To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Nancy Benziger Brown entitled "Presidential and Political Perceptions of Regional Accreditation Effectiveness and Reform." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Education.

E. Grady Bogue, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of the Graduate School

PRESIDENTIAL AND POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS OF REGIONAL ACCREDITATION EFFECTIVENESS AND REFORM

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Nancy Benziger Brown
May 1999

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ABSTRACT

Recently regional accreditation survived a major crisis during the fight over reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. The crisis revealed an apparent gulf between how political leaders and the academy perceive regional accreditation. This study, which utilized a Likert-scale questionnaire analyzed with SPSS and three open-ended questions, asked:

1) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by college presidents reveal significant variances when examined by: mission and classification of institution, experience level of the president, involvement of the president in accreditation, or by field in which the president earned his/her terminal degree?
2) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by political leaders (executive and legislative) reveal significant differences when examined by: political party affiliation; experience level; involvement in accreditation; and profession/employment?
3) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by college presidents reveal a significant variance from the perceptions of political leaders?
4) What themes emerge when presidents and legislators are given an opportunity to offer open-ended comments on regional accreditation strengths, weaknesses, and improvements?

This study focuses on the perceptions of governors, state legislators and presidents of higher education institutions in the eleven-state region of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). One of the six regional accreditation agencies, and the second oldest, SACS includes 772 accredited higher education institutions. The eleven states in the SACS region have a total of 379 legislators that serve as members of House and Senate education committees in their state.

The results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the responses of 438 college and university presidents, 83 state legislators, and five governors show that regional accreditation has the support of both presidents and political leaders. However, the political leaders are less supportive of the existing process than the presidents are, somewhat more cynical about its effectiveness, and more supportive of potential reforms. It is recommended that regional accreditation agencies increase their efforts to inform and involve political leaders and the general public, and to consider some reforms that might increase public support and trust in the process.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Accreditation is a distinctive American ideological invention that has traditionally been viewed as one of the most important means of ensuring the quality of American colleges and universities. While accreditation is one of the oldest forms of quality assurance in American higher education, and perhaps the best known, accreditation is also one of the most often criticized instruments of quality assurance and a source of lively debate in the press, both public and professional.

On the credit side of the accountability ledger, college faculty and administrators appear to generally favor accreditation as a quality control mechanism and regard the self-study element as particularly useful. Educators in other countries that have a centralized quality assurance process for higher education admire the decentralized and non-governmental character of American accreditation. On the other hand, critics note that it is expensive in terms of time and resources and operates on an overly simplistic, and some believe not very helpful, accredited/not accredited status. Those outside the academy look at two institutions comparable in mission, but with widely different perceptions of their quality, and wonder why both carry the same seal of accreditation.

In the 1990's, accreditation has received a great deal of public and professional scrutiny, far more than in the preceding century. Even those civic and political

associates who support higher education have become more critical. In addition, a lively dissent has emerged within the academy on the effectiveness and reform of accreditation. As Charles Cook of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges remarked, " 'As late as five or six years ago, accreditation was a given...Nobody understood it, but nobody much criticized it either. All that has changed' " (Weiss, 1993, p. A17).

College presidents are among those who best understand accreditation, but do they share a vision of how it should develop and demonstrate quality? There is some evidence of differences in perception. In the past, legislators and other political leaders have relied on accreditation to assure quality, but is that confidence in this traditional instrument now waning? This study documents opinions of two key groups of players in regional accreditation and suggests some ideas that may contribute to the enhancement of this traditional and widely valued instrument of quality assurance. The study also looks at perceptions of some major new approaches to quality assurance in colleges and universities that are at some distance in philosophy and method from those of traditional accreditation.

In the past several years, dissension among those most concerned with accreditation has created uncertainty at the national level as the primary coordinating organization, the Council of Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA), was disbanded amidst criticisms of its ineffectiveness. The National Policy Board, whose reform proposals were rejected, first filled the vacuum left open by COPA's demise in 1993.

Then in May 1996, as *Higher Education and National Affairs* reported, "College presidents, regardless of the type and size of institution they represent, overwhelmingly supported a proposal to develop a new accreditation oversight organization," the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) (p. 2). However, little is yet known about CHEA.

Meanwhile, American businesses have intensified their quest for quality. Initiatives that originated in the corporate sector, such as Total Quality Management, and incentives, such as the Malcolm Baldridge Award, have been transported in philosophy and methodology to the halls of higher education. Some friends and critics are suggesting that these tools, and perhaps rankings and ratings such as those found in annual issues of *U. S. News and World Report*, may be more effective in the cause of quality than the professional backscratching they associate with accreditation. Thus, there are serious perceived differences of opinion within higher education and between higher education and those in the civic and corporate sectors about the effectiveness of this traditional instrument of quality assurance and about how it might be improved.

Accreditation at a Crossroads

As a result, accreditation is at a crossroads, according to Robert Glidden (1996). Glidden was reacting, in part, to the crisis of the reauthorization of the 1965 Higher Education Act. Glidden (1996) notes that at that time "Congress exhibited little confidence in accreditation's ability to handle fraud or deal with institution's demonstrating excessive student loan default rates. There was general confusion in

the Congress about what accreditation does, how it works, and whether it is effective" (p. 22-23). While Glidden only mentions members of Congress, state legislators are also perceived as having little faith in accreditation as a quality assurance tool.

The immediate crisis was averted. Congress authorized state review entities, known as State Postsecondary Review Entities or SPREs, in the 1992 reauthorization bill, but never funded the agencies. The fallout continued, however. The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) was disbanded in 1993 after withdrawal of the regional accreditation agencies, which blamed COPA for not preventing the crisis on Capitol Hill. An attempt at broader reform by the National Policy Board failed. Finally, a group of college and university presidents agreed on the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), which was approved by a vote of presidents of degree-granting institutions in the United States in 1996.

Purpose and Research Questions

There is still a great deal of concern about accreditation. The purpose of this study is to explore four questions related to the perceptions of political leaders and the perceptions of presidents of colleges and universities about accreditation as an effective quality assurance tool:

1) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by college presidents reveal significant variances when examined by: mission and classification of institution, experience level of the president,

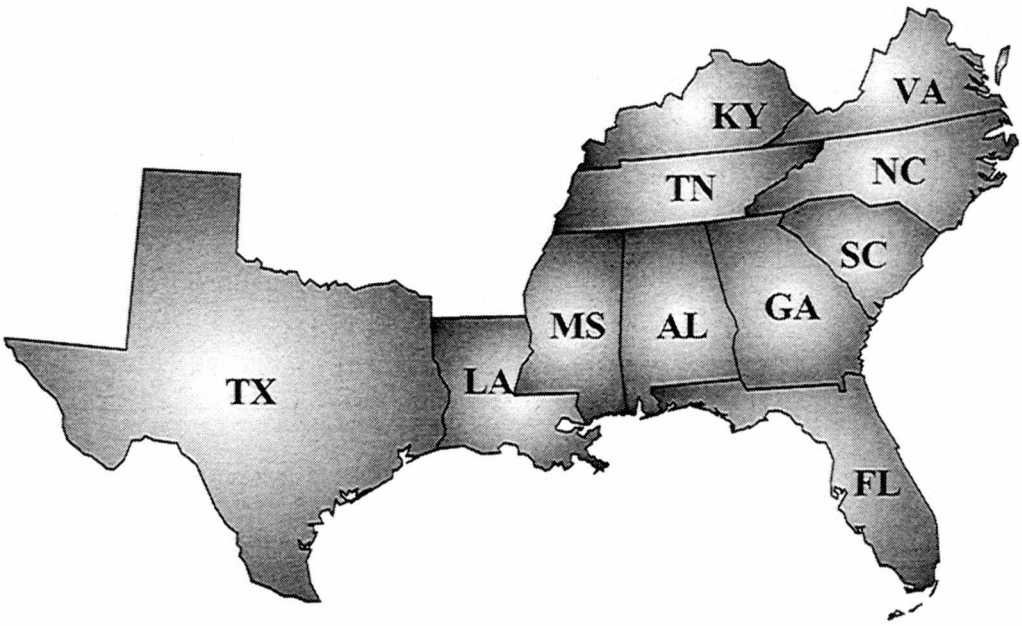
involvement of the president in accreditation, or by field in which the president earned his/her terminal degree?

2) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by political leaders (executive and legislative) reveal significant differences when examined by: political party affiliation; experience level; involvement in accreditation; and profession/employment?

3) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by college presidents reveal a significant variance from the perceptions of political leaders?

4) What themes emerge when presidents and legislators are given an opportunity to offer open-ended comments on regional accreditation strengths, weaknesses, and improvements?

This study focuses on the perceptions of governors, state legislators and presidents of higher education institutions in the eleven-state region of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), shown in Figure 1.1. One of the six regional accreditation agencies, and the second oldest, SACS currently includes 769 accredited higher education institutions. The eleven states in the SACS region have 1,785 elected legislators; a total of 379 of these legislators serve as members of House and Senate education committees in their state. These legislators were selected for the study, along with the governors of the 11 states, because it is assumed that they have



State	Higher Education Institutions	Members of the Education Committee
Alabama (AL)	55	23
Florida (FL)	70	48
Georgia (GA)	79	34
Kentucky (KY)	48	31
Louisiana (LA)	30	19
Mississippi (MS)	35	44
North Carolina (NC)	115	59
South Carolina (SC)	49	36
Tennessee (TN)	64	26
Texas (TX)	154	20
Virginia (VA)	70	39
TOTAL	**769**	**379**

Figure 1.1 Higher education institutions and state legislators on House and Senate Education Committees in SACS states

the most interest in, and knowledge of, accreditation.

Defining Accreditation

A search of the World Wide Web in the fall of 1998 using InfoSeek uncovered over 220,000 references to accreditation. While the majority of references are to education or education entities, and many think of accreditation as an education term, there are a number of other applications of the concept of accreditation. For instance, the word is used in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* for the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (1993) and other government agencies use the term "accredited individual investor" (p. 1). Many financial and investment publications refer to accredited investors or accredited finance providers.

Accreditation, therefore, has several meanings. In *Webster's New College Dictionary* (1996) the first definition is "to bring into credit or favor " followed by "to authorize: give credentials to [an accredited representative]" and "to believe in: take as true" (p. 9). "To certify as meeting certain set standards [colleges may be accredited by a regional organization]" is the fourth definition.

Orlans (1975) believes that "Whatever else 'accredited' may mean, two points stand out in both its lay and technical usage: (1) to be 'accredited' is a good thing; it betokens a commendable and meritorious, not opprobrious, status; and (2) the status is assigned by some other party or parties; it is not self-assumed" (pp. 1-2). However, he questions the independence of accreditation when it is conferred by a newly formed group that accredits its own members.

Most authors, such as Orlans (1975), believe that ideally accreditation is a voluntary process which includes a self-study along guidelines established by an accrediting agency, a site visit by a team of peer evaluators, and a decision by an accrediting agency. CHEA (1996) does not stress the voluntary nature of accreditation, but agrees that the self-study, peer review, and commission decision are the three major accreditation activities. Chambers (1979) calls the self-study the "central genius of accreditation" (p. 32).

Barber (1990) adds that the characteristics of accreditation are, in addition to its voluntary and self-regulating nature, its evaluation component, and its "primary concern for quality" (p. 5), which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2. CHEA (1996) places judgement of quality first in its list of characteristics of accreditation, and includes quality assurance for the public:

- Accreditation involves judgments of quality and effectiveness of an institution/program against a set of expectations (standards, criteria).
- Accreditation is a form of non-governmental self-regulation as contrasted to compliance to state and/or federal rules, regulations, and codes.
- Accreditation is grounded in the institution's or program's mission, history, and sense of purpose.
- Accreditation acknowledges and respects the autonomy and diversity of institutions and programs.

- Accreditation provides assurance to the public that accredited institutions and programs meet or exceed established public expectations (standards) of quality.
- Accreditation is the responsibility of an external commission.
- Faculty involvement is essential to valid accreditation.
- Accreditation is conducted on a cyclic basis, usually 5-10 years. Shorter cycles are used when serious problems are noted.
- Accreditation recently has emphasized student learning and development as an important criterion of effectiveness and quality (p. 1).

Bogue and Sanders (1992) endorse Kell's 1983 definition of accreditation as "a status granted to an educational institution...that has been found to meet or exceed stated criteria of educational quality" (p. 443). This study will use that definition and a slight modification of Selden's (1960) classic definition of accreditation as "the process whereby an organization or agency recognizes a college of university...as having met certain pre-determined qualities or standards" (p. 5). Since this study does not deal with specialized or program accreditation, the words referring to specialized accreditation in both definitions are omitted.

Other significant terms in this study include:

1) *Carnegie classification* - a category of degree-granting colleges and universities by type of institution: research university (awarding bachelor's, master's and 50 or more doctoral degrees), doctorate-granting university (awarding bachelor's,

master's, and 40 doctoral degrees in 3 or more disciplines), comprehensive university/college (awarding bachelor's and master's degrees), baccalaureate/ liberal arts college (awarding bachelor's degrees), associate of arts college (awarding associate's degrees); and specialized institution (bachelor's to doctoral degrees in a single discipline).

2) *College* - a two-year or four-year degree-granting higher education institution.
3) *Higher education institution* - a college or university
4) *Legislator* - a member of a state legislature.
5) *University* - the highest level degree-granting institution, often with one or more undergraduate colleges, along with graduate and professional schools awarding bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.

In short, accreditation is an evaluation and quality assurance process for educational institutions. Typically, every ten years an institution completes a self-study, and subsequently hosts a team of peer evaluators from institutions with similar missions. These peer evaluators are responsible for determining whether the institution meets the published standards or criteria required for an institution to hold "accredited" status. An accredited institution can have its course credits and degree credentials recognized by other schools, gain access to federal funds, operate as a corporate entity in a state (a consumer protection requirement in many states), and attract students who desire a quality education.

There are two major forms of accreditation: regional and specialized. Regional accreditation examines the entire institution. Program or specialty field accreditation focuses on a specific program or field of study, such as engineering, law, education, medicine, nursing, or planning, and is conducted primarily by a professional organization. This study focuses entirely on regional or institutional accreditation, though some issues concerning the relationship between institutional and specialized or program accreditation are briefly discussed.

While scholars have not concerned themselves with detailed discussions of theories of accreditation, there are several theories that provide an insight into accreditation. Institutional accreditation can be considered specifically in relationship to two different types of theories: theories of quality and theories of evaluation. The quality theories discussed by Bogue (1998) and the evaluation theories of Worthen, Sanders and Fitzpatrick (1997) are particularly useful. One doctoral dissertation by Afshar (1991) posited an attributive theory of quality to develop tools for accreditation. However, it is not applicable to this study.

Limitations/Delimitations

This study is limited to the 11 states in the SACS region. There are five other regions and five regional agencies across the United States that have different criteria for accreditation and different political realities. While this study may be expanded to other regions, the SACS region is the first region to be examined.

Only legislators who serve on House and Senate Education Committees in the 11 SACS states were asked to participate in the study. Dr. John Sheb of the University of Tennessee Social Science Research Center indicated that these legislators were most likely to respond to a questionnaire on regional accreditation, and that other legislators were very unlikely to respond. However, there may be other legislators who have an interest in and/or experience with regional accreditation who were excluded from the study. Also, the legislators on the House and Senate Education committees may not reflect the full range of opinion of legislators.

Outline of the Study

The next chapters will explore the history and development of regional accreditation, the methodology of this study, and the results of a large number of responses from college presidents, governors and state legislators in the SACS region. Finally, concluding thoughts will focus on what the results of this study mean for the future of accreditation. Will it remain at a crossroads or will it pursue a path that will bring it into higher esteem, not only with educators, but also with political leaders and the general public?

Chapter 2

ACCREDITATION: HISTORY AND LITERATURE

Accreditation is over 100 years old. Over the past century it has matured and adapted, as it has been used as a tool to achieve a number of different purposes. This chapter will examine: the history of regional accreditation; theories related to accreditation; and literature that concerns accreditation, especially literature related to the purposes of accreditation, and accreditation critiques and suggested reforms.

Historical Precedents and the Development of Regional Accreditation

The history of educational accreditation has been recounted many times. However, it is useful to review the history to determine the original purpose of accreditation; to understand how accreditation grew and developed; and to grasp how, why, and when various roles were assigned to accreditation.

Until the 1900's there was not a clear distinction between a secondary school and a college. No standards for post-secondary training existed, even for professions such as medicine. While other countries had education ministries that enforced national standards, the Federal government in the United States maintained a distance from education, including higher education. In accordance with the Constitution, which did not specifically assign education to the Federal government, education was viewed as a state responsibility. State governments chartered universities but there was little other involvement and there were no restrictions on establishing colleges.

However, as early as 1787, the Board of Regents of the State of New York was directed to visit each college each year. While Young (1983) disagrees with Selden (1960) that the Board of Regents was the first accrediting body, visiting colleges was certainly an initial step in examining the quality of higher education institutions.

The earliest American colleges offered a common curriculum oriented towards religious subjects, such as ancient languages, and most early institutions were established to prepare the clergy. Reflecting the American value of separation of church and state, as Bender notes (1960), American colleges were governed by independent boards of trustees. The famous Dartmouth decision in 1819 clearly established the independence of the trustees, their freedom from government control, and the "inviolability of the corporate charter" (Bender, 1960, p. 271).

Prior to the 20th century, states funded public higher education but restricted their consumer protection role to licensing occupations, rather than accrediting institutions. As Bogue and Saunders (1992) note, individuals and not institutions are licensed or certified. In the 19th century, there was one major departure from the absence of a Federal initiative in higher education. In 1862 the Land-Grant or Morrill Act established land-grant higher education institutions; a second Land-Grant College Act was passed in 1890 to support African-American institutions. Since four-fifths of the pre-Civil War colleges had disappeared, the Morrill Act helped fill a significant void. In addition, the land grant colleges and state universities "represented the

growing philosophy of higher education for everyone who qualified and not merely for the well-born and the professionally inclined" (Selden, 1960, p. 25).

Selden (1960) notes that "as a result of a singular combination of social forces, [accreditation] has developed in the United States in marked contrast to the system employed in all other countries of the world" (p. xv). These social forces included the rapid growth in industry and subsequent ills, a belief in capitalism and individualism, and reform movements such as populism and progressivism, according to Young (1983). Another influence was the American belief in *laissez-faire*.

By the second half of the 19th century, higher education was a growth industry. Major universities, such as the Johns Hopkins in 1873 and the University of Chicago in 1890, were established during this time. John Hopkins was the first of many American institutions that were influenced by the example of the University of Berlin, which was founded in 1810 with government support and under government control, and "epitomized the new emphasis on scholarship, research, and pure knowledge" (Selden, 1960, p. 11).

During the same time period, a number of what would prove to be less reputable institutions, especially medical schools, were established. The crisis in higher education was exacerbated by rapidly expanding technology, which created new knowledge, and the move from a classical curriculum for all students to the elective system, introduced at Harvard between 1882 and 1910. Not only were standards lacking, but also standardization was also rapidly disappearing.

To compound the problem, as Orlans (1975) indicates, the term "college" was not clearly defined. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, founded in 1905, essentially solved the problem by adopting the legal definition developed by the New York Board of Regents, which defined a college as having a minimum of six full-time professors, four years of coursework, an admission requirement equivalent to four years of high school, and a minimum amount of financial support from taxes or an endowment. The Carnegie Foundation also oversaw the ground breaking Flexner report, which was the first major evaluation of medical schools. Published in 1910, the report led to "a sharp reduction in the number of medical schools and particularly of proprietary and part-time night schools, that were shamed and starved into closing or merging and affiliating with universities" (Orlans, 1975, p. 12).

As a result of the public's concern about distinctions between secondary and higher education, as well as complaints about shoddy institutions and concerns about competitors, educators were forced to take action. The initial purpose of accreditation, therefore, was to provide a minimum standard of quality in higher education for the protection of consumers (Davies 1987). From Selden's (1960) perspective, accreditation, like many other movements of the time, essentially began as a reform movement. Since the states and Federal government remained relatively aloof, independent organizations of college faculty and administrators began to take

responsibility for ensuring that students received an adequate education for their investment, and that the public was assured of qualified graduates and practitioners.

Professionals also responded to public concerns. Formed in 1847, the American Medical Association (AMA) began accrediting medical schools in 1906. The AMA was the force behind the 1910 Flexner report, which effectively dealt with problems in medical education. An ever-increasing number of accrediting agencies in a wide range of professional fields such as engineering, nursing, education, and the health occupations subsequently developed to assure quality in professional fields. While the history of professional accreditation will not be discussed, it presents its own group of contemporary challenges and concerns.

Regional Accreditation Associations

In 1885 the first of six regional education associations, the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, was formed (Andersen, 1978; Bemis, 1983). Ten years later, in 1895, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) was established. In 1917 SACS became the second regional association to introduce accrediting standards for colleges and universities. Andersen (1978) describes the history of the other regional associations that followed:

- the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, founded in 1887 as the College Association of Pennsylvania;
- the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, also founded in 1895;
- the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, established in 1917; and

- the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in 1962, which began as a discussion group in 1924 and became an accrediting body in 1948.

Although the New England Association was the first regional association, it did not begin to accredit institutions until 1952. While these regional accreditation associations also deal with K-12 education, this study focuses only on their role in higher education.

Other activities that impacted the development and quality of higher education institutions and students in the early 1900's include the founding of the College Entrance Examination Board in 1900, the Association of American Universities in 1900, and the Association of American Colleges in 1914, and the opening of the first permanent junior college in 1901. These and other significant events related to accreditation in the United States are listed in Appendix A.

During this time the accreditation movement had its critics as well as its supporters. As Young (1983) indicates, Samuel Capen, Chancellor of the University of Buffalo, was one of the earliest and best-known critics of accreditation. In 1939 he delivered a speech entitled "Seven Devils in Exchange for One" that characterized accreditors as irresponsible outsiders with selfish individual interests.

After World War II one of the most significant events affecting the role of accreditation occurred in 1952 when, as Orlans (1975) notes, the U.S. Office of Education began to require that higher education institutions be accredited to receive funding under the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act, better known as the GI bill.

This rather large carrot seriously compromised the voluntary nature of accreditation. The National Commission on Accrediting was established three years earlier in 1949, the first attempt to "guard the guardians." One of what Orlans (1975) called "Two Bears in a Cage," the National Commission on Accrediting and the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE), which was formed in 1964 from the National Committee of Regional Accrediting Agencies, merged in 1975 to form the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). COPA included both regional and professional accrediting agencies. One of COPA's chief roles was in stemming the proliferation of specialized accrediting agencies. In this role, the national agency was attempting to guard the institutions from would be guardians for the rapidly expanding professions.

COPA lasted 18 years. As CHEA notes in its online reference, *A Chronology of Accreditation: Events leading to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation* (http:www.chea.org/perspective/history/htm), in 1993 the regional associations withdrew their support from COPA and it disbanded. The regional associations were very angry at COPA's failure to protect them from the Federal government's attempt to establish State Postsecondary Review Entities (SPRE's) in the 1992 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Congress, upset over high default rates on student loans, authorized a program that would have introduced oversight of higher education by state and Federal governments (DeLoughry, 1991b). Atwell (1994), for instance, called the changes "an unprecedented and unwarranted structure of state oversight of

higher education" (p. 10). Following a storm of protest from educators the legislation was modified. Although revised legislation was enacted, the SPREs were de-authorized in 1994 and their Federal funding was eliminated. The regional associations' dissatisfaction with COPA's failure to protect accreditation led to the demise of COPA in 1993.

Seeking to fend off further governmental involvement, leaders in higher education and accreditation formed the National Policy Board on Higher Education Institutional Accreditation (NPB) after COPA disbanded. The NPB not only looked for means of salvaging accreditation, it examined potential reforms of accreditation and proposed an organization, the Higher Education Accreditation Board, that would oversee the regional agencies as well as the specialized accrediting agencies. However, the NPB proposal was defeated, along with a revised proposal in 1995 for an Accreditation Coordinating Council.

A Presidents Work Group finally developed a successful proposal to establish a Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) that was submitted to all college presidents in 1996. A total of 54 percent of higher education institutions in the United States voted on the CHEA proposal. Of those colleges that voted, 94 percent of them approved of the proposal to establish CHEA. According to the American Council on Education (1996), support was consistent despite the type of college, but not the region. Colleges in the New England region, which did not endorse the proposal, had the lowest percentage of votes to approve CHEA. Schools in the

Western association region, which did not take a position on the proposal, also had a lower approval percentage.

Today accreditation is familiar to many within academia, but little except its existence is known about it outside academia. That may well be one of the challenges of CHEA, especially as the failure to inform and educate the public about accreditation was at least partially responsible for the downfall of COPA. Through the years accreditation has evolved into a series of well known and accepted steps. While the steps are generally followed by all accrediting agencies, during the past 100 years the purposes and roles as well as the process of accreditation have undergone a number of changes. Some history has been written about, but little research has focused on, these changes.

