2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Council on Occupational Education
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Dear Member Institutions and Interested Colleagues,

As we kick off Fiscal Year 2026, I am honored to present this Annual Report on behalf of the Council on Occupational Education (COE). This report highlights a year defined by shared dedication, strategic progress, and an unwavering commitment to our mission.

Year One of our Strategic Plan was a year of purposeful advancement. We focused our efforts on strengthening communication and engagement, enhancing recognition and leadership development, and increasing operational efficiency. A major milestone was the successful integration of EDvera, our new accreditation management system, which continues to improve our processes and enhance the services we provide to our member institutions.

Our advocacy and outreach efforts also gained momentum. In June, we concluded the year with a visit to Capitol Hill, where we held 11 meetings with Congressional staff to share the COE story and champion the value of career and technical education education.

We expanded our presence through social media, and we introduced ACH payments to replace traditional check processing—offering greater convenience and security for our members and evaluation teams.

To recognize excellence within our membership, we launched new awards honoring outstanding institutions and institutional leaders. These recognitions reflect our ongoing commitment to celebrating excellence and leadership in the field of career and technical education.

In keeping with our commitment to transparency, the full Strategic Plan remains available online at https://council.org/strategic-plan/. I encourage you to review it and see the direction we are charting for the next five years.

Every accomplishment outlined in this report is a testament to the strength, engagement, and support of our member institutions. Your partnership makes our work possible. As we look to the future, we have already begun implementing Year Two of the Strategic Plan. The progress made this year has laid a strong foundation for continued growth and impact.

Thank you for your continued commitment to quality, integrity, and continuous improvement in career and technical education. Together, we are shaping a more responsive, innovative, and impactful future—and fulfilling our vision: **to be the standard for education that works.**

Warm regards,

President & CEO
Dr. Kirk A. Nooks
Council on Occupational Education

STAFF

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President & CEO

Dr. Susan Wright
Chief of Staff

Toree Paden
Director of Communication & Events

Tenille Haines
Executive Coordinator

Agency Operations

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Vice President

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HR/Accounting Project Manager

Candace Stevenson
Administrative Coordinator

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Vice President

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Assistant Vice President

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Director - Member Services and Training

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Administrative Coordinator

Institutional Compliance

Shelia Luke
Vice President

Dr. Dwight Pullen
Associate Vice President

Shakedra Robinson
Assistant Vice President

Cherie Jolley
Director

Anita Lachhonna
Administrative Coordinator

Aneesa Le Blanc
Compliance Coordinator

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Kim Ziebarth, **Past Chair**

Comelia Dunbar Jackson
Vice Chair

David Hawk, **Treasurer**

Dr. Thomas E. Pfundstein

Amit Shorewala

Dr. Kirk Nooks, **Ex-Officio**

Members

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Dr. Alvetta Peterman Thomas

Amit Shorewala

Chad Burchell

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David Hawk

David Osborne

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Dr. Gwen Sutton

Holly McClanan

James Sullivan

Julie Ha

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Kristian Smith

Laura Travis

Dr. Stephanie Houston

Steve Sullivan

Dr. Terri Dowell-Kimble

Dr. Thomas E. Pfundstein

COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Council Committee on Nominations

