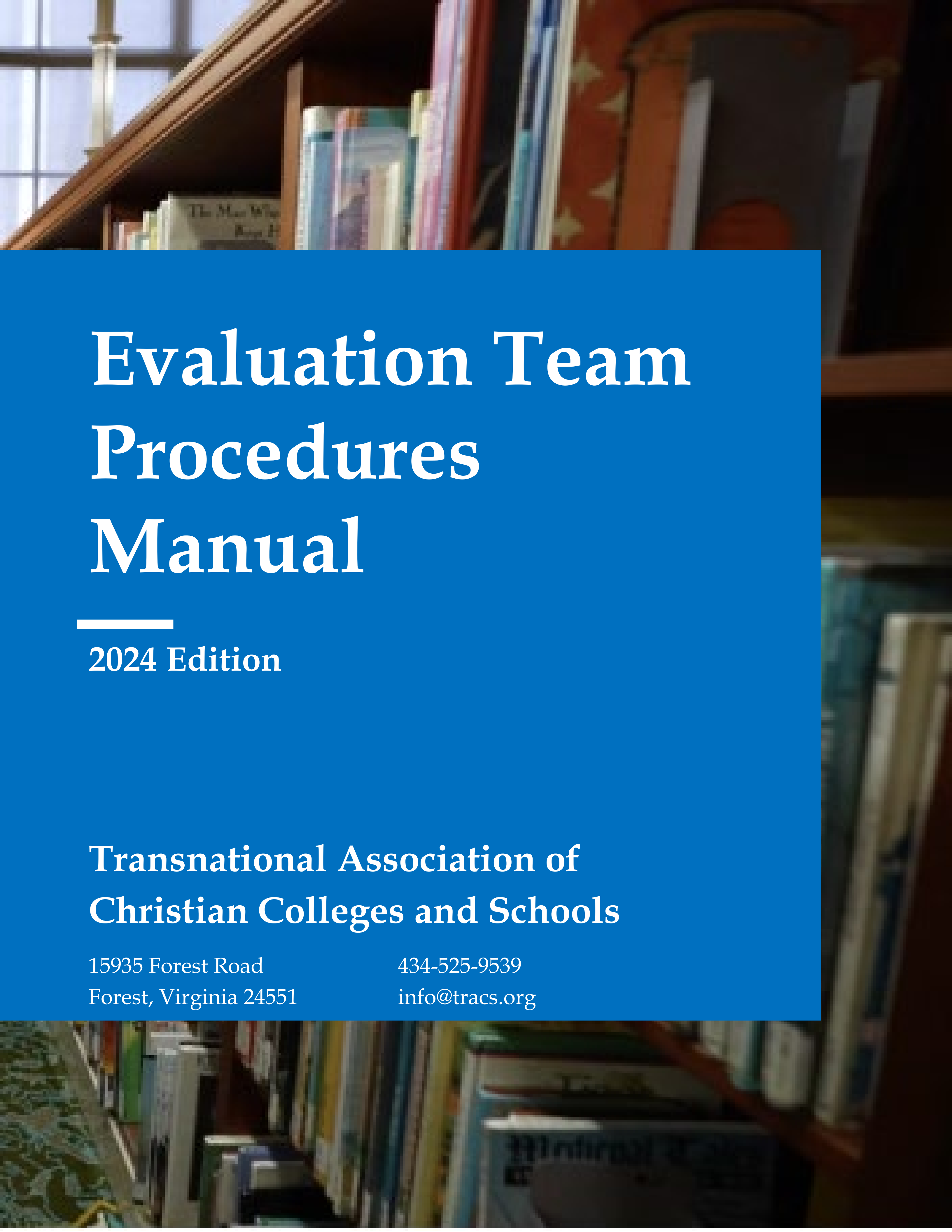

Evaluation Team Procedures Manual

2024 Edition

Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools

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The Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) is recognized by the United States Department of Education (ED), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) as a national accrediting agency for Christian postsecondary institutions that offer certificates, diplomas, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees, including Distance Education.

