COE Strategic Plan

April 2024

Strategic Plan Committee

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Commissioners	Affinity Group Chairs
• Dr. Darline Glaus • Dr. Stephanie Houston • Jim Sullivan • Deanna Thomas • Amit Shorewala	• Non-Public: Billy Clark • Public: Jim Taggart • Registered Apprenticeships: Jeff Rogers • Federal: Barbara Hess

Feedback

- Listening Sessions
- SOAR Survey
  - Please share the STRENGTHS of the Council on Occupational Education.
  - What OPPORTUNITIES are on the horizon for the Council on Occupation Education?
  - What are your ASPIRATIONS for the Council on Occupational?
  - What are some of the RESULTS that would demonstrate achievement and excellence for the Council on Occupational Education?
- Affinity Groups
  - Public, Private, Federal, Registered Apprenticeship
- Townhall Meetings
- Spring Conference

Mission Vision Values

Mission Statement

A mission statement explains an organization’s fundamental purpose. It explains what the contribution is to customers, why the organization exists, and the impact it has.

Our Mission

Current	Proposed
Assuring quality and integrity in career and technical education.	*Our mission is to uphold quality, integrity, and continuous improvement in technical education, meeting the evolving needs of students, employers, and communities.*

About

An organization’s vision is aspirational and communicates the desired future contribution to society.

Do not need to know how you will achieve but clear enough to recognize when you achieve it

Our Vision

Current	Proposed
"COE is the premier accreditor for occupational education in the world. It is a solvent agency with continuous growth. Its reputation is unsurpassed as the gold standard for quality. Its public value is respected by all levels of higher education. The student achievement of its institutions is exemplary."	***Our vision is to be the standard for education that works.*** *By 2029, the Council on Occupational Education will be the top accreditation agency for impactful technical education by:* • *Emphasizing quality outcomes as our top priority.* • *Championing student success in programs, the workforce, and the community.* • *Advocating collectively at both state and federal levels for advancing technical education.* • *Cultivating innovation to adapt and thrive in evolving educational landscapes.* • *Increasing value to improve institutional performance by fostering collaboration and promoting compliance through member development.*

Values Characteristics

- Defines the way we will operate in achieving our goals
- A shorthand way of describing our motivations
- The energetic containers of our aspirations and intentions

Our Values

Current	Proposed
Trustworthiness	*Ethical*
Transparency	*Transparent*
Accountability	*Accountable*
Innovation	*Innovative*
Collaboration	*Collaborative*
Responsiveness	*Responsive*
Commitment	*Inclusive*
Flexibility	

Our Values

Current	Proposed
Trustworthiness *– Denotes honesty, integrity, and reliability. The metaphorical equivalent of having a good credit score.*	***Ethical*** *– An ethical approach guides all interactions, decisions, and processes. The Council is unwavering in its commitment to being trustworthy and maintaining the highest standards of honesty and professionalism.*
Transparency *– Implies openness, communication, and clear visibility. Describes an accreditation process or status that is not secretive or mystical.*	***Transparent*** *– Transparency is a hallmark of the Council's operations. It openly communicates accreditation processes, decisions, and policies through clear and accessible information sharing.*
Accountability *– Implies being answerable and liable. Describes accredited institutions' responsibility to students, regulatory agencies, and business and industry.*	***Accountable*** *– We uphold a culture of accountability, ensuring that every aspect of our operations, from accreditation decisions to communication with constituents, are conducted with transparency, accuracy, and a commitment to fulfilling our responsibilities.*
Responsiveness *– Demonstrates an understanding of constituent's needs and a willingness to respond easily or readily.*	***Responsive*** *– The Council is responsive to needs and feedback of interested parties. It acts promptly to address concerns, adapting its approaches to better serve the evolving requirements of technical education institutions.*

Our Values

Current	Proposed
Innovation *– A blueprint for expectations for the future that encourages perceptive and imaginative experimentation aimed at meeting the needs of constituents. Addresses the expanded learning economy, student preparedness, and cultural understanding.*	***Innovative*** *– We foster an innovative culture by continuously exploring and implementing progressive approaches by identifying emerging imperatives and developing career-ready strategies to ensure our practices remain effective, relevant, and responsive to the evolving landscape of higher education.*
Collaboration *– Stakeholders working together toward a common goal of quality and integrity and making cooperative use of resources and best practices. Accomplished by institutions through networking and communities of practice.*	***Collaborative*** *– We prioritize collaboration as a core value, fostering partnerships among diverse entities. The Council actively engages with educational institutions, policymakers, and team members to collectively enhance the quality and effectiveness of technical education accreditation.*
NA	***Inclusive*** *– We uphold inclusion as a fundamental principle, ensuring that the Council's accreditation processes acknowledge and respect the diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and needs of all individuals and entities involved in higher education.*

Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan

- 5-year plan
- Strategic Imperatives: Quality, Integrity, Continuous Improvement
- Committee defined objectives and outcomes
- Tactics developed by leadership with staff
  - Define initiatives to accomplish the objectives
  - Staff assignments
  - Resources
  - Timeline by year
- Goal
  - Solicit feedback on additions, modifications, removals
  - Motion to approve draft

Accreditation Process Improvement

Objectives

1. Evaluate team composition policies and procedures to ensure a broad and diverse membership representation on visiting teams to provide a consistent, comprehensive, and objective evaluation process.
2. Create an extensive annual review process for staff and standing committees to study U.S. Department of Education rules, actions, and decisions.
3. Implement an accreditation management system and an annual enhancement plan to improve the system's functionality, performance, and data reporting.
4. Assess and streamline the process and timeline for processing initial accreditations, reaffirmations, and substantive changes.
5. Educate and inform related groups of COE policies, procedures, and timelines for accreditation maintenance and institutional actions.

Outcomes

- An improved institutional evaluation process with broad team representation ensures a thorough, impartial, and consistent assessment, contributing to more robust accreditation decisions.
- Improved compliance and alignment with U.S. Department of Education rules strengthen regulatory adherence, fostering trust and confidence.
- Optimized accreditation management system functionality streamlines operations and improves the user experience, facilitating smoother accreditation processes.
- Streamlined accreditation processes for initial accreditations, reaffirmations, and substantive changes expedite decision-making, providing timely support to member institutions.
- Improved compliance is achieved by disseminating updated guidance and information to member institutions through published resources.

Advocacy and Collaboration

Objectives

1. Solicit innovation, industry partnerships, student success stories, lessons learned, and community impact to represent our membership's quality, value, and relevance.
2. Foster collaboration between public, private, federal, and apprenticeship agencies.
3. Foster collaboration and networking among peer institutions to strengthen the overall quality of innovation and student outcomes.
4. Strengthen relationships with the Department of Education for better collaboration and influence.
5. Invite accreditation champions drawn from presidents, accreditation liaison officers, state higher education officials, and elected officials or staff to participate in discussion and training related to accreditation advocacy with elected officials on an as-needed basis.
6. Reinforce the value of technical education by promoting a widespread understanding of the diverse institutions we accredit and the role of accreditation in measuring quality and encouraging institutional improvement.
7. Strengthen national and state legislative support to enhance the overall knowledge of and impact of COE.

Outcomes

- Improved collaboration among agencies and institutions cultivates a rich knowledge-sharing environment, improving technical education's quality and effectiveness.
- Heightened recognition of technical education's quality and relevance strengthens its standing in the education sector, attracting more support and investment.
- Strengthened advocacy efforts and legislative support ensure that the importance of accreditation and technical education is effectively communicated and supported at all levels of governance.

Communication and Information Sharing

Objectives

1. Provide a dynamic website to share resources and keep constituents informed.
2. Develop processes for information dissemination to member institutions, commissioners, and other constituents.
3. Develop systems to communicate information with commissioners, committees, member institutions, and teams about significant Department of Education issues and changes that impact regulatory requirements institutions must comply with to improve the organization's and member institutions' compliance.
4. Develop and execute a long-term strategy to build COE's brand nationally as a prominent and trusted institutional accreditor.
5. Ensure accreditation web resources are searchable to support ease of access.

Outcomes

- A dynamic website is crucial for disseminating resources and updates, ensuring that member institutions are consistently well-informed.
- Processes and systems for sharing information ensure regulatory changes are communicated promptly, enabling members to be compliant and informed.
- Executing a long-term strategy to build COE's brand elevates its reputation and visibility, positioning it as a trusted authority in institutional accreditation.
- Sharing information about significant Department of Education changes fosters transparency and collaboration, reinforcing trust and confidence.

