

MSCHE Accreditation Process Changes

The Renewed Accreditation Process: A Holistic Approach

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Cast your mind back one year. . .

- The Commission proposed the framework for a renewed accreditation process:
 - Eight year cycle
 - Annual institutional updates (AIUs)
 - Mid-point peer review of AIUs (no PRR)
 - Self-Study punctuates the cycle
- Sought member endorsement

What, exactly, were we engaging in?

- A **multi-step process** for renewing accreditation activities.
 - Response to changing higher education realities.
 - Regulatory climate
 - Growing expectations of students and their families
 - Increasing accountability to taxpayers
 - Overburdened resources of our member institutions

And what led to this framework?

- The Assessment Task Force
- Revision of the Standards
- The Collaborative Implementation Project
- **Initiation** of Process Change

Member Endorsement of Framework

- **Overwhelming** endorsement
- **93%** affirmative votes
- **Largest** election turnout in MSCHE history

What did we promise?

- To fill in the details of this process **within the endorsed framework**
- To **return** at this time to update membership
- To hold a **final vote** on the new process

And here we are today!

So, how did we proceed?

- With a **member-driven** process
 - Work Groups of **volunteers** supported by staff
 - Input from **Commissioners**
 - Five **Town Hall Meetings** throughout the region

Incorporating member-input at each step

The Process Change Work Groups

- Steering Committee leading 3 Work Groups
 - Financial Sustainability
 - “Student Achievement”
 - Self-Study and Team Visit
- Included participants from **36 member institutions**
- Directly supported by MSCHE Staff

Work Groups' Goals

- Recommendations leading to consistent interpretation and application of the *Standards* that:
 - Enable the Commission to take **unassailable actions**;
 - Support continuous **institutional improvement**;
 - Are **respectful** of the resources expended by member institutions;
 - Meet expanding **Federal** requirements.

How we worked

- A two-day working session of the entire committee, April 7 & 8, 2016
- A one-day working session of the Steering Committee, May 24, 2016
- **Many** telephone, conference call and email exchanges were held among various members.

Work Group Recommendations

- Presented to the Commission
 - Productive discussion ensued
 - **Further recommendations** were made
- Commission **endorsed** the current path

More development by Chair and Staff

- Incorporating Commissioners' input
- Leading to the **five** Town Hall Meetings
 - San Juan
 - Pittsburgh
 - Albany
 - Baltimore/Washington
 - Philadelphia

Five Town Hall Meetings

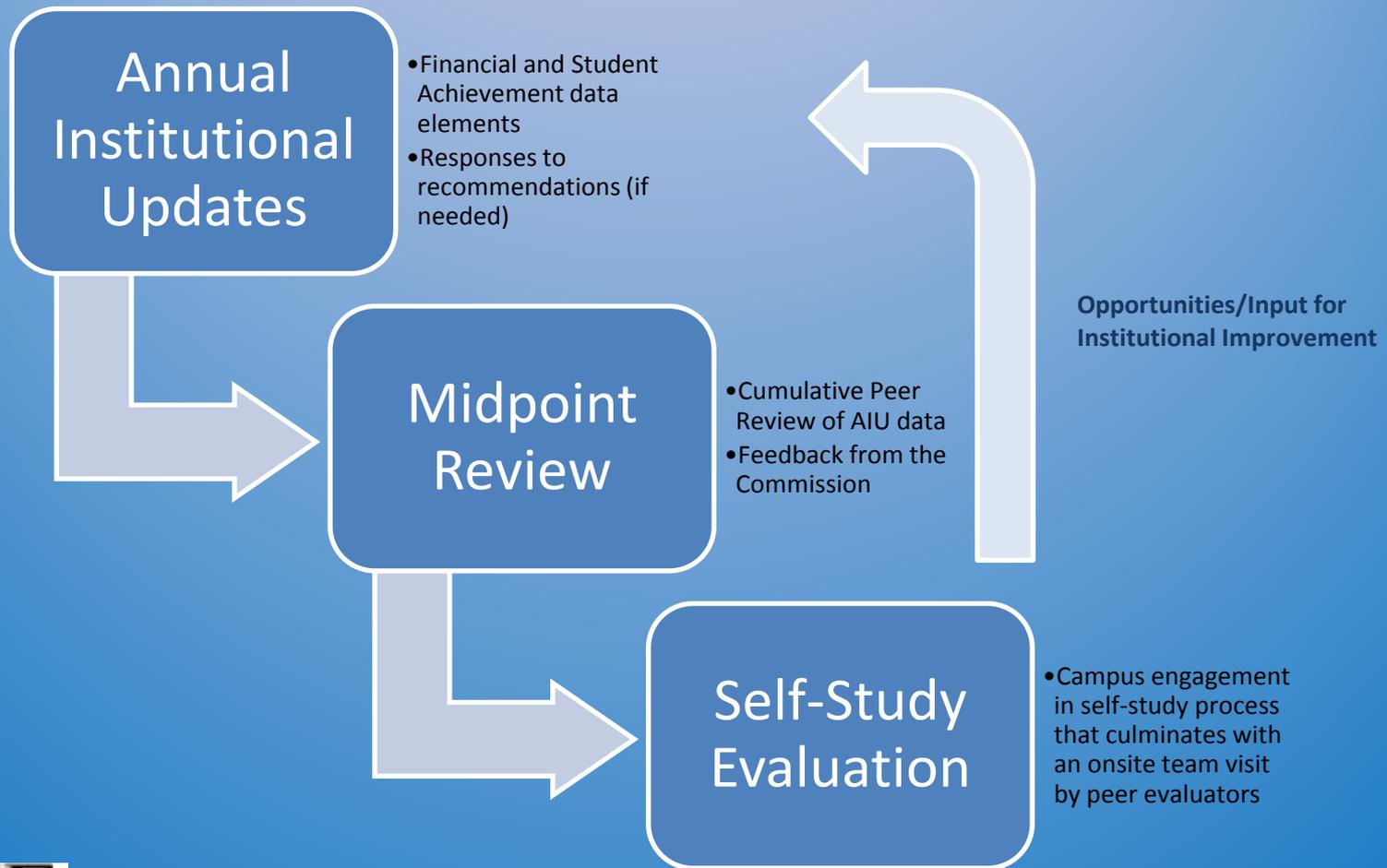
- Presentation and Listening Sessions
 - *More member input*
- Changes were incorporated along the way