Kim Ziebarth

James D. King

Robert J. Clark, **Chair**

Dr. Jeff Sisk, **Vice Chair**

James Sullivan

Julie Ha

Council Committee on Accreditation Standards and Conditions

Dr. Christian Vige

Kallie Heil

Sandy Elliott, **Chair**

Dr.Tachaka Hollins

Council Appeal Panel

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Alice Kay Obenshain

Amita Garg

Arrita Summers

Brian Harris

Carrie Fife

Chandra Couch

Chris Ayers

Debbie Petree

Holly Peterson

J. Ramon Villanueva

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James J. Brosnan

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Jeremy Oberfeld

Joe Stoff

Joel English

John B. Hodgson

John Daniels

Dr. Joseph Molmer

Josh Cotter

Judith Pelletier

Karen Larsen

Lisa Tripney

Michael Gannon

Michael Moye

Paul Hacking

Radiah Dent-Palmer

Rhett Mathieu

Robert J. Clark

Rose Phillips

Sherica Davis

Steven B. Litvack

Walton Cobb

Wendy Jacob

COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION

Commission Committee on Finance

David Hawk, **Chair**

Kim Ziebarth

Dr. Stephanie Houston

Gwen Sutton

Dr. Josh Cotter

Dr. Kirk Nooks, **Ex-Officio**

Commission Committee on Policies and Rules

Dr. Myra West

Dr. Stephanie Houston

Holly McClanan, **Vice Chair**

James Taggart

Julie Ha

Dr. Josh Cotter, **Chair**

Commission Review Committee

David Hawk

Ahmad Dib

Liz Skidmore

Dr. Christian Vige

Yudeimy "Amy" Valdes

Dr. Gwen Sutton, **Ex-Officio**

Anna Sanfilippo

Dr. Carol Puryear

Maurice Dunn

Laura Carew

Chris Burgio

Tom Aasheim

James J. Brosnan

Kirk Nooks, **Ex-Officio**

James Taggart

Comelia Dunbar Jackson, **Ex-Officio**

Sandy Elliott

Robert J. Clark

Krishna Maddipatla

Billy Clark

Dr. Myra West

Ashley Smith

James D. King

Paul Hacking

REPORT OVERVIEW

The 2025 fiscal year has been a period of strategic progress and operational excellence for the Council on Occupational Education (COE). This report summarizes key accomplishments and performance indicators across multiple strategic objectives, including quality assurance, communication, operational efficiency, recognition, innovation, and governance. Across all divisions, the agency has implemented reforms that improved compliance, visibility, and stakeholder engagement while exceeding numerous KPI benchmarks.

Our annual report is structured into three distinct sections: **Quality, Integrity, and Continuous Improvement.** This structure provides a clear and logical progression, beginning with our operational performance, followed by our commitment to ethical standards and governance, and concluding with our efforts to evaluate, learn, and grow as an organization.



TOP 10 STATES

The following states have the highest number of COE-accredited institutions.



Florida
80



Texas
49



Ohio
48



California
43



Tennessee
31



Louisiana
24



New York
19



Missouri
14



Illinois
10



Massachusetts
10

Census Data Snapshot

Membership Institutions	Public	Private For Profit	Private Non-Profit	Apprenticeship	Federal	Total
Accredited	204	195	28	22	31	480
Candidate	12	12	4	0	0	28
Total	216	207	32	22	31	508

	Certificates	Associates	Total
Number of Programs	5376	304	5680

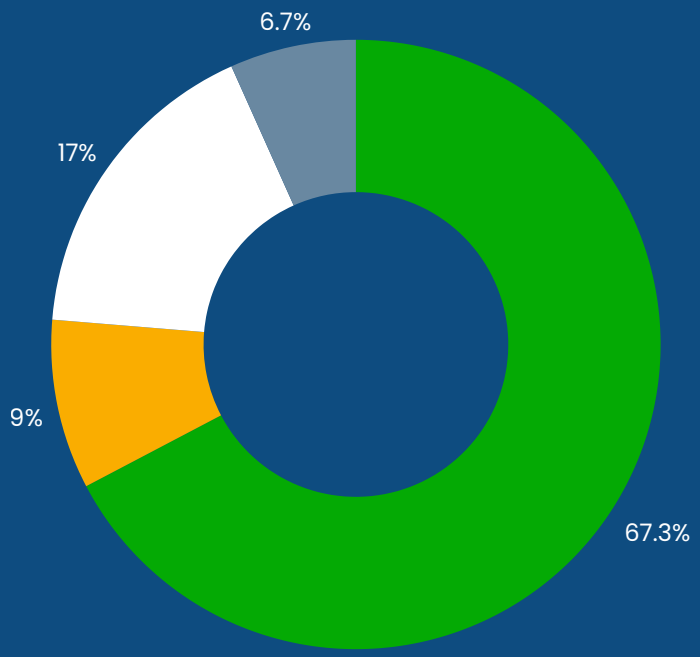
On-Site Visits	Candidate	Initial	Reaffirmation	Announced Focus Visits	Unannounced Focus Visits	Grand Total
Total	12	11	74	3	3	101