Analysis and Theory

While accreditation is a century old, it has been little analyzed, especially from a theoretical perspective. There is only one existing quantitative study that addresses attitudes toward regional accreditation. In 1991 Waggener, Souterland, and Leonard published the results of a study of SACS entitled "College Presidents' Attitudes toward the Importance of Regional Accreditation." Waggener et al. focused on "the relationship of interpersonal values to each president's view of accreditation" (p. 1). Their study indicated that fifty percent (50%) of respondents felt that accreditation would be very important in the future, and that their perceptions were not related to their personal values.

Along with the lack of quantitative analysis is a lack of theory related analysis. However, an examination of the literature reveals several theories that can contribute to a broader understanding of accreditation, and one theoretical framework that is directly related to accreditation.

Bogue (1998) discusses three theories of quality that can be applied to higher education:

1) Limited supply. Quality is a limited commodity, like a prize that can only be won by a few higher education institutions that are selective, and have a high level of resources. Bogue (1998) quotes Wilson's familiar statement that "Excellence, by definition, is a state only the few rather than the many can attain" (p. vii) as an example of this theory. Rankings and ratings are another example.
2) Quality within mission. Quality can be achieved by any institution that fulfills its mission. A mission is defined by an individual institution. According to this theory, a community college could achieve quality, as well as an institution with a national reputation for scholarship, research, and outstanding graduates.
3) Value-added. Astin is a proponent of what he terms the "talent development" definition of excellence. Students who increase their knowledge while being educated and improve their skills have developed their talents. While resources and teaching contribute to talent development, the bottom line is the betterment of the student. A related idea is the concept that students should meet the needs of

prospective employers. Higher education, in this view, should serve a public good of preparing students to be productive members of society.

While the first two theories are in conflict, the third theory of talent development can be accommodated with either of the other theories of quality related to accreditation. Accreditation has traditionally focused on quality within mission, but accreditation has recently incorporated performance assessment, which is more closely related to the idea of value-added.

It is clear that quality is an important aspect of accreditation, but accreditation is also an evaluation tool. Worthen, Sanders and Fitzpatrick (1997) suggest that there are six types of evaluation:

1) Objectives-oriented. The goal is to decide whether the specified goals and objectives have been reached.
2) Management-oriented. The goal is to provide information for better management of a program.
3) Consumer-oriented. The goal is to help consumers be informed and make better choices.
4) Expertise-oriented. Judgement and expertise are used to judge quality.
5) Adversary-oriented. Different perspectives are deliberately used to make judgements.
6) Participant-oriented. Those being evaluated are directly involved in shaping the evaluation.

Accreditation, according to Worthen et al. (1997) is a type of expertise-oriented evaluation.

Worthen et al. (1997) picture evaluation as a continuum of approaches ranged from utilitarian evaluation approaches, such as objectives-oriented and management-oriented evaluation, and intutionist-pluralist approaches, such as naturalistic and participant-oriented evaluation. On their continuum, expertise-oriented evaluation lies halfway between utilitarian and intuitionist-pluralist approaches. They believe that expertise-oriented evaluation depends "primarily on the direct application of professional expertise to judge the quality of whatever endeavor is being evaluated" (p. 78).

In their view, accreditation was the first formal use of expertise-oriented evaluation. They believe that it has been important in encouraging institutional change, although they also feel that accrediting agencies have little real power. For Worthen et al. (1997), reliance on expert judgement can be regarded as both a strength and a weakness. For instance, they regard the thoroughness of accreditation and the self-study process as major strengths. Together with the site visit, they see the process as providing both formative and summative evaluations.

However, Worthen et al. (1997) also perceive accreditation as having "nontrivial drawbacks" such as: a lack of distinction between the importance of different issues in an accreditation self-study and evaluation; excessive rigidness of the

process that may exclude identification and consideration of side effects; bias; and a lack of input from critics (p. 132). Perhaps their most important concern is

> the public suspicion that review by one's peer is inherently conservative, potentially incestuous, and subject to possible conflicts of interest. If evaluators are drawn from the ranks of the discipline or profession to be evaluated, there are decided risks. Socialization within any group tends to blunt the important characteristic of detachment. Assumptions and practices that would be questioned by an outsider may be taken for granted. (p. 133)

The main goal of this study is to determine whether their concern has merit by examining whether there are differences in perception between those who are insiders, college and university presidents, and key outsiders, political leaders.

Accreditation is a blending of quality assurance and evaluation. It is intended as an instrument of evaluation that has a goal of ensuring and enhancing quality. Despite the apparent blending, is there tension between the two purposes of accreditation? Are both purposes being successfully achieved? Do presidents and political leaders perceive that accreditation assures and encourages quality and judges higher education institutions effectively? This study will consider these questions in relationship to the theories of quality and evaluation.

Purposes of Accreditation

Over the past 100 years four main purposes of accreditation have emerged: quality assurance, institutional improvement, accountability, and consumer protection.

The initial, and still a major, purpose of accreditation is to assure the quality of education. Accreditation was developed because the public demanded protection from institutions that offered inferior educational preparation. The protection of the public was a major impetus for both regional and specialized accreditation. As accreditation developed, standardization of higher education, which had given way under the elective system, became a byproduct of accreditation. However, in 1934 the North Central Association helped address the standardization problem by adopting a policy, first proposed in 1929, of evaluating an institution based on its mission. All regional associations currently follow that approach.

It should be noted that the major features of regional accreditation of higher education institutions - the self-study, peer evaluation, and review of the accreditation by the association - are designed to serve the purpose of assuring the quality of higher education. As accreditation matured it assumed, for good or ill, other purposes. Seeking some method of, again, consumer protection, in 1952 the Federal government began using accreditation as a gatekeeper for funds under the GI Bill. Under the United States Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander, this role - however unwanted initially - was threatened by the creation of State Postsecondary Review Entities (SPRE's) under the 1992 reauthorization of the 1965 Higher Education Act.

As a result, accreditation has purposes that were initiated from the inside, the education community, and the outside, especially political leaders. In addition to the tension between these two purposes of accreditation, there is a tension between the

two theories of accreditation, quality and evaluation. As Dill, Massy, Williams and Cook (1996) argue, quality assurance in higher education should focus on both accountability and improvement. A closer examination of the purposes of accreditation may yield some insight and provide a basis for understanding the rationale behind these tensions and some of the reforms that have been proposed for regional accreditation.

Quality and Evaluation

It is clear from the history of accreditation that the initial purpose of accreditation was to assure the public that higher education institutions met a minimum level of quality. The public wanted protection, for instance, from doctors who were educated at inferior institutions.

Today "accreditation is probably the most widely known and respected form of quality assurance among parents, government officials and other civic friends of American higher education" (Bogue, 1992, p. 29). However, as Marcus, Leone, and Goldberg (1983) note, "Accreditation as an indicator of quality has come under strong criticism, in part since accrediting bodies do not generally attempt to define educational quality but, instead, seek to assess an institution's quality according to the institution's own mission and self-definition" (p. 3). Marcus et al. point to other weaknesses of accreditation that some have noted, such as the fact that few self-studies are true evaluations, the agencies do not enforce standards, and the public often does not know where the accreditor identified weaknesses. In 1986 a COPA panel

argued that accreditation was limited by its reliance on minimum standards (Biemiller, 1986). If weaknesses exist, can they be addressed? Perhaps, but Harris (1983) cites three factors hampering the improvement of accreditation: the belief that regulations hamper education; the apathy of presidents of respected colleges; and confusion about the purposes of accreditation.

Accreditation is clearly related to quality assurance: the development of standards and criteria, the self-study, the external evaluation by peer evaluators, and the review of the accreditation documents by the commissions, are all quality assurance tools. However, as indicated, how willingly and/or how well these tasks are performed may be problematical. The Carnegie Foundation (1983) stated that, while regional accreditation is critically important, "accreditation review often is little more than an empty ritual...many campuses downplay the importance of accreditation visits. Higher education leaders frequently decline to participate in the process" (p. 13).

To overcome this perceived weakness, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recommended in 1983 that a "Regional association should do more than measure a college against its own objectives. They should also have their own clear standards of academic quality" (p. 14). Crosson (1987) agreed, arguing that improving the quality of higher education is one of the responsibilities of accrediting agencies, and that it should be "higher on their agendas than it has been" (p. 397).

The result of accreditation is currently a yes/maybe/no decision: an institution is accredited (yes), an institution is placed on probation (maybe), or an institution is not accredited initially or loses it accreditation (no). Not all regional agencies indicate whether an institution is on probation. Often, the public simply knows whether an institution is accredited or not, although some agencies indicate when a college is on probation. Otherwise, there is no rating of ranking of institutions or of individual programs. As a result, *U.S. News and World Report* and *Money* magazine seem to offer the American public useful information about colleges through their published rankings. However, the ranking systems themselves may be suspect at best, and meaningless at worst.

While accreditation assesses whether an institution meets specific minimum standards, the search for quality and continuous improvement indicates that an institution is trying to achieve its highest potential. Miles (1992) insists that accreditation should be a change agent and should be judged "by its effectiveness in encouraging and assisting the institution to evaluate its educational offerings. All other outcomes and uses of accreditation are secondary to this objective" (p. 2).

Chambers (1979) believes that "the accreditation process should not be viewed as the end of a study of past events, but rather as a plan for future activities designed to bring about the changes indicated by the accreditation review" (p. 34). The commissioners of the North Central Association argued in 1989 that enhancing quality was not optional. Like businesses that are facing global competition, higher education

has been challenged to embrace continuous improvement. In the current environment Nadeau (1992) believes that the quest for excellence in higher education is a response to public demands for accountability and as well as improvements in assessment, evaluation and accreditation.

Unfortunately, neither quality nor excellence is easily defined, especially in higher education. Young (1983) protests that the definition of quality is a fruitless task. Others are not so reluctant. Nadeau (1992) notes that achievement of objectives, development of student talent, preparation of students for work, and attainment of a variety of other goals are all considered by different individuals and institutions to equate to achieving quality. However, as the North Central Association initially argued in 1934, as with accreditation, achieving quality should mean achieving the objectives and mission of the institution.

Not only is quality difficult to define, as suggested by the previous discussion of quality theories, it is constantly being defined by different stakeholders. Selden (1960) is often quoted as saying that "Accreditation is a part of the struggle over standards among contending groups" (p. 2) These groups include not only higher education administrators and trustees, but faculty, the general public and legislators.

Enarson (1983) offers a fairly practical definition of quality as "being better than you were...no matter what that was," "trying harder and feeling good about it," "using scarce resources wisely" (p. 7). His common sense tips on judging quality are borrowed from those who judge eggs:

- Egg quality should not be confused with egg size. (So much for our large universities.)
- Hens lay larger eggs as they grow older. (So much for our senior faculty.)
- Americans, it is said, prefer clean eggs, but those that were unwashed could hardly be called dirty, merely spotted here and there. (So much for some of our students.)
- The proper flavor is hard to describe because what is a good egg tastes like a good egg. (pp. 8-9)

While quality and excellence are worthwhile goals, they are not the only goals of higher education. In the United States, access to higher education is highly valued. Yet if access is universal, can quality be maintained? Enarson (1983) notes that, early in our history, Thomas Jefferson was concerned that access and quality were not immediately compatible. A continuing fear in this later era, when access is considered a hallmark of the American system, is that improving quality and pursuing excellence will translate into less access. However, Eaton (1985) argues that there can be access, excellence and equity, particularly at the community college level.

Interestingly, Braskamp, Poston and Wergin (1997) assert that accreditation is only one of the mechanisms that assure the quality of higher education institutions and to "maintain its public accountability and improve its effectiveness and usefulness to society" (p. 1). They believe that governmental mandates and the market place are

also tools in assuring the quality of higher education institutions. However, they still see accreditation as one corner of what they call the "quality triangle" (p. 1).

One of the results of pressures from political leaders is the growth of assessment in higher education. Regional accrediting agencies, according to a story by Palmer in the September 28, 1987 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* strongly resisted Education Secretary Bennett's proposal to "require colleges and universities to provide...evidence of how much their students have learned" (p. A26). Yet ten years later assessment of outcomes has become increasingly accepted in higher education, and is currently incorporated in many accreditation studies.

In 1989 Lenn stated that "No one but the educational community is in the position to set its own values through the communal process of accreditation. It is American higher education's primary means of quality assessment and improvement and must not be forfeited to those with narrower visions or purposes" (p. 49). She also warned that unless accreditation was used to renew and reform higher education, "renewal and reformation [will be] imposed without our participation" (p. 49).

Other Purposes of Accreditation

In addition to assuring quality and encouraging excellence, COPA (1986) identified one additional basic function of accreditation: protecting higher education institutions from outside interference and preserving academic freedom. Trash (1979) agrees that accreditation protects institutions against encroachment. Gates (1965) goes even further, stating that outside accreditation provides the institution with leverage in

its struggles with trustees and legislators. SACS was involved in two such cases in Mississippi and Georgia. In 1930 Governor Bilbo of Mississippi attempted to use political patronage to fill position in state universities. SACS suspended the Mississippi universities from membership in the regional association and student enrollments dropped. The next year a new governor was elected on the promise that he would correct the situation. In 1941 SACS also decided to suspend the university system of the state of Georgia when Governor Talmadge tried to influence the board of regents to fire a dean over a racial integration issue. As in Mississippi, the Governor was defeated for re-election and Georgia now has a constitutionally established state board.

Bogue and Saunders (1992) point out that students benefit from accreditation in several ways in addition to quality assurance since it "assures them that an accredited institution has found to be satisfactory and capable of meeting their needs; facilitates the transfer of credits among institutions; promotes admission to graduate degrees programs; and serves as a prerequisite, in some cases, for entering professions" (p. 32). They also point out that accreditation enhances the reputation of a higher education institution. Miles (1992) agrees that accreditation is used for student admission decisions, and adds that employers also use it in making hiring decisions, and the Federal government in granting aid.

Evolving Roles of Accreditation

Young (1979) believes that "Accreditation cannot allow itself to be used for purposes other than evaluating and encouraging *educational* quality, and the burden is always on the accrediting body to demonstrate that its criteria and procedures serve this ideal" (p. 135). However, the Carnegie Foundation (1983) found Young's (1979) insistence on limiting accreditation to ensuring educational quality a dangerous stance. While opposing governmental involvement in accreditation, the foundation felt that a void had developed that would be filled by the government if the regional agencies did not act. The foundation urged regional accrediting agencies to "expand the scope of their authority and hold colleges accountable not only for academic excellence but also for good management, affirmative action, and consumer protection, too" (p. 14). Of course, the prophecy came true almost ten years later.

It might be argued that good management and consumer protection could be considered a part of accreditation's traditional purpose of ensuring quality. But what about affirmative action? Some of the most contentious battles in the last few years have centered on diversity. According to Jaschik (1991d), in 1991 Education Secretary Lamar Alexander put teeth into his criticism of the Middle States Association's adoption of diversity standards by proposing a process which would enable institutions to qualify for Federal student aid without being accredited. Balch (1992) sees the imposition of diversity standards as disturbing and intellectually intolerant. Yet Weiner (1990) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

defends the relationship between educational quality and diversity, while rejecting the idea of quotas. While some diversity standards have been enacted, many questions remain about their use and role in regional accreditation.

Sports are another issue that some have tried to link to regional accreditation. Lederman (1991) notes that sports "have avoided intense external scrutiny" (p. A43). However, sports are big business at many colleges. Should accreditors be the referees for college sports? Is this an appropriate role for accrediting agencies? Is oversight of college sports related at all to the primary purpose of regional accreditation? In 1995 SACS recommended that the University of North Carolina gain control over the athletics program, rather than letting it be controlled by the booster organization. This action signaled willingness on the part of SACS to become more involved in regulating sports programs.

In the 20th century, despite some criticism, voluntary self-regulation through self-study and peer review became the norm in American higher education. The quality initiatives represented in both regional and specialized accreditation may be seen as a very positive development in the history of American higher education. They arose from the concerns of educators and not from governmental initiative.

In this century many aspects of higher education have changed dramatically. Higher education is now viewed as more essential for both personal and professional growth, as an engine of economic vitality, as an instrument central to the vitality of our democratic society. New methods of delivering education, ranging from branch

campuses to distance learning, have challenged the ability of the accreditation process to ensure quality. Once, as Courtney Leatherman notes, "The mere mention of accreditation once caused the eyelids of many an academic and lawmaker to droop." (1992b). Public perceptions of accreditation, particularly among legislators, are now heightened, but they may not be heightened for long.

Accreditation Under Fire

For most of this century those involved in accreditation were relatively ignored outside academia, although occasionally a state governor or legislature would focus on an issue of public concern. However, there have always been criticisms. In 1977 Poppenhagen summarized the criticisms of accreditation as discouraging innovation, using arbitrary standards, being secretive, excluding certain institutions, and not being responsive to the public.

By the 1980's Newell (1983) indicated that there was some evident dissatisfaction outside the academy with the self-regulation of higher education. In 1984 the Florida legislature ordered a study of the feasibility of a state system of accreditation because the legislators believed that "accrediting bodies have failed to control quality and that the accrediting process has become cumbersome, expensive and duplicative" (p. i).

In the 1990's accrediting agencies were rudely thrust into the spotlight. They were criticized for not alerting the public to high student loan default rates, for allowing institutions to exist that did not provide a good education for the student's

investment, and for requiring diversity standards for accreditation (Leatherman, 1992b). Several major confrontations with Congress and the Department of Education resulted. Robert Atwell (1994) suggests that

> Partly out of a perception by public policy makers that accreditation is nothing more than a mutual backscratching exercise--that it fails to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse in student aid programs or ensure accountability for the educational results of funds provided by taxpayers and families--we are seeing a quantum increase in government regulation, and thereby government control. (p. 9)

Atwell (1994) identified four circumstances which led to greater scrutiny of accreditation by lawmakers: problems with student aid; the 1992 amendments to the Higher Education Act and associated regulations (including the proposed establishment of State Post-secondary Review Entities); concerns of college presidents about unchecked growth of specialized agencies; and "questions about the rigor and consistency of the current structure of regional accreditation" (p. 9).

In 1995 Gordon Haaland, President of Gettysburg College, asserted that accreditation is "bankrupt," citing its failure to be rigorous and its failure to distinguish effectively among colleges of differing quality. Mediocrity, rather than excellence, he argued, was the hallmark of accreditation since accreditation only requires minimum standards performance.

Trombley (1996) reports that Stephen Weiner, the retiring executive director of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), believes that accreditation has two major flaws: its secrecy and its episodic nature. Kaplan (1989) further explains that it is "hard to accept that institutions must rely upon the kindness of a group of strangers, however well trained and well meaning, who come to visit every ten years for a period of three days, to determine the extent and existence of institutional quality" (p. 380).

Others protested that accreditation was "crucial to the credibility of higher education" and that the time honored process preserved academic freedom and freed institutions from political influence (SACS/COC 1991). Even Ernst Benjamin (1994) warned that

> American colleges and universities have provided unprecedented access to quality higher education because of their autonomy and diversity. Current radical changes in public policy and turmoil in our structure of self-assessment through voluntary accreditation will, unless we act quickly, erode this autonomy and the diversity it permits. (p. 34)

Other issues, such as access and diversity, have also led some to call for reform in accreditation. Tribal colleges, for instance, feel that they are out of the mainstream of American accreditation, according to Crazy Bull (1994). In 1996 President Clinton issued an executive order to ensure that tribal colleges were recognized as accredited institutions, involving the Federal government in accreditation in a new way.

As Braskamp, Poston and Wergin (1997) assert, "Accreditation has had a tortured role in higher education: revered, reviled, and revolted against" (p. 1). Accreditation has always had its critics and its recommendations for improvement, but recently the chorus for reform has grown louder.

Accreditation Reform

Educators were able to defeat what they perceived were the worst aspects of the Federal regulations implementing the 1992 Higher Education Act. Private colleges were particularly offended by the specter of state regulation, as DeLoughry (1991) indicated. In the ensuing discussion, it became clear that some in the academy agreed that a few adjustments might be worthwhile. Tobin (1994) reports that particular concern was expressed about legislators and consumers questioning the usefulness and objectivity of peer review.

Others proposed full-fledged reforms. A set of discussion papers developed for a National Policy Board on Higher Education Institutional Accreditation in January 1994 suggested a number of potential avenues for change. Others have also suggested various reforms over the past twenty years. These include:

- exempting well known, established higher education institutions from the traditional accreditation process if they provide evidence of continued quality through annual reports to the accreditation agency (Florida State Postsecondary Education Commission, 1986; Ashworth, 1994); and forming regional groupings

of six (6) to twelve (12) states to focus on the remaining institutions deemed in need of independent review (Ashworth, 1994);

- developing a partnership between the regional accrediting agency and the institutions to develop a self-study that focuses on quality improvement (Kaplan, 1989)
- pursuing partnerships, including the involvement of more civic leaders and politicians on regional association governing boards, and showing greater responsiveness to public concerns, including the Federal government and Congress (Bogue, 1994; Smith, 1994; Wellman, 1994);
- focusing on improvement and change as well as assessment of results, rather than input and output (Wellman, 1994; Haaland, 1995);
- implementing a results system which shows distinctions between achievement of quality objectives, or at least offers public profiles of an institution, and focuses on substantive evaluations rather than "grades" (Davies, 1988; Albrecht, 1989; Ewell, 1994; Smith, 1994);
- utilizing a small, highly trained team for a compliance/evaluation visit scheduled on a short notice, much like a surprise audit (Bogue, 1994; Marchese, 1994);
- instituting an integrity standard/criterion which might be triggered by a report of a violation reviewed for substance by a collegiate grand jury (Bogue, 1994);
- promoting more public announcement of results (Andersen, 1978; Ewell, 1994; Smith, 1994; Haaland, 1995; Trombley, 1996);

- establishing a type of Malcolm Baldridge National Quality Award for education, as well as a new national body focusing on continuous quality improvement in education, and showcasing excellence (Ewell 1994; Marchese 1994; Smith 1994);
- establishing a single national public voice for accreditation (Wellman, 1994);
- developing and implementing nationwide standards (Marchese, 1994);
- establishing a three level process ranging from the traditional forms of accreditation at the threshold, to yearly peer visitation or audits by small teams for established higher education institutions, and then to a national team of experts to audit undergraduate education (Marchese, 1994);
- involving the visiting team earlier in the process of evaluating large universities (Albrecht, 1994);
- collecting common statistics determined either by the Federal government or a national accreditation association (Smith, 1994; Wellman, 1994);
- clearly delineating the roles and responsibilities of the triad: the Federal government, the state government, and accreditation agencies (Wellman, 1994);
- making accreditation sector specific (community colleges, liberal arts colleges, etc.) and developing sector specific standards of excellence (Albrecht, 1989; Haaland, 1995); and
- linking regional and specialized accreditation (Florida State Postsecondary Education Commission, 1986).

These suggested reforms provided the basis for questions posed to both college and university presidents and state legislators for this study.

At the time CHEA, which replaced COPA as the national accreditation organization for higher education institutions, was approved it was expected have a role in changing accreditation. According to the American Council on Education (27 May 1996), CHEA is designed "to foster innovation in accreditation, help resolve accreditation-related disputes, and serve as a national voice for self-regulation" (p. 2)

CHEA does not have any easy task. Writing in their October 1995 monograph, Accountability of Colleges and Universities, Graham, Lyman and Trow note that:

> accreditation plays a vital role as counterpoint to government regulation and as a protection against political interference and attacks on academic freedom. However, its present form tends to set the two hemispheres against one another. (p. 18)

They suggest a transformation of accreditation from a direct quality assurance instrument into agencies that audit a campus to ascertain whether it has in place appropriate procedures and policies to guarantee its quality. A somewhat similar theme, the audit theme, is presented in a September/October 1996 article appearing in *Change* in which the concepts of an academic audit are seen as including public disclosure, as do current financial audits, and accenting the presence of appropriate policies and procedures (Dill et al., 1966).

It should be noted that these commentaries make no reference to what some might call a "been there, done that" position that could be argued for regional accreditation. In its earlier years, regional accreditation (and specialized accreditation as well) did, in fact, focus on inputs, processes and policies presumed to guarantee quality. However, in the 1980s, accreditation began to focus on results and institutional effectiveness.

The Future of Accreditation

The future of accreditation is uncertain from several perspectives. The new national organization for accreditation, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, has now taken up the leadership mantle laid down by COPA. A national organization that has the support of a majority of college and university presidents may be able to either support or effectively defeat any widespread reform. Regional associations have, and will continue to change and may themselves adopt some broader reforms. Accreditation has the opportunity to become, as Braskamp, Poston and Wergin (1997) believe, a more positive and proactive force.

Whether reformed or not, accreditation appears to have survived the latest public crises. However, whether it is perceived by civic and corporate leaders as effective in improving and guaranteeing quality in higher education remains an open question that this study is designed to help answer.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODS

The initial step in developing this study of regional accreditation was a series of interviews with higher education faculty and administrators with experience in accreditation. The interviews were conducted with representatives of a research university, a community college, and a small, private college with a religious affiliation. The interviews included: a graduate school dean; a professor who was formerly a high level administrator and who was experienced with both regional and specialized accreditation; a college president; a professor who chaired the most recent site visit to his institution; and two administrators. An attempt was also made to interview legislators. While brief telephone discussions were held, no legislators agreed to be interviewed in depth. The director of the Social Science Research Institute at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, was also interviewed to gain perspective on the legislators and to review development of the questionnaire.