Who Attended the Town Hall Meetings?

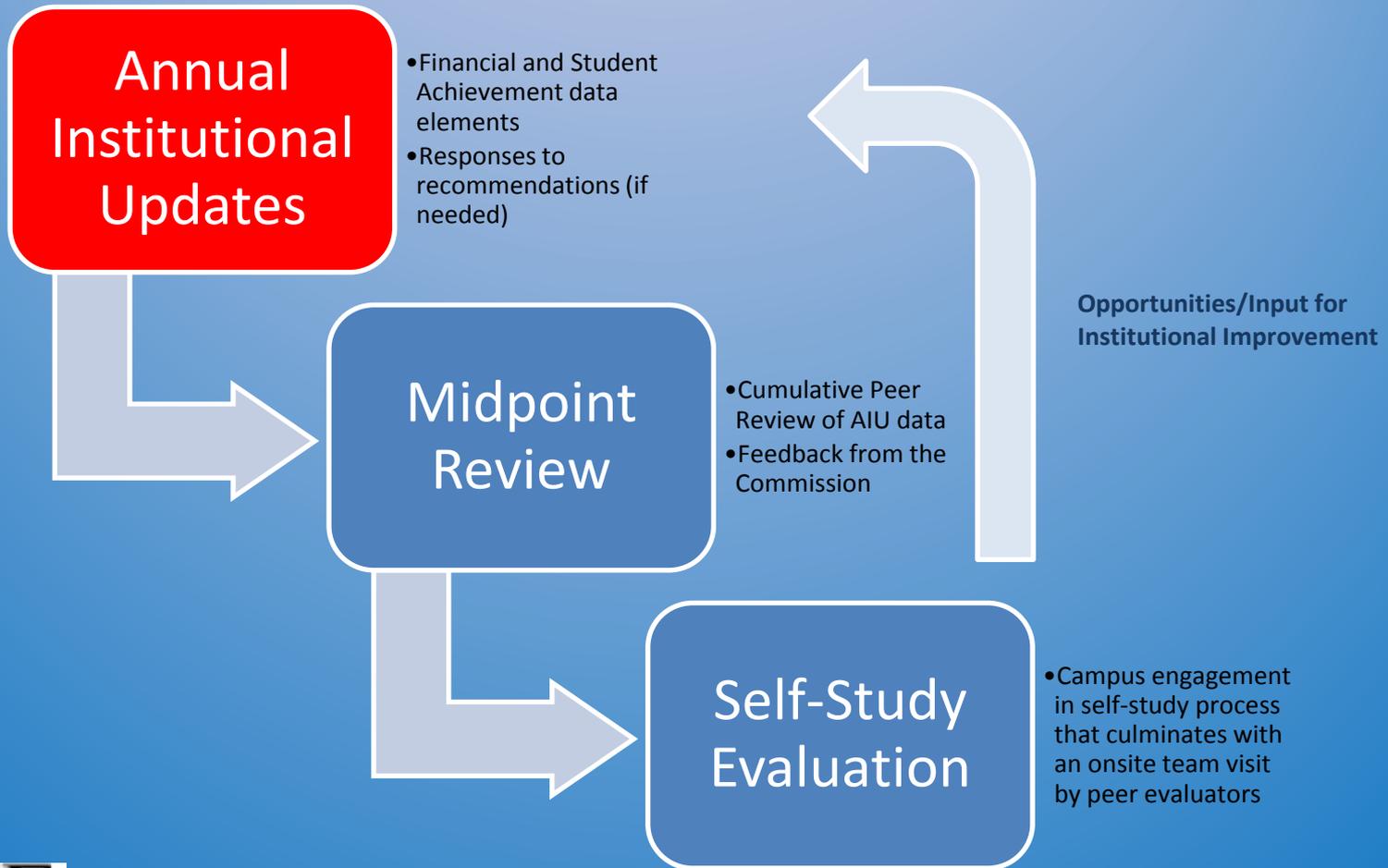
- **Largest turnout** in MSCHE history
 - 648 Total Attendance
 - 357 Institutions Represented

68% of member institutions

The New Process



Annual Institutional Update



Annual Institutional Update: Goals

- Provide information on institution's **general health**.
 - Service to students/constituents
 - Financial Sustainability
- Metrics must be **useful and used**
- Must not be overly burdensome for institution
- Must meet Federal requirements
 - Enabling effective response to increased scrutiny

