

AQIP PARTICIPATION APPLICATION

Name of Institution Southeast Missouri State University Cape Girardeau, MO
Application Date: 5/8/06

To answer Question 1, present evidence that will allow the AQIP Admission Panel to evaluate and affirm your organization's continuing compliance with the Commission's accreditation expectations. Label the sections of your response for each of the five *Criteria*, and make sure each section encompasses the Core Components (listed in the boxes) of the Criterion under discussion.

1. How does your organization currently demonstrate that it meets each of the Higher Learning Commission's five *Criteria for Accreditation*?

Criterion One: Mission and Integrity. The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

- The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.
- In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.
- Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization
- The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.
- The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future. The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

- The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.
- The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.
- The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.
- All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching. The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

- The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.
- The organization values and supports effective teaching.
- The organization creates effective learning environments.
- The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge. The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

- The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.
- The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.
- The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.
- The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Criterion Five: Engagement and Service. As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

- The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.
- The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.
- The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.
- Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

2. Answer both parts of this question candidly and substantively.

2A. Through what specific actions has your organization demonstrated its responsiveness to the Commission in addressing specific accreditation concerns or challenges identified by the Commission's last comprehensive evaluation?

2B. What specific actions or activities are you planning to take in order to address any accreditation concerns or challenges from the Commission's last comprehensive evaluation that are still active issues?

To answer questions 3 - 8, present information that will allow the Admission Panel on Admissions to evaluate your organization's understanding of academic quality improvement and its ability to benefit from participation in AQIP.

3. Why does your institution wish to participate in AQIP? What benefits do you hope to gain as a consequence of participating?
4. Since broad understanding of, support for, and commitment to a continuous improvement approach and AQIP are essential for their success, what is the current level and extent of these elements in your organization? What is the evidence that key groups in your organization (e.g., Board, CEO, senior leaders, faculty, and staff) understand the nature of continuous improvement efforts and the demands of AQIP?
5. What are your plans for integrating participation in AQIP into your organization's current agenda? Are there major events on the horizon (e.g., a change in leadership, a major contract negotiation, budget cuts), and how are you planning to address them or integrate them into your quality efforts?
6. How are you planning to organize your quality effort? Explain which current or new structures (committees, systems, etc.) you will use to organize and run your improvement efforts? What organizational systems, structures, and other resources (e.g., a quality council, quality "champions," task forces, training programs, etc.) currently exist or are planned that will sustain your continuous improvement efforts?
7. Prior to attending a Strategy Forum, how are you planning to meet AQIP's requirement to conduct a preliminary self-assessment from a systems- or process-focused perspective, one that includes input from perspectives external to the organization?

Prior to attending a Strategy Forum (within the 12 months following admission), how will your organization identify issues, challenges, problems, or opportunities that might become Action Projects?

When you submit this application, please name a formal AQIP Liaison for your organization – someone who is centrally involved in your quality initiative. (It need not be the CEO or chief academic officer. We intend to continue to communicate closely with your CEO, CAO, and other members of your leadership, but we must have someone we can call or email directly regarding details of your relationship with AQIP. You inform AQIP whenever you change your AQIP Liaison.)

Contact Information for Organization's AQIP Liaison:

Dr. Dennis Holt

Salutation, Name

Vice President for Administration and Enrollment Management

Job Title of Liaison

Southeast Missouri State University

Organization Name

One University Plaza, MS 3500

Office address

Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

City, State, Zip

573-986-6888

Office phone(s) and extension(s)
address

573-986-6113

Office fax

dholt@semo.edu

Email

**Name and address to which AQIP should send invoice for
application fee of \$275:**

Dr. Jane Stephens, Provost

Salutation, Name, Title

Southeast Missouri State University

Organization Name

One University Plaza, MS 3400

Office address

Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

City, State, Zip

Before you email your *Participation Application* to
AQIP@hlcommission.org, make certain it has been reviewed and approved
by your organization's CEO.

UNDERSTANDINGS AND EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

A Participating Organization is one that elects to maintain its accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission by regularly providing the Academic Quality Improvement Program with evidence of the vitality of its academic quality improvement initiative and the results that initiative has achieved. Participation is subject to approval by AQIP and the Commission. The Academic Quality Improvement Program's goal is to create a culture, a set of shared understandings, with its Participating Organizations that will:

1. **enhance** communication, ongoing learning, and public understanding of systematic academic quality improvement;
2. **encourage** systems-thinking and provide resources that will stimulate continuous improvement and accountability;

3. *promote, within and among organizations, a culture of involvement and shared responsibility for academic quality, and*
4. *develop the critical judgment, skills, and capabilities required for systematic quality improvement.*

These understandings and expectations relate formal points of agreement between AQIP and the organization that establish the conditions for this accreditation process.