Questionnaire Design

Following the interviews and an extensive review of literature, a questionnaire was designed that asks participants to assess accreditation in four areas: purpose (8 questions), process (9 questions), effectiveness (21 questions), and critique and reform (16 questions). Respondents were asked to check off their response to statements on a Likert scale that includes strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree,

and don't know. The "don't know" category was included so that it would be clear when a respondent, as was expected with some legislators, did not have enough knowledge to answer the question and so that the "neutral" category would not be used to indicate a lack of knowledge.

The questionnaire for legislators, governors, and presidents asked for different descriptive information. The goal of the initial questions was to ascertain both the extent of their experience as presidents, governors, or legislators, and their experience with regional accreditation. Presidents were asked to answer 13 initial questions; legislators and governors were asked to answer six initial questions. All respondents were asked to indicate their political party affiliation, political self-description (e.g., liberal or conservative), and their experience with regional accreditation.

Three open-ended questions were included as the final questions. They were designed to allow the participants to highlight specific strengths and weaknesses of accreditation from their perspective, and to encourage any other comments. The final questionnaires and cover letters are included in Appendices B through D.

Data Collection

To ensure up to date, accurate information, mailing lists were purchased from Higher Education Publications and the National Conference of State Legislatures. In addition to mailing addresses, e-mail addresses were requested. The intent was to send e-mail reminders to presidents and legislators with available e-mail addresses. However, Higher Education Publications only provided Web addresses.

The mailing list for state legislators on Education Committees and governors was used as received from the National Conference of State Legislatures. However, the list of higher education institutions in the 11 states had to be modified to include only those institutions with regional accreditation. The most recent published list from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was the basis for revising the mailing list. Additional corrections, such as deleting an institution that recently lost its accreditation, were made as necessary. Higher Education Publications listed 1,029 addresses in the 11 SACS states; system offices were included. SACS listed 786 accredited institutions for 1996-1997. Non-accredited institutions ranged from branch campuses of state universities to 43 branches of the Louisiana Technical College.

A number of specialty and religious institutions, such as the American Flyers College (Fort Lauderdale, Florida), Camelot Career College (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), Gupton Jones College of Funeral Service (Decatur, Georgia), Southeastern Baptist College (Holly Springs, Mississippi), Harding University Graduate School of Religion (Memphis, Tennessee) and the Arlington Baptist College (Arlington, Texas) were not regionally accredited. Many non-accredited higher education institutions such as Electronic Computer Programming Institute (Chattanooga, Tennessee) did not refer to themselves as either a college or university. However, some institutions that were not accredited by SACS, such as the Florida Metropolitan University of Tampa College (Clearwater, Florida) and The Catholic Distance University (Hamilton, Virginia), used the term "university" in their name.

Some proprietary institutions that had campuses in several states, such as ITT Technical Institute, did not appear to have sought regional accreditation in any state. The names of some non-accredited institutions, such as the Nashville Auto-Diesel College (Nashville, Tennessee), the Le Chef College of Hospitality (Austin, Texas), and Full Sail Real World Education (Winter Park, Florida), clearly reflected their mission while others, such as the North Central Institute (Clarksville, Tennessee), the Peoples College (Kissimmee, Florida), and Fugazzi College (Lexington, Kentucky) were less easily classified according to mission.

In some cases, more than one name was listed for the same higher education institution. For instance, Emmanuel College (Johnson City, Tennessee) listed addresses for both a president and a chancellor. In these cases the name listed by SACS was considered the correct address for the questionnaire mailing.

The questionnaires were mailed in July 1998. One questionnaire was returned for a better address. When the completed questionnaires arrived, the zip codes and names on the postmarks were recorded to track the responses. The envelopes were separated from the responses to preserve the confidentiality of the responses.

Tracking of questionnaires was not fully satisfactory, as many envelopes were returned with three-digit zip codes. An extensive effort was made to match envelope zip codes with reported Carnegie classifications, size and type of institution. However, a number of institutions could not be matched, due to incomplete or incorrect information. Follow-up mailings, as a result, included a return addressed

post card that was to be mailed separately from the response. Responses of political leaders were not tracked.

A follow-up postcard was mailed to presidents, governors and legislators in July 1998 (Appendix E). In September 1998, after the beginning of the academic year, follow-up letters were sent to college presidents, encouraging their participation in the study (Appendix F). Questionnaires were sent to those presidents who indicated an interest in participating in the study. In November 1998, all legislators with e-mail addresses were sent an e-mail and asked a final time to answer the three open-ended questions and the initial descriptive questions via e-mail, fax or mail (Appendix G). The legislators also had an opportunity to request a complete questionnaire.

Data Analysis

A total of 438 presidents, 85 legislators and 5 governors responded to the questionnaire. All quantitative data from all of the questionnaires was entered into SPSS 8.0 for Windows for analysis. All of the qualitative data from the final three open-ended questions and one letter from a respondent was first typed in a Microsoft Word document, copied into Microsoft Excel, saved as a text file, and then entered into QSR*Nudist for qualitative analysis.

Every attempt was made to ensure accurate data. The SPSS data was printed after being entered into the database and checked carefully against the questionnaires for errors. Handwriting was closely scrutinized to report the precise wording of the

open-ended responses. In a very few cases, it was not possible to decipher specific words but the intent of all responses appeared to be clear.

Base data and the qualitative questionnaire data were entered into QSR*Nudist for the presidents, legislators and governors. The open-ended questions were first coded using the printed Word documents. The coded responses were then examined for themes and grouped. Text searches were conducted for key words and phrases using QSR*Nudist.

Statistical consultants from Computing and Administrative Services (CAS) at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, assisted in the design of the SPSS analysis. The GLM Multivariate procedure, which provides analysis of variance for multiple dependent variables by one or more factor variables and replaces the MANOVA procedure in SPSS (Nichols, 1997), was chosen to analyze the questionnaire. The multivariate analysis helps identify differences while controlling the size of the Type I error that occurs when separate ANOVAs are run.

An SPSS General Linear Model (GLM) multivariate analysis was run using the presidents' responses to all questions and then with the categories of questions (purpose, process, effectiveness, critique and reform) as dependent variables, and five fixed factors: years as president at current institution, years as president at other institutions, Carnegie classification, involvement in accreditation, and field of terminal degree. Since the data was available, a second set of analyses were run using two additional factors, public/private and total number of students. Therefore, each

category of responses was analyzed twice, once with five fixed factors and once with seven.

To produce the best analysis, responses for all fixed factors except years as president at current institution were grouped. Since many presidents did not indicate any experience at another institution, the categories for experience a other institutions included: no experience at another institution, 1-5 years at another institution, 6-10 years at another institution, and over 10 years at another institution. For Carnegie classification, the specialized institutions and nontraditional institutions were combined, as there was only one president that indicated his or her institution was nontraditional.

Involvement in accreditation was computed by combining information from questions F, G, and I. Question F included five separate responses on participation in the Commission on Colleges, Executive Council of the Commission on Colleges, Visiting Team, Committee on Criteria and Reports, and Ad Hoc Special Committee. A variable was created to represent involvement in accreditation, and the results were grouped for use in the analysis. Each response to the seven questions in F, G, and I received a score: 1 (never); 2 (once); 3 (2-5 times); 4 (6-10 times); or 5 (over 10 times). Responses were grouped as: no or low involvement (8 or less), medium involvement (9-12), high involvement (13 to 19), and very high involvement (20 or more). Based on responses to question K, terminal degree fields were grouped into five categories: grouped degrees (agriculture, business, communications, health care

and medicine, law and other); liberal arts; science, math and engineering; education, and religion.

Main effects was chosen as the multivariate analysis model as interactions did not appear to be significant. The questions were grouped for analysis using the four topics identified in the questionnaire: purpose, process, effectiveness, and critique and reform. An initial multivariate analyses was then run for each category of questions. For example, an initial SPSS GLM multivariate analysis was run using only the eight purpose questions. The resulting tables identified which topics showed significance for which factor at the .05 level using Wilks' lambda, a multivariate test of significance that indicates whether group means are significantly different.

After identifying fixed factors with a significance of .05 using Wilks' lambda in the initial multivariate analysis, a second GLM multivariate analysis was run using only the fixed factors that were significant at the .05 level. For example, for the purpose questions, both years as president of current institution and Carnegie classification were significant at the .05 level using Wilks' lambda. Therefore, in the second GLM multivariate analysis, between-subjects analysis (ANOVA) indicated when the F test was significant at the .05 level for individual questions and individual factors. For example, the between-subjects analysis showed significant differences at the .05 level for purpose questions 6 and 8 when years as president of current institution was the fixed factor.

Tukey's post hoc comparisons were also requested in the second analysis to discover specifically where the significant variation occurred. When Tukey's is requested, SPSS generates tables that indicate homogeneous subsets of means. In purpose question 6, for example, the analysis indicated that there was a significant difference in the means between those presidents with 1-5 years at their current institution and presidents with 6 or more years of experience.

Since there were only five governors, the legislators and governors were combined in one set of data for analysis. Fixed factors for the legislators and governors included political party; political self-description (moderate, middle of the road, conservative, other); participation in accreditation; grouped occupations; grouped years of service on the House or Senate Education Committee; and political experience. The same initial and follow-up GLM multivariate analyses with a post hoc Tukey's were run by topic. However, questions that had less than a 75% response rate were omitted to allow the analysis to run more effectively and have a better opportunity to detect significance.

To summarize, the procedures followed for analysis of the questionnaire data by SPSS were:

1) Select the appropriate fixed factors from the background questions and group as needed. Five fixed factors were chosen for the initial analysis of the presidents' responses, and two other available factors were added to a second set of analyses. Six fixed factors were used for the political leaders.

2) Run a SPSS GLM multivariate analysis to examine main effects for all questions, and then for each category of questions: purpose, process, effectiveness, and critique and reform.
3) Identify which fixed factors are significant for the topic at the .05 level using Wilks' lambda.
4) Run a second GLM multivariate analysis with the same group of questions but only the fixed factors that were significant at the .05 level in the first analysis. Add a post hoc Tukey's test to determine how the factors differ.
5) Use between-subjects analysis in the second GLM multivariate analysis to identify the specific questions that have significance at the .05 level.
6) Examine the post hoc tables and plots to identify how the factors differ.
7) Repeat the GLM multivariate analysis, using seven fixed factors for each category of questions.

To answer the final question on whether the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by college presidents reveal a significant variance from the perceptions of political leaders, the databases were merged, and type of respondent (president or politician) was added to the analysis. The presidents, legislators and governors shared three questions: political party, political self-description, and participation in accreditation. These factors were analyzed for main effects and interactions. Interaction was considered to be of most interest. If an

interaction were found, main effects would not have been analyzed. However, no interactions were found.

The qualitative data from the final three questions on weakness, strengths, and other comments was typed into separate Word documents for the presidents, legislators, and governors, and analyzed for themes. Keyword searches for the identified themes were then conducted in QSR*Nudist. The themes were analyzed for relationships and combined or separated, as appropriate.

Results of both the quantitative and qualitative data analyses for the presidents will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 6 will report the results for political leaders and will compare the perceptions of political leaders and college and university presidents. Chapter 7 will present a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 4

PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Of the 769 presidents of currently accredited college or universities in the SACS region, 438 or 57.0% of presidents in the 11-state region responded to the study questionnaire. In addition, 83 legislators or 21.9% of legislators in the SACS states that serve on House or Senate Education Committees, and 5 of 11 governors in the SACS states or 45.5% of the governors provided survey data. Due to the small number of governors, and in concert with the study design, the legislators and governors will be examined together as political leaders.

The responses of both the presidents and the political leaders to the questionnaire are analyzed in detail. For the convenience of the reader, and to provide a basis for the summary and conclusions in Chapter 7, all questions that have significant differences in the means are summarized in tables by factor and discussed. The summary tables are located at the end this chapter for presidents and at the end of the data analysis of political leaders' responses in Chapter 6. Chapter 5 discusses the responses of the presidents to the final three open-ended questions on the questionnaire. A follow-up interview study, which will not be discussed in this dissertation, has been undertaken with state legislators who are leaders in education to learn more about their views.

STUDY PARTICIPANTS: COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

The initial questions, A through M, asked the presidents to describe themselves and their institutions. Table 4.1 summarizes the responses of the presidents to these questions.

The responses to question A, which asked the presidents how long they had served as president of their current institution or any other institutions, indicated that the presidents had a range of experience. Almost half (45.3%) of the 417 presidents responding to question A indicated that they had served at their current institution for 1 to 5 years. However, 31.4% had served as president of their current institution over 10 years. Most (78.1%) did not indicate that they had served as president at any other institution.

Question B asked the presidents to indicate the Carnegie classification of their college or university. The largest group of the 432 presidents providing responses to question B (43.8%) was from two-year institutions. These respondents represent 62.2% of the two-year institutions in the SACS region. Presidents from Comprehensive Universities and Colleges I and II that offer degrees through the master's provided 21.8% of the responses, and presidents of Liberal Arts College I and II that primarily offer undergraduate degrees provided 19.4% of the responses. Comparable SACS classifications indicate that these respondents represent 53.4% of comprehensive universities in the SACS region, and 62.7% of the liberal arts institutions. Responses from presidents of other institutions included Doctoral

Table 4.1 Summary of responses of presidents to questions A through M

Question	Response	N	Valid %*
A) How many years have you served as the president of your current college and of any other institution(s)? N = 417 (current institution) N = 96 (other institution)	1-5 years at current institution	189	45.3
	6-10 years at current institution	97	23.3
	Over 10 years at current institution	131	31.4
	1-5 years total at any other institution(s)	28	29.2
	6-10 years total at any other institution(s)	29	30.2
	Over 10 years total at any other institution(s)	39	40.6
B) What is the Carnegie classification of your college or university? N= 432	Research University I or II	20	4.6
	Doctorate-Granting University I or II	25	5.8
	Comprehensive University/College I or II	94	21.8
	Liberal Arts College I or II	84	19.4
	Two Year Institution	189	43.8
	Specialized Institution	19	4.4
	Nontraditional Institution	1	.2
C) Is your college or university public or private? N= 434	Public	270	62.2
	Private	164	37.4
D) How many total students are there at your institution? N= 437	Less than 1,000	75	17.2
	1,001 - 5,000	216	49.4
	5,000 - 10,000	74	16.9
	10,001 - 20,000	46	10.5
	Over 20,000	26	5.9
E) What percent of the students are part-time? N= 420	Less than 25%	162	38.6
	25-50%	155	36.9
	50-74%	89	21.2
	75% -99%	13	3.1
	100%	1	.2

*Percent of those responding to the question.

Table 4.1 (continued)

Question	Response	N	Valid% *
F) Have you ever served as a member of any of the following:			
❑ Commission on Colleges (COC) N= 369	Never	284	77.0
	Once	36	8.2
	2-5 times	45	12.2
	5-10 times	2	.5
	Over 10 times	2	.5
❑ Executive Council of the COC N= 341	Never	310	90.9
	Once	18	5.3
	2-5 times	12	3.5
	5-10 times	0	0.0
	Over 10 times	1	.3
❑ Visiting Team N= 423	Never	170	40.1
	Once	52	12.3
	2-5 times	102	24.1
	5-10 times	54	12.8
	Over 10 times	45	10.6
❑ Committee on Criteria & Reports N= 363	Never	280	77.1
	Once	33	9.1
	2-5 times	35	9.6
	5-10 times	11	3.0
	Over 10 times	4	1.1
❑ Ad Hoc Special Committee N= 365	Never	273	74.8
	Once	42	11.5
	2-5 times	46	12.6
	5-10 times	4	1.1
	Over 10 times	0	0.0
G) Have you ever chaired a visiting team? N= 433	Never	330	76.2
	Once	26	6.0
	2-5 times	34	7.9
	5-10 times	23	5.3
	Over 10 times	20	4.6

*Percent of those responding to the question.

Table 4.1 (continued)

Question	Response	N	Valid% *
H) Have you ever been employed by a regional accreditation association? N= 435	Yes	4	.9
	No	431	99.1
	Years Employed (Mean)	8	
I) How often have you participated in the regional accreditation process N= 432	Never	29	6.7
	Once	36	8.3
	2-5 times	278	64.4
	6-10 times	44	10.2
	Over 10 times	45	10.4
J) Is your college or university currently fully accredited? N= 438	Yes	438	100.0
	No	0	0.0
K) In what field did you receive your terminal degree? N= 438	Agriculture	2	.5
	Business	20	4.6
	Communications	4	.9
	Education	223	50.9
	Health Care	8	1.8
	Liberal Arts	77	17.6
	Science	21	4.8
	Other	83	18.9
L) What is your party affiliation? N= 411	Democrat	180	43.8
	Republican	85	20.7
	Independent	99	24.1
	None	38	9.2
	Other	9	2.2
M) How would you describe yourself? N= 438	Liberal	58	13.9
	Conservative	109	26.1
	Middle of the Road	240	57.4
	Other	11	2.6

*Percent of those responding to the question.

Universities I and II (5.8%), Research Universities I and II (4.6%), and Specialized and Nontraditional Institutions (4.6%). Doctoral universities had the lowest response rate, as only 26.9% of presidents of doctoral institutions in the SACS region participated. Close to one-third (32.3%) of the presidents of SACS research universities responded. There was only one institution that classified itself as nontraditional; therefore, it will be considered with the specialized institutions.

When asked whether their institution was public or private, the majority of the 434 institutions whose presidents responded to question C were public institutions (62.2%); the remainder were private institutions. Almost half (49.4%) of the 437 presidents responding to question D, which asked about the total number of students at their institution, indicated that their institutions had from 1,000 to 5,000 total students. Others indicated they had less than 1,000 students (17.2%), from 5,001 to 10,000 students (16.9%), 10,001 to 20,000 students (10.5%), and over 20,000 (5.9%) students.

While the greatest percentage (38.6%) of the 420 presidents responding to question E, which asked about the percentage of part-time students, indicated their institutions had less than 25% part-time students, almost as many (36.9%) indicated that they had 25-50% part-time students. One-fifth (20.3%) had 50-74% part-time students, and 3.0% had from 75% to 99% part-time students. One institution (.2%) indicated that all of its students are part-time.

Involvement in Accreditation

Involvement in accreditation was mixed. Question F asked whether the respondent had served as a member of the SACS Commission on Colleges (COC), Executive Council of the COC, a visiting team, Committee on Criteria and Reports, or an Ad Hoc Special Committee. Of the 369 presidents responding to question F, 77.0% had never served on the Commission on Colleges, although 12.2% had served 2 to 5 times, and 9.8% had served once. An even higher percentage, 90.9% of the 341 presidents responding had never served as a member of the Executive Council of the Commission on Colleges. A total of 18 presidents (5.3%) indicated they had served once, 12 (3.5%) had served 2 to 5 times, and one (.3%) had served over 10 times. Interestingly, 40.2% of the 423 presidents responding had never served on a visiting team. A total of 52 presidents (12.3%) indicated that they had served once on a visiting team, while 102 (24.1%) had served 2 to 5 times, 54 presidents (12.8%) had served 5 to 10 times, and 45 presidents (10.6%) had served over 10 times.

Service as a member of the Committee on Criteria and Reports was reported by 22.9% of the 363 presidents who indicated an answer to the question. While 9.6% indicated that they had served two to five times on the committee, 9.1% had only served once. Eleven presidents (3.0%) indicated that they had served from 5 to 10 times on the committee. Only four presidents (1.1%) served over 10 times.

Membership on Ad Hoc Special Committees was also low. Of the 365 presidents that answered this question, 74.8% had never served on an Ad Hoc Special

Committee. However, a slightly larger percentage served on Ad Hoc Committees than on the Committee on Criteria and Reports. While four presidents (1.1%) indicated they had served 5 to 10 times, 46 presidents (12.6%) indicated that they had served 2 to 5 times, and 42 presidents (11.5%) had served once.

Asking whether the presidents had chaired a visiting team elicited similar responses. Of the 433 presidents that responded to question G, 76.2% have never chaired a visiting team. A few (6.0%) have chaired a visiting team once, 2 to 5 times (7.9%), 5 to 10 times (5.3%), and over 10 times (4.6%).

Only four of the 435 presidents who responded to question H (.9%) were ever employed by a regional accrediting association. Two were employed for less than 10 years, one was employed over 10 years, and one did not indicate how many years.

Participation in regional accreditation was at a much higher level. Of the 432 presidents responding to question I, 64.4% indicated that they had participated in regional accreditation from 2 to 5 times. A number of presidents had participated in regional accreditation over 10 times (10.4%) and from 6 to 10 times (10.2%). Of the remaining presidents, 36 (8.3%) had participated once, and only 29 (6.6%) had never participated. All of the presidents reported that their institutions were fully accredited.

Slightly over half (51.6%) of the 438 presidents responding to the questionnaire had a terminal degree in education. Almost one-fifth (19.9%) had liberal arts degrees, while 8.4% had science degrees. Twenty-six presidents with terminal degrees in religion or theology (5.9%) answered the survey, as did 25

presidents (5.7%) with business degrees. Other degrees include health care (2.7%), law (2.5%), agriculture (.9%), communications (.9%), and various fields such as policy studies (1.4%).

A majority (43.8%) of the 411 presidents providing information about their party affiliation in question L were Democrats. The next largest group of presidents (24.1%) were Independents, while 20.7% classified themselves as Republicans. Almost one-tenth of the presidents classified themselves as having no party affiliation (9.2%) or other (2.2%). Over half of the 418 presidents (57.4%) answering question M labeled themselves as "middle of the road," while over one-fourth (26.1%) felt they were "conservative." Fifty-eight presidents (13.9%) labeled themselves as "liberal" and 11 (2.6%) listed other labels such as libertarian, none, or independent.

Quantitative Analysis

As indicated in the methodology, the legislators and governors were combined into a single database, since there were only 11 governors that were asked to participate (5 governors responded to the questionnaire). Therefore, the responses of the presidents will first be discussed, followed by a discussion of the responses of the political leaders, including both legislators and governors. Finally, the two groups, college and university presidents and political leaders, will be compared. The analysis was designed to answer the following research questions:

1) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by college presidents reveal significant variances when examined by: mission

and classification of institution, experience level of the president, involvement of the president in accreditation, or by field in which the president earned his/her terminal degree?

2) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by political leaders (executive and legislative) reveal significant differences when examined by: political party affiliation; experience level; involvement in accreditation; and profession/employment?

3) Do the perceptions of regional accreditation effectiveness and reform by college presidents reveal a significant variance from the perceptions of political leaders?

4) What themes emerge when presidents and legislators are given an opportunity to offer open-ended comments on regional accreditation strengths, weaknesses, and improvements?

As indicated in the methodology, to understand the perceptions of presidents, SPSS General Linear Model (GLM) multivariate analyses were run using five fixed factors: years as president at current institution, grouped years as president of other institutions, Carnegie classification, grouped accreditation involvement, and grouped degrees. An overall analysis was run using all questions, and then a separate analysis was run for each group of questions on purpose, process, effectiveness, and critique and reform. The GLM multivariate analysis using all questions indicated that Carnegie classification was the only factor that was significant overall at the .05 level

for five or seven factors. Therefore, the separate analyses were run to learn more about the perceptions of the presidents. For each category of questions, a second GLM multivariate analysis and a post Hoc Tukey's analysis were run to identify which questions showed significant differences and where the differences occurred.

Purpose Questions

When a GLM multivariate analysis was run with the purpose questions and five factors (years as president at current institution, years as president at another institution, Carnegie classification, involvement in accreditation, and degree), only years as president at current institution and Carnegie classification were significant at the .05 level, as indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.3 indicates that two fixed factors were significant at the .05 level for purpose questions: years as president at current institution and Carnegie classification. For years as president of current institution, purpose questions 6 (regional accreditation enhances admission to graduate/professional study) and 8 (colleges benefit from required self-studies) showed significant differences at the .05 level.

As shown in Table 4.4, the post hoc Tukey's analysis for purpose question 6 indicates that there is a significant difference in perception between less experienced (1-5 years) and more experienced (over 10 years and 6-10 years) presidents. The more experienced presidents, who have a mean from 4.13. to 4.15, agree more strongly than the least experienced presidents, who have a mean of 3.85, that regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing their admission to graduate and professional study.