Annual Institutional Update: Metrics

- Loosely divided into two categories:
 - “Student Achievement” Metrics
 - Financial Sustainability Metrics
- Include **optional** limited-word **text boxes** for context

AIU Metrics: “Student Achievement”

- Academic Progress Metrics
 - **Three** mandatory academic progress data elements
 - Eight **optional** data elements to provide context
- Post-Institutional Metrics
 - **Two** mandatory post-institutional success data elements
 - Six **optional** data elements to provide context

“Student Achievement-” Academic Progress

Mandatory

- Retention Rates
- IPEDS Graduation Rates
- Mean Time to Graduation

Optional

- % Credits Completed/Attempted
- % Pell
- % Minority
- % Developmental
- % 1st Generation
- % Non-Traditional
- % Part-Time
- Self-Identified

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“Student Achievement-” Post-Institutional

Mandatory

- Loan Default Rate
- Loan Repayment Rate

Optional

- 1st time Pass Rates on Licensure Exams
- Graduate Survey Satisfaction Results
- Career Placement Rates
- “First Destination” Survey Placement Rates
- Transfer Rates
- Self-Identified

“Student Achievement-” Post-Institutional

Mandatory

- Loan Default Rate
- Loan Repayment Rate

Optional

- 1st time Pass Rates on Licensure Exams
- Graduate Survey Satisfaction Results
- Career Placement Rates
- “First Destination” Survey Placement Rates
- Transfer Rates
- Self-Identified

AIU Metrics: Financial Sustainability

- **Thirteen** data elements
 - Some may not apply to all institutions
- **Seven** document uploads
 - Some may not apply to all institutions

Financial Health Indicators- Data Elements

- Available Net Assets
- $\frac{\% \text{ Cash} + \text{Investments}}{\text{Total Operating Expenses}}$
- $\frac{\text{Debt Service}}{\text{Op Expenses}}$
- $\frac{\text{Cash} + \text{Investments}}{\text{Debt}}$
- $\frac{\text{Receivables}}{\text{Tuition} + \text{Fees}}$
- Tuition Discount Ratio
- $\frac{[\text{Op Revenue} - \text{Op Expense}]}{\text{Total Revenue}}$
- Investment Funds/
Operating Budget
- $\Delta \frac{\text{Available Net Assets}}{\text{Total}}$
- Financial responsibility
Composite Score
- HCM Status Incl. Reason
- “90/10” Revenue
Percentage
- Audit Qualifying Letter Type

Financial Health Indicators- Documents

All

- Most Recent Audited Financials
- IPEDS Finance Data
- Title IV Compliance Audits
- Catalog/URL
- Most Recent USDE Composite Score

