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# **SACS 2010 & THE PHYSICS DEPARTMENT**

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**WHAT ARE WE DOING TO BE IN COMPLIANCE?**

**A Presentation to the  
Faculty and Staff of the  
Department of Physics**

**By**

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**PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY  
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## WHAT WE ARE HERE FOR TODAY

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PVAMU is due for consideration by SACS-COC for  
REAFFIRMATION in 2010

Reaffirmation is a vigorous, intensive process of self-examination and documentation—we not only have to state that we comply with the standards, but we also have to prove how we do it.

We, as a faculty, have a role to play.

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# WHAT IS SACS?

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- The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is the recognized regional accrediting body for institutions of higher education that award associate, baccalaureate, master's or doctoral degrees in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and in Latin America.
  - A member institution is reviewed every ten years to determine if it meets the requirements and standards for accreditation that have been established and agreed upon by member institutions.
  - Having last been reaffirmed in 2000, PVAMU's next review will take place in March 2010.
  - "SACS stands for 'Students Are Central to Success.'" - Dr. Belle S. Wheelan, President of SACS
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# THE PROCESS

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- A lot of work goes into preparing for reaffirmation.
  - There are two major areas - **Compliance** and **Quality Enhancement** - to address satisfactorily, with reports to be written and submitted for review.
  - **Compliance:**
  - PVAMU will complete an extensive internal review and produce a Compliance Certification report that provides responses to the following:
    - Core Requirements
    - Comprehensive Standards
    - Federal Requirements
  - The Commission on Colleges will provide information to determine if PVAMU fully complies with its expectations of institutional integrity and compliance with all Commission policies and reporting requirements.
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# THE PROCESS

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**Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP):** PVAMU will develop a QEP proposal that focuses on improving student learning outcomes.

The QEP must have broad-based campus involvement and must emerge from institutional planning, assessment and research.

It will address an area that clearly demonstrates PVAMU's commitment to continuous improvement of student learning.

A satisfactory QEP proposal is one of the Core Requirements for reaffirmation of accreditation.

Once the proposal has been approved, the plan will be implemented and assessed.

The institution must then provide a five-year impact report showing how the QEP has made a difference in learning outcomes for students.

This impact study will be part of The Fifth-Year Interim Report that will also address various requirements, standards and federal requirements for which continued compliance reports are essential.

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# WHAT IS A QEP?

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- The QEP describes a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses well-defined topic(s) or issue(s) directly related to enhancing student learning.
  - Student learning is defined broadly in the context of the QEP and may address a wide range of topics or issues but, in all cases, the goals and evaluation strategies need to be clearly and directly linked to improving the quality of student learning.
  - In order to ensure that the QEP is implemented, “... the institution integrates it into its ongoing planning and evaluation process.” (Excerpt from Core Requirement 2.12)
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# THE REVIEW PROCESS

## Off-Site Review

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- PVAMU will submit its Compliance Certification Report on September 10, 2009.
  - It will be thoroughly examined by a team of peer evaluators from within the Southern region.
  - This team will meet in Atlanta during November 2-5, 2009 to identify any areas in which it appears that PVAMU is not in full compliance.
  - PVAMU will have an opportunity to provide a follow-up focus report and additional documentation to address any issues identified prior to the on-site visit.
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# THE REVIEW PROCESS

## On-Site Review

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- The Quality Enhancement Plan will be submitted about 4-6 weeks before an on-site team visits the campus on March 8-9, 2010.
  - The on-site evaluators will carefully examine PVAMU's QEP proposal and will pay close attention to any areas of concern raised in the off-site committee's report and to certain federal regulations and areas of interest.
  - This committee will determine if there are areas of non-compliance and will make its report and recommendations to a Committee on Compliance and Reports of the Commission on Colleges.
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# THE REVIEW PROCESS

## COC Review

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- The Committee on Compliance and Reports will review the report of PVAMU's On-site Committee and make its recommendation to the COC Executive Council.
  - Its report goes to the full Commission on Colleges for a final decision about reaffirmation and any follow-up activities that might be required.
  - The COC will report its decision during December 4-7, 2010.
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# SACS CRITERIA