Table 4.2 GLM multivariate analysis of presidents' responses to purpose questions using five factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Years as president at current institution	.923	1.764[a]	16.000	692.000	**.032**
Years as president at another institution	.935	.980	24.000	1004.106	.491
Carnegie classification	.830	1.649	40.00	1510.974	**.007**
Involvement in accreditation	.916	1.289	24.00	1004.106	.160
Degree	.925	.849	32.00	1277.580	.708

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: Intercept + @YRSPR+@OTINRV4+@CARNREV+@INVLGRP+ DEGR2

Table 4.3 Tests of between-subjects effects with five factors for purpose questions showing significance at the .05 level - presidents

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Years President at Current Institution					
Purpose 6 - Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	6.550	2	3.275	4.978	.007
Purpose 8 - Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self-study.	2.075	2	1.037	3.602	.028
Source: Carnegie Classification					
Purpose 1 - Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities.	10.510	5	2.102	3.702	.003
Purpose 2 - Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards.	10.313	5	2.063	4.185	.001
Purpose 3 - The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education.	9.770	5	1.954	2.431	.035
Purpose 8-Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study.	7.659	5	1.532	5.319	<.001

Table 4.4 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of purpose question 6 (*Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study*) with years as president at current institution as the fixed factor using five factors

Years as President at Current Institution	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
1-5 years at current institution	172	3.85	
Over 10 years at current institution	120		4.13
6-10 years at current institution	80		4.14
Sig.		1.00	.993

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .658.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 112.582.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

However, it should be noted that these means both show support for this purpose, since 4.0 on the scale is "agree" and 5.0 is "strongly agree."

Purpose question 8, as shown in Table 4.5, shows a significant difference in perception of the benefits of the self-study between presidents with the least experience at their current institution (1-5 years) and presidents with the most experience (over 10 years). Presidents with 6-10 years experience did not differ significantly from either of the other groups. The means ranged from 4.51 for the presidents with 1-5 years of experience to 4.68 for presidents with over 10 years of experience at their current institution. Again, the means show strong support for the self-study as a purpose of regional accreditation, although the support of the least experienced presidents is significantly lower than the most experienced presidents.

When Carnegie classification is examined, as already noted in Table 4.3, there are significant differences between the means at the .05 level for purpose question 1 (regional accreditation is important for improving quality), purpose question 2 (regional accreditation assures the public of quality), purpose question 3 (regional agencies form an effective national system), and purpose question 8 (institutions benefit from self-study). Purpose question 5 (peer evaluation vs. governmental review), which was significant at .051, will also be examined.

Differences were apparent between types of universities in purpose question 1, which asked respondents whether they think regional accreditation is an important tool in improving the quality of institutions. Presidents of Research

Table 4.5 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of purpose question 8 (*Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-examination required by the regional accreditation self-study)* with years as president at current institution as the fixed factor using five factors

Years as President at Current Institution	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
1-5 years at current institution	172	4.51	
6-10 years at current institution	80	4.68	4.68
Over 10 years at current institution	120		4.68
Sig.		.058	.993

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .288.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 112.582.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Universities I and II had significantly lower means than the presidents of colleges and universities with other Carnegie classifications. As shown in Table 4.6, presidents of research universities had a mean of 3.61, while the means for presidents of liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities, two-year institutions, doctorate-granting universities and specialized or nontraditional institutions had significantly higher means, ranging from 4.27 to 4.50. Perceptions of research university presidents, therefore, fall between "neutral" and "agree," while the other presidents fall between "agree" and "strongly agree."

Similarly, presidents of research universities had significantly lower means than presidents of institutions with other Carnegie classifications when asked in purpose question 2 whether they perceive that regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that colleges and universities meet quality standards. Table 4.7 shows the mean of responses of Research I and II presidents was 3.67; the means of the other presidents ranged from 4.32 to 4.45. As with purpose question 1, the opinions of Research I and II are between "neutral" and "agree" while the other presidents' opinions range between "agree" and "strongly agree."

Table 4.8 indicates the responses of presidents to purpose question 3, which asked whether the six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education. Research university presidents responding to this question had significantly lower means (3.33) than presidents of two-year institutions (3.99). The means of other presidents were not

Table 4.6 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of purpose question 1 (*Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Research University I or II	18	3.61	
Liberal Arts College I or II	75		4.27
Comprehensive University/College I or II	75		4.36
Two Year Institution	159		4.39
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	20		4.45
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16		4.50
Sig.		1.000	.837

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .568.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.063.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.7 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of purpose question 2 (*Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Research University I or II	18	3.67	.
Comprehensive University/College I or II	84		4.32
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	20		4.40
Liberal Arts College I or II	75		4.41
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16		4.44
Two Year Institution	159		4.45
Sig.		1.000	.979

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .493.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.063.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.8 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of purpose question 3 (*The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Research University I or II	18	3.33
Liberal Arts College I or II	75	3.71
Comprehensive University/College I or II	84	3.74
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	20	3.80
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16	3.88
Two Year Institution	159	3.99
Sig.		.053

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .804.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.063.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

significantly different from each other or the research university or two-year institution presidents.

Purpose question 8 concerning the benefit of the self-study also showed significant differences at the .05 level for Carnegie classifications. Presidents of Research I and II Universities continued to show the lowest mean as indicated in Table 4.9, but reached the level of "agree" at 4.00. The mean of presidents of research universities was not significantly different from the mean of 4.38 for presidents of two-year institutions. Presidents of two-year institutions did not have significantly different perceptions of the benefit of the self-study from any of the other presidents, but presidents of liberal arts, comprehensive and doctorate- granting institutions had significantly higher means than the presidents of Research I and II Universities.

Since data was available on responses of presidents of public and private institutions and different size institutions, an analysis was made of these additional fixed factors with the other five fixed factors. When these two factors were added to the analysis of purpose questions, years as president of current institution showed significant differences at the .05 level, as indicated in Table 4.10.

When seven fixed factors are considered, Table 4.11 indicates that purpose questions 5 (peer evaluation as opposed to governmental review), 6 (students benefit from enhanced access to graduate or professional study), and 8 (self-evaluation is beneficial) have significant differences in the means at the .05 level. Purpose questions 6 and 8 have already been discussed in Tables 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.9 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of purpose question 8 (*Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self-study*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Research University I or II	18	4.00	
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16	4.38	4.38
Two Year Institution	159		4.64
Liberal Arts College I or II	75		4.64
Comprehensive University/College I or II	84		4.64
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	20		4.75
Sig.		.073	.073

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .288.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.063.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.10 GLM multivariate analysis of presidents' responses to purpose questions using seven factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Years as president at current institution	.914	1.943	16.000	678.000	**.015**
Years as president at another institution	.926	1.106	24.000	983.804	.329
Carnegie classification	.868	1.227	40.00	1480.461	.158
Involvement in accreditation	.905	1.434	24.00	983.804	.081
Degree	.923	.863	32.00	1251.765	.687
Public/Private	.962	1.655[a]	8.000	339.000	.108
Number of Full-Time Student	.899	1.147	32.000	1251.765	.263

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: Intercept + @YRSPR+@OTINRV4+@CARNREV+@INVGRP+ @DEGR2+PUBPRIV+NO#STU

Table 4.11 Purpose questions showing significant variance with seven factors - presidents

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Years President at Current Institution					
Purpose 5 - Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation.	2.251	2	1.125	3.497	.031
Purpose 6 Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	6.501	2	3.250	4.827	.009
Purpose 8 - Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study.	2.402	2	1.201	3.851	.022

As shown in Table 4.12, the means of all presidents fall closer to "strongly agree" than "agree" when presidents are asked if they prefer peer evaluation to governmental review. However, presidents with 6-10 years at their current institution have a mean that is significantly lower than the mean of presidents with over 10 years at their current institution. Presidents with 1-5 years at their current institution have means that are not significantly different from other presidents, and presidents with over 10 years of experience at their current institution have a very high mean of 4.80.

When seven factors are considered in the analysis, purpose question 5 is one of the few questions that is significant for one of the initial five factors (years of experience at current institution) when seven factors are considered, but not when only five factors are considered. Other questions that are significant for seven factors are significant for one of the two additional factors, public/private or number of students.

College presidents appear to support many of the purposes of accreditation. There are, however, some significant differences in means for presidents with different levels of experience at their current institution and different Carnegie classifications.

Process Questions

As shown in Table 4.13, when a GLM multivariate analysis was completed for process questions, significant F scores were found for Carnegie classification and involvement in accreditation. Table 4.14 shows that process questions 2, 4, 6 and 8 had significance at the .05 level for Carnegie classification, while process questions 2, 3, 5, and 6 had significant differences for involvement in accreditation. The posthoc

Table 4.12 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of purpose question 5 (*Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation*) with years as president of current institution as the fixed factor using seven fixed factors

Years as President at Current Institution	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
6-10 years at current institution	81	4.62	
1-5 years at current institution	173	4.65	4.65
Over 10 years at current institution	121		4.80
Sig.		.916	.101

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .322.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 113.677.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.13 GLM multivariate analysis of presidents' responses to process questions using five factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Years as president at current institution	.941	1.126	18.000	652.000	.321
Years as president at another institution	.935	.828	27.000	952.730	.718
Carnegie classification	.808	1.582	45.00	1461.380	**.009**
Involvement in accreditation	.880	1.572	27.000	952.730	**.032**
Degree	.870	1.283	36.000	1223.410	.123

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @YRSP+@OTINRV4+@CARNREV+@INVLGRP+ @DEGRP2

Table 4.14 Tests of between-subjects effects with five factors for process questions showing significance at the .05 level - presidents

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Carnegie Classification					
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	8.438	5	1.688	3.244	.007
Process 4 - The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy	13.063	5	2.613	2.576	.026
Process 6 - Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions.	11.410	5	2.282	3.397	.005
Process 8 - The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited.	19.557	5	3.911	3.080	.010
Source: Involvement in Accreditation					
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	10.340	3	3.447	6.626	<.001
Process 3 - The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards.	8.156	3	2.722	4.809	.003
Process 5 - Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from institutions with similar missions.	9.306	3	3.102	3.459	.017
Process 6 - Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions.	11.819	3	3.940	4.864	.001

Tukey's analysis shows only one subset for several of the questions. Therefore, it is assumed that the lowest and highest means are significantly different at the .05 level.

For process question 2, which asks whether peer review is an effective feature of accreditation, presidents of research universities have significantly lower means than presidents of all other types of universities. It appears from Table 4.15, therefore, that presidents of research universities regard review of the self study by the visiting team against criteria/standards somewhat less highly. For process question 4, which asks whether the purpose of accreditation is to identify ways of improving an institution, presidents of research universities have significantly lower means than presidents of all other colleges and universities except comprehensive universities/colleges. The means of comprehensive university/college presidents are not significantly different from any of the other presidents in Table 4.16. Process question 6 asks whether presidents agree that visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff and presidents from similar institutions.

Table 4.17 summarizes the results of the post hoc analysis for Carnegie classification for process question 4. Presidents of specialized or nontraditional institutions, liberal arts colleges, doctorate-granting colleges, and comprehensive colleges/universities do not differ significantly from each other or from other presidents. However, presidents of research universities have means that are significantly lower from the presidents of two-year institutions.

Table 4.15 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 2 (*The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Research University I or II	17	3.53	
Comprehensive University/College I or II	74		4.16
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16		4.19
Two Year Institution	170		4.27
Liberal Arts College I or II	72		4.28
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	21		4.38
Sig.		1.000	.852

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .516.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.670.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.16 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 4 (*The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Research University I or II	17	3.12	
Comprehensive University/College I or II	74	3.70	3.70
Liberal Arts College I or II	72		3.89
Two Year Institution	170		3.92
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	21		3.95
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16		4.19
Sig.		.220	.430

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.012.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.670.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.17 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 6 (*Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Research University I or II	17	3.65	
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16	3.69	3.69
Liberal Arts College I or II	72	3.92	3.92
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	21	3.95	3.95
Comprehensive University/College I or II	74	3.97	3.97
Two Year Institution	170		4.27
Sig.		.638	.065

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .664.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.670.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

The final process question that shows significant differences between presidents of institutions with different Carnegie classifications is process question 8 in Table 4.18. Two-year institution presidents appear significantly less confident than specialized or nontraditional institution presidents that the selection of peer evaluators is a shared responsibility between SACS COC staff, the visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited.

When the level of involvement in accreditation is examined for process question 2, which asks whether peer review of the self-study and evaluation against criteria/standards is an effective feature of accreditation, those with medium or low/no involvement have significantly lower means than those with very high involvement. Presidents with high involvement do not differ significantly from other presidents on the question of whether peer review is an effective feature of accreditation, as indicated in Table 4.19.

Process question 3 is one of the few questions with three subsets of responses. As indicated in Table 4.20, those presidents with very high involvement in accreditation have significantly higher means than presidents with medium or low/no involvement when asked whether evaluating compliance with criteria or standards is a primary purpose of the visiting team. Responses of presidents with high involvement do not different significantly from responses of presidents with high or medium involvement, but are significantly higher than those with low or no involvement.

Table 4.18 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 8 (*The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Two Year Institution	169	2.97
Liberal Arts College I or II	73	3.22
Research University I or II	17	3.35
Comprehensive University/College I or II	74	3.41
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	21	3.52
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	16	3.63
Sig.		.220

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.014.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.692.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.19 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 2 (*The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Medium Involvement	198	4.11	
Low or No Involvment	69	4.16	
High Involvement	62	4.35	4.35
Very High Involvement	41		4.66
Sig.		.207	.072

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .520.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 66.597.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.20 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 3 (*The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means		
		1	2	3
Low or No Involvement	69	4.00		
Medium Involvement	198	4.15	4.15	
High Involvement	62	4.40	4.40	
Very High Involvement	41			4.51
Sig.		.675	2.00	.837

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.014.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.692.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Those with medium involvement do not differ significantly from those presidents with low or high involvement, but are significantly lower than those with very high involvement.

Process questions 5 and 6, which both focus on the composition of visiting teams, have only one subset, and the means tend to increase from lower involvement to high involvement. Table 4.21 shows means for process question 5. Presidents with very high involvement disagree more strongly than presidents with medium involvement that most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from similar institutions. Presidents with high and low or no involvement do not differ significantly form presidents with very high or medium involvement.

The highest mean for process question 6, which asks whether visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents form similar institutions is for presidents with very high involvement. Perhaps because they are less knowledgeable, presidents with medium and low or no involvement have significantly lower means than those with very high involvement. However, as indicated in Table 4.22, presidents with high involvement do not differ significantly from the other presidents. As could be expected, these results are almost the opposite of the results for process question 5, showing that presidents with very high involvement are most confident that most visiting teams are not solely composed of college presidents from similar institutions.

When the distinction between public and private institutions and number of

Table 4.21 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 5 (*Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from institutions with similar missions*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Very High Involvement	41	1.90	
High Involvement	62	2.08	2.08
Low or No Involvement	69	2.32	2.32
Medium Involvement	198		2.35
Sig.		.054	.344

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .897.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 66.597.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.22 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of process question 6 (*Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff and presidents from institutions with similar missions*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Medium Involvement	198	3.93	
Low or No Involvement	69	4.04	
High Involvement	62	4.26	4.26
Very High Involvement	41		4.54
Sig.		.095	.203

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .672.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 66.597.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

full-time students is considered in the analysis, three fixed factors appear to be significant at the .05 level: Carnegie classification, public/private, and involvement in accreditation, as shown in Table 4.23. Table 4.24 indicates that the between-subjects effects are significant for Carnegie classification for process questions 2, 4, and 8. For involvement in accreditation, process questions 2, 3, 5 and 6 are significant, and for public/private, process questions 2 and 4 are significant. Process question 2, which asks whether presidents believe that peer review of the self-study against standards is an effective feature of accreditation, is significant for all three factors. The results of the analysis of the seven factors are very similar for Carnegie classification and for involvement in accreditation, and will be not be discussed.

There are significant differences in the means of responses of presidents of public and private colleges to process questions 2 and 4, as indicated in Table 4.25. Process question 2 asks whether the peer review and evaluation of the self-study against standards is an effective feature of accreditation. Presidents of public institutions responding to process question 2 have significantly higher means than presidents of private institutions, but both means exceed "agree."

Process question 4 asks whether the primary purpose of a visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy. Presidents of private institutions have significantly higher means when seven factors are analyzed than presidents of public institutions who responded to process

Table 4.23 GLM multivariate analysis of presidents' responses to process questions using seven factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Years as president at current institution	.945	1.014	18.000	636.000	.442
Years as president at another institution	.928	.894	27.000	929.366	.622
Carnegie classification	.811	1.522	45.00	1425.594	**.015**
Involvement in accreditation	.881	1.522	27.000	929.366	**.043**
Degree	.878	1.173	36.000	1193.431	.225
Public/Private	.936	2.413[a]	9.000	318.000	**.012**
Number of Full-Time Students	.871	1.247	36.000	1193.431	.152

b) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @YRSP+@OTINRV4+@CARNREV+@INVLGRP+ @DEGRP2

Table 4.24 Tests of between-subjects effects with seven factors for process questions showing significance at the .05 level - presidents

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Carnegie Classification					
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	9.995	5	1.999	3.862	.002
Process 4 - The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy	15.016	5	3.003	2.987	.012
Process 8 The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited.	18.735	5	3.747	2.933	.013
Source: Involvement in Accreditation					
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	10.485	3	3.495	6.753	<.001
Process 3 - The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards.	8.254	3	2.751	4.813	.003
Process 5 - Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from institutions with similar missions.	8.939	3	2.980	3.301	.021
Process 6 - Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions.	12.068	3	4.023	5.988	.001
Source: Public/Private					
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	2.040	1	2.040	3.941	.048

Table 4.24 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Public/Private					
Process 4 - The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy	5.678	1	5.678	5.647	.018

Table 4.25 Marginal means for process questions with significant differences in the means between public and private institutions when examining seven factors

Dependent Variable	Public or Private Institution	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	Public	4.250	.050	4.151	4.349
	Private	4.117	.066	3.987	4.246
Process 4 - The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy.	Public	3.784	.067	3.652	3.916
	Private	3.934	.088	3.762	4.107

question 4.

It appears from the analysis of the process questions that presidents with more involvement in accreditation are more knowledgeable and more supportive. Research university presidents are again slightly more conservative in their responses. There is no clear pattern of responses for public and private institutions.

Effectiveness Questions

When the five fixed factors (years as president at current institution, grouped years as president of other institutions, Carnegie classification, involvement in accreditation, and grouped terminal degree) are used for a GLM multivariate analysis of effectiveness questions, involvement in accreditation and type of terminal degree are significant at the .05 level, as shown in Table 4.26.

As indicated in Table 4.27, 12 effectiveness questions are shown as significant at the .05 level for involvement in accreditation and degree. For involvement in accreditation, effectiveness questions 3 (state level requirements are more effective), 7 (peer evaluators are the best judges), 8 (accreditation costs are justified), 9 (TQM/CQI are more effective), 10 (accreditation is ineffective in judging quality and educational effectiveness), 13 (accreditation is effective compared to the practices of other countries), 14 (accreditation is professional backscratching), 15c (accreditation is respected by faculty), 15e (accreditation is respected by college trustees), 16 (accreditation confers esteem), 18 (peer evaluation is more effective than significant.

Table 4.26 GLM multivariate analysis of presidents' responses to effectiveness questions using five factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Years as president at current institution	.715	1.131	54.000	334.000	.258
Years as president at another institution	.704	.768	81.000	500.356	.929
Carnegie classification	.486	.967	135.000	828.704	.588
Involvement in accreditation	.542	1.402	81.000	500.356	**.017**
Degree	.454	1.357	108.000	665.476	**.014**

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: Intercept + @YRSPR+@OTINRV4+@CARNREV+@INVLGRP+ DEGR2

Table 4.27 Tests of between-subjects effects with five factors for effectiveness questions showing significance at the .05 level - presidents

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Involvement in accreditation					
Effectiveness 3 - State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	11.886	3	3.962	4.854	.003
Effectiveness 7 - Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	13.012	3	4.337	5.476	.001
Effectiveness 8 - The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results.	13.058	3	4.353	4.625	.004
Effectiveness 9 - The principles and practices of Total Quality Management/ Continuous Quality Improvement are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation.	12.048	3	4.016	4.717	.003
Effectiveness 10 - The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are relatively ineffective in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational programs.	7.972	3	2.657	2.770	.043
Effectiveness 13 - The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represent an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries.	5.366	3	1.789	2.902	.036
Effectiveness 14 - Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument.	8.370	3	2.790	3.583	.015
Effectiveness 15 c - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Faculty	5.129	3	1.710	3.187	.025
Effectiveness 15 e - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by Board of Trustee Members	4.124	3	1.375	2.787	.042

Table 4.27 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Effectiveness 16 - Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	3.833	3	1.278	3.582	.015
Effectiveness 18 - To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	7.052	3	2.351	4.112	.007
Effectiveness 20 - Most accreditation exercises at the campus level are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty/staff.	7.637	3	2.546	3.438	.018
Degree					
Effectiveness 3 - State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	11.939	4	2.985	3.657	.007
Effectiveness 4 - Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	9.121	4	2.280	3.648	.007
Effectiveness 6 - One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.	6.396	4	1.599	2.924	.022
Effectiveness 8 - The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results.	9.696	4	2.424	2.576	.039
Effectiveness 14 - Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument.	9.953	4	2.488	3.196	.014
Effectiveness 15 e - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by Board of Trustee Members	4.900	4	1.225	2.483	.045

Table 4.27 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Effectiveness 17 - The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represents an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries.	21.835	4	5.459	4.823	.001

or degree, effectiveness questions 3, 4 (review designated state agencies would be more effective), 6 (ability to qualify for Federal funds), 8, 14, 15e, and 17 (many weak and low quality institutions are accredited) are significant.

For these questions, there appears to be more of a pattern from low to very high involvement or vice-versa. In question 3, which concerns state accountability, presidents with very high involvement have a lower mean (1.89) than presidents with low or no involvement (2.64). The means of presidents with high and medium involvement are not significantly different, as indicated in Table 4.28. Presidents with very high involvement disagree, therefore, more strongly than presidents with low or no involvement that state reporting requirements are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation.

As indicated in Table 4.29, the means for effectiveness question 7 (peer evaluators as the best judges) show steady increases as the involvement of the presidents increases. Those presidents with low and medium involvement have significantly lower means (3.86 and 3.92) than those with very high involvement (4.61). The mean of those presidents who involvement can be considered high (4.24) does not differ significantly from the other presidents.

Perceptions of costs of accreditation are explored in effectiveness question 4.30. Like effectiveness question 7, the presidents with low and medium involvement have significantly different means at the .05 level from the presidents with very high

Table 4.28 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 3 (*State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Very High Involvement	28	1.89	
High Involvement	41	2.17	2.17
Medium Involvement	111	2.36	2.36
Low or No Involvement	44		2.64
Sig.		.074	.076

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .816.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.29 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 7 (*Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Low or No Involvement	44	3.86	
Medium Involvement	111	3.92	
High Involvement	41	4.24	4.24
Very High Involvement	28		4.61
Sig.		.190	.226

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .792.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.30 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 8 (*The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Low or No Involvement	44	3.43	
Medium Involvement	111	3.56	
High Involvement	41	3.76	3.76
Very High Involvement	28		4.25
Sig.		.402	.082

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .941.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

involvement, and the presidents with high involvement do not differ from either group.

Effectiveness question 9 shows a slightly different pattern in reverse. As shown in Table 4.31, those presidents with high and very high involvement disagree that TQM or Continuous Quality Improvement are better than regional accreditation. Their means are significantly lower than the means of presidents with low involvement, but the means of those presidents with medium involvement are not significantly different from any other group of presidents.

Presidents with very high involvement also react significantly more negatively to the idea expressed in effectiveness question 10 that regional accreditation is relatively ineffective in evaluating quality and effectiveness. Table 4.32 shows that presidents with very high involvement have significantly lower means than presidents with low and medium involvement. Presidents with high involvement are not significantly different from presidents with other levels of involvement.

Table 4.33 includes the means of presidents who responded to effectiveness question 13, which asked presidents to compare regional accreditation with practices in other countries. As is becoming quite clear, presidents with high involvement are most supportive of accreditation. For this question their means are significantly higher than those of presidents with low or medium involvement. As with many other questions, the means of presidents with high involvement did not differ significantly

Table 4.31 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 9 (*The principles and practices of Total Quality Management/ Continuous Quality Improvement are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Very High Involvement	28	2.07	
High Involvement	41	2.24	
Medium Involvement	111	2.42	2.42
Low or No Involvement	44		2.84
Sig.		.283	.149

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .851.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.32 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 10 (*The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are relatively ineffective in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational programs)* with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Very High Involvement	28	1.82	
High Involvement	41	2.32	2.32
Low Involvement	44		2.39
Medium Involvement	111		2.42
Sig.		.085	.958

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .959.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.33 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 13 (*The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represent an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Low Involvement	44	3.82	
Medium Involvement	111	3.91	
High Involvement	41	4.07	4.07
Very High Involvement	28		4.36
Sig.		.428	.330

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .616.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

from those with low, medium or very high involvement.

Effectiveness question 14 asked presidents whether they equated regional accreditation with professional backscratching. As with other such questions, the strongest negative reactions came from those presidents with very high involvement. The means of presidents with high involvement were not significantly different from the others, while presidents with low and medium involvement had significantly higher means than those with very high involvement. The results of effectiveness question 14 are summarized in Table 4.34.

Several effectiveness questions asked presidents how they believe others perceive regional accreditation. Effectiveness question 15c focused on college faculty. As indicated in Table 4.35, there is a significant difference in the perceptions of presidents with low and very high involvement. While those with low or no involvement have significantly lower means than presidents with very high involvement, those with medium and high involvement do not differ from the other presidents.

This pattern is repeated in effectiveness question 15e, which asked about the perceptions of trustees. Those with low or no involvement believe trustees perceive regional accreditation less warmly than those with very high involvement. As shown in Table 4.36, their means are significantly different, but the means of presidents with medium and high involvement are not different from each other or the other groups.

Table 4.34 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 14 (*Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Very High Involvement	28	1.57	
High Involvement	41	1.80	1.80
Low or No Involvement	44		2.11
Medium Involvement	111		2.18
Sig.		.605	.194

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .779.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.35 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 15c (*Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Faculty*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Low or No Involvement	44	3.91	
Medium Involvement	111	4.10	4.10
High Involvement	41	4.27	4.27
Very High Involvement	28		4.43
Sig.		.101	.153

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .537.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.36 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 15e (*Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by Board of Trustee Members*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Low or No Involvement	44	3.91	
Medium Involvement	111	4.16	4.16
High Involvement	41	4.27	4.27
Very High Involvement	28		4.39
Sig.		.080	.418

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .493.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

However, the means continue to indicate relatively positive attitudes, since they range from 3.91 to 4.39.

Effectiveness question 16, as indicated in Table 4.37, produced means, which exceeded "agree" for all groups. However, those with medium and low or no involvement were still significantly less in agreement that accredited colleges are held in higher esteem than non-accredited colleges than those with very high involvement. The means of presidents with high involvement did not differ significantly from any of the other presidents.

As will be seen in the analysis of comments, many presidents saw non-governmental review as a problem. In effectiveness question 18, presidents were asked whether they felt peer evaluation was more effective than non-governmental review. Table 4.38 shows that those presidents with very high involvement had the highest means (4.86) and agreed most strongly that peer review was more effective. Those with medium and low or no involvement were significantly lower, although the lowest mean was 4.32 for those presidents with medium involvement. Presidents with high involvement did not differ significantly from those with other involvement levels.

For effectiveness question 20, as shown in Table 4.39, presidents rejected the notion that most accreditation exercises are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty and staff. Presidents with very high involvement had significantly lower means than presidents with low or no

Table 4.37 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 16 (*Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Medium Involvement	111	4.42	
Low or No Involvement	44	4.45	
High Involvement	41	4.66	4.66
Very High Involvement	28		4.79
Sig.		.256	.753

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .357.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.38 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 18 (*To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Medium Involvement	111	4.32	
Low or No Involvement	44	4.43	
High Involvement	41	4.49	4.49
Very High Involvement	28		4.86
Sig.		.711	.103

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .572.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.39 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 20 (*Most accreditation exercises at the campus level are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty/staff*) with involvement in accreditation as the fixed factor using five factors

Involvement in Accreditation	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Very High Involvement	28	1.54	
High Involvement	41	1.90	1.90
Medium Involvement	111	1.94	1.94
Low or No Involvement	44		2.23
Sig.		.130	.292

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .741.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.554.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

involvement, but neither differed from presidents with medium or high involvement.

Presidents with very high involvement appear to believe that regional accreditation is more effective and other options less effective than any other group of presidents. Overall, presidents with low or no involvement seem to be at the other end of what is a relatively short spectrum.

A pattern of responses to effectiveness questions also emerged when the degrees of the presidents were examined. Presidents with degrees in some aspect of religion or theology were consistently different from other presidents. Effectiveness questions that showed significant differences at the .05 level by degree include questions 3, 4, 6, 8, 14, 15e, and 17.

Effectiveness question 3 asked whether presidents believe that state accountability reporting is more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation. Table 4.40 presents the responses by degree for this question. Presidents with degrees in religion or theology disagreed less strongly that such measure were more effective. Their responses were significantly different from presidents with grouped degrees (agriculture, business, law, medicine/health, and other) and liberal arts degrees. Presidents with degrees in science and engineering or education did not have significantly different means than presidents with other degrees.

Table 4.41 indicates the results for effectiveness question 4, which asks

Table 4.40 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 3 (*State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation*) with degree as the fixed factor using five factors

Degree	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Grouped Degrees (Agriculture, Business, Communications, Law, Medicine/Health, Other)	34	1.94	
Liberal Arts	49	2.22	
Science & Engineering	19	2.32	2.32
Education & Educational Administration	110	2.42	2.42
Religion & Theology	12		2.92
Sig.		.322	.120

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .816.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.657.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.41 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 4 (*Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency*) with degree as the fixed factor using five factors

Degree	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Science & Engineering	19	1.53	
Grouped Degrees (Agriculture, Business, Communications, Law, Medicine/Health, Other)	34	1.59	
Liberal Arts	49	1.78	
Education & Educational Administration	110	1.93	1.93
Religion & Theology	12		2.42
Sig.		.364	.173

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .625.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.657.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

whether goals would be better served by state review. Presidents with degrees in science and engineering, grouped degrees and liberal arts degrees had significantly lower means than presidents with degrees in religion or theology. It appears that presidents with degrees in religion or theology are somewhat less distressed by the idea of state review as opposed to accreditation review. Presidents with degrees in education again did not differ significantly from presidents with any other degree.

The ability to qualify for Federal aid appears to be more valued by presidents with degrees in religion or theology than presidents with degrees in science and engineering, as shown by the responses to effectiveness question 6 in Table 4.42. Table 4.43 indicates the responses to effectiveness question 8, which asked whether the costs of regional accreditation were justified by the results. Presidents with degrees in religion or theology were less sure that the costs of accreditation are justified by the results. Presidents with grouped degrees have significantly higher means than presidents with degrees in religion or theology, but the other presidents show no significant difference in means.

For effectiveness question 14, presidents with degrees in religion or theology disagreed less strongly than presidents with degrees in science and engineering, education, and other degrees except liberal arts, that regional accreditation is more of an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument. As indicated in Table 4.44, those with liberal arts degrees did not differ

Table 4.42 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 6 (*One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid*) with degree as the fixed factor using five factors

Degree	N	Subset of Means
		1
Science & Engineering	19	3.74
Grouped Degrees (Agriculture, Business, Communications, Law, Medicine/Health, Other)	34	3.76
Liberal Arts	49	3.90
Education & Educational Administration	110	4.15
Religion & Theology	12	4.25
Sig.		.094

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .914.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.657.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.43 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 8 (*The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results*) with degree as the fixed factor using five factors

Degree	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Religion & Theology	12	3.08	
Science & Engineering	19	3.37	3.37
Liberal Arts	49	3.51	3.51
Education & Educational Administration	110	3.75	3.75
Grouped Degrees (Agriculture, Business, Communications, Law, Medicine/Health, Other)	34		3.94
Sig.		.104	.214

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .914.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.657.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.44 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 14 (*Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument*) with degree as the fixed factor using five factors

Degree	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Science & Engineering	19	1.74	
Education & Educational Administration	110	1.90	
Grouped Degrees (Agriculture, Business, Communications, Law, Medicine/Health, Other)	34	1.94	
Liberal Arts	49	2.31	2.31
Religion & Theology	12		2.67
Sig.		.141	.586

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .779.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.657.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

significantly from any other group.

Table 4.45 illustrates that those responding to effectiveness question 15e with degrees in religion or theology also believe less strongly than those with education degrees that accreditation is respected by members of the board of trustees. While these two groups were significantly different at the .05 level, those with other degrees did not differ significantly from any other group.

Effectiveness question 17 asked whether regional accreditation allows weak and low quality institutions to be accredited. Those with religion or theology degrees disagreed more strongly and had significantly lower means than those with science and engineering and liberal arts degrees. Table 4.46 shows that those with grouped degrees and education degrees had means that were not significantly different from those with other types of degrees.

When the distinction between public and private institutions and number of students are considered as additional fixed factors, the analysis produces the same results as Table 4.27. As with five factors, involvement in accreditation and degree are significant for the same effectiveness questions. The post hoc analysis also produces the same results.

Critique and Reform

Only one factor, Carnegie classification, was significant when the presidents' responses to 16 questions about critique and reform of accreditation were examined

Table 4.45 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 15e (*Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by Board of Trustee Members*) with degree as the fixed factor using five factors

Degree	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Religion & Theology	12	3.75	
Liberal Arts	49	4.00	4.00
Science & Engineering	19	4.11	4.11
Grouped Degrees (Agriculture, Business, Communications, Law, Medicine/Health, Other)	34	4.12	4.12
Education & Educational Administration	110		4.30
Sig.		.331	.543

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .493.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.657.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.46 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of effectiveness question 17 (*Regional accreditation standards permit many weak and low quality institutions to be accredited*) with degree as the fixed factor using five factors

Degree	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Religion & Theology	12	3.08	
Science & Engineering	19	3.37	3.37
Liberal Arts	49	3.51	3.51
Education & Educational Administration	110	3.75	3.75
Grouped Degrees (Agriculture, Business, Communications, Law, Medicine/Health, Other)	34		3.94
Sig.		.104	.214

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .914.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.657.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

with five factors, as indicated in Table 4.47. However, Table 4.48 shows that Carnegie classification was significant at the <.001 level for every question. Only four questions had more than one homogeneous subset. For questions with one subset, only the highest and lowest means will be discussed.

Presidents of liberal arts colleges, as indicated in Table 4.49, had significant lower means than presidents of specialized and nontraditional institutions when asked whether there should be a graduated recognition system in critique question 1. All of the presidents had means that showed agreement with this question.

Interestingly, the idea of having separate standards for different types of colleges showed a significant difference between presidents of two-year colleges, who were significantly closer to neutral in their responses to critique question 2 than presidents of research universities. As indicated in Table 4.50, means ranged from 2.93 to 3.63.

Table 4.51 reports that presidents of doctorate-granting universities had significantly lower means when asked about focusing on the quality of undergraduate education in critique question 3 than specialized or nontraditional institution presidents. Means of all of the presidents ranged between "neutral" and "agree." This significant difference held true for critique question 4, which asked presidents whether graduated performance assessment should replace compliance/noncompliance. As shown in Table 4.52, presidents of doctorate-granting universities were very close to

Table 4.47 GLM multivariate analysis of presidents' responses to critique and reform questions using five factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Years as president at current institution	.878	1.117[a]	32.000	530.000	.304
Years as president at another institution	.800	1.284	48.000	788.970	.098
Carnegie classification	.637	1.572	80.000	1280.017	**.001**
Involvement in accreditation	.811	1.202	48.000	788.970	.169
Degree	.743	1.281	64.000	1039.704	.072

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @YRSPR+@OTINRV4+@CARNREV+@INVLGRP+ @DEGRP2

Table 4.48 Tests of between-subjects effects with five factors for critique and reform questions showing significance at the .05 level - presidents

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Carnegie Classification					
Critique 1 - There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g. a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards.	36335.534	6	605.922	621.216	<.001
Critique 2 - Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e.g., community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.).	2987.772	6	497.962	339.953	<.001
Critique 3 - Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice.	3883.887	6	647.314	779.448	<.001
Critique 4 - More discrimination should be used in evaluating institutional compliance with standards--e.g., replace compliance/ non compliance with a graduated performance assessment.	3155.846	6	525.974	623.459	<.001
Critique 5 - Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits.	1237.545	6	206.257	242.325	<.001
Critique 6 - There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation.	2332.838	6	388.806	370.450	<.001
Critique 7 - Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.	3068.084	6	511.347	465.808	<.001
Critique 8 - Well-known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.	699.846	6	116.641	213.528	<.001

Table 4.48 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Carnegie Classification					
Critique 9 - Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	2845.744	6	474.291	422.812	<.001
Critique 10 - Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional.	2903.864	6	483.977	351.661	<.001
Critique 11 - An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review.	3246.294	6	541.049	493.172	<.001
Critique 12 - The results of accreditation should be more publicly known.	3764.508	6	627.418	751.452	<.001
Critique 13 - For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in the state.	4053.163	6	675.527	654.487	<.001
Critique 14 - The effectiveness of regional accreditation would be enhanced by using professional evaluator teams selected and trained for that purpose.	1938.626	6	323.104	282.184	<.001
Critique 15 - There should be closer coordination between regional accreditation and specialized accreditation as a means of reducing both costs and time demands on an institution.	5190.239	6	865.040	1506.035	<.001
Critique 16 - A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report.	2513.851	6	418.975	406.812	<.001

Table 4.49 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 1 (*There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g., a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.26
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.35
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.41
Research University I or II	16	3.44
Two Year Institution	134	3.44
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	4.00
Sig.		.056

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .975.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.50 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 2 (*Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards [e.g., community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.]*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Two Year Institution	134	2.93
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.07
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.13
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.21
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.23
Research University I or II	16	3.63
Sig.		.266

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.465.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.51 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 3 (*Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.27
Research University I or II	16	3.31
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.47
Two Year Institution	134	3.51
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.68
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.87
Sig.		.143

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .830.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.52 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 4 (*More discrimination should be used in evaluating institutional compliance with standards--e.g., replace compliance/non compliance with a graduated performance assessment*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.05
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.16
Two Year Institution	134	3.16
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.18
Research University I or II	16	3.38
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.40
Sig.		.699

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) .844.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

neutral (3.05) in their responses, and presidents of specialized and non-traditional institutions had a mean of 3.40.

Presidents of research universities were significantly less interested in unannounced performance audits than presidents of specialized or nontraditional institutions. As shown in Table 4.53, no group of presidents favored unannounced performance audits discussed in critique question 5.

Presidents of research universities were also significantly less interested in having more public or lay members on governing and policy boards for regional accreditation than presidents of doctorate-granting universities, who were close to neutral. The means of the other presidents for critique question 6 showed some disagreement with the idea of more public and lay members. Table 4.54 shows the means for critique question 6.

Publishing trend data, the reform suggested in critique question 7, was significantly less acceptable to presidents of research universities than presidents of two-year institutions. Table 4.55 indicates that means ranged from 2.69 to 3.36 for these presidents. Presidents of comprehensive colleges/universities and doctorate-granting universities were very close to "neutral."

Presidents of liberal arts colleges, two-year institutions, specialized or nontraditional institutions, comprehensive colleges/universities, and doctorate-granting universities soundly rejected exempting large and well-known institutions

Table 4.53 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 5 (*Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits*) with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Research University I or II	16	1.75
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	1.89
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	1.90
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	1.91
Two Year Institution	134	2.07
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	2.40
Sig.		.088

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .851.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.54 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 6 (*There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Research University I or II	16	2.56
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	2.59
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	2.63
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	2.67
Two Year Institution	134	2.81
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.09
Sig.		.383

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.050.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.55 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 7 (*Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Research University I or II	16	2.69
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	2.80
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	2.92
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.05
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.09
Two Year Institution	134	3.36
Sig.		.157

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.098.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

from accreditation. Presidents of research universities disagreed significantly less, but still disagreed with the idea of exempting some institutions, including possibly their own institution, from accreditation. Table 4.56 presents the results by Carnegie classification for critique question 8.

Presidents of two-year institutions and research universities had significantly different means for critique question 9, which asked whether some members of the visiting team should be selected from outside the region. Table 4.57, which shows two subsets, indicates that presidents of two-year institutions agreed significantly less with this reform than presidents of research universities. All of the other presidents did not disagree significantly.

The range of responses to critique question 10, which asks whether accreditation standards should be national, is from close to "neutral" for liberal arts college presidents to 3.47 for presidents of specialized and nontraditional institutions. Table 4.58 includes the responses to critique question 10.

Presidents do not disagree that trustees or state officials should be able to request a special accreditation review. However, their responses to critique question 11 in Table 4.59 range from just above "neutral" for presidents of liberal arts colleges to 3.32 for presidents of two-year institutions. These differences are significant at the .05 level.

Table 4.56 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 8 (*Well-known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	1.31	
Two Year Institution	134	1.42	
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	1.47	
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	1.56	
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	1.64	
Research University I or II	16		2.25
Sig.		.551	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .546

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.57 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 9 (*Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Two Year Institution	134	2.79	
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	2.95	2.95
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.14	3.14
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.33	3.33
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.45	3.45
Research University I or II	16		3.63
Sig.		.176	.163

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.122.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.58 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 10 (*Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	2.92
Two Year Institution	134	2.99
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.11
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.14
Research University I or II	16	3.25
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.47
Sig.		.501

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.376.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.59 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 11 (*An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.10
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.13
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.17
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.18
Research University I or II	16	3.25
Two Year Institution	134	3.32
Sig.		.967

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.097.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.60 shows that responses to critique question 12 are significantly different for presidents of liberal arts colleges and presidents of doctorate-granting universities. Liberals arts college presidents have significantly lower means, which are close to "neutral," than presidents of doctorate-granting universities when asked whether the results of accreditation should be more publicly known.

Critique question 13 asks whether presidents think that regional accreditation should be required for institutions that are incorporated by the state. As indicated in Table 4.61, presidents of specialized or nontraditional institutions have means that are significantly different from presidents of comprehensive colleges/universities.

Critique question 14 asks whether professional evaluators would enhance regional accreditation. Table 4.62 shows that presidents of liberal arts colleges disagree significantly more than presidents of specialized or nontraditional institutions that professional evaluators would enhance regional accreditation.

While specialized accreditation is not the focus of this study, presidents were asked whether closer coordination between regional and specialized accreditation could reduce costs and time demands on institutions in critique question 15. The means of all responses ranged from slightly below to slightly above "agree." Table 4.63 shows that only liberal arts college presidents and doctorate-granting university presidents can be considered to have significantly different responses, with liberal arts college presidents having means slightly below "agree" and doctorate-granting

Table 4.60 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 12 (*The results of accreditation should be more publicly known)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.10
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.40
Research University I or II	16	3.44
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.51
Two Year Institution	134	3.59
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.73
Sig.		.101

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .835.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.61 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 13 (*For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.07
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.13
Research University I or II	16	3.44
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	3.64
Two Year Institution	134	3.77
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	3.83
Sig.		.058

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.032.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.62 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 14 (*The effectiveness of regional accreditation would be enhanced by using professional evaluator teams selected and trained for that purpose)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	2.34
Research University I or II	16	2.38
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	2.46
Two Year Institution	134	2.54
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	2.55
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	2.80
Sig.		.589

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.145.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.63 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 15 (*There should be closer coordination between regional accreditation and specialized accreditation as a means of reducing both costs and time demands on an institution2)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	3.85
Research University I or II	16	4.00
Two Year Institution	134	4.12
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	4.14
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	4.20
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	4.23
Sig.		.440

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .574.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

presidents having means slightly above "agree."

Research university presidents disagree most that portfolios would provide a more useful picture of an institution than a self-study report. Their responses to critique question 16 are significantly lower than the mean of specialized or nontraditional institution presidents, who have a response slightly above "neutral." Table 4.64 indicates that research university presidents have a mean less than "neutral" although only approximately half way to "disagree."

When seven fixed factors are considered, Table 4.65 shows years as president at other institutions, Carnegie classification, and number of students are significant at the .05 level. It appears, therefore, that the additional two factors most affected the analysis of critique questions. As indicated in Table 4.66, only critique questions 7, 8 ,9, 12 and 13 are significant at the .05 level for Carnegie classification. However, as with five factors, no patterns are apparent in the data.

Presidents with no experience at another institution have significantly different means for critique question 7, which asks whether institutions should be required to publish trend data, from presidents with 6-10 years experience at another institution. Presidents with no experience are closer to a "neutral" response, and presidents with 6-10 years are closer to an "agree" response as shown in Table 4.67. Presidents with 1 to 5 years of experience at another institution and presidents with over 10 years of experience at another institution have means that are not significantly different from

Table 4.64 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 16 (*A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report)* with Carnegie classification as the fixed factor using five factors

Carnegie Classification	N	Subset of Means
		1
Research University I or II	16	2.63
Comprehensive University/College I or II	63	2.75
Two Year Institution	134	2.83
Doctorate-Granting University I or II	22	2.86
Liberal Arts College I or II	62	2.90
Specialized or Nontraditional Institution	15	3.20
Sig.		.276

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.030.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 28.026.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.65 GLM multivariate analysis of presidents' responses to critique and reform questions using seven factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept					
Years as president at current institution	.873	1.141	32.000	518.000	.275
Years as president at another institution	.779	1.404	48.000	772.124	**.040**
Carnegie classification	.666	1.377	80.000	1251.133	**.018**
Involvement in accreditation	.810	1.176	48.000	771.124	.198
Degree	.738	1.278	64.000	1016.215	.074
Public/Private	.956	.742[a]	16.000	259.000	.749
Number of Students	.709	1.458	64.000	1016.215	**.013**

c) Exact statistic.
d) Design: Intercept + @YRSPR+@OTINRV4+@CARNREV+@INVLGRP+ @DEGRP2+PUBPRIV+NO#STU

Table 4.66 Tests of between-subjects effects with seven factors for critique and reform questions showing significance at the .05 level - presidents

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Years as President at Other Institutions					
Critique 7 - Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.	10.482	3	3.494	3.340	.020
Critique 13 - For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state	8.051	3	2.684	2.629	.050
Source: Carnegie Classification					
Critique 7 - Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.	12.150	5	2.430	2.323	.043
Critique 8 - Well-known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.	11.519	5	2.304	4.295	.001
Critique 9 - Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	18.263	5	3.653	3.389	.005
Critique 12 - The results of accreditation should be more publicly known	11.826	5	2.365	2.798	.017
Critique 13 - For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in the state	16.956	5	3.391	3.323	.006

Table 4.66 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Number of Students					
Critique 3 - Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice.	8.528	4	2.132	2.635	.034
Critique 7 - Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance	12.016	4	3.004	2.872	.023
Critique 9 - Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	17.188	4	4.297	3.986	.004
Critique 16 - A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report.	10.003	4	2.501	2.497	.043

Table 4.67 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 7 (*Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance*) with experience as president at other institutions as the fixed factor using seven factors

Experience as President at Other Institutions	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
No experience at another institution	241	3.03	
1-5 years as president at another institution	22	3.18	3.18
Over 10 years at another institution	28	3.50	3.50
6-10 years at another institution	21		3.71
Sig.		.280	.181

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.046.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.089.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

the other presidents.

Critique question 13, which asks whether regional accreditation should be required for continued state incorporation of an institution, shows steadily increasing means as the experience of presidents at other institutions increases, as indicated in Table 4.68. Those with no experience at another institution have means that are significantly lower than presidents with over 10 years at another institution when asked whether regional accreditation should be required for continued state incorporation. The means of all presidents are close to "agree" for this question.

Critique question 3, which was significant for number of students when seven factors were examined, asks whether institutions should focus more on the quality of undergraduate education. The responses, as indicated in Table 4.69, do not follow a pattern from largest to smallest. Instead, presidents of institutions with 10,001 to 20,000 students have significantly lower means than presidents of institutions with over 20,000 students. Presidents of other size institutions do not have significantly different means from any other presidents. All of the presidents means range between "neutral" and "agree."

A more understandable pattern emerges for responses to critique question 7, which asks about the publication of trend data. As shown in Table 4.70, as the number of students increases, the agreement of the presidents increases. Some of the strongest differences in means that have occurred are seen between presidents of the smallest

Table 4.68 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 13 (*For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in the state*) with experience as president at other institutions as the fixed factor using seven factors

Experience as President at Other Institutions	N	Subset of Means
		1
No experience at another institution	241	3.52
1-5 years as president at another institution	22	3.55
6-10 years at another institution	21	3.86
Over 10 years at another institution	28	4.04
Sig.		.200

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.021.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.089.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.69 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 3 (*Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice*) with total number of students as the fixed factor using seven factors

Total Number of Students	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
10,001 - 20,000	38	3.26	
1,001 - 5,000	151	3.50	3.50
5,001 - 10,000	52	3.52	3.52
Less than 1,000	51	3.69	3.69
Over 20,000	20		3.85
Sig.		.207	.385

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .809.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 41.059.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.70 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 7 (*Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance*) with total number of students as the fixed factor using seven factors

Total Number of Students	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
Less than 1,000	51	2.94	
1,001 - 5,000	151	3.05	
10,001 - 20,000	38	3.13	
5,001 - 10,000	52	3.29	3.29
Over 20,000	20		3.80
Sig.		.537	.156

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.046.

a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 41.059.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

and the smallest institutions. Presidents of institutions with less than 1,000 students are very slightly below "neutral" and their responses are significantly different from presidents of institutions with over 20,000 students, whose means are closer to"agree."

Presidents of colleges with over 20,000 students also have the highest means for critique question 9, which asks if some members of the visiting team should be selected from outside the Southern region. Table 4.71 also indicates that presidents of institutions with 1,001 to 5,000 students and with less than 1,000 students have significantly lower means. The means of presidents of institutions with 10,001 to 20,000 students do not differ significantly from the other presidents.

The dichotomy between presidents of institutions with the largest and the second largest number of students is repeated in critique question 16, which asks whether a portfolio would be more valuable than a self-study. Presidents of institutions with 10,001 to 20,000 students have a mean between "disagree" and "neutral," as shown in Table 4.72, while presidents of institutions with 20,000 or more students have a mean slightly above "neutral" when seven fixed factors are examined.