If Applicable

- Bond Rating for New Debt issued
- Financial Audit from Parent Corporation

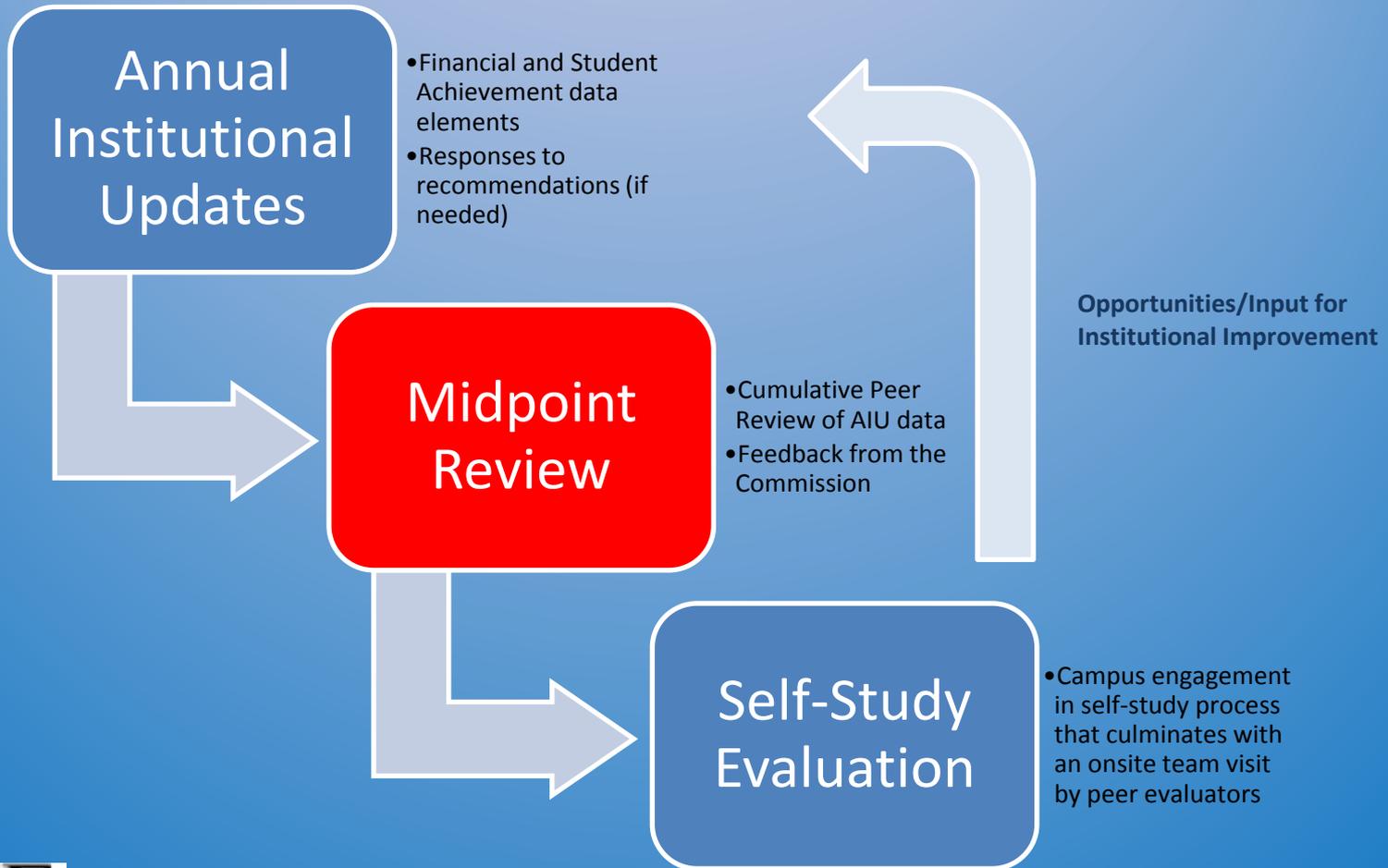
AIU Data Sources

- **Mandatory data elements**
 - Uploaded directly from IPEDS by MSCHE
 - Decrease burden on institutions
 - Satisfy Federal Regulators
 - Decrease confusion of multiple definitions
- **Optional data elements**
 - Entered by institution at their discretion

Annual Institutional Updates: Useful and Used

- AIUs will be reviewed by staff.