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- ❑ Reaffirmation decisions based on institution's compliance with:
    - ❑ Principles of Reaffirmation - defined as integrity and commitment to quality enhancement
    - ❑ Core Requirements (12) - compulsory for newly accredited institutions (criteria beginning with 2)
    - ❑ Comprehensive Standards (53) - elaboration of Core Requirements (criteria beginning with 3)
    - ❑ Federal Requirements (8) - need to meet for Title IV compliance (criteria beginning with 4)
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# CHALLENGING REQUIREMENTS

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## Core Requirement 2.5

The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of programs and services that:

- (a) results in continuing improvement, and
  - (b) demonstrates that the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission.
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# CHALLENGING REQUIREMENTS

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## **Comprehensive**

3.3.1 - The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.

3.4.1 - The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded (a) is approved by the faculty and the administration, and (b) establishes and evaluates program and learning outcomes.

3.5.1 - The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies.

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# CHALLENGING REQUIREMENTS

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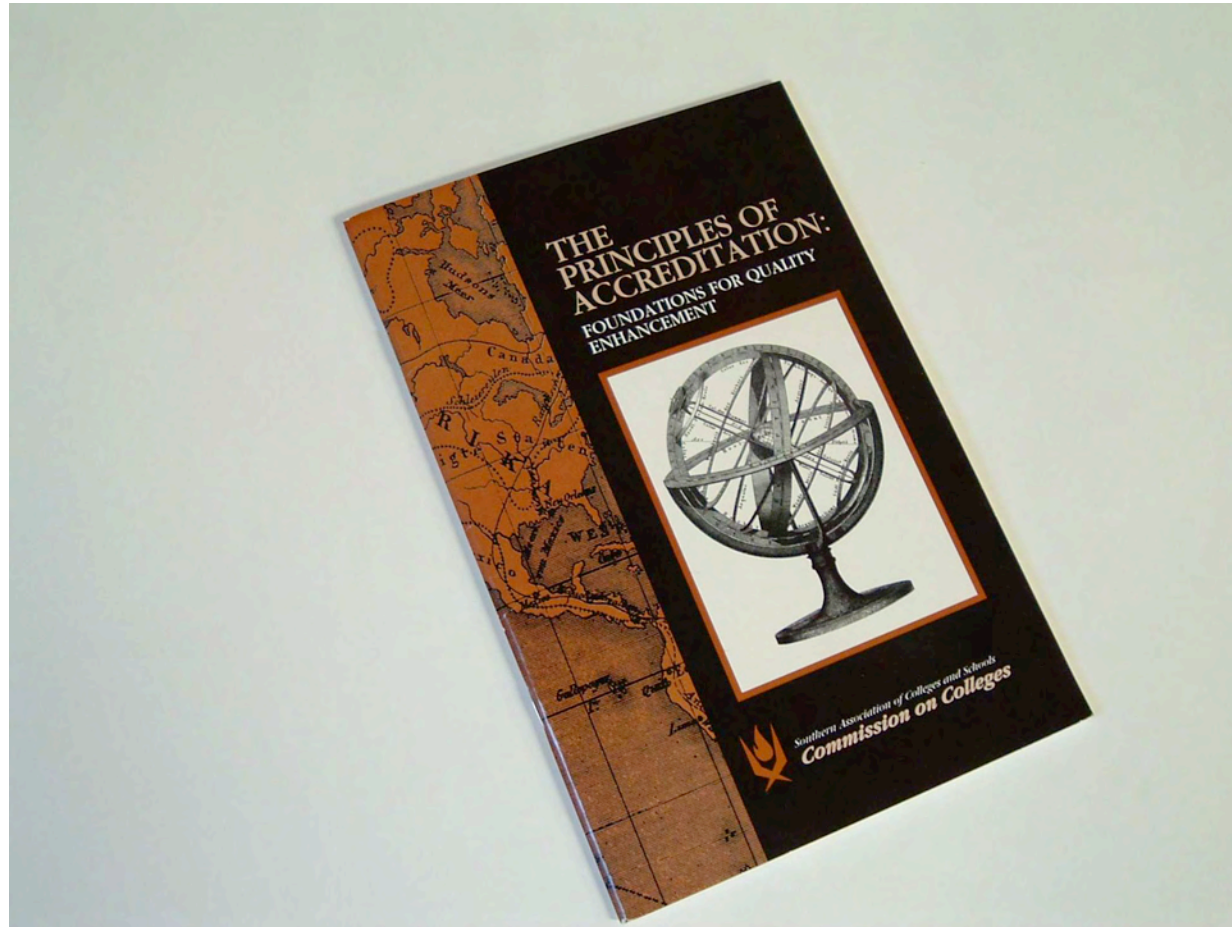
## **Comprehensive**