Data and Reporting

Objective

1. Annually evaluate and report on the Council's contributions to professional practice, advocacy, economic impact, and student success.
2. Conduct an inventory of all data COE collects from member institutions, identify gaps and redundancies, and determine how best to improve data practices.
3. Develop comparative data for institutions to aid in the quality assurance process.
4. Evaluate data included in the annual report with consideration for improving the quality, integrity, and relevance of information gathered.
5. Develop an annual reporting process to communicate progress on the strategic plan and overall status of the agency to the commission and member institutions.

Outcomes

- Improved reporting and data practices provide transparency and accountability, enabling interested parties to make informed decisions based on reliable information.
- Improved annual reporting processes enhance organizational transparency and accountability, fostering constituent trust and confidence.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Objective

1. Develop comprehensive systems for staff, the commission, committee members, institutional leaders, accreditation liaison officers, and team members and leaders to evaluate policies, processes, practices, and services.
2. Utilize results from member surveys and other feedback mechanisms to identify ongoing and emerging trends in technical education.
3. Assess the effectiveness of practices in elevating quality and integrity in technical education.
4. Convene member institutions, state agencies, and others to identify policy and process improvements to ensure that COE remains a leader in accreditation and technical education.
5. Provide an extensive review of Council resources with the assistance of a professional technical writer to improve organization, clarity, and quality that contributes to confidence and trust.

Outcomes

- Evaluation and feedback systems drive ongoing improvement and accountability, ensuring the organization remains responsive to evolving needs.
- Assessment of practices ensures that technical education maintains high standards of quality and integrity, adapting effectively to changing requirements and expectations.

Governance and Compliance

Objective

1. Create a supportive assistance and advocacy culture among staff and leadership to guide institutions to compliance.
2. Establish guidelines and mechanisms for staff to provide commissioners with information, perspective, and support to ensure the commission makes informed decisions.
3. Ensure transparency to the Commission regarding U.S. Department of Education compliance.
4. Formalize a calendar cycle for meetings, convenings, communications, internal processes, practices, conducting and compiling evaluations, and policy review.
5. Establish internal expectations for institutional service, accessibility, and responsiveness.

Outcomes

- Improved compliance and accountability instill confidence and ensure that the organization operates ethically and transparently.
- Improved decision-making processes promote efficiency and effectiveness, enabling the organization to achieve its objectives more effectively.
- A culture of advocacy and support fosters collaboration and trust among constituents, strengthening the organization's position and influence.

Innovation

Objective

1. Explore COE's potential role in assuring the quality of additional workforce-oriented, non-traditional, or non-credit credentials and degrees.
2. Establish relationships with technical education thought leaders and collaborate with accreditation agencies to explore innovative ideas and policies.
3. Ensure Council staff and the commission represent the diverse demographics of member institutions.
4. Explore opportunities to expand the scope of accreditation to include various types and levels of workforce-oriented degrees.
5. Consider expanding distance education opportunities and assisting institutions with quality and development.

Outcomes

- The organization's expanded portfolio of accreditation services, including workforce-oriented credentials and virtual education alternatives, broadens its appeal to diverse institutions. This expansion is poised to attract new members and solidify the organization's financial stability.
- Establishing relationships with thought leaders and collaborating on innovative initiatives positions the organization as a forward-thinking leader in the field. This reputation drives discussions and policies that address emerging needs, attracting a wider audience and expanding the organization's influence.
- Creating an appropriate framework for expanding distance education and sharing curricular resources ensures distance education is not a barrier to accreditation.

Leadership Development

Objective

1. Drive innovation by including industry and technical education thought leaders in relevant conferences.
2. Establish requirements for Commissioners to participate in a designated number of team visits.
3. Encourage Commissioners and committee members to uphold high engagement standards with in-person attendance at meetings and conferences.
4. Facilitate a nomination process to recommend volunteer leaders with a proven history of engagement, the ability to connect with constituents, and the ability to advocate for the organization's best interests.
5. Develop a mentoring system to connect emerging leaders with technical education leaders from various institution types.
6. Establish mentoring programs for leaders of newly accredited institutions.

Outcomes

- Commissioners' active participation in designated team visits ensures a deeper understanding of constituent needs and enhances their ability to make informed decisions, contributing to effective governance.
- Developing mentoring systems for emerging leaders fosters talent and knowledge sharing, strengthening the organization's leadership pipeline.
- Encouragement of in-person attendance at meetings and conferences facilitates networking and idea exchange, promoting professional growth and collaboration among accredited institutions and team members.

