



**Accreditation**

This is a necessary word for our university. Without it, our programs are not recognized and our students will not receive federal financial aid. With it, we demonstrate the quality of our institution and its programs, and our graduates receive more value for their investment. Only with accreditation can we achieve our university’s vision.



**Accreditation Process**

ETBU is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). We will be considered for “reaffirmation of accreditation” in 2009. President Dr. Bob E. Riley, Dr. J. Paul Sorrels, Mr. Richard Hutsell, Mrs. Karen Wiley, Dr. Jerry Hopkins, and Dr. John L. Harris form our Accreditation Leadership Team for SACS reaffirmation.



**Compliance Certification**

SACS has recently adopted new *Principles of Accreditation* that govern this examination. The new *Principles* require that the university provide evidence that it complies with specific Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements vital for the successful operation of accredited universities. We have established a Compliance Certification Committee, chaired by Dr. Jerry Hopkins, that will be working to evaluate our compliance and provide evidence that supports our claims.

**Quality Enhancement Plan**

SACS is a leader among regional accrediting bodies by incorporating procedures that help institutions improve the quality of student learning. The new *Principles of Accreditation* now requires each university to prepare a **Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)** as part of the reaffirmation process.



SACS describes the Quality Enhancement Plan as a “carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined issue or issues directly related to *improving student learning*.” SACS adds that the development of the

QEP must involve significant participation by the institution’s academic community. The requirement to have a QEP provides a unique opportunity for us to identify an important issue that will help to improve student learning at ETBU, and we need everybody’s input!

**QEP Topic Selection Committee and QEP Development Committee**

In order to create a QEP that addresses student learning, the QEP Topic Selection Committee, chaired by Dr. John L. Harris, was established to identify several viable QEP topics. This committee, under the direction of the Accreditation Leadership Team, will evaluate the topics and then select one for the QEP. After a topic is selected, a QEP Development Committee will be established to identify the actions needed, develop the assessment plan, construct the budget, develop and prepare the QEP for implementation, and prepare the QEP document for SACS review.



**Identifying a QEP Topic**

The immediate task of the QEP Topic Selection Committee is to identify potential QEP topics. Although we are looking at our strategic plan, student surveys, and what other universities are doing, the most important source of ideas is the ETBU community—the faculty members, students, staff members, and alumni that make ETBU what it is. To get your input, we will use

- surveys,
- focus groups,
- open meetings, and
- web and email solicitations.



Expect to see announcements about these Opportunities. Please take time to attend a session or send your ideas to the QEP Topic Selection Committee. QEP topics can include curricular as well as experiential and other activities that will improve student learning. We need to hear from YOU!

Please send your ideas for QEP topics to [QEP@etbu.edu](mailto:QEP@etbu.edu) or use the QEP website at <http://www2.etbu.edu/sacs>