



Advanced ISER Workshop

Feb. 3, 2023

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Topics for Today

- Quick Refresher: The “Whys” of Accreditation
- Checking in on the Standards: How’s it going?
- Putting the ISER Together
- Understanding the New Review Process



Quick Refresher: Accreditation 101

Accreditation is a **practice** of academic quality control

- **Promotes** institutional excellence through application of standards
- **Advances** meaningful and effective **student learning and achievement**
- **Provides** assurance to students, general public, & others of quality of educational offerings

Using **processes** characterized by a unique commitment to peer review

- Comprehensive evaluations are **practitioner-based and mission-focused**
- **Consistent Standards** for quality, implemented by **different types of institutions**

With immediately practical **benefits**

- Enables access to **Title IV programs (Federal Student Aid)**
- Ensures **credibility of degrees and credentials** awarded to students

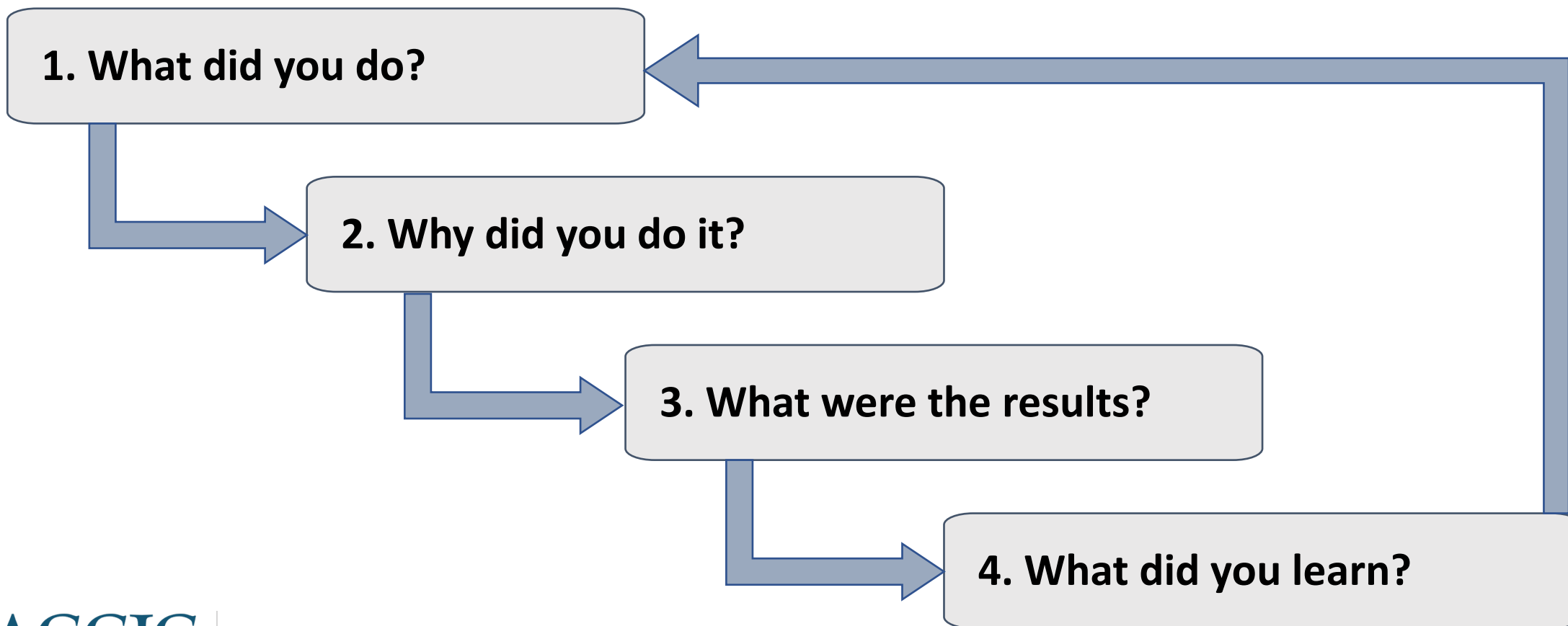
Mindset Matters!