2025 BUDGET OVERVIEW

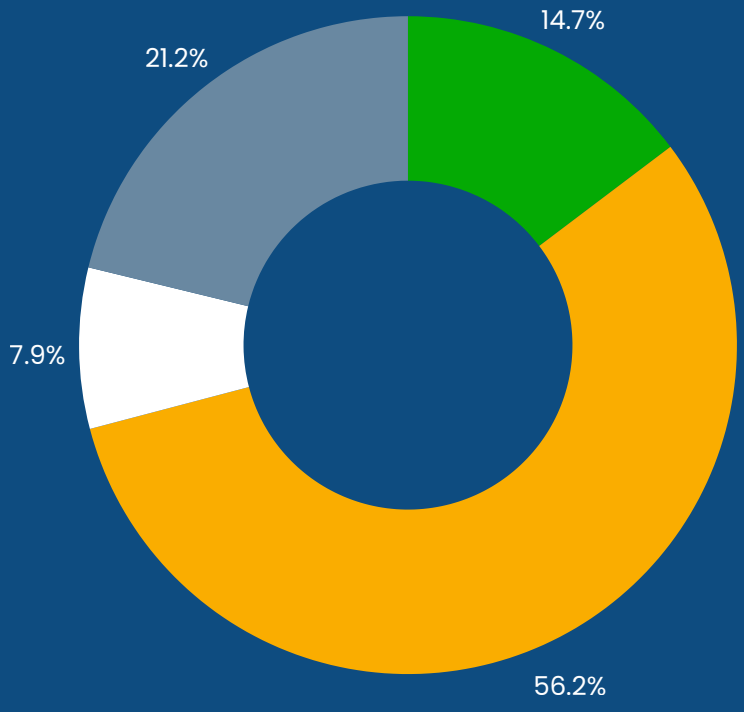
Revenue

- Annual Dues
- Application Fees & Penalties
- Events & Conferences
- Other Income



Expenses

- Conferences & Events
- Payroll & Related Expenses
- Agency Operations
- Travel



AGENCY PROFILE

The Council on Occupational Education (hereinafter referred to as the Council or COE) came into existence initially in 1971 as the Commission on Occupational Education Institutions (COEI) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), a regional accrediting association that serves institutions in an 11-state region. Operating as a unit of SACSCOC, COEI provided accreditation services to postsecondary occupational education institutions located, with a few special exceptions, in the SACSCOC region.

In preparation for assuming a national scope, the Council was incorporated as a non-profit education organization under the laws of the State of Georgia in June 1994. At the end of June 1995, the Council became a fully operational agency when all assets (staff, physical resources, and financial resources) and the membership of COEI were transferred from SACSCOC to the Council. The Commission of the Council, composed of 19 members, functions as the governing board and the decision-making body for all accreditation actions of the Council.

Throughout its history, the Council and its predecessor agency, SACSCOC, have been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a reliable authority on the quality of education offered by the institutions it has accredited. Its current scope of recognition is as a national institutional accrediting agency for the accreditation of non-degree-granting and applied associate degree-granting institutions, postsecondary occupational education institutions.



HISTORY

The Council on Occupational Education (COE) is a nationally recognized accrediting agency that ensures quality, integrity, and continuous improvement in career and technical education. The agency's roots date back to 1971, when it was first established as the Commission on Occupational Education Institutions (COEI) under the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC). At that time, COEI served primarily to accredit postsecondary occupational education institutions within the 11-state SACSCOC region, with a few exceptions.

Initially focused on secondary-level occupational programs, the agency gradually transitioned its focus to postsecondary institutions offering non-degree and applied associate degree programs. Recognizing the growing national demand for quality career and technical education, the Council took deliberate steps toward independence. In June 1994, it was incorporated as a nonprofit educational organization under the laws of the State of Georgia. By June 1995, the Council became fully operational as an independent agency when all assets, staff, and membership of COEI were formally transferred from SACSCOC to the newly established Council.

That same year, the Council was officially recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a national institutional accrediting agency. This recognition affirmed COE's role as a reliable authority on the quality of occupational education institutions across the country.

Today, the Council accredits a broad range of postsecondary institutions nationwide, including public technical colleges, private career schools, and workforce development organizations, ensuring they meet rigorous standards of educational quality and institutional integrity. Governed by a 20-member Commission, which serves as its decision-making and policy-setting body, The Council remains steadfast in its mission to support student success through high-quality career and technical education.





COUNCIL ON OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

VISION

Our vision is to be the standard for education that works.

By 2030, the Council on Occupational Education will be the premier accreditation agency for impactful occupational 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 occupational education.
- Cultivating innovation to adapt and thrive in evolving educational landscapes.
- Increasing value to improve institutional performance by fostering collaboration and promoting
- Compliance and institutional success through member development.



COUNCIL ON OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

MISSION

Our **mission** is to uphold quality, integrity, and continuous improvement in occupational education, meeting the evolving needs of students, employers, and communities.

CORE VALUES

The Council on Occupational Education is guided by a foundational set of core values. These values shape every aspect of our mission, decisions, and interactions with the institutions and individuals we serve. Each value stands as a pillar of our commitment to quality education and accountability.



ETHICAL
We take an ethical approach that guides all interactions, decisions, and processes. Our membership and staff are unwavering in the collective commitment to being trustworthy and maintaining the highest standards of honesty and professionalism.



TRANSPARENT
We prioritize clarity and openness in everything we do. We clearly communicate accreditation processes, decisions, and policies, ensuring information is accessible and understandable.



ACCOUNTABLE
We foster a culture of accountability by ensuring our operations, including accreditation decisions and communication with constituents, are transparent and accurate. This value also extends to the institutions we accredit, holding them to the same standards of responsibility and clarity.



RESPONSIVE
The Council is accessible and responsive to the needs and feedback of constituents. it acts promptly to address concerns, adapting its approaches to better serve the evolving requirements of educational institutions while adhering to the principles defined in Council policies.



INNOVATIVE
We foster an innovative culture by continuously exploring and implementing progressive approaches, identifying emerging requirements and developing strategies to ensure our practices remain effective, relevant, and responsive to the evolving landscape of higher education.



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 occupational education through accreditation.



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 .

QUALITY

Communication and Information Sharing

Objective 1. Provide a dynamic website to share resources and keep constituents informed.

- In partnership with the Director of Communication & Events, the Director of Institutional Compliance created a fully electronic complaint submission process featuring an updated Certification Form and an option allowing for anonymous complaints. Since launching via the new website in October 2024, over 100 submissions have been received and processed.

- By November 2024, the Director of Communications & Events completed the Phase II rollout of the website. All "Coming Soon" pages were fully launched, with key sections—such as Press, Classes & Training, Complaint, and Important Dates—receiving the latest updates.

Objective 2. Develop processes for information dissemination to member institutions, commissioners, and other constituents.

- In August 2024, the Council finalized a comprehensive Communications and Marketing Plan, including a Branding Booklet, with the goal of increasing presence and social media engagement by 15%. The plan was successfully completed and led to notable growth across all social media platforms, each surpassing the 15% engagement target. Instagram gained 34 followers, reflecting a 29% increase; Facebook saw an increase of 71 followers, up by 52%; LinkedIn added 179 followers, also a 52% rise; X (Twitter) gained 6 followers, marking a 21% increase; and YouTube grew by 22 subscribers, a 56% increase. Additionally, 14 videos were published on YouTube, garnering a total of 1,956 views, including 417 views on a single video.

Objective 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.

- Working in collaboration with the Vice President of Evaluation, a streamlined notification and registration process was implemented for the 2026 Reaffirmation Cohort. As a result, 98% of institutions scheduled for a 2026 reaffirmation visit participated in orientation—either at the Spring Accreditation Institute or during one of two virtual sessions in May 2025—surpassing the 85% attendance goal.



Objective 4. Develop and execute a long-term strategy to build COE's brand nationally as a prominent and trusted institutional accreditor.

- By leveraging the expertise of COE staff, fellows, and commissioners, COE successfully led and coordinated the submission of the Department of Education Recognition Petition by the July 5, 2024 deadline. A Recognition Committee was established, incorporating the insights of current and former commissioners to identify and address key policy issues through four focused meetings. This collaborative effort led to enhancements across COE policies.

- In preparation for the U.S. Department of Education's on-site review and evaluation during the FY25 fiscal year, all required documentation for file reviews was submitted to the USDE Analyst during the week of June 16, 2025, meeting the submission timeline.



Objective 5 . Ensure accreditation web resources are searchable to support ease of access.

- By April 2025, a web-based, real-time member directory was created and integrated with EDvera profiles and Commission actions. This directory, accessible via www.council.org, maintains up-to-date public access to COE accreditation data, enabling users to search for any COE-accredited institution. The information provided includes each institution's current accreditation status, along with any applicable restrictive or non-restrictive statuses.

COUNCIL ON OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

Organizational Structure and Operational Efficiency

Objective 1. Grow the agency in terms of membership, sector and reach.

- The Leadership in Motion tour began in June 2025, and President and CEO, Dr. Kirk Nooks, has visited two accredited institutions in Florida, three in New York, two in California.

Objective 2. Evaluate and improve organizational structure, job title, and staffing needs.

- As part of Phase I of the organizational structure review, all Executive Director titles were transitioned to Vice Presidents, and Assistant Executive Directors were retitled as Assistant Vice Presidents as of July 1, 2024. To further support organizational functions, two new roles—Director of Membership Services and Director of Communications & Events—were established.

- In collaboration with the President & CEO, all new and continuing FY25 job descriptions related to the Phase I structure were drafted and finalized by July 2024. Additionally, onboarding efforts began for the new Director of Institutional Reporting, Data, and Compliance, with orientation scheduled to be completed by September 2024.

Objective 3. Enhance cybersecurity efforts to protect technical resources.

