Standard I. “The institution’s mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.”

* Collaboratively developed mission and goals that address internal and external contexts/stakeholders and is approved by a governing body that guides faculty, staff, and administrative decision making on all aspects of the institution.
* Realistic goals that are focused on student learning and achievement and assessed periodically to ensure relevance and achievability.

Standard II. “Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to policies, and represent itself truthfully.”

* Academic, intellectual, and expressive freedom along with respect for the diverse perspectives of all individuals in the institutional community and their intellectual property rights; as part of this expectation of freedom and respect there should be a clear, fair, and impartial grievance policy, the avoidance of conflict of interest (or the appearance thereof), and fair and impartial practices in managing human capital, and periodic assessment thereof.
* All published material representing the institution should be honest and truthful, appropriate to the institution’s mission, services, or programs to promote accessibility, and comply with applicable regulations and reporting policies.
* Must “enable students to understand funding sources and options, value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt”

Standard III. “An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.” **This is one of the Standards we must report on annually through the Annual Institutional Update – They’ll be looking closely!**

* Appropriately qualified (full or part time) professionals deliver and assess student learning experiences that are rigorous and coherent, leading to any credential at the undergraduate or graduate level, that are of an appropriate duration to align with the objectives of the program and promote synthesis of learning.
* Programs are clearly and accurately described and student learning opportunities and resources are sufficient to support both the institution’s programs of study and the students’ academic process; this includes a comprehensive general education program (free standing or integrated into academic disciplines) at the undergraduate level and/or opportunities for graduate and professional program participants to develop research, scholarship, and independent thinking appropriate to graduate-level curricula.
* Offers curriculum that is designed for students to acquire and demonstrate essential skills and is consistent with the mission of the institution and assessed periodically for effectiveness of programs providing student learning opportunities.

Standard IV. “Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.”

* Clearly articulated ethical policies/processes to facilitate the success of all students who are admitted that are congruent with the institutional mission including accurate and comprehensive financial information, avenues to support underprepared students, programs to guide students through their experience, enhancement of student educational success.
* Transfer policies and procedures that are clearly articulated, including the acceptance of previously earned credit.
* All policies and procedures ensure the security of student records information and are periodically assessed for effectiveness.

Standard V. “Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution’s students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their programs of study, degree level, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.” **This is one of the Standards we must report on annually through the Annual Institutional Update – They’ll be looking closely!**

* Clearly stated educational program goals, organized and systematic assessment of those goals, and the use of those assessment results for continuous improvement of educational programming.

Standard VI. “The institution’s planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.”

* Objectives and decision making processes are clearly defined, assessed appropriately, linked to the achievement of the institutional mission and goals, and reflect the results of periodic assessment for continuous improvement of planning and resource allocation.
* Financial and human resources, as well as the physical and technical infrastructure, are adequate to support programs and all financial planning and budgeting processes are aligned with the institution’s mission and goals, evidence based, clearly linked to strategic plans and objectives, and are assessed periodically to ensure effective planning and resource allocation.

Standard VII. “The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.”

* A clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that is legally constituted by a governing body that serves the public interest independently and with integrity, and ensures that neither the governing body nor its individual members interferes in the daily operations of the institution. The governing body should support he Chief Executive Officer (President) appointed and evaluated by, and responsible to, the governing body after demonstrating appropriate credentials and experience consistent with the mission of the institution.
* The President should be supported by a sufficient number of qualified administrators within an organizational structure that is clearly documented, of an appropriate size, with appropriate professional expertise, that effectively engages with faculty and students in advancing the institution’s goals and objectives.
* The effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration should be periodically assessed using documented and systematic procedures for evaluating administrative units and using that data to enhance operations.