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the community college planning & research organization (ccpro) supports and endorses a process of peer review, which provides for the review and examination of institutional effectiveness (ie) and institutional research (ir) processes for north carolina community college system (ncccs) institutions. it does so to serve the following purposes:

1. to respond, in part, to section ii (core requirements) and section iii (comprehensive standards) of the principles of accreditation as established by the southern association of colleges and schools (sacs), which requires that “the institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes . . .” and that “the institution defines expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results ;

2. to improve the practice of ie and ir among the ncccs institutions in a collegial, constructive environment;
 3. to provide an in-depth, substantive professional development experience for those hosting a peer review and those serving on review teams; and
 4. to further cultivate working relationships among professionals in the fields of (ie) and (ir).
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what a ccpro peer review is

a ccpro peer review is an elective process initiated by ncccs institutions interested in having a review conducted at their location. host institutions may elect to engage in a peer review for various reasons:

- (1) internal motivations for self-improvement,
- (2) preparation for the sacs-coc internal analysis of compliance with the principles of accreditation,
- (3) baseline ie assessment for new planners, and
- (4) ie awareness building among institutional faculty and staff.

to initiate a peer review, a host institution identifies an individual within the institution to coordinate the peer review process with ccpro peer reviewers. this individual may or may not be a member of the institution's ie or ir staff and may or may not be a ccpro member. (hereafter, all references to host institution will refer to the designated host institution's peer review coordinator

what a ccpro peer review is not

participation in a peer review is not a mandate from an external agency, a condition of accreditation, or a condition of membership in ccpro, and while participating in a peer review may be helpful in preparing for a sacs-coc reaffirmation of accreditation visit, it does not serve as validation of institutional compliance with established sacs-coc principles of accreditation. furthermore, host institutions are under no obligation to

implement peer review recommendations. ccpro will recognize only those peer reviews conducted according to the requirement set forth in this document.

requirements

the following conditions or requirements must be met in order for a host institution to receive a ccpro letter of compliance officially recognizing successful completion of the peer review process:

1. the peer review team will consist of three members of ccpro currently practicing in the field of ie or ir in the north carolina community college system.
2. the peer review will include an onsite visit of the host institution.
3. the peer review onsite visit will consist of a series of evaluation activities organized by the host institution in advance of the visit. the evaluation activities will be developed in consultation with the peer review team. these activities may include, but are not limited to, interviews of faculty and staff, focus groups, group interviews, examinations of planning and research products, meetings with committees, etc.
4. the peer review evaluation activities will be listed in a printed agenda to be shared with the team and all participants at the college prior to the site visit.
5. the peer review will culminate in a brief report of two to four pages, excluding appendices and will include eight (8) required sections as listed in item 6, a-h below:
6. of the eight required peer review report sections, the host institution is responsible for sections a-d, g, and h. the peer review team is responsible for sections e and f:
 - a. a description of the comprehensive planning and evaluation process used by the institution to regularly evaluate institutional effectiveness and research, including the frequency with which the evaluations are conducted;

- b. a statement of the purpose of the peer review;
- c. a listing of peer review team members and the date of the onsite visit;
- d. a listing of the evaluation activities conducted by the team;
- e. key findings of the evaluations, to include a listing of strengths and weaknesses;
- f. a list of recommendations for improvement;
- g. original and dated signatures of the peer review team, including job titles and the names and locations of institutions to which they belong; and
- h. an appendix, which will include the peer review agenda, evaluation instruments used, anonymous written recordings from qualitative research, results of quantitative analyses and all other supporting documentation used to identify strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for improvement.

7. upon receiving sections e and f from the peer review team, the host institution will assemble all sections (a-h) to compile a final report. the host institution will submit within 30 calendar days of the onsite visit two (2) copies of the final report to the ccpro president for review by the executive board: (1) a complete original copy including signature page and appendices mailed by courier or usps and (2) a partial copy (sections a-g only) submitted by email.

8. once the ccpro executive board certifies that the review meets all peer review process requirements, the ccpro president will forward an official letter of compliance (addressed to the individual coordinating the review from the host institution) within 30 days of receiving full and partial copies of the final report. the president also will forward a copy of the compliance letter to the ccpro secretary.

9. if the executive board finds that the review does not conform to all peer review requirements, the host institution will be so informed by its ccpro regional director. the host institution will have 30 days after notification to correct and re-submit copies of the amended final report using the procedure described in item 7 above.

10. upon receiving the letter of compliance officially certifying the peer review, the host institution will disseminate copies of the letter of compliance and the final report to all parties it deems appropriate (e.g. faculty, staff, administrative team, peer review team, etc.).

responsibilities

responsibilities of the executive committee

1. the executive committee will provide oversight and leadership to the peer review initiative.
 2. the executive committee will examine the final report for evidence of compliance with the aforementioned “requirements” and will respond to the host institution with either a letter of compliance or a notification of non-compliance within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the final report.
 3. contingent upon compliance, a letter from the ccpro president, on official stationary, will be mailed to the peer review coordinator at the host institution. the letter will certify that the review was conducted according to the requirements of this policy statement. the ccpro president will forward a copy of the compliance letter to the secretary of ccpro and to the appropriate ccpro regional director.
 4. should the report not meet the requirements, the ccpro president will notify the appropriate ccpro regional director, who will notify the host institution. the host institution will have thirty (30) calendar days after notification of non-compliance to correct and re-submit the final report.
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responsibilities of the ccpro regional membership

1. the peer review process is an elective process that will be implemented at the regional level.