 - Trends rather than bright lines.
 - Staff feedback only if warranted
 - Trend thresholds trigger contact from MSCHE Staff
- Self-generated AIU reports also useful to institutions
 - Graphics **enable institutions** to monitor progress.
 - Ability to compare trends to **aggregated** peer-group.

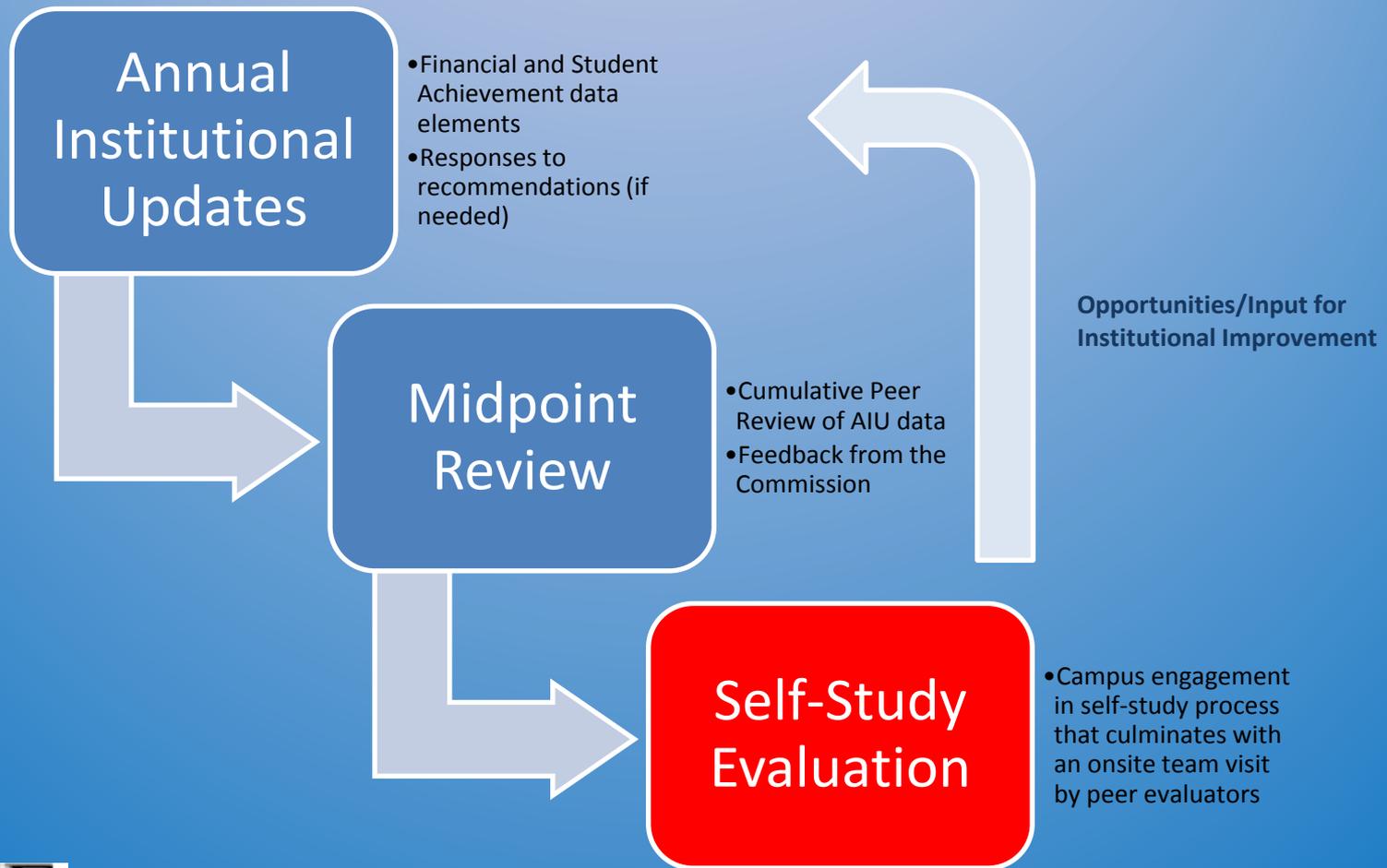
Midpoint Peer Review



Midpoint Peer Review

- Based on preceding AIUs.
 - **No PRR report** or equivalent
- **Peers** review information
- Follow-up as needed