Institutions with a learning-focused approach to self-evaluation:

- Honestly evaluate alignment with Standards
- Base conclusions on evidence and analysis
- Focus on outcomes rather than processes
- Celebrate, appreciate, and build on what works
- Lean into opportunities for improvement
- Value internal accountability
- Think holistically across institutional systems
- Mindful of institutional mission and goals



Framework for Reflection & Improvement



Mindset Matters for Your Team, Too

Approach (mindset) for Review

- Starts with **trusting** the ISER and evidence
 - Seek to **understand** the college in the context of its mission
 - Practice **appreciative inquiry**
 - **Respect / Appreciate** college processes, practices and culture
- Validation and affirmation (**alignment** with Standards)
 - **Not** hunting for deficiencies (not playing gotcha game)
 - **Not** reviewing against other regulations or requirements of other groups/entities
 - **Triangulate** all evidence and findings
- **Goal:** assist college with improving educational quality and student learning
- **Outcome:** team report – help the college to improve, and celebrate good practice



Powerful Framework for Ongoing Improvement

- Power of Self-Reflection
- Power of Peer Review
- Power of Accredited Status





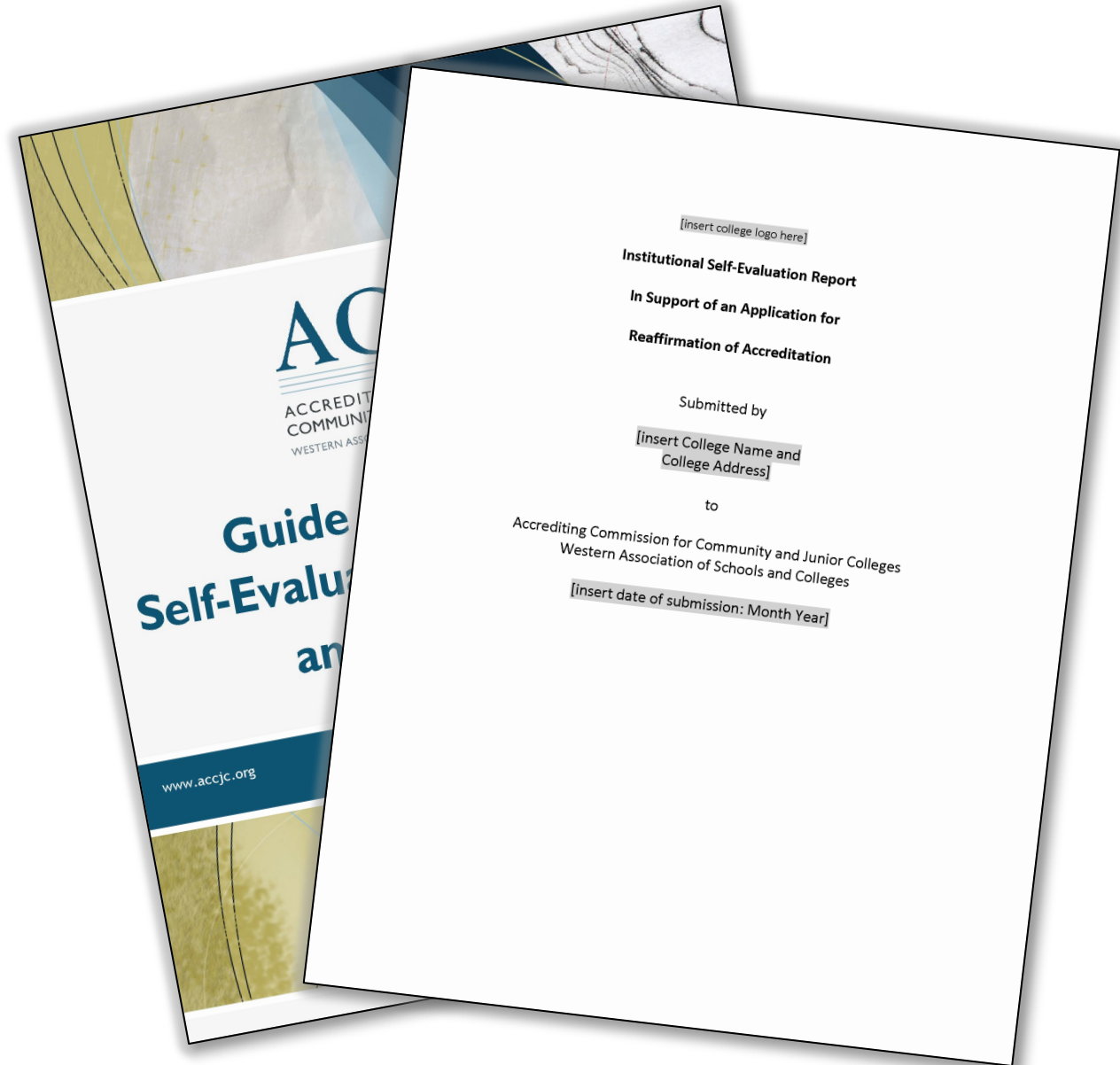
Checking In: Tricky Standards? Timeline Questions?



The ISER: Good Practices & Tips for Putting It Together

Key Resources:

- *Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Peer Review*
 - Required contents, formatting/structure suggestions, submission instructions, additional protocols, etc.
- ISER Template
 - Word document with embedded formatting, structure, links to the *Guide*, etc.
- Available on ACCJC website – [Resources > Guides & Manuals](#)





Good Practices for Approaching the Report

- Discuss the Standard, gather the evidence, **then** write
- Refer to the *Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation* frequently
- Keep the narrative clear, direct, and focused – use active voice
- Use introductory sections to set the context and tone
- Don't forget narratives for ERs 1-5 & Commission Policies!
- Use the ISER template (available on ACCJC website)
- Format as an electronic document from the start



Good Practices for Evidence

- Gather your evidence *before* you begin writing
- Compare your evidence with suggestions in the *Guide*
- Be selective: more evidence is not necessarily better
- Provide samples that show results of institutional processes
- Call out relevant sections of big documents (highlights, excerpts, etc.)
- “Freeze” evidence from websites in a PDF or screenshot



Advice for the Report Based on Recent Reviews

- **Evidence + Narrative should show your practices in action**
 - Provide completed examples, not just process handbooks or templates
 - Balance examples across different areas of the institution
- **Tell the whole story of complex processes**
 - Outline multi-step/integrated processes with clear description or visuals
 - Include “case studies” showing how steps fit together
- **Check your cycles (e.g., assessment, evaluations, BP review)**
 - Are you on schedule and at expected completion percentages?
 - If you’ve slipped, include plans to get back on track in your evidence



Reflect & Self-Assess as You Go

Questions to consider as you review your drafts:

- Is the narrative accurate?
- Have we met the review criteria in the *Guide*?
- Does each response include appropriate evidence?
- Is our narrative focused ONLY on the Standard?
- Do we call out both strengths and areas of improvement?
- Do we have action plans and timelines for major areas of improvement?



Comprehensive Review: Timeline and Process

Key Resources:

Guide for Peer Review Team Members

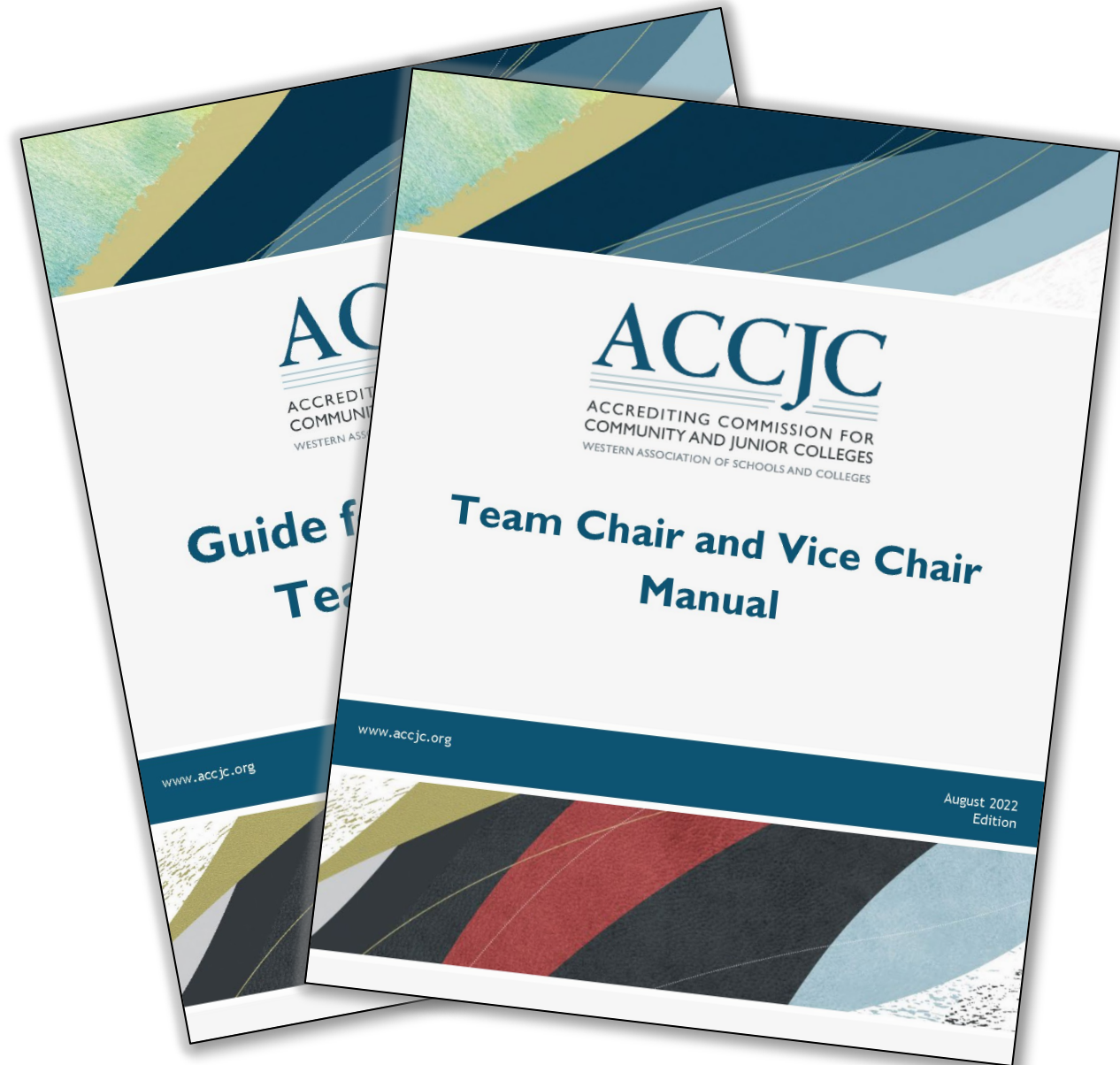
- General principles; team instructions; expectations for colleges; guidelines for DE review, etc.

Team Chair and Vice Chair Manual

- Suggested Timeline, Pre-visit meeting agendas, Schedules for team activities, etc.

Available on ACCJC website:

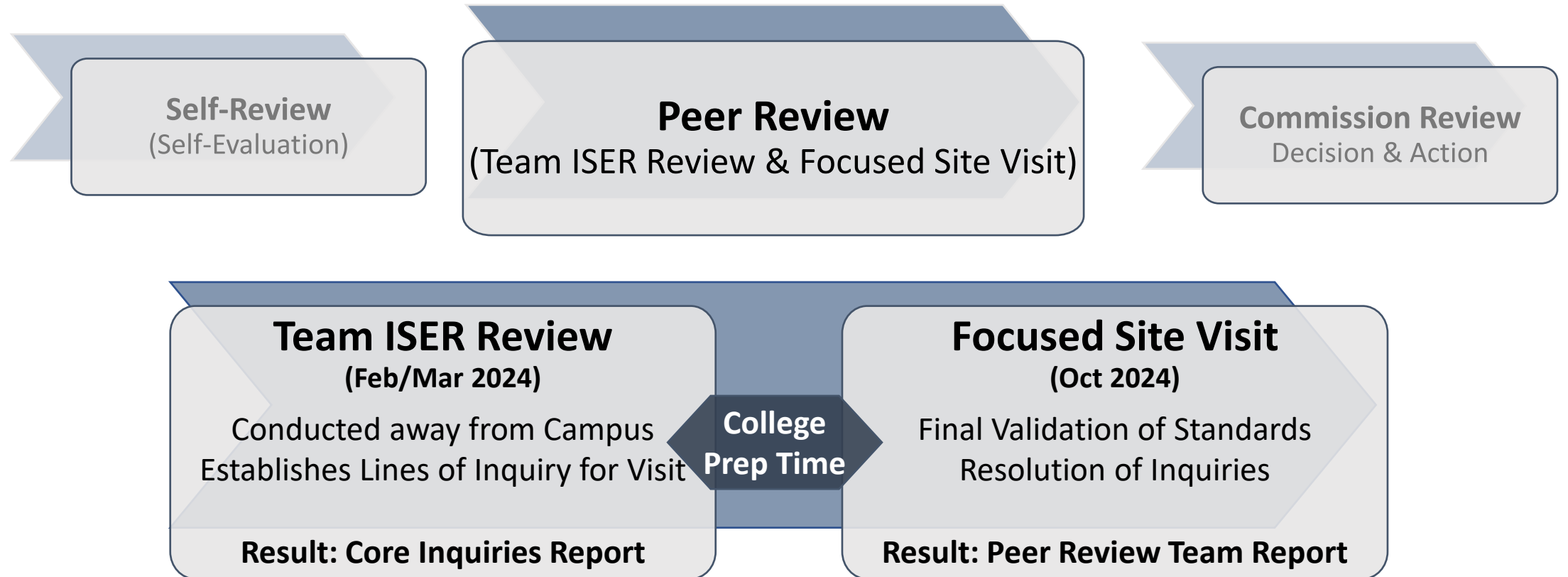
[Resources > Guides & Manuals](#)



Timeline for Your Comprehensive Review

Date	Activity
December 15, 2023:	ISER & evidence due to ACCJC
Feb/Mar 2024:	Team ISER Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">Peer Review Team provides <i>formative feedback</i> via Core Inquiries
Oct 2024:	Focused Site Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none">Subset of Peer Review Team visits, conducts interviewsPeer Review Team provides <i>summative feedback</i> via Team Report
January 2025:	Commission Action

Closer Look: Two-Term Peer Review Process





Benefits of the Two-Semester Review Process

- Reduces surprises during the Focused Site Visit
- Reduces fear and anxiety
- Gives you time to consider the team's questions and make changes
- Emphasizes institutional improvement and ongoing learning
- Promotes collegiality between you and your peer review team
- Increases transparency and trust around the review process

Activities in the Comprehensive Review Process

Team ISER Review (Feb/Mar 2024)

Associated Activities:	Purpose Is To:	Results In:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Kick-Off” with College• Open Forum• 1-day off-site team meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validate Standards that are met based on ISER• Identify Standards where clarification is needed for potential recommendation or commendation• Develop the core inquiries for the Focused Site Visit	Core Inquiries Report

Activities in the Comprehensive Review Process

What's in the Core Inquiries Report?

One or more Core Inquiries, each consisting of:

Summary-level information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-2 sentence summary of the area for clarification or further discussion• Specific indication of relevant Standards or Policies for the inquiry
Detail about Team's observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief description of what the team observed during review of ISER and evidence• Clear identification of the area that needs clarification or exploration
Items to address at the Focused Site Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short list of topics the team would like to discuss during interviews• Requests for any additional information or evidence• Interview requests

Activities in the Comprehensive Review Process

What does the college do with the Core Inquiries Report?

Prepare for the Focused Site Visit:

- Review and reflect on the Core Inquiries
- Address any obvious/easy items (e.g., missing policies/procedures)
- Document all progress in areas connected Core Inquiries
- Gather additional evidence
- Prepare “College Update to Core Inquiries” (due 2 weeks before visit)

Activities in the Comprehensive Review Process

Focused Site Visit (Oct 2024)

Associated Activities:	Purpose Is To:	Results In:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visit by subset of team• Interviews• Open Forum• Team meetings• Exit Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validate Standards that are met based on ISER, interviews, and additional evidence• Finalize any team recommendations or commendations• Complete the draft Peer Review Team Report outlining the findings of the team	Peer Review Team Report

Excerpted from Team Training materials, Spring 2022

Approach (mindset) for Review

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Checking In:

Any remaining questions?

What additional information or resources would be helpful?





Thank you, LTCC!