2. each march, ccpro regional directors will make annual calls to institutions within their regions for the purpose of scheduling peer reviews in the upcoming twelve months. if no peer review requests are made, regional directors may identify and contact selected institutions they feel might benefit from a review. considerations when identifying such institutions include the following:
 - a. an institution's willingness to be reviewed;
 - b. scheduled sacs reaffirmation of accreditation visits;
 - c. year of last evaluation of institutional effectiveness and research;
 - d. ie/ir issues facing the college; and
 - e. longevity of the ie/ir staff.
 3. upon receiving the annual call, interested host institutions will contact regional directors to be placed on the peer review calendar.
 4. regional directors will explain peer review policy and procedures to interested institutions and, if so requested, will assist the host institution in selecting peer review team members.
 5. regional directors will communicate dates of scheduled peer reviews to the ccpro webmaster.
 6. in the event a peer review report is deemed incomplete or in non-compliance by the ccpro executive committee, the ccpro president will notify the appropriate regional director who then will notify the host institution of non-compliance. the host nstitution will have 30 days of notification to correct and re-submit the final report.
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responsibilities of the host institution

1. the host institution will identify an individual within the institution to coordinate the peer review process. this individual may or may not be a member of the institution's ie/ir staff and may or may not be a ccpro member. (references to "host institution" in this document are used synonymously with the designated peer review coordinator within a host institution.)
2. the host institution will select the peer review team from among the regional ccpro membership. if no members are available within a region or if an institution wishes to go outside the region, reviewers from outside the region may be selected. if requested by the host institution, the regional director will assist in the peer review team selection process.
3. the host institution will issue peer review team invitations to selected reviewers as early as practicable, giving reviewers at least two (2) weeks to prepare for onsite visits. (accepting an invitation to participate as a peer reviewer is left to the discretion of the ccpro member; however, once an invitation is accepted the ccpro member is expected to make a good faith effort to fulfill their peer review responsibilities as outlined in this document)
4. the host institution will establish the date of the onsite visit and will develop a printed agenda of the evaluation activities to occur during the onsite visit. to the extent appropriate, the evaluations will be developed in consultation with the peer review team. the final agenda will be shared with the peer review team and all others involved in the review at least two (2) weeks prior to the onsite visit.
5. the host institution will manage all evaluation activities conducted during the site visit.
6. the host institution will accommodate all needs of the peer review team to facilitate an efficient and productive onsite review. accommodations may include, as necessary, subsistence, provisions for overnight stays, transportation, etc.
7. the host institution will facilitate the completion and submission of the final report by completing, compiling, and disseminating within thirty (30) calendar days of the onsite visit two copies of the final report to the ccpro president for review by the executive committee as follows: (1) a complete (required components a-h) original copy of the final report including signature page and appendices mailed by courier or usps and (2) a partial copy (components

a-g) submitted by email. upon examination of the final report by the ccpro executive committee, the ccpro president will issue a formal letter of compliance to the host institution. the letter will certify that the review has been conducted in accordance with ccpro peer review “requirements” as defined within this document. should a review fail to comply with the requirements, the ccpro president will notify the appropriate regional director who then will notify the host institution of non-compliance. 30 calendar days of notification. a host institution will have thirty (30) calendar days after notification of non-compliance to correct and re-submit a final report.

8. the host institution will distribute copies of the final report and the ccpro letter of compliance to all parties it deems appropriate e.g. faculty, staff, administrative team, peer review team, etc.

responsibilities of the peer review team

1. ccpro members who accept an invitation to serve on peer review teams will devote the necessary time, energy, preparation, and forethought to the evaluation.
2. peer review team members will commit themselves to conducting a constructive evaluation that will lead to the improvement of the institution.
3. peer review team members will be punctual by arriving for all meetings ahead of time and completing all assignments by agreed upon deadlines.
4. the peer review team will be responsible for conducting all evaluation activities as specified by the host institution on the onsite visit agenda and will complete required peer review components e, a listing of strengths and weaknesses, and f, recommendations for improvement, for inclusion in the final report. the report will include all elements prescribed in the “requirements.”
5. the peer review team will complete and submit required components e and f to the host institution within two (2) weeks of the onsite visit.

suggested criteria for evaluation of institutional effectiveness & research

1. the following items are suggested as criteria to be considered in conducting a ccpro-sanctioned peer review.
2. principles of accreditation, southern association of college and schools, commission on colleges (at least sections ii.5 and iii.16).
3. current and former guidelines for institutional effectiveness plans as issued by the system office of the north carolina community college system.
4. other planning-related requirements of the system office of the north carolina community college system (i.e. diversity and technology planning).
5. locally developed criteria.

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