Summary of Analysis of Presidents' Responses.

It is clear that college and university presidents support regional accreditation. Support is particularly strong for the purposes of regional accreditation. There are some significant differences, however, for each topical group of questions. Post hoc

Table 4.71 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 9 (*Some members of peer review teams making visits to campuses should be selected outside the Southern region*) with total number of students as the fixed factor using seven factors

Total Number of Students	N	Subset of Means	
		1	2
1,001 - 5,000	151	2.83	
Less than 1,000	51	2.88	
10,001 - 20,000	38	3.13	3.13
5,001 - 10,000	52	3.31	3.31
Over 20,000	20		3.70
Sig.		.222	.095

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.078.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 41.059.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

Table 4.72 Tukey's HSD[abc] post hoc analysis of critique and reform question 16 (*A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report*) with total number of students as the fixed factor using seven factors

Total Number of Students	N	Subset of Means
		1
10,001 - 20,000	38	2.55
5,001 - 10,000	52	2.73
1,001 - 5,000	151	2.80
Less than 1,000	51	3.14
Over 20,000	20	3.15
Sig.		.053

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on Type III Sum of Squares
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.001.
a) Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 41.059.
b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
c) Alpha = .05.

analysis pinpoints these differences for each significant fixed factor for each question that shows significant differences at the .05 level. To have an overall picture of these differences by question, Table 4.73 illustrates where significant differences were found for each question for five fixed factors and for seven fixed factors. For many questions, significant differences were found when both five and seven factors were examined. Fifteen questions had significant differences in the means only when five factors were examined, and three had significant differences for the original five factors only when seven factors were examined.

Only in the critique and reform questions are there more extensive differences in the number of questions and the significant factors when five fixed factors and seven fixed factors were examined. For five fixed factors, all of the critique and reform questions have significant differences by Carnegie classification.

Tables 4.74 through 4.80 graphically illustrate some interesting patterns of responses by fixed factor. For each question with a significant difference in the means, the number of factors that yielded significant differences is included. As noted, a question may have significant differences in the means when five factors are considered, seven factors are considered, or both.

Table 4.74 examines the responses with significant differences in the mean for years president at current institution. Presidents with the most experience at their current institution have higher means for purpose questions than presidents with less

Table 4.73 Presidents' responses significant at the .05 level by question with five (5ff) and seven (7ff) fixed factors.

Question	Fixed Factors						
	Years President at Current Institution	Years President at Other Institution	Carnegie Classification	Involvement in Accreditation	Grouped Degree	*Public/ Private*	*Number of Students*
Purpose							
1) Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities.			5 ff				
2) Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards.			5 ff				
3) The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education.			5 ff				
4) There is an effective distinction between the purpose of regional (institutional) accreditation and the purpose of professional or major field (program) accreditation.							
5) Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation.	7 ff						
6) Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	5 ff 7 ff						
7) Graduation from a regionally accredited institution is important for being licensed in a profession.							
8) Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study.	5 ff 7 ff		5 ff				
Process							
1) The requirement that an institution conduct a self-study every ten years is an effective feature of accreditation.							
2) The review of an institutional self study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.			5 ff 7 ff	5 ff 7 ff		7 ff	

Table 4.73 (continued)

Question	Fixed Factors						
	Years President at Current Institution	Years President at Other Institution	Carnegie Classification	Involvement in Accreditation	Grouped Degree	*Public/ Private*	*Number of Students*
Process							
3) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards.				5 ff 7 ff			
4) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy.			5 ff 7 ff			7 ff	
5) Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from other campuses with similar missions.				5 ff 7 ff			
6) Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions.			5 ff	5 ff 7 ff			
7) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is primarily made by professional staff of the SACS Commission on Colleges.							
8) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited.			5 ff 7 ff				
9) Regional accreditation has moved from a preoccupation with process to an accent on results—from standards (e.g. number of Ph.D.s on the faculty) to a concern with institutional effectiveness (identifying goals consistent with mission and assessing performance on the basis of those goals).							
Effectiveness							
1) The regional accreditation of a college is a major factor in parent/student decision to attend a particular college.							
2) Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.							

Table 4.73 (continued)

Question	Fixed Factors						
	Years President at Current Institution	Years President at Other Institution	Carnegie Classification	Involvement in Accreditation	Grouped Degree	*Public/ Private*	*Number of Students*
Effectiveness							
3) State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.				5 ff 7 ff	5 ff 7 ff		
4) Improvement and accountability goals—for both public and private institutions—would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.					5 ff 7 ff		
5) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to transfer credits from one institution to another.							
6) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.					5 ff 7 ff		
7) Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.				5 ff 7 ff			
8) The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results.				5 ff 7 ff	5 ff 7 ff		
9) The principles and practices of Total Quality Management/ Continuous Quality Improvement are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation.				5 ff 7 ff			
10) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are relatively ineffective in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational programs.				5 ff 7 ff			
11) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in large comprehensive and research universities.							
12) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in smaller schools such as some community colleges and liberal arts schools.							

Table 4.73 (continued)

Question	Fixed Factors						
	Years President at Current Institution	Years President at Other Institution	Carnegie Classification	Involvement in Accreditation	Grouped Degree	*Public/ Private*	*Number of Students*
Effectiveness							
13) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represent an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries.				5 ff 7 ff			
14) Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument.				5 ff 7 ff	5 ff 7 ff		
15) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by:							
a) Parents							
b) College Students							
c) College Faculty				5 ff 7 ff			
d) College Administrators							
e) Board of Trustee Members				5 ff 7 ff	5 ff 7 ff		
f) Political Leaders							
g) Civic and Corporate Leaders							
16) Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non-accredited colleges.				5 ff 7 ff			
17) Regional accreditation standards and review permit many weak and low quality institutions to be accredited.					5 ff 7 ff		
18) To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.				5 ff 7 ff	5 ff 7 ff		
19) Regional accreditation has been effective in monitoring the quality and integrity of intercollegiate athletics programs.							

Table 4.73 (continued)

Question	Fixed Factors						
	Years President at Current Institution	Years President at Other Institution	Carnegie Classification	Involvement in Accreditation	Grouped Degree	*Public/ Private*	*Number of Students*
Effectiveness							
20) Most accreditation exercises at the campus level are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty/staff.				5 ff 7 ff			
21) The current self-study process is seen by most faculty as an exercise in "busy work" rather than an effective instrument of quality assurance.							
Critique and Reform							
1) There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g. a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards.			5 ff				
2) Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e. g. community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.).			5 ff				
3) Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice.			5 ff				7 ff
4) More discrimination should be used in evaluating institutional compliance with standards—e.g. replace compliance/non compliance with a graduated performance assessment.			5 ff				
5) Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits.			5 ff				
6) There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation.			5 ff				
7) Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.		7 ff	5 ff 7 ff				7 ff

Table 4.73 (continued)

Question	Fixed Factors						
	Years President at Current Institution	Years President at Other Institution	Carnegie Classification	Involvement in Accreditation	Grouped Degree	*Public/ Private*	*Number of Students*
Critique and Reform							
8) Well-known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.			5 ff 7 ff				
9) Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.			5 ff 7 ff				7 ff
10) Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional.			5 ff				
11) An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review.			5 ff				
12) The results of accreditation should be more publicly known.			5 ff 7 ff				
13) For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state.		7 ff	5 ff 7 ff				
14) The effectiveness of regional accreditation would be enhanced by using professional evaluator teams selected and trained for that purpose.			5 ff				
15) There should be closer coordination between regional accreditation and specialized accreditation as a means of reducing both costs and time demands on an institution.			5 ff				
16) A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report.			5 ff				7 ff

Table 4.74 Presidents' responses with significant differences in the means at the .05 level for years president at current institution with five (5ff) and seven (7ff) fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Means and Significance for Years President at Current Institution		
		1-5 years	6-10 years	Over 10 years
Purpose				
5) Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation. (Table 4.12)	7 ff	4.65	4.62	4.80
6) Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study. (Table 4.4)	5 ff 7 ff	3.85	4.14	4.13
8) Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study. (Table 4.5)	5 ff 7ff	4.51	4.68	4.68

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.75 Presidents' responses with significant differences in the means at the .05 level for years president at other institution with five (5ff) and seven (7ff) fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Years President at Other Institution			
		No Exp. at Other Inst.	1-5 years	6-10 years	Over 10 years
Critique and Reform					
7) Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance. (Table 4.67)	7 ff	3.03	3.18	3.71	3.50
13) For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state. (Table 4.68)	7 ff	3.52	3.55	3.86	4.04

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.76 Presidents' responses with significant differences in the means at the .05 level for Carnegie classification with five (5ff) and seven (7ff) fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Carnegie Classification					
		Research	Doctorate-Granting	Comprehensive University/College	Liberal Arts College	Two Year	Specialized or Nontraditional
Purpose							
1) Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities. (Table 4.6)	5 ff	3.61	4.45	4.36	4.27	4.39	4.50
2) Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards. (Table 4.7)	5 ff	3.67	4.40	4.32	4.41	4.45	4.44
3) The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education. (Table 4.8)	5 ff	3.33	3.80	3.74	3.71	3.99	3.88
8) Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study. (Table 4.9)	5 ff	4.00	4.75	4.64	4.64	4.64	4.38
Process							
2) The review of an institutional self study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation. (Table 4.15)	5 ff 7 ff	3.53	4.38	4.16	4.28	4.27	4.19
4) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy. (Table 4.16)	5 ff 7 ff	3.12	3.95	3.70	3.89	3.92	4.19

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.76 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Carnegie Classification					
		Research	Doctorate-Granting	Comprehensive University/College	Liberal Arts College	Two Year	Specialized or Nontraditional
Process							
6) Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions. (Table 4.17)	5 ff	3.65	3.95	3.97	3.92	4.27	3.69
8) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited. (Table 4.18)	5 ff 7 ff	3.35	3.52	3.41	3.22	2.97	3.63
Critique and Reform							
1) There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g. a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards. (Table 4.49)	5 ff	3.44	3.41	3.35	3.26	3.44	4.00
2) Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e. g. community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.). (Table 4.50)	5 ff	3.63	3.23	3.21	3.13	2.93	3.07
3) Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice. (Table 4.51)	5 ff	3.31	3.27	3.68	3.47	3.51	3.87

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.76 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Carnegie Classification					
		Research	Doctorate-Granting	Comprehensive University/College	Liberal Arts College	Two Year	Specialized or Nontraditional
Critique and Reform							
4) More discrimination should be used in evaluating institutional compliance with standards—e.g. replace compliance/non compliance with a graduated performance assessment. (Table 4.52)	5 ff	3.38	3.05	3.16	3.18	3.16	3.40
5) Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits. (Table 4.53)	5 ff	1.75	1.91	1.89	1.90	2.07	2.40
6) There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation. (Table 4.54)	5 ff	2.56	3.09	2.59	2.63	2.81	2.67
7) Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance. (Table 4.55)	5 ff 7 ff	2.69	3.09	3.05	2.92	3.36	2.80
8) Well-known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review. (Table 4.56)	5 ff 7 ff	2.25	1.64	1.56	1.31	1.42	1.47
9) Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region. (Table 4.57)	5 ff 7 ff	3.63	3.45	3.14	2.95	2.79	3.33

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.76 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Carnegie Classification					
		Research	Doctorate-Granting	Comprehensive University/College	Liberal Arts College	Two Year	Specialized or Nontraditional
Critique and Reform							
10) Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional. (Table 4.58)	5 ff	3.25	3.14	3.11	2.92	2.99	3.47
11) An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review. (Table 4.59)	5 ff	3.25	3.18	3.17	3.10	3.32	3.13
12) The results of accreditation should be more publicly known. (Table 4.60)	5 ff 7 ff	3.44	3.73	3.51	3.10	3.59	3.40
13) For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state. (Table 4.61)	5 ff 7 ff	3.44	3.64	3.83	3.13	3.77	3.07
14) The effectiveness of regional accreditation would be enhanced by using professional evaluator teams selected and trained for that purpose. (Table 4.62)	5 ff	2.38	2.55	2.46	2.34	2.54	2.80
15) There should be closer coordination between regional accreditation and specialized accreditation as a means of reducing both costs and time demands on an institution. (Table 4.63)	5 ff	4.00	4.23	4.14	3.85	4.12	4.20

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.76 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Carnegie Classification					
		Research	Doctorate-Granting	Comprehensive University/College	Liberal Arts College	Two Year	Specialized or Nontraditional
Critique and Reform							
16) A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report. (Table 4.64)	5 ff	2.63	2.86	2.75	2.90	2.83	3.20

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.77 Presidents' responses with significant differences in the means at the .05 level for involvement in accreditation with five (5ff) and seven (7ff) fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Involvement in Accreditation			
		Low or No Involvement	Medium Involvement	High Involvement	Very High Involvement
Process					
2) The review of an institutional self study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation. (Table 4.19)	5 ff 7 ff	4.16	4.11	4.35	4.66
3) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards. (Table 4.20)	5 ff 7 ff	4.00	4.15	4.40	4.51
5) Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from other campuses with similar missions. (Table 4.21)	5 ff 7ff	2.32	2.35	2.08	1.90
6) Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions (Table 4.22)	5 ff 7 ff	4.04	3.93	4.26	4.54`
Effectiveness					
3) State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation. (Table 4.28)	5 ff 7 ff	2.64	2.36	2.17	1.89
7) Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality. (Table 4.29)	5 ff 7 ff	3.86	3.92	4.24	4.61

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.77 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Involvement in Accreditation			
		Low or No Involvement	Medium Involvement	High Involvement	Very High Involvement
Effectiveness					
8) The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results. (Table 4.30)	5 ff 7 ff	3.43	3.56	3.76	4.25
9) The principles and practices of Total Quality Management/ Continuous Quality Improvement are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation. (Table 4.31)	5 ff 7 ff	2.84	2.42	2.24	2.07
10) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are relatively ineffective in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational programs. (Table 4.32)	5 ff 7 ff	2.39	2.42	2.32	1.82
13) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represent an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries. (Table 4.33)	5 ff 7 ff	3.82	3.91	4.07	4.36
14) Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument. (Table 4.34)	5 ff 7 ff	2.11	2.18	1.80	1.57
15c) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Faculty (Table 4.35)	5 ff 7 ff	3.91	4.10	4.27	4.43
15e) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Board of Trustee Members (Table 4.36)	5 ff 7 ff	3.91	4.16	4.27	4.39
16) Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non-accredited colleges. (Table 4.37)	5 ff 7 ff	4.45	4.42	4.66	4.79

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.77 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Involvement in Accreditation			
		Low or No Involvement	Medium Involvement	High Involvement	Very High Involvement
Effectiveness					
18) To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies. (Table 4.38)	5 ff 7 ff	4.43	4.32	4.49	4.86
20) Most accreditation exercises at the campus level are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty/staff. (Table 4.39	5 ff 7 ff	2.23	1.94	1.90	1.54

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.78 Presidents' responses with significant differences in the means at the .05 level for degree with five (5ff) and seven (7ff) fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Degree				
		Grouped Degrees*	Education & Ed Admin	Liberal Arts	Religion & Theology	Science & Engineering
Effectiveness						
3) State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation. (Table 4.40)	5 ff 7ff	1.94	2.42	2.22	2.92	2.32
4) Improvement and accountability goals—for both public and private institutions—would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency. (Table 4.41)	5 ff 7 ff	1.59	1.93	1.78	2.42	1.53
6) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid. (Table 4.42)	5 ff 7 ff	3.76	4.15	3.90	4.25	3.74
8) The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results. (Table 4.43)	5 ff 7 ff	3.94	3.75	3.51	3.08	3.37
14) Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument. (Table 4.44)	5 ff 7 ff	1.94	1.90	2.31	2.67	1.74
15e) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Board of Trustees members. (Table 4.45)	5 ff 7 ff	4.12	4.30	4.00	3.75	4.11

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.78 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Degree				
		Grouped Degrees*	Education & Ed Admin	Liberal Arts	Religion & Theology	Science & Engineering
Effectiveness						
17) Regional accreditation standards and review permit many weak and low quality institutions to be accredited. (Table 4.46)	5 ff 7 ff	3.94	3.75	3.51	3.08	3.37

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.79 Presidents' responses with significant differences in the means at the .05 level for public/private with seven (7ff) fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Public/Private Institution	
		Public	Private
Process			
2) The review of an institutional self study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation. (Table 4.25)	7 ff	4.250	4.117
4) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy. (Table 4.25)	7 ff	3.784	3.934

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 4.80 Presidents' responses with significant differences in the means at the .05 level for number of students with seven fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Number of Students				
		Less than 1,000	1,0001-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-20,000	Over 20,000
Critique and Reform						
3) Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice. (Table 4.69)	7ff	3.69	3.50	3.52	3.26	3.85
7) Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance. (Table 4.70)	7 ff	2.94	3.05	3.29	3.13	3.80
9) Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region. (Table 4.71)	7 ff	2.88	2.83	3.13	3.31	3.70
16) A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report. (Table 4.72)	7 ff	3.14	2.80	2.73	2.55	3.15

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is not significantly different from other means.
Mean is significantly higher.

experience.

Table 4.75 indicates that presidents with no experience at any other institution have significantly lower means for critique and reform questions than presidents with experience at other institutions. Generally, the more experience, the higher the means for critique and reform questions 7 and 13. No other questions showed significant differences in the mean for years of experience at other institutions, and the significance only occurred when seven factors were considered in the GLM multivariate analysis.

Carnegie classification was the only factor that was significant when all questions were considered in the GLM multivariate analysis, but there were no significant differences in the means by Carnegie classification for effectiveness questions. Table 4.76, however, indicates that there were significant differences in the means by Carnegie classification for four purpose questions, four process questions, and all 16 critique and reform questions.

It is clear that research university presidents have significantly different opinions from other presidents for a number of questions. For many questions, they have lower means. Presidents of research universities are less enthusiastic when responding to questions concerning: regional accreditation as a quality improvement tool and as a means of assuring the public that institutions meet standards; the regional agencies as an effective national system; the benefits of self-evaluation; the effectiveness of peer evaluation; the visiting team identifying areas of improvement

for an institution; and the composition of the visiting team as faculty, staff, and presidents from similar institutions.

Responses to critique and reform questions exhibit less of a pattern, although research university presidents have significantly lower means for critique and reform questions 4 (performance audits), 6 (increasing public/lay members), 7 (publishing trend data), and 16 (developing a portfolio). Conversely, they are more enthusiastic about separate standards for different sectors (critique question 2), exempting well-known institutions (critique question 8), and choosing some visiting team members from outside the South.

Specialized and nontraditional institution presidents have significantly means than the other presidents for several questions. They believe that selection of peer evaluators is a shared responsibility (process 8), that there should be a graduated recognition system (critique 1 and 4), that standards should focus more on undergraduate practice (critique 3), that unannounced performance audits should be used (critique 5), that standards should be national (critique 10), that professionally trained evaluators are better (critique 14), and that a portfolio would be more useful than the self-study (critique 16). In some cases, the views of presidents of specialized and nontraditional institutions are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the views of the research university presidents. However, the differences are seldom opposing (e.g., agree vs. disagree), but instead are simply stronger.

Table 4.77 groups the responses of presidents by level of involvement in accreditation. It appears that presidents with the most involvement in accreditation have consistently stronger perceptions then presidents with less involvement. They appear to endorse the process of accreditation more, endorse peer review more strongly, and feel that regional accreditation is more effective than the alternatives (such as state agencies) and is more respected. Presidents with more involvement in accreditation object more to criticisms of accreditation, such as its depiction as professional backscratching.

Perhaps the most interesting result shown in Table 4.78 is the lack of difference that a degree in education or educational administration makes in perceptions about regional accreditation. Most often, those with education degrees do not have significantly different means from those with any other degree. They do have significantly lower means for effectiveness question 14, disagreeing significantly more with the statement that regional accreditation is essentially professional backscratching.

Presidents with degrees in religion have consistently higher means for many of the effectiveness questions. They are less concerned about state accountability reporting (effectiveness 3) and state agency review (effectiveness 4) than the other presidents, and less sure that many weak and low quality institutions are accredited (effectiveness 17). Presidents with degrees in religion are, however, more supportive

of accreditation's advantage in applying for federal grants (effectiveness 6), and less sure that it is not professional backscratching (effectiveness 14).

Public and private colleges had significantly different means for two questions, process 2 (review by a visiting team is effective) and 4 (primary purpose of a visiting team is to identify areas of improvement). As indicated in Table 4.79, public university presidents were more supportive of the review by the visiting team, and private college presidents were more supportive of the visiting team identifying areas for improvement.

A cross tabulation was done to assure that the questions that were significant for number of students was not merely a reflection of Carnegie classification. It appears that is not the case. Table 4.80 clearly shows, however, that presidents of the largest institutions were more interested in focusing on undergraduate practice (critique 3), publishing trend data (critique 7), selecting some visiting team members from outside the South (critique 9), and the usefulness of a portfolio (critique 16). The means for questions 7 and 9 show a more substantial difference in perception between presidents of the smallest and largest institutions.

What factors make a difference in how presidents of colleges and universities perceive regional accreditation? It appears that Carnegie classification is the most important factor, as might have been predicted. Research university presidents have significantly different means from the rest of the presidents for a number of questions.

Interestingly, presidents of specialized and nontraditional institutions appear more open to reforms of regional accreditation, as well as presidents of larger institutions.

Presidents with less experience, either at their institution or another institution, are also somewhat less enthusiastic about regional accreditation. On the other hand, presidents with more involvement in accreditation support it more strongly. Somewhat surprisingly, presidents with education degrees did not have significantly different perceptions than presidents with other degrees. Presidents with degrees in religion were generally stronger supporters of regional accreditation than presidents with other degrees.

In the next chapter, the presidents' comments about strengths, weakness, and other concerns will be examined. These comments allow the presidents to focus on their personal perspective on regional accreditation.

Chapter 5

PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The preceding chapter presented an analysis of the quantitative data from the presidents who responded to the questionnaire, while this chapter discusses the qualitative data provided by the presidents. The presidents made many thoughtful comments in response to the final three questions:

- If you could identify one strength or positive feature of regional accreditation, what would it be?
- What is the greatest weakness or drawback of accreditation?
- Other comments.

The presidents provided 304 comments on strengths and 313 on weaknesses. They also wrote 174 additional comments, both in response to final question and as notations on other questions in the questionnaire. Every effort was made to decipher the handwriting of the presidents and to accurately record their comments.

When the presidents' responses to the final three open-ended questions were examined, numerous themes emerged. As in the literature review and survey, these responses can be grouped into purpose, process, effectiveness and critique and reform. Another category includes miscellaneous responses, which include such issues as the strength of regional accreditation as a non-governmental process.

Those comments, which seem especially representative or revealing are included in the discussion of the responses in italics. None of the presidents is identified.

Strengths

Many responses to the first question focused on the process of the regional accreditation as its strength, particularly peer review. A number of presidents commented on how regional accreditation fulfills the purposes of accreditation as its strength, while others discussed effectiveness. Several critiqued the process and several commented on roles that regional accreditation plays.

Process

Process will be the first theme examined, since it is clearly the most dominant theme. Nearly one-fourth (102 or 23.2%) of the respondents cited peer review and evaluation the major strength of regional accreditation. Many presidents simply listed "peer review" as the major strength of accreditation, with no other comments. Some presidents specifically referred to "peer review," even underlining the term or following it with an exclamation point, but others used the term "peer evaluation." One president indicated that both the visiting team and the institution under review gain from the exchange of ideas and that "*There is no more effective review process possible than one made by peers who have 'been there, done that.'*" Another president commented that

> *The greatest strength of the regional accreditation process is the fact that it is conducted by peers, not by professional evaluation teams. The peers bring with them their combined expertise and take away new knowledge that they can apply at their own institutions or on other accreditation visits. This is the very essence of the educational process - there could be no more appropriate method of evaluating educational institutions.*

A third president calls the peer review process "*serious, honest and revealing*" and believes that it naturally leads to institutional improvement.

The next most popular response was self-evaluation, which was mentioned by 64 respondents. Several presidents commented on the usefulness of being forced to undertake self-examination and the broad involvement that is required. One president commented that regional accreditation is an

> *opportunity for an institution to involve faculty, staff, students, trustees, etc., is the self-study process. If done properly/correctly, this is a great opportunity to be introspective and make improvements in the quality of the institution.*

Another president warned, however, that "*not many self study's are insightful nor introspective - Writers on Steering Committees appear to require training on 'Self Study.' Most self study's are descriptive, rather than introspective.*"

Standards and criteria or "*a common expectation of what constitutes a healthy, credible institution*" were identified as the major strength by 35 presidents, along with several institutional aspects of accreditation (29 presidents) and simply the

accreditation process (22 presidents). Twelve presidents noted the usefulness of common benchmarks for institutions, and nine presidents praised the periodic nature of the process. One president saw regional accreditation as a "*regular, positive, motivational expectations experience.*" Six presidents noted the comprehensive nature of the process as a strength.

