

## Accreditation Guidelines

Bowling Green State University (BGSU) is committed to maintaining standards outlined by accrediting agencies at all levels: institution (ex: Higher Learning Commission), unit (ex: Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)), and program (ex: Accreditation Board for Engineering & Technology (ABET)). The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE, formerly Ohio Board of Regents) also has a role in all university accreditations under the new guidelines for [Program Review](#). New ODHE guidelines require an increased communication regarding accreditation and accreditation status changes of programs within institutes of higher education and their respective accrediting agencies.

### Accreditation Responsibilities

Many accreditation agencies are moving towards an expectation that programs adopt a continuous improvement model focusing on student outcomes/competencies. This approach takes time, careful consideration, planning, and monitoring on a regular basis. There are units within BGSU that can assist faculty, administrators, and BGSU personnel with various aspects of implementing a continuous improvement evaluation plan and the assessment of student outcomes/competencies necessary for accreditation (see *Accreditation Resources*). Additionally, communication and early action by all involved in accreditation is necessary given the increased need for external reporting about accreditation activities to state and national agencies.

Program faculty, Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator, and the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness (VPIE) fulfill critical roles in program accreditation. The AAUP states that:

Within a college or university, the nature of the accrediting process requires common enterprise among the faculty, the administration, and to some extent the governing board. The appraisal of the academic program should be largely the responsibility of the faculty members. (AAUP's *Policy Documents and Reports*, 11<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 132).

Collaboration between the program faculty and Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator is expected in all accreditation activities (completing self-study and accreditation reports, visits from accreditation teams, etc.). The VPIE serves as the Institutional Liaison with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE). The VPIE also serves as the institutional contact between the President, Provost, and Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator.

*A meeting between the Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator and the VPIE early in the accreditation cycle to discuss data and institutional assistance is strongly recommended.*

### Accreditation Activities

#### Data Collection

All institutional data, used in accreditation reports (initial self-studies, continuing self-studies, annual updates, etc.), **must** be verified by the Office of Institutional Research (IR). Requests for institutional data from IR can be requested using the [IR Data Request Form](#).

*Please note that requests for institutional data from IR could take two weeks to fulfill depending on the complexity of the data request, availability of data, and capacity/activities within the IR office. Adequate*

*time should be allowed so that data can be incorporated and used by the unit/program in completing the accreditation self-study/report.*

### **Reports: Initial Self-Studies, Continuing Self-Studies, & Annual Updates**

Accreditation reports and evidence files must be shared with the VPIE **at least one month** before they are due to accreditation agencies. After accreditation reports and evidence files have been reviewed by the VPIE, the Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator is responsible for uploading all accreditation materials (self-study/report and evidence files).

*Please note that some accreditation systems require multiple institutional contacts (the President, Provost, Dean, Institutional Research Representative, etc.) to sign off on the submitted materials. If this is the case, more time may be needed to review the file. The President and/or Provost **will not sign off** on submitted materials for accreditation until review from the VPIE is completed.*

### **Team Visits**

The Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator is responsible for coordinating accreditation team visits, scheduling the visit with the necessary institutional contacts (the President, Provost, etc.) and informing the VPIE of the accreditation schedule.

*Please note that accreditation team visits with the President and/or Provost will not be confirmed unless the VPIE has reviewed submitted accreditation reports and evidence files.*

### **Communication with Accreditors: Changes in Accreditation Status, Final Accreditation Outcome & Significant Findings**

Typically, the accreditation agency communicates directly with the Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator, Dean, Provost, and President about accreditation visit outcomes and/or significant findings. However, in some cases information related to accreditation is only shared with the Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator.

To ensure that accreditation information is accurate, the Unit/Program Accreditation Liaison/Coordinator is responsible for communicating with and providing copies to the VPIE of any communications regarding accreditation (change in accreditation status, team visit outcomes/reports, and/or significant findings). This information will be housed within the Provost's Office.

### **Accreditation Resources**

- Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness (VPIE)  
Julia M. Matuga, [jmatuga@bgsu.edu](mailto:jmatuga@bgsu.edu)
- Associate Director for Academic Assessment  
Jessica Turos, [jmturos@bgsu.edu](mailto:jmturos@bgsu.edu)
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Data Request Form [IR Data Request Form](#)