To support Academic Quality Improvement Program operations and activities, the organization will:

- identify an official organizational liaison with AQIP and the Commission, notifying AQIP promptly of temporary or permanent changes affecting this liaison role;
- participate in all scheduled AQIP activities (e.g., Strategy Forum, Systems Appraisal, Annual Updates, Checkup Visit, Reaffirmation of Accreditation), which are essential to the operation of this accreditation process and required by AQIP for its accrediting determinations;
- inform AQIP promptly of major organizational conditions, events, or changes that could negatively affect the organization's viability, operations, or quality improvement efforts;
- pay fees charged for participation in AQIP Workshops, Appraisals, and other activities promptly; and
- continue to meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, responding promptly to any inquiries the Commission receives regarding possible violations of these fundamental Commission membership expectations, and observing other Commission policies and obligations of membership (e.g., concerning organizational change and dynamics, annual report, complaints, public information, etc.).

To respond to an organization's needs and requirements, the Academic Quality Improvement Program, its staff, and the Higher Learning Commission will:

- collaborate with a participating organization to help it accomplish its goals;
- make information about an organization public only with the organization's consent;
- respond energetically, quickly, and courteously to requests by a Participating Organization for assistance or information in all quality-related areas;
- keep program costs and the fees charged to a Participating Organization as low as possible, thereby promoting opportunities for broader involvement in AQIP's activities and services; and,
- share information on organizational quality improvement by identifying, evaluating, validating, and sharing best and innovative practices discovered by participating and partnering organizations.

The Higher Learning Commission agrees to:

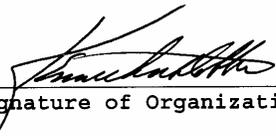
- maintain the organization's AQIP participation so long as the organization continues to take part in AQIP activities and provides AQIP with credible evidence justifying continuation;
- indicate in the organization's Statement of Affiliation Status (SAS) under a section titled "Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation," the scheduling of the date for a reaffirmation seven academic years in the future;
- transition the organization, after appropriate notice and consultation, to the standard accreditation process if (1) the organization so requests, (2) the Commission has evidence that the organization is no longer continuing in its good faith effort to participate in AQIP according to the terms of these understandings and expectations; or (3) AQIP review for Reaffirmation of Accreditation shows a lack of progress in continuous quality improvement and that the organization or the Commission would be better served by a standard process;
- if the organization has participated in AQIP for five years or more, to schedule its next comprehensive visit five years after the year it leaves AQIP; or
- if the organization has participated in AQIP for fewer than five years, to schedule its next comprehensive visit either for the year that it was originally scheduled before the organization joined AQIP, or at least one full year after the year the organization ceases to be an AQIP participant, whichever is later.

The Commission continuously re-examines its programs and processes to make changes and corrections where appropriate. In the event the Commission makes changes that will affect this agreement, the Commission agrees to notify Participating Organizations in advance of implementation and allow a reasonable period of time for organizations to make appropriate adjustments or request transition to a standard process.

APPLICATION AFFIRMATION

I affirm that the application emailed to AQIP@hlcommissdsion.org presents our institution accurately, and that we agree, if admitted, to abide by the *Academic Quality Improvement Program Understandings and Expectations* and to:

- commit to a systematic initiative to improve continuously our academic and related processes and their results;
- engage faculty, staff, and other constituents in defining and implementing quality improvement efforts so that an institution-wide culture and understanding of systematic academic quality improvement evolves;
- promote and provide broad-based involvement in activities and in professional development that builds awareness and understanding of the principles and practices of systematic quality improvement at all levels of the institution; and
- establish systems for communication across staff, students, and other constituents and stakeholders regarding our institution's involvement and progress in systematic Academic Quality Improvement.



Signature of Organizational CEO

May 8, 2006

Date

Kenneth W. Dobbins, President

Printed/Typed Name and Title

Southeast Missouri State University

Name of Organization

President's Office

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One University Plaza, MS 3300

Address

Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

City, State of Organization, ZIP code

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