Self-Study and Team Visit



Self-Study Evaluation

- Replaces decennial review
- Engages entire campus community
- Examines progress during past eight years
- Plans for future initiatives

Self-Study Evaluation: A Holistic Approach

- **Multiple Sources of Evidence: One Action**
 - Document Archive
 - Institutional Narrative
 - Team Visit
- Focus is on **institutional improvement**

Self-Study Evaluation Demonstrates Institutional Health

Medical Check-Up

- Clinical History
- Test Results/Blood Work
- Specialists' Consultation
- Diagnosis/Prognosis



Self-Study Evaluation

- Institutional Narrative
- Document Archive Data
- Team Visit
- Commission Action



Document Archive

- **Piloted** in CIP
- **“Resource Room”** within MSCHE Portal
 - MSCHE requested and institution-originated documents
 - May be briefly annotated to provide context
- **Useful** to multiple constituents
 - **Institution-** While developing narrative, and ongoing repository
 - **Evaluators-** Prior to and during site visit

Self-Study Narrative

- Focus is on **institutional improvement**
 - In context of the **Standards**
- **Narrative** report on **major initiatives**
 - Identified in **previous** Self-Study
 - Initiated **since** last Self-Study
 - Planned **future initiatives**

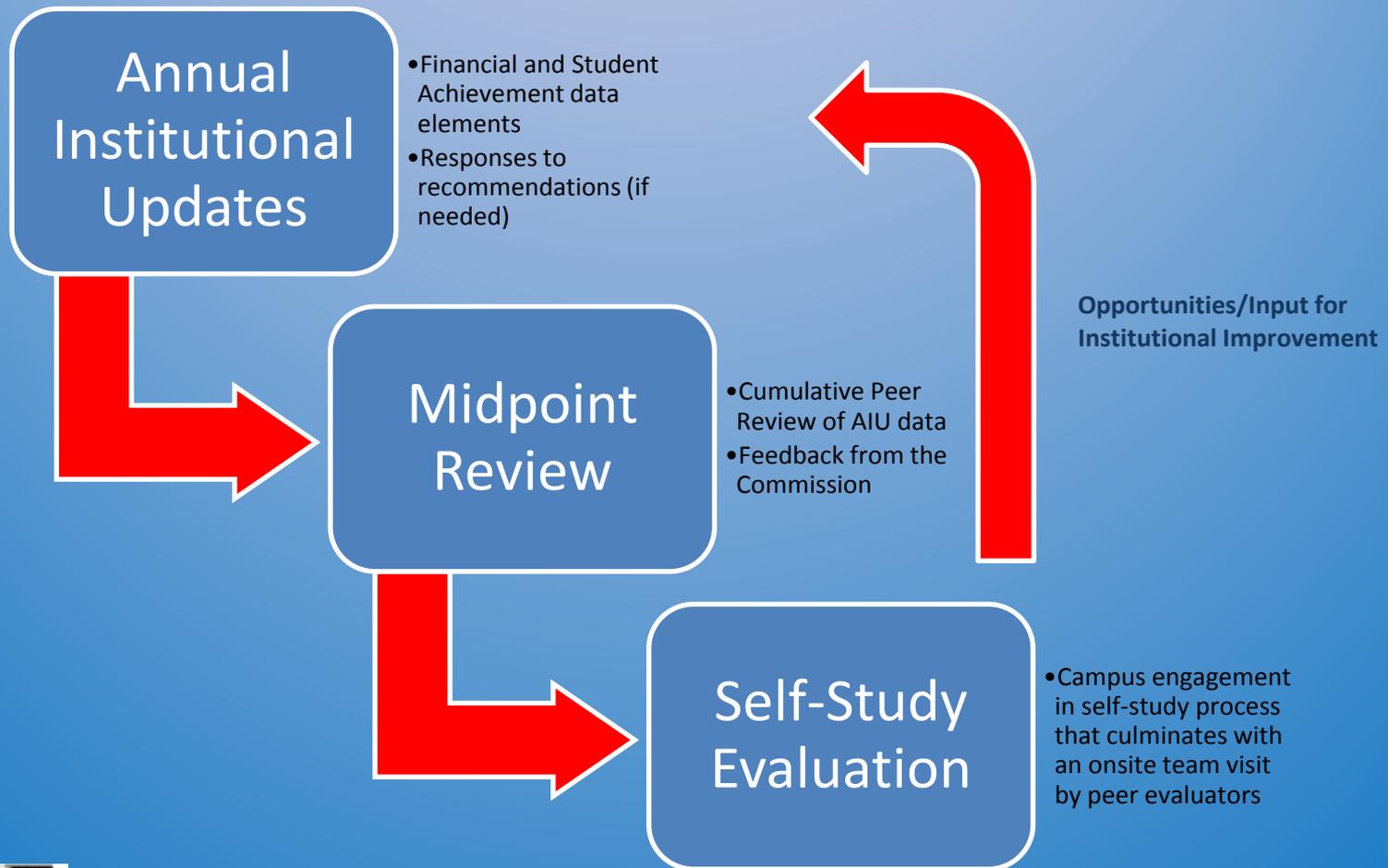
Narrative Initiatives

- **Initiatives** included in narrative will be:
 - **Identified** in Self-Study Design
 - Approved by MSCHE Liaison
 - **Broad** in scope
 - Major impact on large sectors of the institution
 - **Linked** specifically to appropriate Standards
 - Via final criterion of each Standard

