



ROAD TO SACSCOC REAFFIRMATION

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025



What is Reaffirmation of Accreditation?

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' (SACSCOC) Reaffirmation of Accreditation is a comprehensive internal and external review process to ensure that member institutions maintain continuing compliance with Commission policies and with [The Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement](#).

According to SACSCOC, "At the heart of SACSCOC's philosophy of accreditation, the concept of quality enhancement presumes each member institution is to be engaged in ongoing improvement of its programs and services and be able to demonstrate how well it fulfills its stated mission. Although evaluation of an institution's educational quality and effectiveness in achieving its mission is a difficult task requiring careful analysis and professional judgment, an institution is expected to document the quality and effectiveness of all its programs and services."

Quality Enhancement Plan Update

The results are in! BCM has voted for **Career Advising and Professional Development** to be the QEP topic. The next step includes focus groups with students and faculty to inform the project development.

SACSCOC SITE VISIT SAVE THE DATE!!

While there is much work to be done between now and the SACSCOC On-site Reaffirmation Committee visit, please mark your calendars.

MARCH 24th - 26th, 2026

STANDARD SHOWCASE:

Standard of the Month

SECTION 8: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

8.1: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Standard 8.1 *The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success.*

Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) identifies, evaluates and publishes measurable goals and outcomes for student achievement that are aligned with the institution's mission, the nature of the students the institution serves, and the kinds of programs offered by annually evaluating and publishing multiple measures to document student success. With a diverse student population that includes medical, graduate, and health professional students, BCM emphasizes key student achievement criteria such as **graduation rate, retention rate, time to degree, licensing examination success rate, and job placement rate for its degree-granting programs.**

These criteria reflect BCM's commitment to producing graduates who are not only academically proficient but also well-prepared to address the healthcare needs of their community, both locally and globally. For non-degree programs, BCM uses the **completion rate** as the sole criterion for evaluating student success. In alignment with BCM's mission to further education, BCM evaluates student achievement goals for each program, including its advanced degree, certificate and diploma programs, and thus meets the standard for evaluation of student achievement.

Criteria for Student Success

For degree-granting programs at BCM, the five criteria used to evaluate student achievement are outlined in Table 8.1-1. These criteria were selected for their alignment with BCM's mission and higher education to propel graduates forward in their careers and align with regional and national benchmarks.

Table 8.1-1. Criteria for Degree-Granting Programs

Student Achievement Metric	Definition	Rationale
Graduation Rate	The percentage of students who completed their program within 100% and 150% of the published time for the program or based upon benchmarking data from peer institutions.	As a leading health sciences university dedicated to creating knowledge and applying scientific discoveries, Baylor College of Medicine recognizes the critical importance of graduation rates in ensuring that our students meet the rigorous standards of academic excellence and professional competence.

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Retention Rate	The percentage of a school's first-time, first-year students who continue at that school the next year.	By focusing on retention rates, we can identify and address the challenges that students face, ensuring they have access to the resources and support necessary to complete their studies. This commitment to student success aligns with our mission to improve healthcare outcomes locally and globally, as we prepare graduates who are well-equipped to contribute meaningfully to the field.
Time to Degree	Time in enrolled program less reported periods of non-enrollment (registered time to degree). The institutional process to derive time to degree targets is calculated as 150 percent of the program length or may alternatively be calculated to be consistent with available national or regional benchmarking data.	By monitoring and striving to minimize time to degree, we can ensure that our programs are effectively structured to support students' academic journeys. This aligns with our mission to improve health outcomes both locally and globally, as graduates who complete their programs in a timely manner can more quickly contribute to addressing the pressing healthcare needs of their communities.
Licensing Exam Success Rate	Percentage of first takers of certifying examinations who successfully pass the exam on the first attempt.	We recognize that achieving high first-time pass rates is essential for ensuring that our graduates possess the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in clinical practice and deliver high-quality healthcare.
Job Placement Rate	All students of a defined cohort employed in their field of training or related field upon graduation.	We recognize that job placement rates are a crucial indicator of our graduates' readiness to enter the workforce and their ability to meet the healthcare needs of the communities we serve.

The graduation rate data is disaggregated by demographics such as gender, race, ethnicity, citizenship, and award status for each program. The award status serves as a proxy for socioeconomic status based on financial aid status from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Analyzing graduation rates in relation to those categories is a key strategy for identifying challenges, promoting equity, and ensuring all students have the support they need to succeed.

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The structure and purpose of BCM's non-degree programs differ from that of the degree-granting programs, and thus there are different student achievement metrics tracked and assessed. For BCM's non-degree programs, which include the Diploma in Tropical Medicine (DTM), Certificate of Completion in Biomedical Sciences and Health Equity (BSHEq), Certificate of Added Qualification in Clinical Translational Research (CTR-CAQ) and Certificate of Added Qualification in Clinical Investigation (CSTP-CAQ), the criterion for student success is defined by the completion rate as shown in Table 8.1-2 below.

Table 8.1-2. Criteria for Non-Degree Granting Programs

Student Achievement Metric	Definition	Rationale
Completion Rate	The percentage of a program's registered students who fulfill the requirements for successful completion.	The completion rate directly reflects the effectiveness of the program in facilitating student success in completing all the requirements for certificate or diploma.

These standards of academic success are most relevant to BCM's mission as a health sciences university that "creates knowledge and applies science and discoveries to further education, healthcare and community service locally and globally." Furthermore, the selected criteria and thresholds of acceptability for student achievement were chosen to reflect BCM's commitment to the highest standards of excellence in education and its commitment to continuous quality improvement informed by the performance of its students. Both the criteria and the thresholds of acceptability for the student achievement data at BCM are in alignment with our mission and informed by comparative data from peer institutions, national certifying agencies and from the U.S. Department of Education, as applicable.