Organizational Structure and Operational Efficiency

Objective

1. Grow the agency in terms of membership, sector, and reach.
2. Evaluate and improve organizational structure, job titles, and staffing needs.
3. Enhance efforts in cybersecurity to protect technical resources.
4. Implement strategies for improved financial strength and transparency and contract and vendor performance.
5. Improve process documentation and cross-training among staff to ensure continuity.
6. Develop a system for purchasing equipment and technology to ensure staff have the necessary resources to work efficiently and streamline processes.
7. Evaluate commission size and composition to ensure broad and diverse representation.
8. Improve efficiency by identifying and prioritizing the automation of processes.
9. Improve the timeliness of reimbursement of travel claims.

Outcomes

- Evaluating the organizational structure to ensure clarity and efficiency enables staff to work more effectively towards organizational goals.
- Strengthened cybersecurity and streamlined processes improve operational resilience, ensuring continuity and reliability in service and delivery.
- Streamlined resource utilization and automation increase efficiency, enabling the organization to allocate resources effectively and focus on its core mission.
- Providing timely reimbursement of travel claims ensures financial commitment does not hinder team member or commissioner participation.

Recognition and Appreciation

Objective

1. Celebrate longstanding quality by recognizing high-performing COE members and institutions.
2. Recognize and reward institutions for excellence in accreditation.
3. Demonstrate a commitment to valuing volunteers' contributions.

Outcomes

- Increased morale and motivation among COE members and institutions foster a positive working environment, leading to greater engagement and productivity.
- Enhanced compliance support provided by knowledgeable staff improves institutional adherence to regulations, enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.
- Specialized expertise developed among staff enhances the organization's ability to address complex compliance issues and adapt to changing regulatory landscapes.

Staff Development

Objective

1. Ensure staff and experts with extensive and relevant technical education experience are designated to provide compliance guidance and support to teams and member institutions.
2. Adopt professional development opportunities appropriate to COE employees' work responsibilities and strategic priorities.
3. Develop professional development opportunities for staff specializing in relevant and complex compliance topics.
4. Strengthen the use of technology by staff and members to improve efficiency, professionalism, and trust.
5. Provide professional development opportunities to improve staff's professional command of Council policies, rules, and procedures.

Outcomes

- Specialized expertise developed among staff improves the organization's ability to address complex compliance issues and adapt to changing regulatory landscapes.
- Increased staff proficiency in Council policies and procedures ensures consistent and effective organizational implementation, further strengthening operational efficiency and compliance.

Training and Development

Objective

1. Offer in-person and remote training for visiting team members, leaders, and member institutions, including training to address unique requirements for each accreditation sector.
2. Develop online webinars, seminars, and workshops in complex compliance areas and on topics of value to member institutions.
3. Create and support various communities of practice (e.g., student success, assessment, outcomes, development of industry partnerships).
4. Implement innovative programming at annual conferences to meet the unique needs of attendees.
5. Collaborate with leaders in technical education and accreditation agencies to pinpoint gaps in COE's training offerings and actively explore opportunities for potential collaborations to address these gaps.
6. Develop training and resource centers for accreditation liaison officers, accreditation team members, and commissioners to define their roles and expectations and centralize information and digital files required for their respective roles.
7. Support smaller and less resourced member institutions with professional development.
8. Enhance the diversity of information presented during COE conference sessions, fostering meaningful interactions and engagement to create a more enriching and dynamic learning experience for participants.
9. Explore virtual options for recertification to provide some flexibility to active members who have completed certifications.
10. Provide an informal and open forum for member institutions to connect with, discuss interests and challenges, and ask staff, commissioners, and committee members questions.

Outcomes

- Improved skills and knowledge among members and leaders through flexible training options empower leaders to adapt to evolving challenges and drive organizational success.
- Enhanced compliance understanding and access to valuable resources for member institutions support their ongoing compliance efforts and promote best practices.
- Strengthened collaborative networks within COE fosters knowledge exchange and innovation, creating a supportive professional growth and organizational advancement environment.

Information

Review

Annual review of the strategic plan by the Commission and leadership with any relevant updates to strategies, objectives, or tactics.

Reporting

Progress on this work is included in annual reports that are delivered to the Commission and membership on the status of the work.

Additional Sections

- Introduction
- Equity statement
- Organizational background
- Strengths
- Trends
- Process

Next Steps

April

- Refine COE Strategic Plan based on Commission and townhall feedback
- Format and add additional sections to plan

May

- Preview and solicit feedback of COE Strategic Plan at 2024 Spring Conference

June

- Request Commission approval of final strategic plan

July

- Implementation of strategic plan