



Accreditation of Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability

Stephanie Smith Lee, Chair, Accreditation Workgroup
Cate Weir, Program Director, Think College
2017 State of the Art Conference



- Brief history of Accreditation Workgroup
- Why program accreditation is important
- Accreditation Report and model standards
- Current Workgroup activities and Next Steps
- Opportunity to volunteer for field testing



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The Center is funded by the Office of Postsecondary Education Grant #P407B100002.

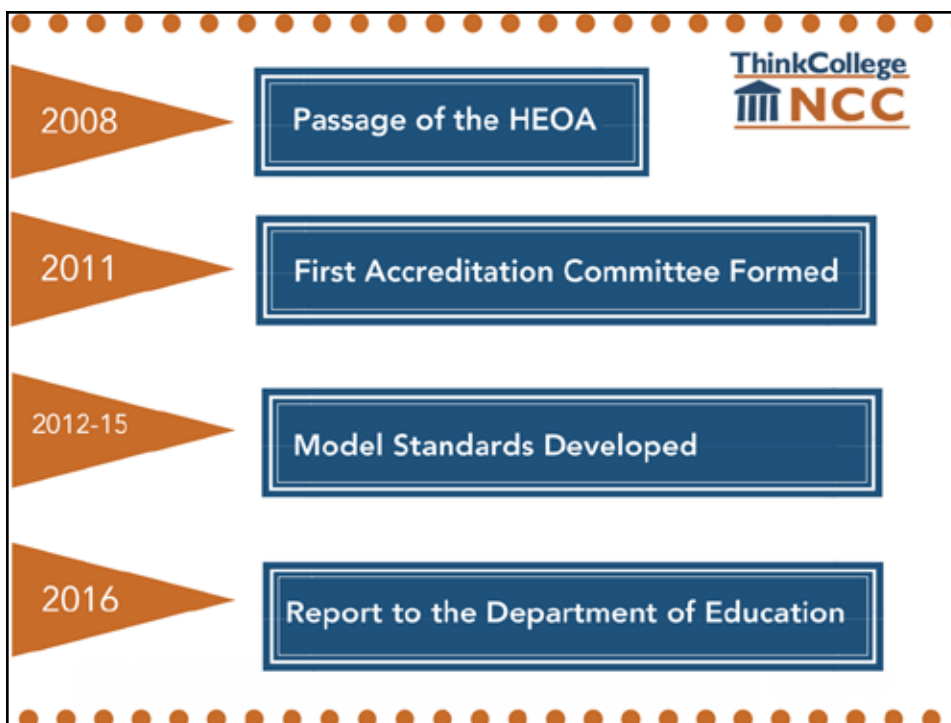


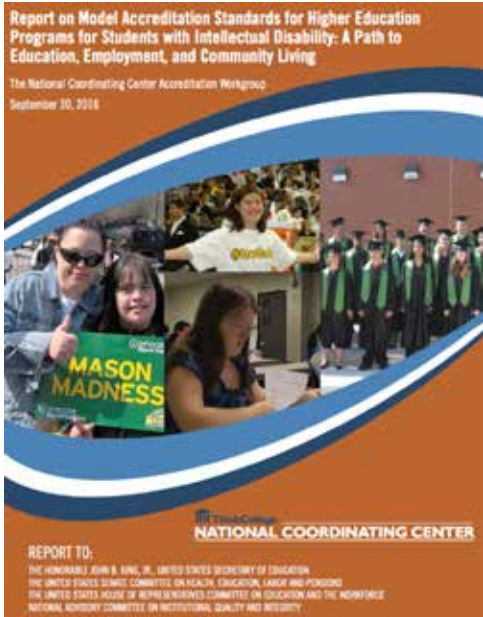
Importance of Program Accreditation

- Benchmarks are useful for quality assurance and improvement.
- Valuable for institutions of higher education, federal student aid offices, accrediting agencies, students with ID and their parents.
- Implementation will validate and strengthen programs.
- Accreditation MAY replace the current Comprehensive Transition Program approval process



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Report on Model Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability: A Path to Education, Employment, and Community Living

The National Coordinating Center Accreditation Workgroup
September 30, 2016

**ThinkCollege
NATIONAL COORDINATING CENTER**

REPORT TO:
THE HONORABLE JOHN B. KING, JR., UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
THE UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS
THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY AND INTEGRITY

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<https://thinkcollege.net/resource/accreditation-and-credentials/report-model-accreditation-standards-higher-education>

Goals for the Model Standards

- Responsive to public input
- Reflect a sufficient level of quality
- Clear and understandable
- Align with ED regulations, HEOA, & WIOA
- Include information from HEOA for clarity
- Include guidance and needed next steps
- Used by accrediting agencies

Model Standards in Ten Areas

Mission
 Student Achievement
 Curriculum
 Faculty
 Facility, Equipment and Supply
 Administrative and Fiscal Capacity
 Student Services
 Length and Structure of Program of Study
 Student Complaints
 Program Development, Planning, and Review



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Recommendations to Department of Education

- Consider the role of the FSA approval process for CTPs, if any, once program accreditation is implemented.
- Provide guidance to school districts, comprehensive transition programs, and families about the determination of “intellectual disability” with respect to admissions and to financial aid.
- Fund the development and dissemination of various resources and strategies



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Accreditation Workgroup 2016-2020

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Workgroup Subcommittees

Accreditation Self-Study Process

- Work with the field on guidance and a protocol for implementing the standards.

Accreditation Outreach

- Research and consider feasibility of existing accrediting agencies using model standards or creating a new accrediting agency.

Student Assessment and Learning Outcomes

- Recommend standards and guidance related to how student learning outcomes are assessed



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Accreditation Self Study Process

- Prepare recommendations for a self-study process for full Workgroup consideration in December
- Based on Workgroup recommendations, develop protocol for selection of sites for self-study, dates for trainings, in-person or virtual visits with IHEs, etc.
- Develop materials and any training needed for self-study and conduct training.
- Field test the Self-study process with several college programs



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Accreditation Outreach

- Approaching possible existing accreditors and considering the feasibility of an existing accreditor or possible need for a new accrediting agency.

Student Assessment and Learning Outcomes

- Researching current practice and developing draft language for student learning standard (based on NACIQI recommendation)



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Webinar Presentation: Measuring Student Learning Outcomes

The recording is available to all, but copying or duplication of any materials mentioned or shared in the presentation without permission of relevant program staff is strictly prohibited.



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Additional Work 2018 - 2020

- Address other recommendations from first Report
- Develop technical guidance to accompany standards
- Consider options for utilizing model accreditation standards
- Tweak existing model standards if needed
- Submit Report as required in Year 5 (2020)



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Interested in becoming a Self-Study Site?

Email thinkcollege@umb.edu and indicate your interest!

“Accreditation Self Study” in the subject line

Be sure to let us know what program you are with, where it is located

(IHE, City, State)



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