Eight presidents praised the role of the visiting team in the regional accreditation process, while five other presidents referred to the role of consultation as the major strength. One other president mentioned the participants in general as a major strength and another mentioned the percentage of presidents on the Commission on Colleges. The objectivity of regional accreditation process and its voluntary nature were each mentioned by three presidents. Two mentioned the value of networking as a major strength. One president mentioned that the process has been revised over the years to be more relevant.

Purpose

Nineteen presidents felt that the main purpose of evaluation, its utility as a quality assurance tool, was a strength of regional accreditation. One president believes that "*It has produced and maintained a consistent level of educational quality that is the envy of the civilized world,*" although another cautioned that it "*Causes us to take a good look at ourselves but as we move toward TQM and other type of similar activities*, [the] *need may not be as great.*" Between ten and fifteen presidents focused on other themes related to the purpose of accreditation: accountability, institutional

effectiveness, institutional improvement, and the public's trust of accreditation and its connection to the "real world." One president remarked that it "*Doesn't let an organization get sloppy*," while another said that "*It forces an institution to evaluate its effectiveness & the extent to which it performs to similar standards of peer colleges*."

Nine presidents stated that the major strength of regional accreditation was its ability to identify strengths and weaknesses of an institution and needed improvements. A total of 16 presidents, eight each, referred to institutional evaluation and institutional improvements as the major strengths of regional accreditation. Eight presidents mentioned the evaluation and critique of the mission of the institution. One noted that the major strength of regional accreditation was the "*evaluation of the institution's mission statement and determining how well it is meeting that mission*" while another stated that "*It makes you validate mission and goals with actual results. Are you 'walking your talk.'* "

Eight presidents discussed the relationship of regional accreditation to outcomes as a strength. Several specifically mentioned the "*focus on outcomes*." Consistency was the strength mentioned by four presidents. One eloquently noted,

> *By and large, the single best means for ensuring a consistent academic standard & set of expectations & assumptions about the teaching-learning experience across a diversity of higher educ. institutions. Tis our common bond of integrity and credibility.*

Seven presidents especially valued the opportunity that regional accreditation provides to involve constituent groups and to have a dialogue with them. For these presidents, this is an internal focus that "*generates a better understanding of the institution by faculty, staff and students*." Two presidents viewed regional accreditation as a team-building experience that involves shared decision-making. Three presidents expressed a related idea, viewing regional accreditation as a forum that allows an opportunity to exchange ideas with peers. Another three presidents view it as a learning experience for the institution with another president remarking that it "*provides broader perspectives of possibilities in administering, programming, etc.*."

For two presidents, a strength of regional accreditation is that it provides parity between institutions. Two others commented on the control of poor institutions and its usefulness for marginal institutions.

Effectiveness

As noted, presidents commented on effectiveness primarily in terms of institutional effectiveness as a strength of regional accreditation. Thirteen presidents noted institutional effectiveness as a strength, many indicating that regional accreditation "*forces an institution to evaluate its effectiveness*." Two presidents commented on the ability to transfer credits as a strength. Twelve presidents discussed the impetus that regional accreditation provides for improvements to the institution. One mentioned that "*The SACS approach embodies a continuous*

improvement concept," and another noted that there is "*Special insight given for improvement of areas of weakness*."

Critique and Reform

Two presidents critiqued accreditation, viewing it as having little or no strengths.

Miscellaneous Comments

Several comments could not be easily classified within purpose, process, effectiveness, critique and reform. Ten presidents commented on some aspect of the regional nature of accreditation. One believes that it leads to an "*Understanding of the regional environment*." Another remarked that "*Regional dialogue on standards reduces provincialism and supports openness to new ideas/approaches and a closer connection to the 'real world'*."

Nine presidents praised the non-governmental nature of regional accreditation, seeing it as a protection from what they view as undesirable outside review. Four presidents focused on the benefits of change resulting from regional accreditation. Two presidents commented favorably on SACS, one commenting that the COC "*is the strongest, most rigorous of the six*" regional accreditation associations. One stated that "*It allows the institution a way to force itself to change*," while another felt that it allowed "*Consistent gradual change rather than abrupt spontaneous change*." One commented on its acceptance by the institution as a strength, while another noted its

cooperation with specialized accreditation. Finally, the mere existence of regional accreditation was a strength for one president, which sees it as a "*known commodity*."

Weaknesses

The presidents had almost as many comments about weaknesses as about strengths of regional accreditation. While peer review was overwhelmingly cited as a major strength of regional accreditation, the presidents saw the visiting team as the greatest single weakness or drawback of regional accreditation. While 62 presidents named the visiting team as a weakness, 46 were concerned about the time commitment or timing of accreditation, and 42 were concerned about the cost. Other weaknesses discussed by the presidents included standards (32 presidents), the accreditation process (31 presidents), and a variety of things that were lacking (25 presidents). These and other comments will be discussed in the same format as the strengths: purpose, process, effectiveness, critique and reform, and other.

Purpose

The major purpose issue, which was mentioned as a weakness by only four presidents, was quality. One president felt that "*It can become a 'game' - do what you have to do to meet the criteria when everyone knows that there is a vast difference between the quality of programs [which] varies greatly between various accredited colleges*.

Process

The visiting team was identified by the 62 presidents as a weakness or drawback of regional accreditation, making it the leading concern. Specific concerns included the composition of the team (uneven or inconsistent, arbitrary, lack of balance between types of team members), their qualifications (incompetent, naïve, untrained, not matched to the institution, uninformed public participants), and their conduct (differing interpretations, turnover, punitive attitudes, personality problems) and the results (inconsistent, poor or unclear recommendations). The presidents' frustrations of "*Getting stuck with a 'bad' peer evaluator*" and dealing with "*the hidden agendas*" of some team members were obvious. Others bemoaned

> *Small-minded, bean-counting tendencies; a tendency of some participants in the process to enjoy 'putting the heat on' a college or 'tightening the thumb screws' and so on. The process should emphasize helpfulness and improvements rather than penalties. And recommendations should be spelled out clearly and in enough detail.*

Several presidents believe that "*A well-versed & experienced chair is a must.*" While the presidents lauded experience, several expressed concerns about how visiting team members appear to be chosen from an inner circle or member of the " '*guild*'."

Standards and criteria were identified as a weakness by 34 presidents. Concerns ranged from a lack of standards to an excessive number of standards and from fuzziness or ambiguity of the standards to low standards. Varying interpretation

of standards were cited as a weakness or drawback by several presidents. According to one president,

> *Visiting team members often have differing interpretations of criteria by which institutions are evaluated. At times, this leads to recommendations that are not beneficial to the institution. It would be very helpful to both members of visiting teams and to institutions if regional accrediting agencies would define the criteria and provide examples (especially of new criteria) more clearly.*

Aspects of the regional accreditation process were viewed as a weakness or drawback by 31 presidents. One president simply called it "*cumbersome*" while several complained that it was vulnerable to educational fads. Other concerns were its: overemphasis on institutional effectiveness assessment, rigidity ("*One size fits all*"), dependence on statistics, stifling of innovation, lack of significance, lack of focus on students, check-list orientation, and subjectivity. Five presidents indicated that it seemed like too much paperwork or "*busy work.*" One president summed it up as,

> *Far too process oriented. Too much emphasis on counting and weighing process elements and far too little emphasis on real student outcomes, e.g., employment or satisfaction of the student; transfer success; performance on external certification exams.*

Eleven presidents criticized the regional accreditation agency, SACS. Concerns ranged from SACS being too rigid and arbitrary to having poor staff that

turn over rapidly and are slow and reluctant to respond to questions. One president indicated that,

> *SACS needs to work on its ability to communicate effectively (i.e., the officers and staff need a little training in personality & courtesy). These folks work for us rather than the institutions working for them. They present the attitude of being Judge & Jury, rather than helpful and cooperative. Also, no institution should be measured by a criteria standard (Book Chapter and Verse) that was published weeks before the accreditation committee visit. An Institution spends years conducting a study, to be disregarded by a new publication of the Rules and Regulations. This is a total disrespect for the institution and to the Review Committee.*

Several presidents felt that the SACS staff had too much power, and one called the SACS structure "incestuous."

Other process weaknesses identified by the presidents include: reducing regional accreditation to a formula (5 presidents), duplication between regional and specialized accreditation (4 presidents), weak assessment of outcomes (3 presidents), excessive bureaucracy (2 presidents), emphasis on details instead of outcomes (2 presidents), emphasis on credentials (2 presidents), excessive requirements (2 presidents), preoccupation with assessment (1 president), inability to get faculty interested (1 president), and emphasis on money (1 president).

Effectiveness

One of the most important issues in effectiveness, the capabilities of the visiting team, has already been discussed under process. The other two weaknesses which were important to many presidents were the cost and time commitment/timing of regional accreditation. Thirty-seven presidents, some who underlined or repeated the word, mentioned cost. One president estimated the cost to his or her institution at $2 million for the self-study alone, and one noted that costs "*can easily get out of hand when a large team is assigned to a small university.*" Another president mentioned the cost, but tempered his comment by noting that "*these are unavoidable in thorough peer review.*"

Time was often mentioned with cost. Several presidents noted that regional accreditation is "*Time consuming and expensive.*" Nine presidents of the 43 presidents that discussed time as an issue were concerned that it did not occur often enough. While cost of the visits was a concern, two presidents indicated that the campus visits were too short.

Twenty-five presidents used the term "lack" in describing a weakness or drawback of accreditation. While many of these concerns were related to other categories of issues, such as "*lack of common standards*," several related specifically to effectiveness issues. Nine presidents noted the lack of public understanding (including legislators) of regional accreditation, critiquing the "*Lack of publicity for*

the results, and the resulting lack of public and legislative familiarity with accreditation."

Sixteen presidents viewed the focus of regional accreditation as a weakness. They were specifically concerned with the focus on minimal standards, process rather than outcomes, resources instead of results, compliance rather than performance, and input and not output. Fourteen presidents saw the inability of regional accreditation to deal effectively with weak and/or marginal institutions as a weakness, yet one president indicated that he felt that "*SACS is much more stringent in its accreditation standards than some other regions.*"

The differences between regions were viewed as a weakness by 12 presidents. One president felt that "*Regional groups vary so vastly - to the point of unfairness to specialized institutions.*" Inconsistency of standards and their application was viewed as a weakness or drawback by 11 presidents.

Six presidents identified governmental involvement or interference as a weakness of regional accreditation. One president stated that,

> *The greatest weakness or drawback of accreditation is the federal interference into the accreditation process. The SACS Criteria now contain numerous citations which result from federal law not peer governance. In my opinion, federal interference represents the greatest threat to accreditation by peers that we have seen since the advent of regional accreditation. Regional accrediting bodies should not be federal "watch dogs."*

The presidents identified several other effectiveness issues. Backscratching, or "log rolling" was identified as a weakness by five presidents. Four were concerned about the disparity between different types of institutions. Three presidents viewed the influence of politics as a weakness. The need to be relevant and to respond to change concerned three presidents. One noted the weakness of

> *The present process which doesn't ensure that institutions provide programs relevant to the present needs of business, industry and the professions. Rapid changes are needed to remain competitive in a global economy, and traditional accreditation is ineffective.*

Finally, one president indicated that regional accreditation was discriminatory to small institutions, one viewed it as subjective, one believed that it included too many assumptions, and one felt that it focused too much on grievances.

Critique and Reform

The only issue related to critique and reform that some presidents viewed as a weakness was the lack of coordination with specialized accreditation. Three presidents mentioned that "*The greatest drawback is the duplication that exists between the regional and specialized/professional accreditation processes.*" One president added state agencies, as well as regional and professional accrediting agencies. One president saw national accreditation as a drawback, believing it might lower standards.

Other Weaknesses

Four presidents indicated that regional accreditation had no weaknesses or drawbacks.

Other Comments

The other comments of 165 presidents can be categorized as either positive or negative; suggestions for improvements to regional accreditation; or comments on the overall study or the specific questions in the questionnaire. Some presidents commented on more than one aspect.

Positive Comments

Seventeen presidents praised regional accreditation and peer review as the best processes. Other presidents called it excellent, respected, worthwhile, or very important. One president stated that "*I simply cannot visualize a world without accreditation standards.*" Other presidents tempered their praise somewhat, calling regional accreditation the best available alternative. One commented that "*The present system is defective, but it is far preferable to having more federal government involvement in the process.*" One president noted that the new SACS process provided institutions with the opportunity to enhance quality, and two others praised SACS. Some presidents offered a mixed viewpoint, such as the president who stated,

> *Whatever its faults, it should be recognized that regional accreditation was in place during the period in which American higher education became the most respected in the world. To the extent that government continues to intrude*

upon the associations and upon the institutions, there is likely to be a corresponding diminution in quality.

The concern about government involvement in accreditation will be further discussed under negative comments.

Negative Comments

Ten presidents identified specific problems with regional accreditation. These problems ranged from the cost of the process to unnecessary involvement with issues such as tenure and workload and too much focus on resources. Three presidents were concerned about specialized accreditation, which one termed "*white-collar extortion.*" While some presidents criticized SACS for being too flexible, others chafed under a perceived lack of flexibility in dealing with smaller, specialized or unique institutions.

SACS was the focus of nine negative comments. One president felt that "*SAC accreditation has become a political arena or a popularity showcase*" (P128). One president was particularly harsh, stating that "*SACS is a perfect paradigm of how incompetent leadership, petty jealousies and lack of focus can ruin what has the potential of being an outstanding organization.*"

Several presidents termed SACS rigid; one who had experience on visiting teams with other regional associations termed SACS as *"the most rigid and legalistic"* of all the accrediting associations. Another president criticized the makeup of the Executive Committee and the COC, indicating that they should be "*more representative of the ethnic composition of the region.*" Two presidents were more

hopeful, indicating that SACS could improve itself to address weaknesses. As one said, "*SACS may not be perfect, but I cringe at the alternatives.*"

Inconsistency between regions was a concern of one president who, like several others, felt that the accreditation process fails to focus on what is most important - outcomes. Another president felt that the focus on "*false issues*" resulted from the resistance of large research universities to measuring student achievement.

Five presidents expressed concern over Federal and state involvement in accreditation. However, one president felt that national accreditation with trained evaluators would be better, and another felt that meeting state requirements should be sufficient. Not only was duplication of effort a concern, there was also a concern about the lack of public understanding of the process.

The most severe critic felt that,

> *No entity in America other than the IRS is in greater need of reform. "Consumer protection" interests have buried such concepts as Freedom, Liberty, and worthy achievement. Moral and spiritual integrity has been lost to special interests and "protection of professors". The system as it exists is hypocritical and ineffective. Sooner or later, the system will fail and few, except its employees, will mourn.*

Suggestions for Improvements

Presidents made a range of suggestions for improvements to regional accreditation. One suggested using alternative self-studies that might "*touch the heart*

of efforts to improve instruction & leadership." Other suggested improvements included selecting visiting teams and the C&R Committee from stronger colleges, developing a common calendar for all accrediting bodies, being responsive to change, and focusing on outcomes. Overall, many of the responses seemed to reflect the sentiments of one president who said, "*Revise, cull, focus, or whatever, but don't throw the baby out with the bath water*."

Comments on the Study

There were seventeen comments on the study, ranging from suggestions for improvements to comments such as "*impressive study*" and "*well designed questionnaire*." One president felt that national accreditation was ignored, and another did not think that the questionnaire allowed a full range of responses. More careful proofreading and some re-design of questions was also recommended. A number of presidents asked to see the results of the study.

Comments on Specific Questions

The presidents' interest in the topic can at least partially be gauged by the comments they added to specific questions. They often underlined a word or added exclamation points. For the background questions, they often included additional data, such as the exact number of years they had been president at their current or previous institution. The additional comments should be closely examined if the questionnaire is used again in another region.

Effectiveness question 19, which focused on the effective monitoring of intercollegiate athletics by regional accreditation, had the most comments. Seventeen presidents made some additional comment. Many circled the word "effective" while others added "*ineffective*?" to their questionnaire. One president added "*As effective as one could be with a dragon.*"

Question F, which asked if presidents had ever served as a member of various regional accreditation committees, had 10 additional comments, with most presidents adding specific information about their experience. Question I may need to be clarified, as some of the nine presidents who commented did not know whether participating as an institutional representative qualified. The question was intended to capture any regional accreditation experience, and should have been broadly interpreted as it seemed it was from the comments.

Process question 5, which asks whether presidents agree that visiting teams are mainly composed of college presidents, also had nine comments. Several circled the words "college president" and one crossed out "composed of" and added "*chaired by.*" Effectiveness question 17, which concerned the accreditation of weak and low quality institutions, had eight comments. Most circled or underlined the word "many."

Process question 4, which indicated that the primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance with standards, had comments that focused on emphasis on the word "primary purpose" in the question. Process question 8, which concerned selection of the visiting team by staff, the chair, and the president, had

seven comments. Presidents indicated that they thought the commission was more influential in the selection of the team, that the chair had some influence, and that the president of the institution had little influence.

There were numerous other instances of presidents adding emphases to words or questions by underlining or adding exclamation points. Only four questions had no additional comments: effectiveness question 4, which asked if improvement and accountability goals would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency; critique and reform question 8, which asked if well-know institutions should be exempted from accreditation; critique and reform question 10, which asked if standards should be national rather than regional; and critique and reform question 13, which asked whether regional accreditation should be required for an institution to continue to be incorporated by the state.

One president felt that the questionnaire was poorly worded, and others pointed out specific questions, such as effectiveness question 16, that might be worded differently. As indicated, these comments should be examined more closely if the questionnaire is used in another study.

The college and university presidents who responded to the survey showed a serious interest in the topic. Not only did they take the time to answer a long questionnaire, but most also added detailed comments in response to the open-ended questions and many made additional notations on specific questions. In the next chapter, the responses of political leaders will be compared to both the quantitative

and qualitative responses of presidents, and the perceptions of the two groups will be compared.

Chapter 6

PERCEPTIONS OF POLITICAL LEADERS AND COMPARISONS OF PRESIDENTIAL AND POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS

State legislators in the 11 states in the SACS region, as might be expected, responded in smaller numbers to a questionnaire concerning regional accreditation than college and university presidents. As a result, a set of follow-up interviews with key political leaders is being undertaken. However, the responses of the political leaders still offer some interesting insights into the concerns of legislators, and it is useful to examine how their perceptions of regional accreditation compare to the perceptions of college and university presidents.

Study Participants: Political Leaders

While 83 legislators and five governors responded to the questionnaire, two legislators only responded to questions A through F and the open-ended questions. The responses of the legislators and governors to questions A through F are summarized in Table 6.1.

A total of 66 state legislators indicated that they had served in the House and 26 in the Senate. Many of the 66 legislators (30.3%) had served 3 to 5 years in the House. Almost as large a number (27.3%) had served 6-10 years in the House, with 21.2% indicating they had served 10 to 20 years. A few had served one to two years (13.6%) and an even smaller percent (7.6%) had served over 20 years in the House.

Table 6.1 Summary of political leaders' responses to questions A through F

Question	Response	N	Valid %*
A) How many years have you served as a state legislator (*or* elected official)?			
❑ House: N = 66	1-2 years	9	13.6
	3-5 years	20	30.3
	6-10 years	18	27.3
	10-20 years	14	21.2
	Over 20 years	5	7.6
❑ Senate: N = 26	1-2 years	4	15.4
	3-5 years	5	19.2
	6-10 years	6	23.1
	10-20 years	4	15.4
	Over 20 years	7	26.9
❑ Elected official at the state level: N = 4	1-2 years	0	0.0
	3-5 years	2	50.0
	6-10 years	1	25.0
	10-20 years	1	25.0
	Over 20 years	0	0.0
B) What is your party affiliation N= 86	Democrat	45	52.3
	Republican	40	46.5
	Independent	0	0.0
	Other	1	1.2
C) What is your primary occupation outside the legislature (*or* when you are not serving as governor)? N= 84	Full time legislator (*or* other elected official)	6	7.1
	Business owner	20	23.8
	Physician/Dentist/ Other health care	1	1.2
	Lawyer	15	17.9
	Other management/ professional	9	10.7
	Farmer	2	2.4
	Educator	7	8.3
	Retired	21	25.0
	Other	3	3.6

*Percent of those responding to the question.

Table 6.1 (continued)

Question	Response	N	Valid %*
D) How would you describe yourself? N= 81	Liberal	7	8.6
	Conservative	37	45.7
	Middle of the road	37	45.7
	Other	0	0.0
E) Have you ever served on the Education Committee in the House or Senate? N = 86	Yes	81	94.2
	No	5	5.8
How many years? N= 78	1-5 years	38	48.7
	6-10 years	17	28.2
	Over 10 years	18	23.1
F) Have you ever participated in the accreditation process of any college or university? N = 84	Yes	16	19.0
	No	68	81.0
How many times? N= 16	Once	5	31.3
	Two to five times	10	62.6
	Five to ten times	1	6.3

*Percent of those responding to the question.

In contrast, senators with a long tenure made up the largest number of respondents who had served as state senators. The largest group of 26 legislators who responded (26.9%) had served over 20 years in the Senate. Almost one-fourth (23.1%) of the legislators who indicated that they had served in the Senate had served 6 to 10 years. Almost as many (19.2%) had served 3 to 5 years, with 15.4% indicating that they had served one to two years and 15.4% indicating that they had served 10 to 20 years in the Senate. The governors participating in the survey had served from 3 to 20 years as elected officials.

Again, Democrats outnumbered Republicans legislators as they did presidents, but by a much smaller margin. Of the 86 political leaders responding to question B, 53.1% classified themselves as Democrats, including two governors, and 45.7% as Republicans, including three governors. One legislator indicated "other."

Only six of the 84 political leaders answering question C (7.1%) are full-time as legislators, although an additional five political leaders are full-time governors. One-fourth (25.0%) indicated that they were retired. Business owners made up 23.8% of the political leaders that responded, with lawyers comprising 17.9% and other management/professional comprising 10.7%. Only 8.3% listed themselves as educators. Other occupations included occupations listed by the legislators that were not otherwise classified (3.6%), farmer (2.4%), and health care (1.2%).

The majority of the 81 political leaders responding to question D consider themselves "middle of the road" (45.7%) and "conservative" (45.7%). A few (8.6%)

consider themselves "liberals." None of the governors termed themselves "liberal." Three of the governors considered themselves as "conservative" while two considered themselves as "middle of the road."

Of the 86 political leaders, 81 that responded to question E indicated that they serve on the House or Senate Education Committee. Their experience ranges from one to 32 years. Almost half (48.7%) have served from one to five years on the committee. Over one-fourth (28.2%) have served from six to 10 years, and the remainder (19.2%) have served over 10 years on the Education Committee.

Involvement in Accreditation

A large majority of the 84 political leaders that responded to question F (81.0%) have no experience participating in accreditation. Of the 16 political leaders that had experience participating in the accreditation of a college or university, most (93.8%) indicated that they had participated less than five times. Both the legislators and the governors appeared to have very little experience with the accreditation of colleges and universities. No governor had ever served on an Education Committee in the state legislature. Only one governor had participated once in the accreditation process of a college or university.

Quantitative Analysis

The same GLM multivariate analyses were used to examine the significant differences between political leaders. The separate databases for legislators and governors were combined for the analysis, and no distinction is made between the

different types of political leaders in the analysis, because of the small number of governors. To improve the analysis, only questions with 75% or more responses were included: all purpose questions except purpose question 4 concerning the distinction between professional and regional accreditation; only process questions 1 and 2, which dealt with the self-study; effectiveness questions 1 through 7, 15, 16 and 18; and all of the critique and reform questions except critique question 4 concerning graduated performance assessment, and critique questions 14 through 16 concerning professional evaluators, closer coordination between specialized and regional accreditation, and use of the portfolio as an evaluation tool.

Fixed factors for the analysis of political leaders' responses included party, years on the Education Committee, participation in accreditation, political self-description, political experience, and grouped occupation. Due to the small number of other responses, political party was limited to Democrat or Republican. Political self-description was grouped in two categories: conservative and middle of the road, liberal and other. As indicated in Chapter 3, years on the Education Committee and occupations were also grouped.

Purpose Questions

There were no main effects when purpose questions were examined using the GLM multivariate analysis with fixed factors, as indicated in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 GLM multivariate analysis of political leaders' responses with at least 75% response to purpose questions using six factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Party	.885	.689[a]	7.000	37.00	.681
Years on the Education Committee	.717	.955[a]	14.000	74.000	.507
Participation in accreditation	.903	.571[a]	7.000	37.000	.775
Political self-description	.851	.922[a]	7.000	37.000	.501
Political experience	.769	.743[a]	14.000	74.000	.725
Occupation	.370	1.204	35.000	158.075	.220

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @PARTY+@YREDCO3+@ACCPART+@POLDES2+POLTIEX+ @OCCRGRP

Process Questions

There were no main effects when process questions were examined using the GLM multivariate analysis with six fixed factors, as indicated in Table 6.3.

