ACCREDITATION 101: STANDARDS 3.1 TO 3.5

STANDARD 3

Infrastructure and Resources

The institution supports its educational services and operational functions with effective infrastructure, qualified personnel, and stable finances. The institution organizes its staffing and allocates its physical, technological, and financial resources to improve its overall effectiveness and promote success for all students.

STANDARD 3

Infrastructure and Resources

The institution actively monitors and assesses resource capacity to inform improvements to infrastructure and ensure long-term health and stability.

STANDARD 3.1

The institution employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain educational services and improve student success. The institution maintains appropriate policies and regularly assesses its employment practices to promote and improve mission fulfillment. (ER 8, ER 14)

STANDARD 3.1 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution has a process to determine the staffing levels and organizational structure it needs to support its mission, educational programs, and operations.
- The institution uses appropriate hiring criteria (including minimum qualifications criteria for the system in which it operates and/or degree level, if applicable) to ensure all employees are qualified for their roles.

STANDARD 3.1 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution plans for the recruitment of personnel in accordance with its institutional mission and goals.
- Faculty job descriptions are appropriate for the level of instruction offered, and include the responsibility for teaching and learning, curriculum oversight, and the assessment of student learning outcomes.

STANDARD 3.1 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution verifies the education (including equivalency of degrees for non-U.S. institutions), training, and experience of all new hires to ensure they possess the minimum qualifications outlined in job descriptions.
- The institution regularly reviews its policies and/or procedures for fair hiring practices to ensure currency and relevancy.

STANDARD 3.1 – EVIDENCE

- Policies, procedures, or processes that guide the institution's determination of staffing needs
- Policies, procedures, or operational guides outlining hiring practices
- Job announcements with position descriptions for faculty, administrators, and staff

STANDARD 3.1 – EVIDENCE

- Policies and procedures related to transcripts evaluation and certifying equivalency
- EEO reports, plans, goals, etc.
- Results from evaluation of the effectiveness of hiring policies, processes, and procedures

STANDARD 3.2

The institution supports its employees with professional learning opportunities aligned with the mission and institutional goals. These opportunities are regularly evaluated for overall effectiveness in promoting success for all students and in meeting institutional and employee needs.

STANDARD 3.2 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution has methods to identify employees' professional learning needs relevant to educational services and operational functions.
- The institution evaluates its training and professional learning offerings and uses the results to improve effectiveness in supporting employee needs.

STANDARD 3.2 – EVIDENCE

- Policies, schedules, resources, agendas, or other artifacts related to employee orientation, on-boarding, and ongoing professional learning processes
- Records of professional development opportunities offered, evaluation of impact, and use of data to inform offerings and resources for professional learning

STANDARD 3.2 – EVIDENCE

- Employee handbooks/manuals
- Sample presentations or other artifacts from trainings related to job functions and/or other professional development events (technology use and cybersecurity trainings, federal or state-mandated trainings, etc.)

STANDARD 3.3

The institution evaluates its employees regularly, using clear criteria that align with professional responsibilities and reflect the institution's mission and goals.

STANDARD 3.3 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution regularly and systematically evaluates all of its employees based on their professional responsibilities and uses this information to foster employees' development and success.
- The institution has methods to determine the kinds of support its personnel need to be successful in their roles.

STANDARD 3.3 – EVIDENCE

- Procedures and documentation related to employee evaluation

STANDARD 3.4

The institution develops, maintains, and enhances its educational services and operational functions through the effective use of fiscal resources. Financial resources support and sustain the mission and promote achievement of success for all students. (ER 18)

STANDARD 3.4 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution has resources to support essential program needs, as well as educational improvement and innovation when warranted.
- Funds are allocated in a manner to help achieve the institution's stated goals for student learning.

STANDARD 3.4 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution's resource allocation process provides a means for setting priorities for funding.
- The institution manages its resources in order to sustain educational services and improve institutional effectiveness at all locations where over 50% of a program is offered.

STANDARD 3.4 – EVIDENCE

- Annual financial reports
- Budget allocation model or process
- Trends in major budget categories, annual budget carryover decisions, or similar planning documents
- Examples of the enhancement of programs or services funded through the budget allocation model or process

STANDARD 3.5

The institution's mission and goals are the foundation for financial planning. Financial information is disseminated to support effective planning and decision-making and provide opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the development of plans and budgets.

STANDARD 3.5 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution considers its mission and goals as part of the annual fiscal planning process.
- Individuals involved in institutional planning receive accurate information about available funds, including the annual budget showing ongoing and anticipated fiscal commitments.

STANDARD 3.5 – REVIEW CRITERIA

- The institution's processes are used to ensure appropriate stakeholder participation in financial planning, prioritization, and budget development.
- Sound financial planning, including a realistic expectation of financial resource availability, is a foundational element of the institution's plans and goals.

STANDARD 3.5 – EVIDENCE

- Documentation of how the budget development process ties resource allocation to the mission, institutional goals, and/or program review and planning
- Procedures that outline processes and timelines for financial planning and budget development, including responsible parties and opportunities for input from institutional stakeholders

STANDARD 3.5 – EVIDENCE

- Examples of how budget proposals, resource allocation decisions, and/or financial decisions are reported to institutional stakeholders
- Documentation of coordination of institutional planning with grants and other alternative funding sources

DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS