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Introduction

Accreditation in the United States is voluntary and non-governmental in nature, a system of institutional self-regulation that is unique in comparison with many other nations. TRACS provides accreditation for Christian liberal arts colleges and universities, graduate schools, seminaries, Bible colleges and institutes that offer a certificate, diploma, or degree (associate, baccalaureate, graduate and/or post-graduate) at both the Candide (pre- accredited) and Accredited levels. TRACS is an institutional accreditor. This means the institution as a whole is considered, rather than simply individual educational programs offered by the institution. Every facet of the institution is included in the evaluation process. The geographic scope of TRACS is transnational.

The granting of Candidacy, Accreditation, and /or Reaffirmation of Accreditation is based, in large part, on peer review. The Evaluation Team Visit is a major component of this review. The purpose of this manual is to provide information concerning the role of the Evaluation Team in the review process. Knowing how an Evaluation Team functions can prepare the team members and the institutional leadership for maximal profit from the experience.

There are four major steps included in the process for institutions seeking Candidacy, Accreditation or Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

1. **Self-Study** - The institution conducts a self-study following procedures prescribed by TRACS. The Self-Study Report addresses the institution's level of compliance with each TRACS Standard. Upon completion, the Self-Study Report, along with any supporting documentation, is submitted to TRACS via the TRACS portal. Evaluation Team members will be provided access to the Self-Study Report via the TRACS portal. The Self-Study report becomes the basis of the Evaluation Team's review.
2. **Evaluation Team Visit** - During an Evaluation Team Visit, the Evaluation Team, composed of peer professionals, evaluate both the institution and the Self-Study Report itself. An Evaluation Team Report which contains the team's determinations regarding institutional compliance, and a subsequent Compliance Report, if required, is presented to the institution for follow-up.
3. **Accreditation Commission Action** - At the next regularly scheduled meeting following an Evaluation Team Visit, the members of the Accreditation Commission review the Self-Study Report, the Evaluation Team Report, the Compliance Report submitted by the institution, the recommendation of the Evaluation Team regarding the status sought by the institution and the TRACS staff recommendation. The institution is invited to have representative(s) present for the Accreditation Commission's decision-making meeting. The Accreditation Commission determines the institution's accreditation status based on these factors.
4. **Follow-Up** - Utilizing the TRACS provided Compliance Report, the institution follows up on any Findings and/or Recommendations noted in the Evaluation Team Report and on any conditions imposed by the Accreditation Commission until such time as all unresolved Findings and/or Recommendations, and conditions have been satisfied.

<u>Findings</u> are given when the Evaluation Team determines that the institution is in possible non- compliance with a Standard noted as an Institutional Eligibility Requirement (IER). Institutions are required to respond to Findings in their Compliance Report.

<u>Recommendations</u> are given when the Evaluation Team determines that the institution is in possible non-compliance with a non-IER related TRACS Standard. Institutions are required to respond to Recommendations in their Compliance Report.

<u>Suggestions</u> are given when the Evaluation Team determines that, although not in non-compliance with a TRACS Standard, the institution should give further attention to a particular area. Institutions are not required to respond to Suggestions in their Compliance Report.

The entire accreditation process is designed to assist in the improvement of the institution by leading the institution to assess both strengths and weaknesses. When weaknesses are identified, the accreditation process guides the institution as it provides remediation to become a stronger institution. A complete description of all aspects of the accreditation process is found in the following official TRACS publications: Steps Toward Accreditation, Self- Study Guidelines. Policies and Procedures Manual and the Accreditation Manual. These publications detail the official guidelines and expectations for institutions, Evaluation Teams, and the Accreditation Commission.

Fundamentally, accreditation indicates that an institution has met the TRACS Standards at an acceptable level of compliance and has the prospects of addressing satisfactorily any deficiencies identified within a reasonable time. Accreditation certifies that the institution has conducted a comprehensive Self-Study that has been validated by an Evaluation Team of professional peers. Thereby, the institution has demonstrated that its educational programs have satisfactory quality, that adequate resources exist to support the institution, and that it is committed to self-improvement and self-enhancement.

The accreditation process helps new institutions establish themselves according to commonly accepted standards for postsecondary education and assists established institutions to become stronger. The result is that the interests of students and the public are served by providing assurance that the institution is operating at an acceptable level of quality to justify both its existence and students choosing it for their education.

The basic purposes of the Evaluation Team are to determine if the institution is in compliance with the TRACS Standards, to identify areas in need of improvement, to validate the Self-Study Report, and to make a recommendation concerning the institution's accreditation status to the Accreditation Commission.

The Evaluation Process and the Role of the Evaluation Team

The institution begins the evaluation process by conducting a comprehensive Self-Study that involves all constituencies of the institution. One outcome of the process is a Self-Study Report. This report is a straightforward description and self-appraisal that identifies both strengths and weaknesses of the institution in relation to the TRACS Standards. The

Evaluation Team members evaluate the adequacy of the Self-Study Report and serve as helpful collegial consultants to the institution by noting areas of non-compliance (Findings and/or Recommendations)and by giving non-binding Suggestions for improving its operations and programs.

The TRACS Standards, as detailed in the *Accreditation Manual,* have been developed to represent expectations of good practice and serve as the basis of the Evaluation Team's analysis. Under the leadership of a standing Standards Review Committee, there is on-going review of the TRACS Standards by the Accreditation Commission.

The ultimate goal of the Self-Study and follow-up evaluation processes is to ensure that institutions demonstrate compliance with all of the TRACS Standards. TRACS Standards are divided into two categories: Accreditation Requirements and Federal Requirements

The Accreditation Requirements (Standards 1-16) and Federal Requirements (Standard 17) are as follows:

1. **Faith Statement**
2. **Mission and Name**
3. **Institutional Objectives**
4. **Institutional Integrity**
5. **Operational Authority**
6. **Organizational Structure**
7. **Publications and Policies**
8. **Educational Programs**
9. **Faculty**
10. **Student Services**
11. **Financial Operations**
12. **Institutional Assessment**
13. **Strategic Planning**
14. **Library and Learning Resources**
15. **Facilities and Equipment**
16. **Health and Security**
17. **Federal Requirements**

Evaluation Team Members

Before being eligible to serve as a member of an Evaluation Team, individuals are required to participate in training for Evaluation Team members. This training is conducted at each TRACS Annual Conference and as needed during the year. As part of this required training, each participant becomes thoroughly familiar with the contents of the *Accreditation Manual,* and the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team as outlined in this publication. After completing training, the individual submits documentation (including a verification of training document and transcripts) which serve as the criteria for determining the level of expertise for each of the areas to be reviewed. TRACS staff review the qualifications for each individual, identify the areas for which expertise is documented and approve the individual for use as a team member. Finally, the individual's name is entered into the Team Pool.

At the appropriate time in the process, the Evaluation Team is formed for service on an Evaluation Team Visit. The team may vary in size depending on the institution to be evaluated. The Evaluation Team typically includes at least five peer evaluators (made up of professionals, educators, and faculty members), including a team chair. A staff representative acts as a resource to the team for each visit. TRACS Accreditation Commission members may not serve on Evaluation Teams.

The following factors are considered when determining the suitability of an individual to be placed in the Team Pool and when selecting team members and assigning them to specific review areas:

1. <u>Governance / Administrative Evaluator</u>: Minimum of three years of experience in program or institutional leadership as a senior administrator (CEO, executive vice president, chief academic officer, division director, institutional effectiveness/assessment director, or other cabinet-level administrator) in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

2. <u>Academic Evaluator</u>: Minimum of three years of experience as an educator engaged in academic leadership (provost, academic dean, assistant provost/dean, academic division director, program director, registrar) in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

3. <u>Student Services Evaluator</u>: Minimum of three years of experience in student affairs, student life, student services, or student ministry leadership in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

4. <u>Finance/Business Evaluator</u>: Minimum of three years of experience in institutional finance or business affairs (CFO, vice president of finance, director of business affairs) in a postsecondary institution or corporation, business degree, completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

5. <u>Library / Learning Resources Evaluator</u>: Minimum of three years of experience in librarianship in a postsecondary institution, library science degree (MLS/MLIS), completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of TRACS evaluation team

training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

6. Faculty Evaluator: Minimum of three years of teaching or research experience in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

7. Distance Education Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience teaching distance education courses, developing distance education curriculum, and/or administrating a distance education program in a postsecondary institution; Master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (Doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators); completion of TRACS Evaluation Team training; completion of TRACS Distance Education Training and completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

If the institution offers its programs / courses via Distance Education, in addition to reviewing the institution against the specified Distance Education Standards, particular focus concerning the institution's Distance Education programs / courses should be given to the following TRACS Accreditation and Federal Requirements and should be reflected in the Evaluation Team Report:

- Operational Authority
- Organizational Structure
- Publications and Policies
- Educational Programs
- Faculty
- Student Services
- Financial Operations
- Institutional Assessment
- Strategic Planning
- Library and Learning Resources
- Facilities and Equipment
- Federal Requirements (as applicable)

8. Assessment / Institutional Effectiveness Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience in assessment of student learning, institutional effectiveness, and planning in a postsecondary institution; master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred); completion of TRACS evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members outlined in this publication.

Evaluation Team Chair

Before being eligible to serve as the Chair of an Evaluation Team, individuals must have served on at least three Evaluation Team Visits and must participate in a training session specifically for Evaluation Team Chairs. Evaluation Team Chair training opportunities are conducted at each TRACS Annual Conference and individually by TRACS Staff as necessary.

In concert with TRACS Staff, the Chair coordinates the visit and, if deemed necessary, may make a pre-team visit to determine the institution's readiness to host the Evaluation Team. The chair assists the TRACS Staff representative with the team orientation session at the beginning of the visit. The Chair coordinates assignments, and periodically convenes the team for reviews of the progress and to share information and impressions. The Chair is responsible for facilitating the completion of post-visit evaluation instruments including the Evaluation Team recommendation for the Accreditation Commission.

Evaluation Team Preparation

Approximately six weeks prior to the scheduled Evaluation Team Visit, each team member will be granted access, via the TRACS portal, to the institution's Self-Study Report, including supporting documents. Each team member reads the materials with specific scrutiny given to their area(s) of assignment and will prepare a preliminary narrative for these areas. Each team member will formulate questions, identify those to be interviewed during the visit, and note additional documentation which he or she may need to review during the visit.

Evaluation Team Roster, Travel, and Accommodations

Once all Evaluation Team members have been selected and properly approved, TRACS will provide a team roster to the institution that identifies the areas of review assigned to each team member, the travel itinerary for each team member, and information concerning the team's accommodations during the visit. The institution is responsible for arranging on-site transportation and lodging.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest includes, but is not limited to, having served for compensation during the prior three years as an employee of or consultant to an institution under consideration; being a stockholder or board member of the institution during the prior five years; or any other association or activity, including the appearance of a conflict of interest that an impartial person might reasonably conclude would compromise a person's capacity for objectively dealing with an issue concerning a particular institution.

In addition to the stipulations outlined in the general Conflict of Interest definition above, the following guidelines are applied to Peer Evaluators when determining what constitutes a conflict of interest and whether or not a member of the Peer Evaluator Pool is eligible to serve as an Evaluation Team Member, Focus Team Member or as an IFYR Peer Reviewer:

TRACS staff shall not knowingly assign a person to serve as a Peer Evaluator if that person:

1. Within the last five years has been an appointee (e.g., a board member) or employee of the institution, or has recently been a candidate for employment at the institution.

2. Is a graduate of the institution.
3. Has any other impediment to rendering an impartial, objective professional judgment regarding the institution, such as a close personal or familial relationship with persons at the institution or a strong bias regarding the institution.

TRACS staff relies on the personal and professional integrity of Peer Evaluators, expects them to be sensitive to potential conflicts of interests in the peer review process, and assumes they will act accordingly.

Peer Evaluators must not have served the institution undergoing review as a paid consultant within three years of the review.

Peer Evaluators must not seek or accept employment from the institution undergoing review or serve it as a consultant for a period of one year following the review.

If it is discovered that a conflict of interest may have significantly affected the evaluation of an institution by a Peer Evaluator, either the TRACS President or the Chair of the Accreditation Commission (whichever is appropriate) may ask that a further evaluation of the institution be initiated to ensure an objective review.

As a part of the training required for inclusion in the Peer Evaluator Pool, individuals receive training concerning conflicts of interest. Upon agreement to serve as a member of an

Evaluation Team, individuals submit a “Conflict of Interest Form” specific to the institution to be reviewed. The institution will also submit a "Conflict of Interest Form" regarding each assigned Evaluation Team member.

Any Peer Reviewer who knowingly violates this policy will be removed from the Peer Evaluator Pool.

Evaluation Team Visit Schedule

The visit to the institution usually lasts four days. The team arrives during the afternoon of the first day in time to participate in a team orientation session. At this meeting, strategies, and procedures for conducting a successful site visit are reviewed. Each team member provides the team chair with a list of persons to be interviewed and briefly reports on their initial determinations regarding the institution’s compliance each Standard to which they have been assigned. Concerns are noted which need further exploration. Typically, the institution will host an evening dinner or reception on this first day which involves the team members and key administration to introduce all parties and to confirm plans and expectations for the rest of the visit.

On the morning of the second day, final decisions are made related to the schedule to be followed for the rest of the visit. Upon arrival the campus, the team tours the campus and conducts interviews with designated individuals.

From this time on, the team members are immersed in reviews within their assigned areas: visiting classes, interviewing, conducting open meetings, taking extensive notes of determinations, sharing determinations with the other team members, and expanding or correcting draft sections of the Evaluation Team Report

During the evening, each team member will work independently and will continue writing their particular sections of the draft Evaluation Team Report.

On the morning of the third day, once the team returns to the campus, team members proceed with whatever is necessary to enable them to fulfill their assignment and bring on-campus work to a close. Additional interviews may be conducted, and additional documents may be reviewed as necessary. The team continues to discuss determinations among themselves.

Once all drafts of the various sections of the Evaluation Team Report have been submitted and complied into a comprehensive document, the team meets to finalize the Evaluation Team Report and to complete all evaluation instruments. This may take place on either the afternoon of the third day, or if these are not completed on the afternoon of the third day, may take place on the morning of day four.

In any case, once the Evaluation Team Report and evaluation instruments are competed, an exit interview with the institution's Chief Executive Officer is conducted. A draft copy of the Evaluation Team Report will be given to the institution's Chief Executive Officer at the exit interview. Then the Evaluation Team will meet with select members of the institution where each team member reads the Commendations, Findings, Recommendations, and Suggestions for their assigned areas of review. The team chair and TRACS staff will provide the institution with information concerning institutional responsibilities moving forward. There is no discussion of the Evaluation Team Report, and the team will not entertain questions concerning its determinations.

The institution is provided with the opportunity and means to cite any "Errors of Fact", or any misinterpretations contained in the draft of the Evaluation Team Report. If no changes to the report are necessary, the report is finalized and becomes the official and final Evaluation Team Report.

Evaluation of Processes

All parties participating in the institutional evaluation process are involved in assessing the efficacy of the process itself as well as the instruments and individuals involved. Assessment tools are provided which allow the institution to evaluate the Evaluation Team as well as the evaluation process overall. Additionally, the Evaluation Team members assess the Team Chair; and the Team Chair evaluates the team members. TRACS and its processes are evaluated by both the institution and the Evaluation Team members.

Compliance Report

Once finalized, the institution will receive, via the TRACS portal, a copy of the final Evaluation Team Report, along with a Compliance Report. The Compliance Report will contain the Findings and/or Recommendations given by the Evaluation Team as noted in the Evaluation Team Report. Utilizing the Compliance Report, the institution will respond to each Finding and/or Recommendation and submit these responses to TRACS, via the TRACS portal, by a specified date. If there are no Evaluation Team determinations to which the institution is required to respond, a blank Compliance Report will be created and submitted on behalf of the institution. This blank Compliance Report exists simply for TRACS internal processing and does not require any action by the institution.

Reminders

It is vital that each Evaluation Team member remains focused on their assigned areas of responsibility. If a team member discovers information regarding another evaluator's assignment, those determinations should be shared with the other team member assigned to that particular area, but no team member should become intrusively involved in any of the other members' assigned areas.

Evaluation Team members must respect the confidentiality of information learned during an Evaluation Team Visit. They must be careful to use TRACS Standards and policies and procedures, not the expectations of some other institution or agency. It is important that no one seek information to satisfy their own curiosity apart from what is called for in the TRACS Standards.

During the visit, team members should focus on the evaluation process as a priority, not their own personal business or that of their institution. Unless prior arrangements with TRACS staff, the team chair and/or the institution, team members should not arrive late or leave early.
They should never attempt to lure employees of the institution to their own institution. Neither should they use an Evaluation Team Visit as an opportunity to seek employment at the reviewed institution for themselves or others.

Self-promotion should be avoided as should the accepting of gifts or favors that might in any way be misinterpreted as influence peddling or that might create a conflict of interest. Misplaced sentiment for an institution with inadequate funding or other challenges will simply obstruct fairness and objectivity. It is possible to be fair while remaining firm and objective.

The Evaluation Team should avoid citing specific individuals in the Evaluation Team Report, rather they should emphasize the individual’s position or title, e.g., the President or the Academic Dean. It is not the responsibility of the Evaluation Team to prescribe solutions to areas of deficiency or non-compliance. Such areas will be identified in the Evaluation Team Report as Findings, Recommendations and/or Suggestions, but the team should not demand prescribed solutions.

Evaluation Team Resources

It is the responsibility of the Evaluation Team to review the institution's Self-Study Report and supporting documentation in order to honestly and objectively evaluate the existing educational programs for the purpose of assisting the institution in developing quality and to determine if the institution maintains the appropriate level of compliance with the TRACS Standards which qualify the institution for Candidacy, Accreditation, or Reaffirmation.

The institution's Self-Study Report will be made available to the Evaluation Team members via the TRACS portal.

The following general resources are available to Evaluation Team members on the TRACS website.

1. Accreditation Manual
2. Institutional Eligibility Requirements (IERs) as noted in the Accreditation Manual
3. Policies and Procedures Manual

Additionally, the following resources are available to the Evaluation Team members for use prior to and during the Evaluation Team Visit on the Evaluation Team Resources page of the TRACS website.

1. *Evaluation Team Procedures Manual*
2. *Benchmarks for Excellence*
3. *Compliance Resource Manual*
4. Evaluation Team Report Template

Finally, the following forms constitute the Evaluation Instruments that an Evaluation Team member, Team Chair, or both must complete at the conclusion of an Evaluation Team Visit. These forms are available on the Evaluation Team Resources page of the TRACS website.

1. Reliability and Validity Study – all Evaluation Team members
2. Evaluation Team Workbook– all Evaluation Team members
3. Evaluator – Post Visit Questionnaire– all Evaluation Team members
4. Evaluation Team Consensus – Evaluation Team Chair only
5. Evaluation Team Recommendation – Evaluation Team Chair only
6. Team Member Evaluation – Evaluation Team Chair only

Responsibilities of TRACS Staff

The TRACS staff member assigned to the institution under review will be responsible for certain aspects of the evaluation process before, during and after the Evaluation Team visit.

Before the Visit:

1. Upon receipt of the institution's Self-Study Proposal, TRACS staff will conduct a Self-Study Visit (either in-person or virtually) to the institution to interview key individuals and review preliminary drafts of the Self-Study Report as well as other key institutional documents and publications. The timeline for completing the Self-Study process and hosting the Evaluation Team is also finalized during this visit. In a follow-up staff report to the institution, the staff member will offer non-binding recommendations to the institution regarding the finalization of the Self-Study Report and to ensure that the institution is prepared to host the Evaluation Team.
2. TRACS staff will select the Evaluation Team members from the Team Pool. Staff will also ensure that there are no known conflicts of interest between the proposed Evaluation Team members and the institution.
3. In concert with the Team Chair, TRACS staff will coordinate communications between the institution, the Team Chair and individual Evaluation Team members and will ensure that all team members are granted access, via the TRACS portal, to the Self-Study Report and supporting documents materials once submitted to and approved by TRACS.

During the Visit:

1. TRACS staff will conduct the Team Orientation and Training session in concert with the Team Chair.
2. TRACS staff will act as resource for the Team Chair and Evaluation Team members and will act as an editor and will compile the various elements of the draft Evaluation Team Report.
3. TRACS staff will ensure that team members remain focused on TRACS Standards as they conduct their review and write their individual sections of the draft Evaluation Team Report.
4. TRACS staff will provide guidance in defining and properly delineating Commendations, Findings, Recommendations, and/or Suggestions noted in the draft Evaluation Team Report.
5. TRACS staff ensure the completion and submission of all required Evaluation Instruments at the close of the Evaluation Team Visit.
6. TRACS staff and the Team Chair will oversee the exit interview with the institution's key personnel.