- COE successfully partnered with vendors to migrate its infrastructure to a cloud-based server platform in March 2025, slightly beyond the original February target. The transition to a virtualized environment enhanced system reliability, scalability, and security. Efforts were also underway to ensure 100% of staff completed the annual cybersecurity training as part of the organization's ongoing commitment to data protection and risk mitigation.



Objective 4. Implement strategies for improved financial strength and transparency through contract and vendor performance reviews.

- A performance rubric was developed, and annual reviews were conducted for all agency vendors based on contract obligations. In May 2025, performance evaluations for 10 COE vendors were completed, enhancing accountability and service quality.

Objective 5. Improve process documentation and cross-training among staff to ensure continuity.

- The COE's shared drive filing system was redesigned by December 2024. In partnership with the Administrative Coordinators, the project to convert stored paper files into an electronic format was successfully completed in January 2025, enhancing efficiency and records management. Additionally, collaboration with Administrative Coordinators resulted in the conversion of stored paper files into electronic formats, completed by January 2025.

Objective 6. Develop a system for purchasing equipment and technology to ensure staff have the necessary resources to work efficiently and streamline processes.

- The COE office renovation was completed between March and April 2025, including enhancements to the employee break area, construction of two new offices, repainting of the front office, and full furniture upgrades. All improvements were completed under budget, significantly boosting employee efficiency, productivity, and workplace aesthetics.

Objective 7. Evaluate commission size and composition to ensure broad and diverse representation.

- An enhanced approach was deployed to increase nominations for all Council and Commission standing committees, with a special emphasis on expanding the pool of Public Members who have strong workforce connections.



Objective 8. Improve efficiency by identifying and prioritizing the automation of processes.

- In partnership with the Vice President of Agency Operations, ACH payments for dues, fees, and invoices increased to 52.5% by December 2024—exceeding the 20% growth target by 32.5 percentage points. All 1,224 Substantive Change applications submitted through the EDvera system were fully processed by the March 2025 Commission Meeting deadline. For FY24 audit submissions in EDvera, 40% of audits were processed by February 2025, as the majority of institutions submitted audits at the end of June. Efforts were ongoing to achieve 100% acceptance of audit and financial documents through the EDvera system by the February 2025 deadline.

Objective 9. Improve the timeliness of reimbursement of travel claims.

- In partnership with the Vice President of Agency Operations, efforts to transition 80% of Team Visit Leader and Member reimbursements to ACH by November 2024 were ongoing. A total of 520 volunteers were registered, with 169 (32.5%) participating in at least one accreditation visit. Of the visiting volunteers, 52 (30.8%) were reimbursed via ACH (direct deposit), while 117 (69.2%) received physical checks. This payment breakdown highlighted current preferences and provided insights for targeting future initiatives to increase ACH adoption and streamline reimbursements.



Recognition and Appreciation

Objective 1. Celebrate longstanding quality by recognizing high-performing COE members and institutions.

- New awards were established to honor institutions that demonstrated exceptional achievement in Community Service, Economic Impact, and Student Success during the November 2024 Annual Conference. The awards introduced included the Excellence Award in Community Service / Economic Impact, the Excellence in Student Teaching / Learning Achievement, the Excellence in Occupational Workforce Partnership, the Chief Administrative Officer Hall of Fame Award, and the COE Liaison Hall of Fame Award.

Objective 2. Recognize and reward institutions for excellence in accreditation.

- COE recognized institutions that have maintained accreditation for 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50 years—demonstrating dedication to quality, integrity, and continuous improvement.

Objective 3. Demonstrate a commitment to valuing volunteers' contributions.

- By April 2025, the second cohort of Sue Schooler Award nominees was identified, honoring the outstanding work of COE team leaders and team members. Seven individuals were nominated, and two recipients were selected and formally recognized at the 2025 Spring Accreditation Institute in Columbus, Ohio.

Innovation

Objective 4. Explore COE's potential role in assuring the quality of additional workforce-oriented, non-traditional, or non-credit credentials and degrees.

- A survey was developed, distributed, and reviewed by March 2025 to assess membership interest in expanding the scope of COE's accreditation. The Workforce Readiness Survey received 49 responses, while the Reaffirmation Cohort Survey gathered 82 responses.



INTEGRITY

Advocacy and Collaboration

Objective 3. Foster collaboration and networking among peer institutions to strengthen the overall quality of innovation and student outcomes.

- COE staff successfully facilitated 10 institutional sector Affinity Group meetings across the 2024 Annual Meeting and the 2025 Spring Accreditation Institute, providing direct support to each Affinity Group Chair and Vice Chair. Every staff member supported two meetings, ensuring consistent guidance and engagement.

Objective 7. Strengthen national and state legislative support to enhance the overall knowledge of and impact of COE.

- A formal legislative cycle and engagement plan was developed and presented at the June 2025 Commission Meeting, establishing a structured process for delivering ongoing legislative updates to member institutions during COE's major conferences. As part of this effort, COE Day on Capitol Hill was held on June 9, 2025, during which COE Commissioners, the CEO, and the Chief of Staff met with 10 legislative aides and one U.S. Representative to strengthen advocacy and enhance agency visibility.



Data and Reporting

Objective 1. Annually evaluate and report on the Council's contributions to professional practice, advocacy, economic impact, and student success.

- The Annual Report for the Strategic Plan was developed and finalized, including clearly defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to enable consistent year-over-year comparisons.

Objective 2. Conduct an inventory of all data COE collects from member institutions, identify gaps and redundancies, and determine how best to improve data practices.

- In collaboration with the COE Leadership Team, a tracking system was established by December 2024 to oversee division-specific factors supporting member monitoring. Enhancements included annotating the 2025 and 2026 Team Visit schedules to record institutional requests for visit date changes, implementing color-coded highlights to track Conflict-of-Interest (COI) forms—yellow indicating sent and green indicating received—and monitoring due dates for institutional responses following the release of Team Reports.

- Approximately 75 document submissions were managed through EDvera, including applications, closures, substantive changes, and annual report inquiries. Additionally, a partnership with the Director of Institutional Data, Reporting, and Compliance enabled monthly updates through the "Status" spreadsheet. The Title IV data field in EDvera was activated to support federal compliance tracking, along with audit-related fields such as Composite

Objective 4. Evaluate data included in the annual report with consideration for improving the quality, integrity, and relevance of information gathered.

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for member institutions were identified, and standard data definitions were developed and finalized by March 2024. These KPIs provide a consistent framework for measuring institutional performance and supporting data-driven decision-making across the Council.

Objective 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.

- In partnership with the President & CEO, an annual reporting process was developed to communicate progress on the strategic plan and the overall status of the agency to the Commission and member institutions. This tracking and reporting process included the successful submission of key performance indicators (KPIs) from all COE departments—including Compliance, Evaluations, Operations, and the President's Office—ensuring comprehensive monitoring of progress across the organization.



Leadership Development

Objective 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.

- In coordination with the Vice President of Evaluation, the process to update and confirm eligible volunteers for Team Visits and Substantive Change visits was completed by December 2024. A SurveyMonkey feedback form was deployed to assess current interest and availability among trained volunteers. Survey results were used to begin assembling the 2025 volunteer roster, prioritizing individuals with prior engagement, strong performance, and completed training.

Objective 5. Develop a mentoring system to connect emerging leaders with occupational education leaders from various institution types.

- In partnership with the Vice President of Evaluation and the Accounting/HR Manager, the job description and training requirements for the COE Fellow were developed and refined by October 2024. The finalized job description was shared with the three Fellows during their February 2025 training, with two Fellows accepting the role. Additionally, seven training sessions and a COE video web series titled "What is a Fellow" were completed. Leadership was also provided in developing the COE Fellow Guidelines to support role clarity and effectiveness.



Governance and Compliance

Objective 3. Ensure transparency to the Commission regarding U.S. Department of Education compliance.

- Beginning in September 2024, the Commission received formal quarterly updates on the status and development of the DOE Recognition Process, ensuring transparency and ongoing communication throughout the process.

Objective 4. Formalize a calendar cycle for meetings, convenings, communications, internal processes, practices, conducting and compiling evaluations, and policy review.

- In partnership with the Vice President of Agency Operations, the Operations Calendar was expanded to incorporate routine and cyclical communications, evaluation cycles, and policy review expectations, enhancing organizational coordination and transparency.



Accreditation process improvement

Objective 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.

- The Standards and Conditions and Policies and Rules Committees collaborated to evaluate and recommend improvements to the Team Visit process by October 2024. Recommendations for Standards 1, 3, 7, 8, and 10 were submitted during the June work session for inclusion on the agenda for the Business Meeting of the November Annual Meeting. A comprehensive list of eligible Team Leaders and Members for 2025 was created by March 2025, considering factors such as Volunteer Survey results, biodata sheets, training attendance, and specialty areas.

- All team members ensured their EDvera volunteer profiles were complete by uploading resumes and updating specialty and location fields. The COE Fellows' role was established to deploy participants during the 2025 Reaffirmation Visit cycle. Staff directed the development of the COE Fellow Guidelines, co-presented on the topic "What is a COE Fellow?" to Team Leaders and Member Institutions, and provided training on the roles and responsibilities of COE Fellows, completed by April 1, 2025.