3.7.1 - The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline in accordance with the guidelines listed below. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.

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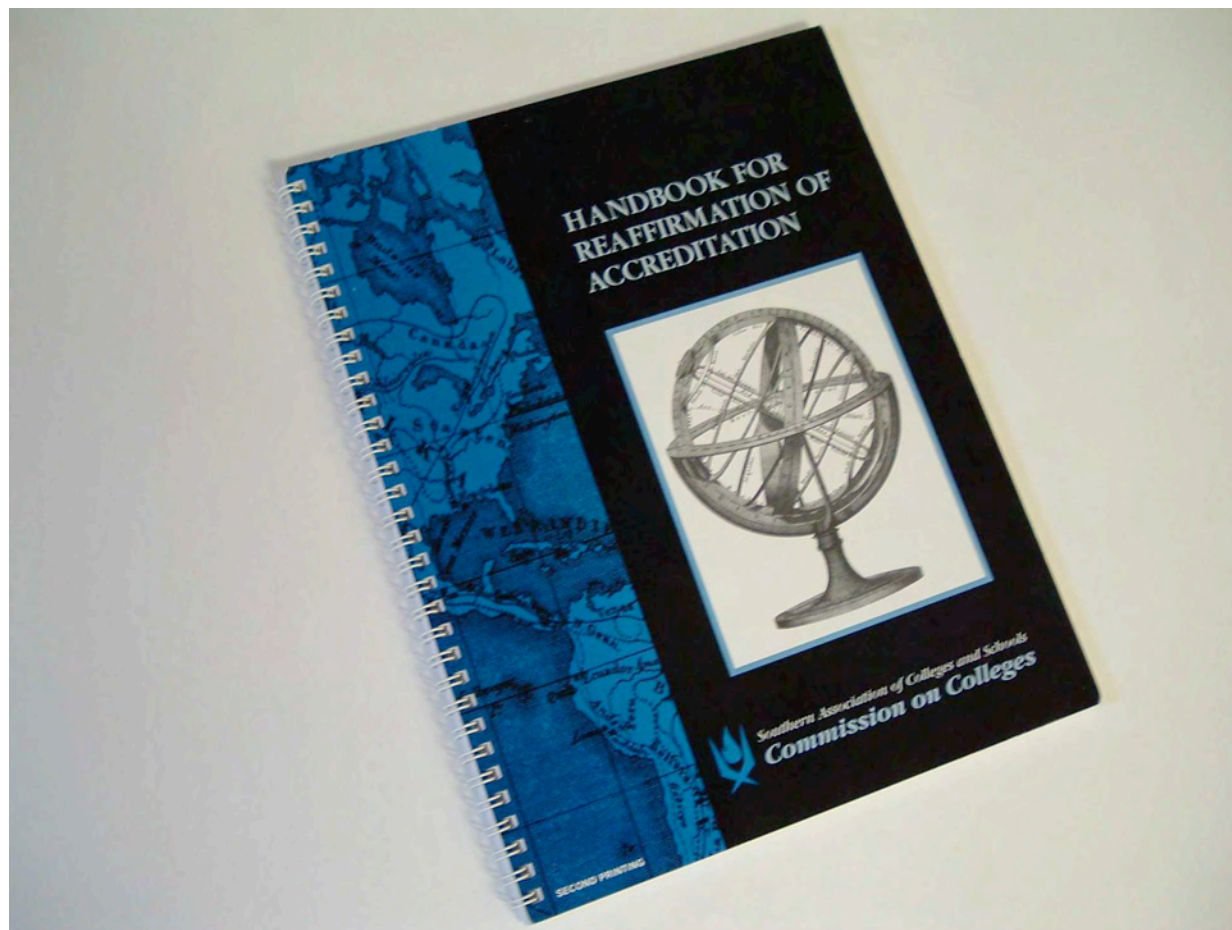
# “PRINCIPLES” DOCUMENT

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# HANDBOOK

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# WHAT WILL SACS LOOK FOR?