Procedures and Timelines

Deans and academic program leaders maintain responsibility to annually review and revise targets and thresholds of acceptability, refine benchmarks and implement action plans for their respective student achievement. Each program evaluates its outcomes using three-year rolling averages to minimize year-to-year variability. This assessment is conducted alongside national benchmarks and program-established targets to identify opportunities for continuous quality improvement. Different student cohorts are monitored for each metric to ensure that the calculations utilize the most current data available, thereby promoting data-driven decision-making. Data in the measurement areas for student success are available by the Office of the Accreditation and Education Effectiveness (OAEE) from BCM's student information system and other sources, as applicable. In collaboration with the Office of Accreditation and Education Effectiveness, the data are analyzed and disaggregated to further support the development of institutional strategies to seek improvement for at-risk student populations.

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Student achievement data from each academic program is subsequently published on the BCM education website. The annual student achievement reporting cycle and timeline is shown in Table 8.1-3 below.

Table 8.1-3. Annual Reporting Cycle and Timelines

Month	Event
April	Degree program leads share pass rate and job placement data if applicable, with Office of Accreditation and Education Effectiveness (OAE).
May	OAE prepares Student Achievement (SA) reports, updates the SA dashboards, and shares with degree programs.
June	Degree program leads review the SA report and dashboards, make reconciliations, and answer the Action Plan survey via Microsoft Form.
July	Non-degree seeking programs share completion data with OAE.
August	OAE prepares completion rate report and shares it with the non-degree program leads for review and action planning if necessary.
September	OAE updates the SA Data website and dashboards for all programs.

BCM Student Achievement Dashboards and Webpages

The Office of Accreditation and Education Effectiveness has developed interactive Power Business Intelligence Data Dashboards for the Baylor community and the public. These dashboards cover data from education programs across the College, providing access to a variety of data points and graphics related to graduation, retention, time to degree, job placement, and first-time pass rates. To access the dashboards click [here](#).

You can also find additional information regarding Student Achievement Data for each program at Baylor College of Medicine [listed](#) below:

- [M.D. Program](#)
- [Ph.D. Program](#)
- [Physician Assistant Program](#)
- [Nurse Anesthesia Program](#)
- [Master of Science, Clinical Scientist Training Program](#)
- [Orthotics & Prosthetics Program](#)
- [Genetic Counseling](#)
- [Diploma in Tropical Medicine](#)
- [Certificate of Added Qualification in Clinical Investigation](#)
- [Graduate Certificate in Biomedical Sciences and Health Equity](#)

REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION TIMELINE:

All dates subject to change throughout the process

Target Date	Accreditation Process	Quality Enhancement Plan
October 2024	SACSCOC Executive Committee Established and First Meeting SACSCOC Reaffirmation 2026 Kick-Off Review of SACSCOC narratives begins	Launch QEP Survey Recruit QEP Director
November 2024	Reaffirmation Newsletter Review of SACSCOC narratives	Review Survey Results/Analyze Comments Examine Feasibility of Topic Recruit QEP Director
December 2024	SACSCOC Annual Meeting, Austin, TX (12/7 to 12/10) Reaffirmation Newsletter Review of SACSCOC narratives	Review Survey Results/Analyze Comments Examine Feasibility of Topic
January 2025	Reaffirmation Newsletter	Engage Content Specialist Identify External review/advisory committee Recommend Topic to Executive Leadership QEP Topic Announced to BCM Community
February 2025		Determine QEP time frame for implementation and budget
March 2025		
April 2025	Leadership Review of Compliance Certificate begins	
July 2025	Compliance Certificate Draft Completed	
August 2025	Final Review of Compliance Certificate	
September 2025	Compliance Certificate Due (9/8)	QEP Summary Due (9/8)
November 2025	Site Visit Prep Off-Site Peer Review Conducted (11/4 to 11/7)	
December 2025	Site Visit Prep Mock Visit	
January 2026	Site Visit Prep Mock Visit	
February 2026	Site Visit Prep Optional Focused Report Due (2/10)	QEP Due (2/10)
March 2026	On-Site Peer Review Conducted (3/24 to 3/26)	Present and discuss QEP (3/24 to 3/26)
December 2026	Review by SACSCOC Committee Board (12/3 to 12/6)	

OUR MISSION, OUR PURPOSE

Mission: Our mission at Baylor College of Medicine is to provide guidance, support and resources to help faculty and staff create and implement effective changes while ensuring the highest quality of education for our students.

Purpose: Our purpose is to promote academic excellence and innovation through accreditation and education effectiveness. We strive to foster a culture of continuous improvement and to provide resources and support for faculty and staff to develop and implement effective educational programs that prepare students for success.

The Office of Accreditation and Education Effectiveness supports the Baylor College of Medicine education enterprise by:

- Facilitating institutional accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and monitoring ongoing compliance with SACSCOC principles of accreditation
- Providing support for program level specialized accreditation
- Coordinating ongoing assessment of educational programs and the university's quality enhancement plan (QEP)
- Conducting and reporting the results of academic program reviews
- Conducting general institutional research and data analysis
- Reporting key academic performance metrics to federal, state, and professional organizations
- Conducting general institutional research and data analysis
- Providing process expertise in the approval of substantial changes to existing programs
- Managing educational affiliation agreements, observerships, and external learners

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