Objective 2. Create an extensive annual review process for staff and standing committees to study U.S. Department of Education rules, actions, and decisions.

- Led the implementation and release of the Phase III EDvera Accreditation Management Software Team Visit module by October 2024.

Objective 3. Implement an accreditation management system and an annual enhancement plan to improve the system's functionality, performance, and data reporting.

- The implementation and release of the Phase III EDvera Accreditation Management Software Team Visit module was led and completed by October 2024. Training sessions for COE Volunteers and Member Institutions were conducted on July 15 and August 20, 2024. Oversight of the implementation and release of the Phase IV EDvera Annual Report module was also completed by October 2024, with 75% of annual reports finalized by that time and the remaining reports completed in 2025. Support for the Phase I EDvera Institution Directory module included ensuring Program Lists were updated by October 2024, with approximately 1,200 programs updated.



Objective 4. Assess and streamline the process and timeline for processing initial accreditations, reaffirmations, and substantive changes.

- Effective July 2024, a process was implemented to track all Substantive Change applications in EDvera, enabling the creation of Commission Action prelists and agendas based on received applications. By the December 2024 Commission Meeting, the Substantive Change visit schedule was revised and optimized, achieving 90% of visits scheduled within three months of initial approval. Specifically, 10 visits from December and 20 visits from March met this target. Additionally, by November 2024, the process for generating Substantive Change letters and tracking Agenda D items was streamlined to enhance efficiency and accuracy.

Objective 5. Educate and inform related groups of COE policies, procedures, and timelines for accreditation maintenance and institutional actions.

- In partnership with the Director of Membership Services, a training presentation and guidebook titled "How to Develop a Comprehensive Teach-Out Plan" were developed and delivered at the November 2024 Annual Meeting, facilitating institutional understanding of teach-out plans and supported by a revised Institutional/Conditional Teach-Out Plan template. In collaboration with the Vice President of Evaluation, the 2026 Reaffirmation Cohort Survey was designed and distributed in January 2025, with results informing the development of the 2026 Reaffirmation Visit Schedule, which was finalized by April 2025.

- Working alongside the President & CEO, the scheduling and coordination of FY25 Standing Committee Meetings—including Nominations, Standards & Conditions, Policies & Rules, and By-Laws—were facilitated. Preparatory activities included three preliminary meetings for the Standards & Conditions and Policies & Rules Committees ahead of the Annual Committee Meetings on June 9–10, two preliminary meetings for the Nominations Committee before its June 9 meeting, and the By-Laws Committee convening on June 10, just prior to the June Commission Meeting.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Objective 2. Utilize results from member surveys and other feedback mechanisms to identify ongoing and emerging trends in occupational education.

- Developed and launched the Institutional Compliance video library series by leveraging member survey insights and feedback. Designed content aligned with learning outcomes, implemented post-viewing surveys, and integrated viewer feedback to continuously improve engagement and effectiveness

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Objective 3. Develop professional development opportunities for staff specializing in relevant and complex compliance topics.

- The monthly Lunch and Learn series for all full-time staff was created and sponsored, launching successfully by August 2024. This ongoing series fosters professional development and knowledge sharing across the organization.

Objective 5. Provide professional development opportunities to improve staff's professional command of Council policies, rules, and procedures.

- Several training manuals and resources were developed and are in progress to support COE's operational and procedural training needs. The EDvera Substantive Change Approval Process Training Manual was formatted to cover initial topics, with a step-by-step processing guideline scheduled for completion by April 2025. The Commission Agenda "B" Training Manual was developed by November 2024, followed by the Commission Agenda "C" Training Manual, completed by February 2025. The Commission Meeting Role Guide was finalized by December 2024, and the EDvera Training Role & Responsibility Guide was completed by January 2025. Additionally, four training modules focused on Standards, Conditions, and Check Sheets were developed by April 2025, including videos on Team Member 101, Team Leader, Standard One: Mission Statement, and Standard Four: Strategic Plan.



Training and Development

Objective 1. Institutions, including training to address unique requirements for each accreditation sector institutions, including training to address unique requirements for each accreditation sector.

- In alignment with objective 1-A-5, in-person and remote training sessions were offered for visiting team members, leaders, and member institutions, including specialized sessions addressing the unique requirements of each accreditation sector. In partnership with the Director of Membership Services & Training, EDvera-based training topics and learning outcomes for Team Leaders and Members were updated and refined by March 2025, and a dedicated COE Retiree Team Leader/Member training curriculum was developed and implemented.