After the Visit:

1. Once the institution has submitted any factual errors to be corrected in the draft Evaluation Team Report, the Report is finalized and submitted to the institution along with a Compliance Report by which the institution will respond to any Findings and/or Recommendations noted in the Evaluation Team Report.
2. TRACS staff will present the Self-Study Report, the Evaluation Team Report, the team recommendation concerning the accreditation status sought, the intuition's

Compliance Report, and a staff recommendation to the Accreditation Commission at the next meeting for consideration of the institution's sought status.

3. TRACS staff will continue to receive periodic Compliance Reports from the institution and will report the institution's progress to the Accreditation Commission until such time as all Findings and/or Recommendations, as well as any conditions imposed by the Accreditation Commission, have been satisfactorily addressed.

Responsibilities of the Team Chair

The Chair will be responsible for certain aspects of the evaluation process before, during and after the Evaluation Team visit.

Before the Visit:

1. Once provided the names and contact information of the Evaluation Team members, the Chair will establish communication with each of the team members and, in concert with the TRACS office, will confirm their travel plans for the visit and coordinating other aspects of the visit as necessary.
2. Once the Evaluation Team members have been granted access to the Self-Study Report and supporting documentation, the Chair and the TRACS staff will determine if a visit by the Chair and/or TRACS staff is necessary prior to the Evaluation Team visit.
3. Team members will be encouraged to begin their review of the Self-Study materials and compile a list of questions to be answered and individuals to be interviewed during the visit.
4. The Chair and TRACS staff will be prepared to answer any questions and address any concerns raised by the team members as a result of their review of the Self-Study materials prior to the visit.
5. The Chair should inform the institution, prior to the visit, of any preliminary questions or concerns raised by the team members so that the institution will have an opportunity to respond appropriately in advance of and during the visit.
6. The Chair, in concert with TRACS staff and institutional personnel, will establish the daily schedule for the visit based on the generally accepted format established by TRACS.

During the Visit:

1. The Chair and TRACS staff representative will be responsible for coordinating the team's activities during the visit. It may be necessary for the Chair and/or TRACS staff to arrive at the institution prior to the arrival of the other team members to ensure that necessary preparations have been made for the visit.
2. The Chair will conduct the Team Orientation and Training session in concert with the TRACS staff.
3. The Chair will act as the team spokesperson in all matters pertaining to policy, procedures, and institutional relations with TRACS, and coordinate all interviews, including the exit interview with key institutional personnel.
4. The Chair will ensure that all team members submit their drafts of the narratives for the individual portions of the Evaluation Team Report and that these drafts are compiled into a single cohesive report. TRACS staff will serve as the editor and compiler of these drafts.
5. The Chair will oversee the final team meeting concerning the compilation of the draft Evaluation Team Report and the completion of all Evaluation Instruments.
6. The Chair and TRACS staff will oversee the exit interview with the institution's key personnel.

After the Visit:

1. Once the visit is completed, the Chair will communicate, via email, with each team member expressing his/her appreciation for their service on the team.
2. The Chair may be called upon by TRACS staff or the Accreditation Commission to provide clarity on any issues which remain unclear, and which may influence the final decision of the Commission regarding the status sought by the institution.

Responsibilities of the Team Members

The Team members will be responsible for certain aspects of the evaluation process before, during and after the Evaluation Team visit.

Before the Visit:

1. Team members should indicate their willingness and suitability to serve on the Evaluation Team and submit the "Conflict of Interest" form provided by TRACS.
2. Team members should coordinate with the Chair and TRACS staff regarding travel arrangements for the visit.
3. Once granted access to the Self-Study Report and supporting documentation via the TRACS portal, Evaluation Team members should conduct their review of the Self Study Report and supporting documentation with a focus on their assigned areas of review.
4. Team members should prepare a written summary of initial determinations and observations based on the review of their assigned areas. Corrections and additions may be made to these initial determinations after confirmation occurs during the team visit.
5. Team members should compile a list of questions to be answered and individuals to be interviewed during the visit and should send these lists to the Team Chair prior to the visit.
6. Team members should maintain communication with the Team Chair and TRACS staff regarding questions and to ensure clarity regarding travel and other matters.

During the Visit:

1. Team members should be present and actively participate in the orientation session on the afternoon of the first day of the team visit.
2. Team members should conduct the necessary interviews and review the necessary documents on-site to ensure a thorough review and accurate conclusions.
3. Team members should contribute appropriately to the writing and final compilation of the draft Evaluation Team Report and to the completion of all Evaluation Instruments.