Self-Study Narrative: Role of each Standard's final criterion

- In context of initiatives, **narrative** presents:
 - **What you learned** from this assessment
 - How **results informed** initiatives
 - Past, current and planned
 - Or, indicated **no initiative** needed

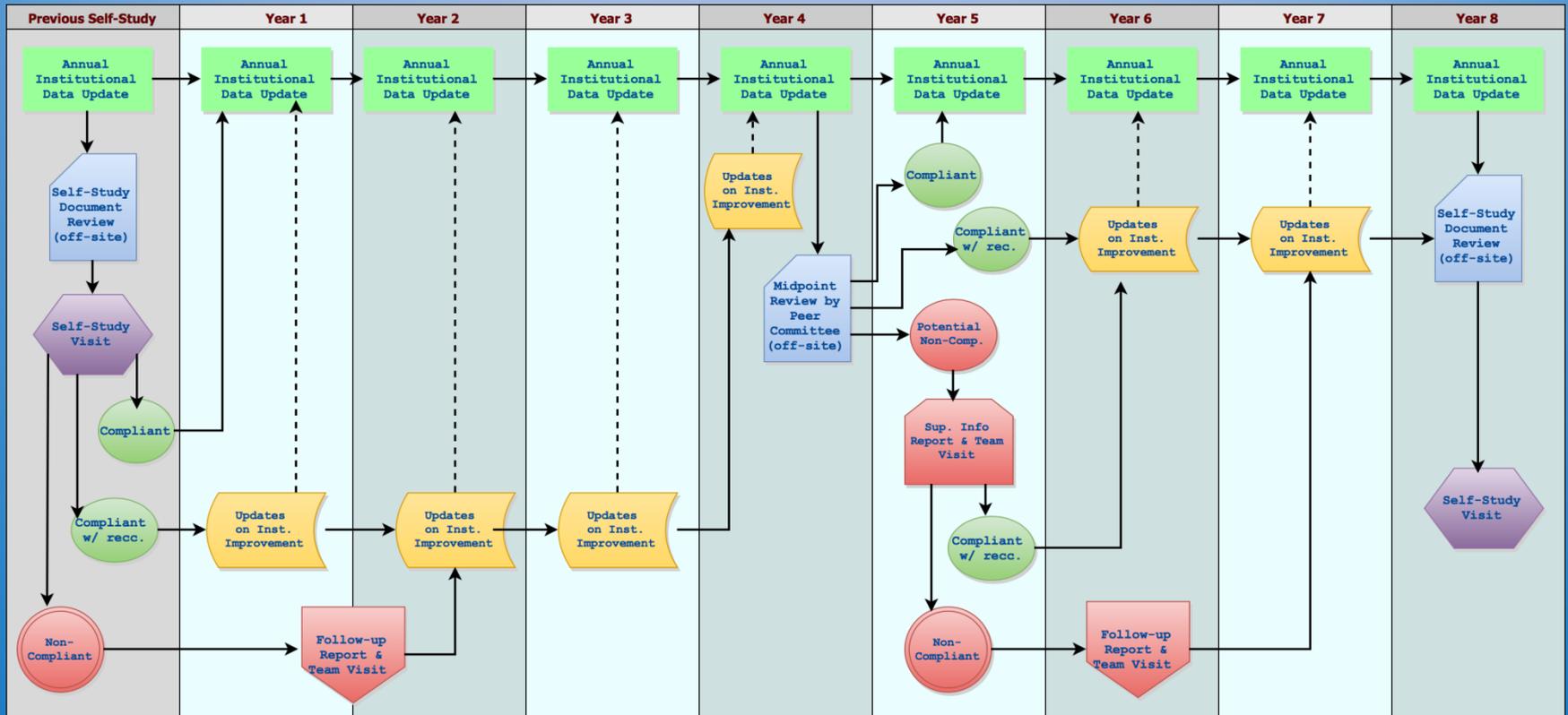
Linking Self Study Reviews



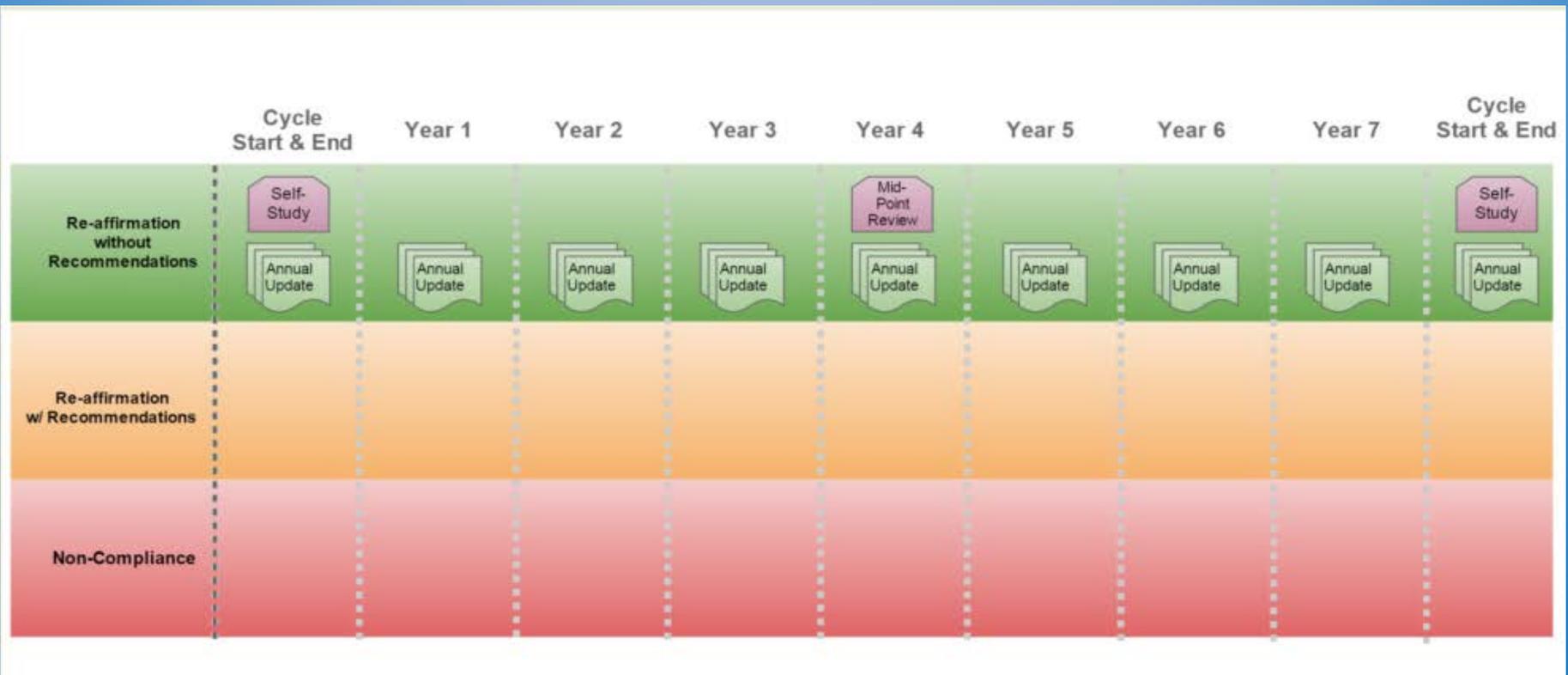
The Holistic Accreditation Cycle

- **One prominent pathway**
 - For institutions in compliance
- **Alternate pathways** when guidance is needed
 - Additional institutional improvement is sought
- Pathways for **returning to compliance**
 - Following an adverse action