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- Compliance with all Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards and Federal Requirements.
  - If there is partial or non-compliance, plan for achieving compliance must be submitted
  - Compulsory compliance with Core Requirements
  - Compliance with Federal Mandates prerequisite to qualify for federal programs such as the Guaranteed Student Loan Program
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# WHAT WILL SACS LOOK FOR?

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- Institutional integrity -- including honesty in all our dealings with the Commission and with others.
  - Another key indicator of integrity is fulfillment of our mission - that we are who we say we are and do what we say we will do.
  - Quality enhancement - a concept that is at the heart of the Commission on Colleges' philosophy of accreditation.
  - There must be evidence that the institution pursues continuous improvement in both academic and administrative areas through assessment in order to achieve its institutional and program-level goals and outcomes.
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# WHAT WILL SACS LOOK FOR?

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- Focus on student learning outcomes with evidence that students know what we taught them and are prepared to demonstrate that they know.
  - Assessment of student learning outcomes in all majors at the program level, as well as in all educational support programs.
  - Findings to improve student learning.
  - Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that focuses on student learning and has broad-based support across the institution.
  - Qualified faculty with documentation (Faculty Rosters) showing they have the preparation to teach the courses to which they are assigned.
  - Financial health and other resources to support the educational programs and mission of PVAMU.
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*This  
Is  
Not  
Your  
Father's  
SACS!*

Previous Reaffirmation	Current Reaffirmation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Study Report (intensive writing) with extensive on-campus committee structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance Audit (succinct and technical) with small compliance team</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400+ prescriptive "must" statements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 Core Requirements</li> <li>• 58 Comprehensive Standards</li> <li>• 7 Federal Requirements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview-based review with onsite visiting committee of 10-20 members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidenced-based review with 2 reviews (off-site and on-site)</li> <li>• Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several follow-up reports allowed, but no interim report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited follow-ups</li> <li>• QEP impact report</li> <li>• Interim Compliance Certification</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficiencies in self-study did not affect reaffirmation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficiencies in Compliance or QEP affect reaffirmation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaccreditation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaffirmation</li> </ul>

# WHY REAFFIRMATION?

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- According to the U.S. Department of Education, “The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality.”
  - Accreditation promotes public confidence in higher education; it is pivotal in keeping institutions up to date in matters of institutional effectiveness and best practices.
  - Accreditation is required for universities to have access to federal funds, such as student aid and other federal programs. Federal student aid is only available to students if the institution or program they are attending is accredited by a recognized accrediting organization.
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# WHAT IS OUR ROLE AS FACULTY?

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- Conduct assessment of our instruction.
  - Provide documentation to support our assertions and actions.
  - Syllabi with explicit Learning Outcomes and Competencies
  - Documentation of feedback to students, improvements over previous tests, etc.
  - Writing samples
  - Project reports and presentations
  - Course Based Matrices - Taught (T), Reinforced (R), Integrated (I)
  - Examples for at least a few of T/R/I
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# WHAT IS OUR ROLE AS FACULTY?