After the Visit:

1. Team members should complete and submit to TRACS a copy of the TRACS supplied expense report, with receipts attached, within ten days of the completion of the visit.
2. Team members should remain available to the Team Chair and TRACS staff to provide clarity on determinations noted in the Evaluation Team Report as needed.
3. All team member follow-up communications with the visited institution should be conducted through the Team Chair and/or TRACS staff.

Responsibilities of the Institution

The host institution will be responsible for certain aspects of the evaluation process before, during and after the Evaluation Team visit.

Before the Visit:

1. Once informed of the proposed Evaluation Team roster, the institution will notify TRACS of its approval of the selected team members and indicate that there are no conflicts of interest with the members selected utilizing the "Conflict of Interest" form provided by TRACS.
2. The institution will complete and submit the Self-Study Report and supporting documentation via the TRACS portal. As may be requested by individual team members, the institution should be prepared to send to those team members, printed copies of any specified documents related to the Self-Study process. The TRACS office will grant access to the Self-Study Report and all supporting documents to the Evaluation Team members, via the TRACS portal, at least six weeks prior to the scheduled team visit.
3. The institution should make all hotel, dining and local travel arrangements for team members as specified in a letter which will be sent to the institution's Chief Executive Officer. Additionally, the institution should provide each team member with the name and telephone number of the hotel where the team will be staying during the visit, along with emergency contact numbers in the event of travel delays, etc.
4. The institution should reserve a workroom at the hotel for team use on the afternoon of the first day of the visit.
5. The institution should ensure that the institution's Board, administration, faculty, staff, students, and available alumni are aware of the dates for the visit and that representatives from each of these constituencies are available for interviews during the visit.
6. The institution should provide a private and secure workroom on the campus exclusively for team use during the entire visit. The workroom should contain power strips as necessary and internet access. The institution is encouraged to provide snacks and/or beverages for the team members in the campus workroom.
7. At least one month before the Evaluation Team Visit is scheduled to take place, the host institution must notify the public of the pending visit on the institution's website. The notification should provide guidance for the submission of third-party comments regarding the visit. Below is a sample of the wording to be used in the announcement:

    (Institution's Name) is scheduled to host an Evaluation Team from the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) from (dates of the visit). This visit concerns the granting of (status sought).

    Constituents and members of the public are invited to submit third-party comments concerning (Institution's Name)'s qualifications for (status sought). Third-party comments should be submitted to thirdpartycomments@tracs.org. TRACS will receive third-party comments on this matter until 14 days before the scheduled Evaluation Team Visit.

TRACS shares third-party comments with members of the Evaluation Team prior to the visit, but at no time during the review process will third-party comments be shared with (Institution's Name). During its review, the Evaluation Team considers third-party comments only as they relate to the TRACS Accreditation Standards.

TRACS is approved by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized institutional accrediting agency and appears on the DOE Secretary's List of Approved Accrediting Agencies, which is provided in the Higher Education Directory. TRACS is also recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

During the Visit:

1. The institution should ensure that the team members have full access to administrators, faculty, students, alumni, Board members, and other key personnel and should supply key documents as requested by team members.
2. The institution should ensure that the travel needs of the Evaluation Team members (transportation to and from airports, hotels, restaurants, and the campus) are met.
3. The institution should ensure that the Chief Executive Officer, administrators, and other key personnel are available for the exit interview.

After the Visit:

1. According to the guidance that will be provided in a follow up comment to the institution's Self-Study Report on the TRACS portal, the institution should complete the "Institution - Post Visit Questionnaire" and should submit "Errors of Fact" concerning the draft of the Evaluation Team Report.
2. Once the Evaluation Team Report is finalized, the institution should respond, if required, to the Evaluation Team's determinations (Findings and/or Recommendations), utilizing a Compliance Report that will be created by the TRACS office on the TRACS portal. The institution's Compliance Report is to be submitted according to the established deadline.
3. The institution should make arrangements to attend the appropriate Accreditation Commission meeting and should be prepared to appear before the Commission to provide insight and answer questions regarding institutional progress since the Evaluation Team Visit.