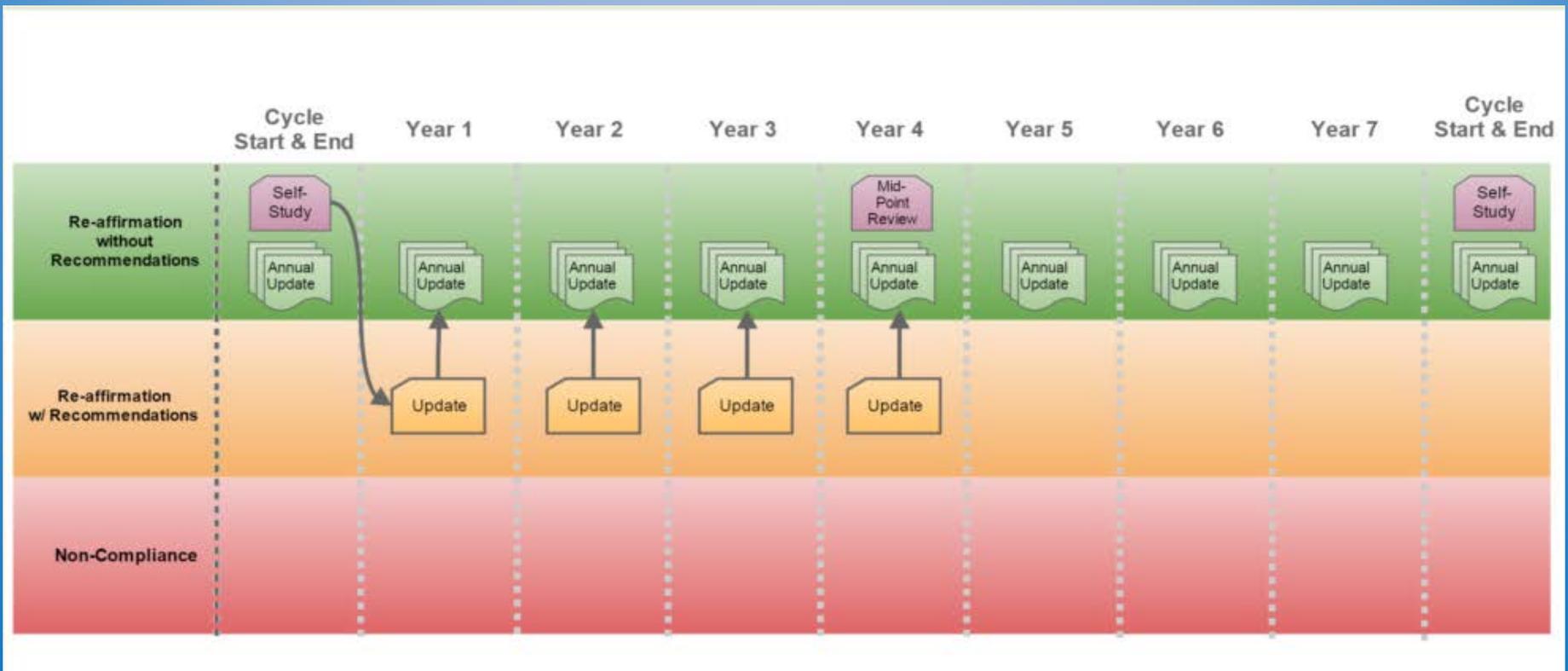
Accreditation Pathways



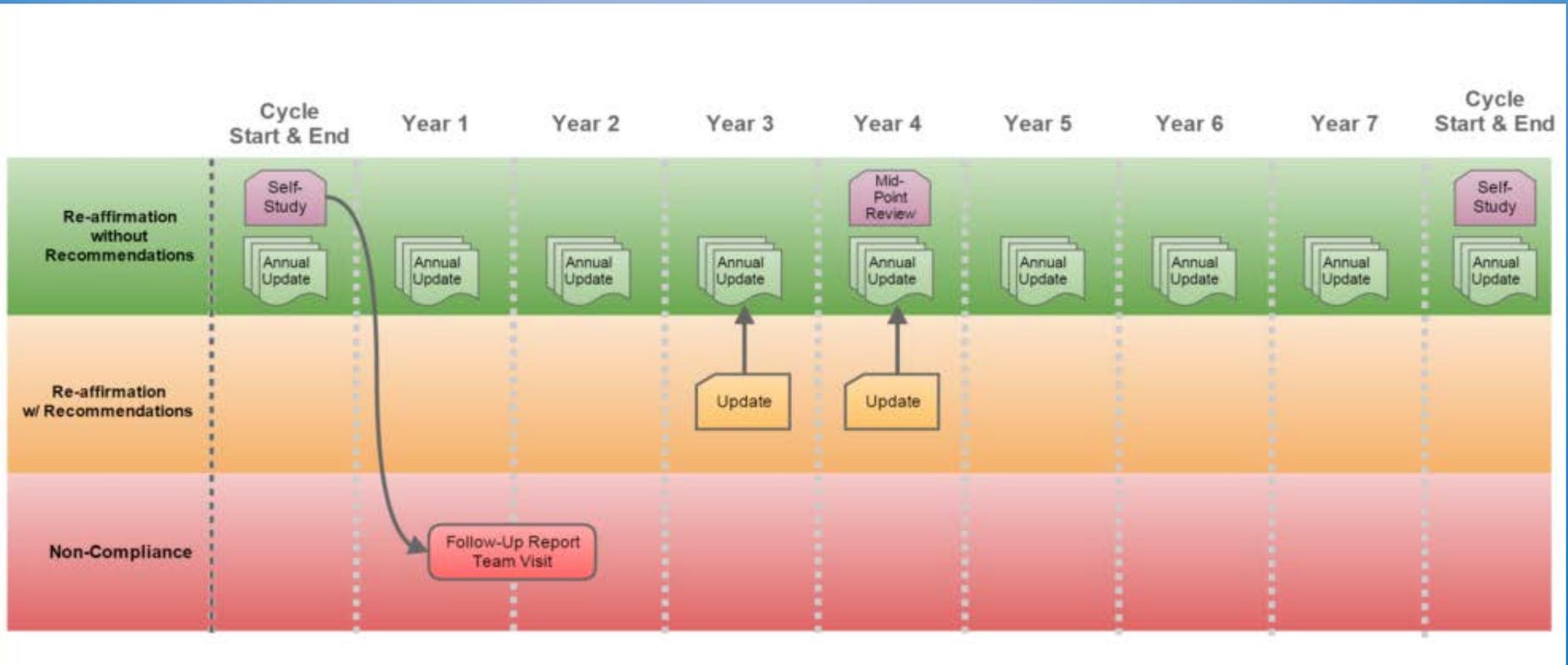
Re-Affirmation without Recommendations



Re-Affirmation with Recommendations



Non-Compliance



Timing

- Spring 2017- Institutional Profiles upload w/ minor updates
- November 2017- Training in new process for **2019-2020 cohort** institutions
- Spring 2018- Portal opens, **AIUs begin**, training available
- Summer/Fall 2018- **MPPR** conducted for 1st cohort
- June 2019- SS evaluations of last institutions under old process
- Fall 2019- Training for evaluators using new process
- June 2020- **Evaluation of 1st cohort** under new process

In Conclusion

- A **member-driven**, multi-step process has brought us to this point:
 - Assessment Task Force
 - Revision of the Standards
 - Collaborative Implementation Project
 - Process Change

The new process is at hand.

We have met these goals

- A process leading to consistent interpretation and application of the *Standards* that:
 - Enables the Commission to take **unassailable actions**;
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***Thank you for your participation
and attention!***