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- Start populating True Outcomes for each course assigned to you.
  - Suggest ideas for QEP.
  - What Information Is Appropriate For The QEP?
  - Any idea that impacts student learning in and outside of the classroom at PVAMU and is consistent with PVAMU goals and mission is appropriate.
  - The idea can be as brief as a sentence or in the form of a more elaborate, supported plan.
  - One may choose to focus on the identification of weaknesses with respect to education at PVAMU or build on existing strengths.
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# A FEW EXAMPLES OF QEP TOPICS

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- Critical Thinking through First-Year Seminars - Christopher-Newport University
  - Gateways to Excellence in Math and Science (GEMS): A Quality Enhancement Plan for UT Dallas
  - Making Critical Connections, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  - Enhancing Student Academic Engagement - Nova Southeastern University
  - Learning for Civic Engagement in a Global Context - Mary Baldwin College
  - Going Further Faster: The College of Charleston First-Year Experience - College of Charleston
  - Global Learning for Engaged Citizenship - Kennesaw State University
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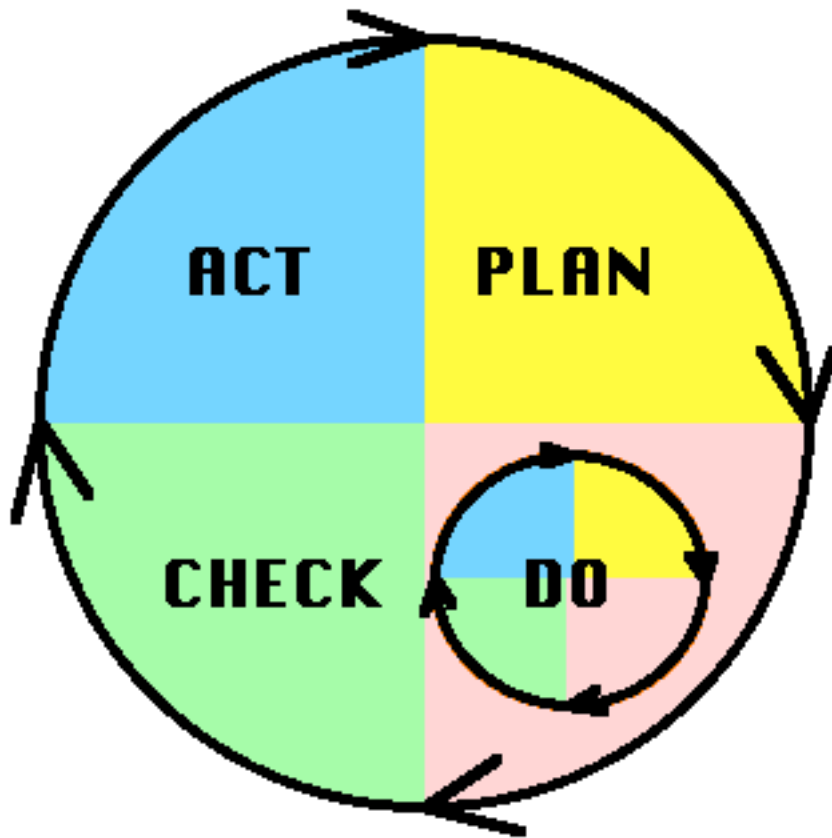
# A FEW EXAMPLES OF QEP TOPICS

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- Developing an Information Literate Student, Baylor University
  - Student engagement in learning, large lecture classes, Baylor University
  - Learning in a Technology-Rich Environment, North Carolina State University
  - First-year Seminars: Shaping Women's Voices for the Twenty-First Century - Hollins University
  - Ideas to Action: Using Critical Thinking to Foster Student Learning and Community Engagement - University of Louisville
  - Leverage Rice University's intellectual capital for the benefit of our city, our local economy, and our quality of life. - Rice University
  - "Do The Right Thing: A Campus Conversation On Ethics" - Texas Tech
  - Finding a Voice: Improving Oral and Written Competencies. University of Southern Mississippi
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# CQI - CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



**PLAN:** Design or revise business process components to improve results (individual faculty and curriculum committees)

**DO:** Implement the plan and measure its performance (review courses & program & make changes as needed)

**CHECK:** Assess the measurements and report the results to decision makers (determine effects & document)

**ACT:** Decide on changes needed to improve the process (close the loop)

## Deming/Shewhart Cycle

[http://www.balancedscorecard.org/  
TheDemingCycle/tabid/112/Default.aspx](http://www.balancedscorecard.org/TheDemingCycle/tabid/112/Default.aspx)

# FINALLY,

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- We need to complete our True Outcomes posting before Spring Break.
  - That means we have just about a week to do so.
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