The Self Study Process

Elaine Phillips and Dara Gilliam
Family of Faith Christian University
Why us?

- We are a smaller institution
- We have staff and faculty scattered across the country and in other nations
- We have undergraduate and graduate programs
- We offer on campus and online programs
- Elaine: experience on teams and COA
- Dara: newer to the process
- We just did it!
Why are YOU here?

• New to this?
• Need a refresher?
• When is your self-study process happening?
What is a Self-Study?

• A process
• An examination of your institution
• A comparison to ABHE standards
• Documentation of compliance
• A decision of compliance
• A map toward improvement
• Preparation for Evaluation Team Visit
What is a Self-Study?

- A process
- A decision
- A map
- Preparation
Your Self Study will produce these materials.
Your Opportunity for Learning Together

• **ABHE training opportunities**
  - ABHE.org – Accreditation – Accreditation Documents
    Library Guidelines; Evaluation Team Handbook; Report Guide;
    Self Study Guide; Statistical Abstract
  - Achieving Accreditation Standards Conference (May)
  - Accreditation Journey Conference (Fall)
  - Assessment Tool

• **ABHE training for evaluators**
  - ABHE.org – Accreditation – Evaluation Team Training
    what they ask; how they ask; documents they look for

• **ABHE Staff Representative**
Your Opportunity for MINISTRY

- Stir up the **mission and vision**
- Time to think about our programs: purpose, job description, values, assessment, outcomes, next steps
- Understand ABHE standards
- Assessment Tool (emerging schools)
- Prepare for interviews in Team visit
Important Elements of the Self-Study Process

**PRIORITY for EVERYONE**

- Do Their Part
- Timely Manner

= Effective and Helpful
One Person

Governing Board

Students

Admin

Library

TEAM

Staff

Faculty

Important Elements of the Self-Study Process
• **Communication**
  Regarding Time Periods, Deadlines, Needs, Progress

• **Timeline/Calendar**
  Key dates and transition points
  Review of standards; Completion of assessment;
  Initial Draft; Final Draft; Team Visit

• **Editing/Word processing skills**
  Office/Word, Graphs/charts, Adobe, File Sharing

• **Training and Preparation**
  Mission of your institution and the calling of everyone there.
  Help them verbalize it, do it, and improve it
Step 1
Timeline of the Process
Sample Timeline

- **2023**: Identify Team Leaders
- **2024**: Initial Reviews
  - Assessment Tool
  - By May
- **2025**: Self-Study Due
- **2026**: Team Visit
  - Approval for Team Visit
  - Updated S/S
  - Response To Team Report
- **2027**: COA Decision
Sample Timeline

Initial Reviews
Assessment Tool
By May

2023

Identify Team Leaders

2024

Self-Study Due

Assessment, Policies, Outcomes, Improvements,

2025

COA Approval for Team Visit

2026

Team Visit

COA Decision

Updated S/S

Response To Team Report

Internal Deadline

Progress Report

Assessment, Policies, Outcomes, Improvements,
Sample Timeline

- **2023**
  - Identify Team Leaders

- **2023 - 2024**
  - Initial Reviews
    - Assessment Tool
    - By May
  - Assessment, Policies, Outcomes, Improvements

- **2024**
  - Self-Study Due
  - COA Approval for Team Visit
  - Team Visit

- **2025**
  - Updated S/S

- **2026**
  - Response To Team Report
  - COA Decision
Sample Timeline

- **Identify Team Leaders**
- **Initial Reviews**: Assessment Tool By May
- **Self-Study Due**
- **COA Approval for Team Visit**
- **Team Visit**
- **COA Decision**

Timeline:
- **2023**: Identify Team Leaders
- **2024**: Initial Reviews, Self-Study Due
- **2025**: COA Approval for Team Visit
- **2026**: Team Visit, COA Decision

Key Milestones:
- **Assessment, Policies, Outcomes, Improvements**
- **Progress**
- **Updated S/S**
- **Response To Team Report**

Timeline highlights:
- Identify Team Leaders by 2023
- Initial Reviews with Assessment Tool by May 2024
- Self-Study Due in 2025
- COA Approval for Team Visit in 2026
- Team Visit and COA Decision

Progress annotations:
- Assessment, Policies, Outcomes, Improvements, Progress!
Sample Timeline

- **Identify Team Leaders**
- **Initial Reviews**
  - Assessment Tool
  - By May
- **Self-Study Due**
- **COA Approval for Team Visit**
- **Team Visit**
- **Updated S/S**
- **Response to Team Report**
- **Missional Excellence**

**Assessment, Policies, Outcomes, Improvements,**

- **Progress Report**
- **Internal Deadline**
- **2023**
- **2024**
- **2025**
- **2026**
Step 2