- Four tailored training presentations were co-developed and delivered: "COE Visiting Team Leader and Team Member Retirees" (November 1, 2024), "Preliminary Visit Training for Retirees" (November 19, 2024), "Phase III: Utilizing EDvera's Self-Study Module" (August 20, 2024), and "Phase III: Utilizing EDvera's Team Visit Module" (July 15, 2024). Each session incorporated refined learning objectives, defined key tasks, and emphasized communication and compliance strategies to strengthen volunteer engagement and ensure effective training delivery.

Objective 2. Develop online webinars, seminars, and workshops in complex compliance areas and on topics of value to member institutions.

Video Training Library Development and Presentation Engagement
In partnership with the Director of Membership Services & Training and Content Owners, a comprehensive COE video training library series was successfully developed and expanded, meeting and exceeding established benchmarks. A total of 17 training videos were completed by April 2025, with 7 produced in collaboration with the Evaluations Department. The videos cover a broad range of accreditation and compliance topics designed to support institutional staff and volunteers. Training videos can be found here: https://council.org/classes-training/

Video Titles Include:

1. What to Expect on Your First COE Visit
2. Maintaining Your Accreditation File and Using the COE Accreditation Seal
3. Substantive Change Approval Process
4. Completing and Submitting a Substantive Change Application
5. How to Locate a Substantive Change Application
6. Submitting Payments and Vouchers
7. Teach-Outs
8. Team Member 101
9. What is a COE Fellow? – Part 1
10. What is a Fellow? – Part 2
11. What is a Fellow? – Part 3
12. Team Leader 101
13. COE Standard 1
14. Annual Report – Part 1
15. Accreditation Process – Part 1

In partnership with the Director of Communications & Events, the **Compliance-Sponsored Video Library Series** was launched, covering the following topics by May 2025:

- Institutional Teach-Out Plans
- Annual Report Part 1: FTE

In collaboration with the Vice President of Compliance, topic concepts and learning outcomes/scripts were outlined to guide the video series development, meeting the goal of three topics outlined by November 2024 and three additional topics by April 2025.

Conference & Academy Engagement

Staff participated in multiple professional development events, consistently achieving a feedback score of 3.0 or higher:

- Co-presented 4 sessions at the 2025 Spring Candidate Academy
- Co-presented 2 sessions at the 2024 Fall Candidate Academy
- Co-presented 6 sessions at the 2024 COE Annual Meeting
- Co-presented 6 sessions at the 2025 Spring Accreditation Institute
- Target milestones were achieved, including at least 6 sessions each at the 2024 Annual Meeting and across Candidate Academies (October 2024, January 2025, April 2025)

Objective 4. Implement innovative programming at annual conferences to meet the unique needs of attendees.

- In collaboration with the Chief of Staff, the Director of Communication & Events designed an on-budget Annual Conference format that incorporated innovative content, best-practice sessions, and compliance-focused workshops. A Call for Proposals was launched for 30% of the sessions, resulting in 12 submissions, with 6 accepted—representing 17% of total Annual Meeting sessions.

- The Chief of Staff and Director of Communication & Events also implemented a revised, on-budget Spring Accreditation Institute format, which included reaffirmation cohort orientations and comprehensive training sessions covering all accreditation standards. Additionally, a Call for Proposal submission process was developed and executed to successfully recruit speakers for the Annual Conference, securing 2 keynote speakers and 4 thought partners for the November 2024 meeting, compared to 1 keynote speaker and 1 thought partner in 2023.



Spring Accreditation Institute implemented a revised format, including reaffirmation cohort orientation and comprehensive sessions covering all accreditation standards.

- The Call for Proposals for the COE Annual Meeting was successfully launched, resulting in the submission of 12 proposals, of which 6 were accepted—representing 17% of the total meeting sessions. Additionally, there was a notable increase in secured speakers for the event, with 2 keynote speakers and 4 thought partners confirmed for November 2024, compared to just 1 keynote speaker and 1 thought partner in November 2023.

Objective 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.

- By January 31, 2025, COE staff developed, organized, and delivered training sessions for all Commission and Council Committees—including Executive, Finance, Nominations, Appeal Panel, Review, Standards & Conditions, and Policies & Rules—to enhance committee effectiveness, with attendance and completion tracked.

Committee member training completion rates — 93% overall training achieved across committees:

- Appeals: 70% (26/37 members)
- CRC: 42% (19/45 members)
- Finance: 100% (5/5 members)
- Executive: 80% (4/5 members)
- Standards & Criteria (S&C): 100% (5/5 members)
- Policies & Rules (P&R): 100% (6/6 members)
- Nominations: 66% (4/6 members)





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