accreditation team visit and a receive visiting team report
9. Respond to visiting team report
10. Initial accreditation or reaffirmation awarded by the Commission (at March, June, Sept, or Dec meetings)

No substantive changes