Identify Leaders and Assign Standards

- President: 1, 3, 5, 2
- Student Affairs: 7 & 8, 2
- Academic Dean(s): 9 & 11, 2
- Chief Finance Officer: 6, 2
- Board Chair: 4, 2
- Assessment: 2+++++
- Library Staff: 10, 2

AKA Steering Committee!
Step 2
Identify Leaders and Assign Standards
Step 3: Meaningful Study of Standards and EE’s

**STUDY IT!**
Identify areas of success AND areas that need work!
Step 3: Meaningful Study of Standards and EE’s

- Connecting the importance of my office/program to the mission of our university
- Discussing and defining the standards and elements
- Verbalizing how my daily work translates into accreditation standards and language
Step 3: Meaningful Study of Standards and EE’s

- Organizing my work into a Program

[Diagram showing the flow of Mission -> Goals -> Actions with arrows and interconnected boxes labeled for Improvement, Results, and Assessment.]
Step 3: Meaningful Study of Standards and EE’s

- Demonstrating successes through assessment information
- Dreaming
- ‘Formalizing’ what we are already doing
  - Written plan, Meeting minutes, policies, assessment summary . . .
- Using the standards to bring strength and structure
Step 3: Meaningful Study of Standards and EE’s

Celebrate what you do well!

Be honest with what you need to do!

Create the plan to see it happen!
Step 4: Write it up

- Write your Compliance Document
- Build your Improvement Plan
- Expand and/or Update your Assessment Plan
- Compile your evidence into one location
Your Compliance Document Includes . . .

**Introduction**
History, Mission, Leadership, Self-study process, Compliance document set up

**Standards 1-11**
A. Analysis section for each Essential Element
B. Evaluative Conclusion section
C. Exhibits List

**Chapter 12 = Regulatory Requirements**

**Conclusion**
Summary of areas identified in need of work, timelines, costs, personnel, etc.
- **Standard # - Type the Overall Standard**
- **Analysis Section Header**
  - Essential Element #1 typed
    - Descriptions; Data; Policies (In short: What we do in that area)
    - Assessment results and evidence (include in narrative if appropriate, OR describe and number and place in Exhibits)
  - Essential Element #2 typed . . . REPEAT
  - Essential Element #3 typed . . . REPEAT . . .
- **Evaluative Conclusion Header**
  - Make your conclusion regarding meeting the Standard
    - Our self-study regarding this standard shows compliance . . .
    - Our self-study shows several areas in need of attention . . .
    - Areas that have been identified as in need of improvement . . .
    - In order to address this . . . (plan, dates, budget, personnel)
- **Exhibits Header**
  - The list of exhibits you are providing as evidence of your analysis
Exhibits and Statistical Abstract

- **Statistical Abstract**
  - Template (ABHE.org – Accreditation – accreditation documents)
  - Data overview

- **Exhibits**
  - Provide in narrative or as supplement
  - How to number
  - If and/or how to link
  - How to create and highlight
Institutional Assessment Plan
- Assessment of Student Learning
- Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness
- Objective
- Means of Measurement (what data; when; who)
- Define outcomes and indicate benchmarks
- Results and Implications of results

Institutional Improvement Plan
- Short term Plans (1-2 years)
  - Issues
  - Action steps
  - Resources required
  - Person responsible
  - Deadline
  - Anticipated results
- Long term (3-4 years) more general
Final Editing

- Use Spell Check (and English teachers)
- Use page breaks
- Use headers and footers (Different First Page – page numbers)
- Use bookmarks in your PDF
- Check links
- Reduce size
What helps your reader?

- **Consistency in format**
  - Same format for tables, charts, graphs, etc.
  - Sloppy work raises concerns

- **Easy access/connection to information**
  - Bookmarks
  - Headers
  - Page numbers
  - References to Exhibits
What am I looking for as a Commissioner or Evaluator?

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- Variety of assessment?
- What systems are in place for continued review?

## Accuracy of Conclusion
- Did your analysis support your conclusion?
- What did you say was lacking?
- Do I concur or did I spot other missing elements?
- Is there a plan for improvement?

## Assurance
- Compliance document describes what was found on campus
- No surprises
- Possibility of continued improvement
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• If it is weak or missing, say so and make your plan to fix it.
• Then show the team your progress
• And if they cite it, show the Commission continued progress and results!
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**Is it known on campus?**
- By staff
- By faculty
- By students
- By other Administrators
The Self Study Process is . . .

- A Process – A Journey
- Effective and Helpful for your Institution
- A time for Ministry to your staff
- A time to Learn (and Dream)
- A time to Build and Improve your programs
- Producing compliance materials
- Preparing to move into the next stages
Questions?

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