Effectiveness Questions

As indicated in Table 6.4, the only significant differences in means for effectiveness questions were uncovered in the GLM multivariate analysis occurred when participation in accreditation was considered. As shown in Table 6.5, all of the effectiveness questions had significantly different means for those who had participated in accreditation and those who had never participated.

Table 6.6 indicates that means for those who had participated in accreditation were significantly higher for effectiveness questions 1, 4, 15a, 15b, 15g, and 16. Those with experience in accreditation agree more strongly that accreditation is a major factor in parent/student selection of a college, that state agencies would be more effective in assuring that institutions meet their goals, that parents and college students as well as civic and corporate leaders respect regional accreditation as a quality assurance tool, and that regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public esteem.

Those political leaders who had participated in accreditation had significantly lower means than those who had not participated for effectiveness questions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, and 18. They are significantly less enthusiastic than those who

Table 6.3 GLM multivariate analysis of political leaders' responses with at least 75% response to process questions using six factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Party	.944	1.383[a]	2.000	47.000	.261
Years on the Education Committee	.938	.766[a]	4.000	94.000	.550
Participation in accreditation	.970	.728[a]	2.000	47.000	.488
Political self-description	.973	.663[a]	2.000	47.000	.520
Political experience	.965	.425[a]	4.000	94.000	.790
Occupation	.860	.739[a]	10.000	94.000	.687

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @PARTY+@YREDCO3+@ACCPART+@POLDES2+POLTIEX+ @OCCRGRP

Table 6.4 GLM multivariate analysis of political leaders' responses with at least 75% response to effectiveness questions using six factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Party	.271	1.344[a]	16.000	8.000	.346
Years on the Education Committee	.099	1.088[a]	32.000	16.000	.443
Participation in accreditation	.100	4.523[a]	16.000	8.000	**.018**
Political self-description	.346	.944[a]	16.000	8.000	.564
Political experience	.114	.981[a]	32.000	16.000	.537
Occupation	.003	1.222	80.000	42.837	.239

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @PARTY+@YREDCO3+@ACCPART+@POLDES2+POLTIEX+ @OCCRGRP

Table 6.5 Tests of between-subjects effects with five factors for effectiveness questions with at least 75% response showing significance at the .05 level - political leaders

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Participation in Accreditation					
Effectiveness 1 - The regional accreditation of a college is a major factor in parent/student decision to attend a particular college.	416.433	2	208.217	150.518	<.001
Effectiveness 2 - Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	372.933	2	186.467	202.065	<.001
Effectiveness 3 - State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	451.600	2	225.800	235.725	<.001
Effectiveness 4 - Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	325.773	2	162.867	161.732	<.001
Effectiveness 5 - One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to transfer credits from one institution to another.	624.133	2	312.067	496.866	<.001
Effectiveness 6 - One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.	555.233	2	277.617	443.875	<.001
Effectiveness 7 - Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	422.533	2	211.267	169.132	<.001

Table 6.5 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Effectiveness 15a - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Parents	534.533	2	267.267	244.923	<.001
Effectiveness 15b - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Students	514.900	2	257.450	271.000	<.001
Effectiveness 15c - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Faculty	689.733	2	344.867	646.625	<.001
Effectiveness 15d - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Administrators	748.233	2	374.117	1621.646	<.001
Effectiveness 15e - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Board of Trustee Members	705.733	2	352.867	734.066	<.001
Effectiveness 15f - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Political Leaders	504.933	2	252.467	187.867	<.001
Effectiveness 15g - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Civic and Corporate Leaders	562.800	2	281.400	247.528	<.001
Effectiveness 16 - Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	706.133	2	353.067	481.455	<.001
Effectiveness 18 - To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	511.633	2	255.817	274.864	<.001

Table 6.6 Means for effectiveness questions with 75% response from political leaders with participation in accreditation as the fixed factor

Dependent Variable	Participation in Accreditation	Mean	Std. Error	95 % Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Effectiveness 1 - The regional accreditation of a college is a major factor in parent/student decision to attend a particular college.	Yes	3.400	.372	2.647	4.153
	No	3.167	.215	2.732	3.601
Effectiveness 2 - Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	Yes	2.800	.304	2.185	3.415
	No	3.133	.175	2.778	3.488
Effectiveness 3 - State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	Yes	2.900	.309	2.273	3.527
	No	3.500	.179	3.138	3.862
Effectiveness 4 - Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	Yes	3.100	.317	2.458	3.742
	No	2.767	.183	2.396	3.138
Effectiveness 5 - One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to transfer credits from one institution to another.	Yes	3.900	.251	3.393	4.407
	No	3.967	.145	3.674	4.260
Effectiveness 6 - One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.	Yes	3.600	.250	3.094	4.106
	No	3.767	.144	3.474	4.059
Effectiveness 7 - Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	Yes	3.200	.353	2.485	3.915
	No	3.267	.204	2.854	3.680

Table 6.6 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Participation in Accreditation	Mean	Std. Error	95 % Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Effectiveness 15a - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Parents	Yes	4.000	.330	3.331	4.669
	No	3.533	.191	3.147	3.919
Effectiveness 15b - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Students	Yes	4.100	.308	3.476	4.724
	No	3.400	.178	3.044	3.760
Effectiveness 15c - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Faculty	Yes	3.900	.231	3.432	4.368
	No	4.233	.133	3.963	4.503
Effectiveness 15d - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Administrators	Yes	4.300	.152	3.993	4.607
	No	4.333	.088	4.156	4.511
Effectiveness 15e - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Board of Trustee Members	Yes	4.100	.219	3.656	4.544
	No	4.233	.127	3.977	4.490
Effectiveness 15f - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Political Leaders	Yes	3.300	.367	2.558	4.042
	No	3.633	.212	3.205	4.062
Effectiveness 15g - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Civic and Corporate Leaders	Yes	3.900	.337	3.217	4.583
	No	3.700	.195	3.306	4.094
Effectiveness 16 - Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	Yes	4.400	.271	3.852	4.948
	No	4.133	.156	3.817	4.450
Effectiveness 18 - To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	Yes	3.400	.305	2.782	4.018
	No	3.633	.176	3.277	3.990

have not participated in accreditation concerning: ranking and ratings of colleges; state accountability requirements; the ability to transfer; the ability to qualify for federal aid; peer evaluators as the best judges of higher education performance and quality; the respect college faculty, college administrators, trustees, and political leaders have for accreditation as a quality assurance tool; and the effectiveness of peer evaluations over government agency evaluations. Yet, only a few means dip below 3.0 or "neutral." These include the means for effectiveness questions 2 (2.80 for participants in accreditation), 3 (2.90 for those who have participated), and 4 (2.77 for those who have not participated). Political leaders seem most confident that regionally accredited colleges and universities are held in higher esteem than institutions that are not accredited.

Critique and Reform Questions

There were no main effects when critique and reform questions were examined using the GLM multivariate analysis with fixed factors, as in Table 6.7.

Summary of Analysis of Political Leaders' Responses

As indicated, the only significant differences in the means for political leaders occurred for participation in accreditation with effectiveness questions. Responses to all of the effectiveness questions with 75% response from the political leaders indicated that state legislators that had participated in accreditation appeared to have mixed feelings about regional accreditation. Table 6.8 indicates, however, that

Table 6.7 GLM multivariate analysis of political leaders' responses with at least 75% response to critique and reform questions using six factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Party	.679	1.025	12.000	26.000	.456
Years on the Education Committee	.352	1.483[a]	24.000	52.000	.117
Participation in accreditation	.875	.311[a]	12.000	26.000	.981
Political self-description	.757	.695[a]	12.000	26.000	.742
Political experience	.371	1.392[a]	24.000	52.000	.158
Occupation	.180	.925	60.000	125.526	.626

c) Exact statistic.
d) Design: @PARTY+@YREDCO3+@ACCPART+@POLDES2+POLTIEX+ @OCCRGRP

Table 6.8 Political leaders responses with 75% responses with significant differences in the means for participation in accreditation with 6 fixed factors.

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Participation in Accreditation	
		Yes	No
Effectiveness			
1) The regional accreditation of a college is a major factor in parent/student decision to attend a particular college.	6 ff	3.400	3.167
2) Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	6 ff	2.800	3.133
3) State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	6 ff	2.900	3.500
4) Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	6 ff	3.100	2.767
5) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to transfer credits from one institution to another.	6 ff	3.900	3.967
6) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.	6 ff	3.900	3.967
7) Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	6 ff	3.200	3.267
15a) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Parents	6 ff	4.000	3.533
15b) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Students	6 ff	4.200	3.400
15c) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Faculty	6 ff	3.900	4.233

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is significantly higher.

Table 6.8 (continued)

Question	Number of Fixed Factors	Participation in Accreditation	
		Yes	No
Effectiveness			
15d) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Administrators	6 ff	4.300	4.333
15e) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Board of Trustee Members	6 ff	4.100	4.233
15f) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Political Leaders	6 ff	3.300	3.633
15g) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Civic and Corporate Leaders	6 ff	3.900	3.700
16) Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	6 ff	4.400	4.133
18) To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	6 ff	3.400	3.633

Mean is significantly lower.
Mean is significantly higher.

political leaders who had participated in accreditation were sometimes more supportive and sometimes more critical of the process. They were more supportive of regional accreditation as a factor when parents and students choose a college (effectiveness 1), as a quality assurance tool respected by parents (effectiveness 15a), college students (15b), and civic and corporate leaders (effectiveness 15g). Political leaders who had participated in accreditation also felt that regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public esteem (effectiveness 16).

Political leaders who had some experience with accreditation, on the other hand, felt that a state agency might be more effective (effectiveness 4), and were less sure than those who had not participated in accreditation that the ability to transfer credits (effectiveness 5) and to qualify for Federal funds (effectiveness 6) were principal advantages of accreditation. The political leaders who had participated in accreditation had significantly lower means when asked if regional accreditation is respected by college faculty, college administrators, Board of Trustee members, and political leaders. They also were less convinced that peer review is more effective than government agency evaluations (effectiveness 18). Greater knowledge of regional accreditation appeared to affect political leaders' perceptions of regional accreditation, but not always in a positive way.

Qualitative Analysis

Thirty legislators of the 83 political leaders that responded provided comments on strengths, 27 on weaknesses, and 27 provided other comments. In some cases,

their views were similar to the views of presidents, but in other cases might be regarded as less trusting and even cynical. However, there were also some severe criticisms offered by presidents. Specific comments of the political leaders are in italics.

Strengths

The 30 political leaders identified 37 strengths. Five political leaders mentioned standards and criteria or "*Assurance to public and consumer that institution meets minimum standards.*" Five political leaders also mentioned self-examination, although one remarked "*It causes the institution to at least assess itself.*" That attitude was reflected in one of the two comments on quality when a political leader noted that it "*Creates at least some quality control.*" Another political leader indicated that

> *The concept or philosophy of accreditation is sound. Lawmakers and academicians are very aware of the process and consider it when making policy changes, many times with a 'wink'!!*

Other apparently two-edged remarks from political leaders include: "*It's (sic) one strength is that it's better than nothing*;" "*Raises briefly the apprehension level of the faculty which motivates the faculty to briefly consider their true mission in the 'educational scheme of things'*;" "*separating out totally worthless institutions from those at least minimally functioning*;" and "*lots of jobs.*" It is not clear whether the respondent felt that regional accreditation created employment for regional agencies or

for institutions. Another political leader commented that the process should be done more often.

One political leader flatly stated regional accreditation did have a strength or positive feature. Another indicated that he or she was "*Not fully familiar with the process.*"

Other comments were more positive. Three political leaders indicated that they felt regional accreditation lead to improvements, although one merely remarked that it "*Gets the campus cleaned up.*" One political leader mentioned peer review, which was cited by a large number of presidents. Awareness of common problems, sensitivity to the region, examination of strengths and weaknesses, and providing comparisons with other institutions were all mentioned by a political leader. Finally, one commented that "*The institution thinks it is of value - Then they work to make sure the identifying information is correct. Self policing to do the study (Report).*"

Weaknesses

One political leader felt that accreditation had no weaknesses. Six political leaders felt that accreditation and self-studies did not provide a true picture of an institution. One stated this weakness as a "*Failure to identify false claims that are generated by the institution's Self Study.*" A second was concerned that accreditation did not show a true picture of discrimination for students from different ethnic groups, resulting in failure, dropouts, and a lack of program effectiveness. Another indicated that

College Administrators know when the visiting team is coming and they are on best behavior. The Administrators have become professional in showing the team only what they want them to see. Every self study I have been a part of is an absolute joke!

Other political leaders felt that peer review was a weakness because peers would be reluctant to criticize, and that being able to elect those who evaluate them was a weakness. Several political leaders identified various shortcomings, such as a lack of: national standards, comprehensive data, follow-up, and public understanding. Like many of the college and university presidents, three political leaders were concerned about the amount of time it takes, and two were concerned about the cost. One felt that it was better than nothing, but another stated that he was unimpressed. One political leader questioned the appropriateness of regional accreditation standards, and one was concerned about its slow response to changes, especially in a changing world. A political leader who focused on SACS also identified this as a weakness:

SACS is fast becoming an anachronism because of its conservative approach. Its ultra-conservative approach is putting it out of touch with the changes in education. You continue to try to drag a 17th century model into the next millenium! Also, its legal problems have detracted from its prestige.

Neither presidents nor political leaders appear to believe that sports are effectively monitored by regional accreditation. One political leader felt that the major weakness was,

Monitoring of Sports Programs. These are money makers for colleges/universities, nothing more. The NCAA is not up to date as well as the colleges themselves. This is where all the problems start at the Univ. level!

Presidents and political leaders both seem to have a basic faith in regional accreditation, but recognize it is not perfect. In the next section, the opinions of political leaders and presidents will be compared to see how extensive the differences are, and how they differ.

Perceptions of Political Leaders Compared to Perceptions of College and University Presidents

The final analysis combined all of the respondents in one database for analysis. To ensure that the analysis examined significant interactions, only questions with responses from 75% or more of the political leaders were included in the GLM multivariate analysis. The analysis included an examination of interactions between type of respondent (presidents and political leaders) and the other fixed factors that were common to the two groups (party affiliation, political self-description and involvement in accreditation), as well as main effects of the fixed factors identified as common for the two groups. Since the numbers were relatively small for the political leaders, the fixed factors were grouped for the final analysis. For instance, while there were a number of presidents that classified themselves as Independent, None or Other when asked about their party affiliation, all of the political leaders were either

Democrat or Republican. Party affiliation was, therefore, grouped into three categories: Democrat; Republican; and Independent, None and Other.

Only seven political leaders described themselves as "liberal" or "other." Therefore, political self-descriptions were grouped into "Liberal and Other," "Conservative" and "Middle of the Road."

The legislators reported very little involvement in accreditation; only 18.1% indicated participating and one-third of those only participated once. Therefore, participation was grouped into a yes/no response of "Never Participated" and "Participated One or More Times."

Quantitative Analysis

The analysis of the combined database was similar to the analysis of the other databases. However, there was also a search for interaction effects. Interactions and main effects were analyzed with SPSS multivariate analysis for the four categories of questions by type of respondent and participation in accreditation, type of respondent and party, and type of respondent and political self-description. While interactions were tested, none were found. The only significant F values of the multivariate analysis were generated for main effects. Type of respondent was significant for all of

Table 6.9 GLM multivariate analysis of all respondents with main effects for responses with at least 75% response of political leaders to purpose questions using four factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Type of respondent	.879	5.464[a]	7.000	278.000	**<.001**
Participation in accreditation	.965	1.434	7.000	278.000	.191
Party	.965	1.453[a]	7.000	278.000	.184
Grouped political self-description[c]	.966	.697[a]	14.000	556.000	.778
Type of respondent * Participation in accreditation	.988	.494[a]	7.000	278.000	.839
Type of respondent * Party	.987	.537[a]	7.000	278.000	.806
Type of respondent * Grouped political self-description[c]	.962	.772[a]	14.000	556.000	.700

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @PARTY+@YREDCO3+@ACCPART+@POLDES2+POLTIEX+ @OCCRGRP
c) Political self-description groups: conservative, middle of the road, and other

the four categories of questions: purpose, process, effectiveness and critique and reform.

Purpose Questions

The only purpose question with less than 75% response was purpose question 4. For the purpose questions with 75% response from political leaders, significant main effects were found for type of respondent, as indicated in Table 6.9. All of the purpose questions with 75% response from political leaders had significantly different means by type of respondent, as shown in Table 6.10.

For all purpose questions, the means of presidents were significantly higher than the means for political leaders, as indicated in Table 6.11. Presidents agreed more strongly than political leaders that: regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities; regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards; the six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system; peer evaluation is a major strength; regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing their admission to graduate/professional study; graduation from an accredited institution is important for professional licensing; and institutions benefit from self-studies.

The largest difference in means occurs in purpose question 5, which concerns peer evaluation. The mean of presidents are 4.67, the highest mean for any question,

Table 6.10 Tests of between-subjects effects for all respondents with type of respondent as the factor for purpose questions with at least 75% response from political leaders

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Type of Respondent					
Purpose 1 - Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities.	8365.036	2	4182.518	6206.598	<.001
Purpose 2 - Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards.	8611.781	2	4305.890	7447.570	<.001
Purpose 3 - The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education.	6626.475	2	3313.237	3887.166	<.001
Purpose 5 - Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation.	9493.143	2	4746.571	10908.249	<.001
Purpose 6 - Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	7264.345	2	3632.172	5360.489	<.001
Purpose 7 - Graduation from a regionally accredited institution is important for being licensed in a profession.	8337.390	2	4168.695	7145.609	<.001
Purpose 8 - Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study.	9474.273	2	4737.136	12390.002	<.001

Table 6.11 Descriptive statistics for all respondents[a] for purpose questions with 75% response from political leaders and significant differences in the means.

	Type of Respondent	Mean	Std. Dev.
Purpose 1 - Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities.	Presidents	4.31	.80
	Political Leaders	4.03	.93
	All	4.27	.83
Purpose 2 - Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards.	Presidents	4.35	.75
	Political Leaders	4.19	.82
	All	4.33	.76
Purpose 3 - The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education.	Presidents	3.80	.92
	Political Leaders	.378	.96
	All	.380	.92
Purpose 5 - Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation.	Presidents	4.67	.60
	Political Leader	3.71	.94
	All	4.54	.74
Purpose 6 - Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	Presidents	3.98	.76
	Political Leader	3.94	.69
	All	3.98	.82
Purpose 7 - Graduation from a regionally accredited institution is important for being licensed in a profession.	Presidents	4.29	.76
	Political Leader	4.10	.78
	All	4.26	.77
Purpose 8 - Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study.	Presidents	4.58	.59
	Political Leader	4.33	.76
	All	4.54	.62

[a]N= 396 presidents + 63 political leaders = 459

and the mean of political leaders is 3.71, which is slightly below "agree."

Process Questions

The only process questions that were answered by 75% or more of the political leaders participating in the study were questions 1 and 2. Again, type of respondent was significant, as indicated in Table 6.12. For the two purpose questions, type of respondent was significant for both questions, as shown in Table 6.13.

Table 6.14 shows that presidents had significantly higher means than political leaders when asked about the effectiveness of the self-study and the visiting team. For process question 1, both had means near 4.00 or "agree." Presidents were above 4.00 and political leaders were below 4.00. For process question 2, political leaders and presidents had means above 4.00, although presidents still had significantly higher means.

Effectiveness Questions

For effectiveness questions type of respondent was significant at the .05 level, and participation in accreditation was significant for effectiveness questions at the .051 level as shown in Table 6.15. When both type of respondent and participation in accreditation are examined for between-subjects effects, as indicated in Table 6.16, the means were significantly different for type of respondent for effectiveness questions 2, 3, 4, 7, 15b, and 18, but only for questions 15a and 15b for participation in accreditation. However, when only type of respondent was considered, there were

Table 6.12 GLM multivariate analysis of all respondents with main effects for responses with at least 75% response of political leaders to process questions using four factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Type of respondent	.962	6.109[a]	2.000	311.000	**.002**
Participation in accreditation	.991	1.475	2.000	311.000	.230
Party	.986	2.265[a]	2.000	311.000	.106
Grouped political self-description[c]	.989	.890[a]	4.000	622.000	.470
Type of respondent * Participation in accreditation	1.000	.020[a]	2.000	311.000	.981
Type of respondent * Party	.999	.118[a]	2.000	311.000	.889
Type of respondent * Grouped political self-description[c]	.988	.958	4.000	622.000	.430

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @PARTY+@YREDCO3+@ACCPART+@POLDES2+POLTIEX+ @OCCRGRP
c) Political self-description groups: conservative, middle of the road, and other

Table 6.13 Tests of between-subjects effects for all respondents with type of respondent as the factor for process questions with at least 75% response from political leaders

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Type of Respondent					
Process 1 - The requirement that an institution conduct a self-study every ten years is an effective feature of accreditation.	8945.640	2	4472.820	7083.330	<.001
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/ standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	8793.232	2	4396.616	7203.883	<.001

Table 6.14 Descriptive statistics for all respondents[a] for process questions with 75% response from political leaders and significant differences in the means.

	Type of Respondent	Mean	Std. Dev.
Process 1 - The requirement that an institution conduct a self-study every ten years is an effective feature of accreditation.	Presidents	4.27	.78
	Political Leaders	3.86	.88
	All	4.21	.81
Process 2 - The review of an institutional self-study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/ standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	Presidents	4.20	.79
	Political Leaders	4.08	.69
	All	4.18	.78

[a]N= 432 presidents + 71 political leaders = 503

Table 6.15 GLM multivariate analysis of all respondents with main effects and intercepts for responses with at least 75% response of political leaders to effectiveness questions using four factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Type of respondent	.839	2.768[a]	16.000	231.000	**<.001**
Participation in accreditation	.896	1.680[a]	16.000	231.000	.051
Party	.961	.585[a]	16.000	231.000	.894
Grouped political self-description[c]	.837	1.342[a]	32.000	462.000	.104
Type of respondent * Participation in accreditation	.923	1.202[a]	16.000	231.000	.267
Type of respondent * Party	.941	.906[a]	16.000	231.000	.563
Type of respondent * Grouped political self-description[c]	.868	1.058[a]	32.000	462.000	.384

a) Exact statistic.
b) Design: @@TYPE2+@@PARTY+@@LIBCN3+@@TYPE2* @@PARTC2+@@TYPE2*@@PARTY+@@TYPE2*LIBCN2
a) Political self-description groups: conservative, middle of the road, and other

Table 6.16 Tests of between-subjects effects for all respondents with type of respondent and participation in accreditation as the fixed factors for effectiveness questions with at least 75% response from political leaders

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Type of Respondent					
Effectiveness 2 - Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	12.285	1	12.285	13.430	<.001
Effectiveness 3 - State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	14.068	1	14.068	16.014	<.001
Effectiveness 4 - Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	25.546	1	25.546	35.497	<.001
Effectiveness 7 - Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	12.426	1	12.426	15.115	<.001
Effectiveness 15b - .Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Students.	3.478	1	3.478	4.305	.039
Effectiveness 18 - To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	14.349	1	14.349	21.506	<.001
Effectiveness 15a - Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: Parents	3.409	1	3.409	4.352	.038
Effectiveness 15b – Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by: College Students	7.458	1	7.458	9.231	.003

significant differences in means between presidents and political leaders for five of the same effectiveness questions (2, 3, 4, 7, and 18) as shown in Table 6.17. Effectiveness question 15b, which concerned the respect college students have for regional accreditation, did not shows significant differences in the means when type of respondent was the only fixed factor. Instead, effectiveness question 16, which indicated that accredited institutions are held in higher public esteem, was significant.

As indicated in Table 6.18, the means of political leaders were significantly higher than presidents on the following effectiveness questions: 2) ranking and ratings are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality (also significantly higher when both fixed factors are examined), 3) state level accountability requirements are effective (also significantly higher when both fixed factors are examined), and 4) state agency effectiveness (also significantly higher when both fixed factors are examined). The means of political leaders are significantly lower for effectiveness questions 7) peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education; 16) regionally accredited colleges are held in higher esteem; and 18) peer reviews are more effective than government reviews. These differences are graphically illustrated in Figure 6.1.

Critique and Reform Questions

Type of respondent was the only fixed factor that was significant for critique and reform questions, as indicated in Table 6.19. Critique questions 4 and 14 through 16 were omitted from the analysis because they had less than 75% response from

Table 6.17 Tests of between-subjects effects for all respondents with type of respondent as the fixed factor for effectiveness questions with at least 75% response from political leaders

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Type of Respondent					
Effectiveness 2 - Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	35.103	1	35.103	38.603	<.001
Effectiveness 3 - State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	35.433	1	35.433	40.042	<.001
Effectiveness 4 - Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	34.746	1	34.746	47.599	<.001
Effectiveness 7 - Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	21.550	1	21.550	26.287	<.001
Effectiveness 16 - Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	3.190	1	3.190	8.273	.004
Effectiveness 18 - To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	26.104	1	26.104	39.265	<.001

Table 6.18 Means for effectiveness questions with 75% response from political leaders with type of respondent as the fixed factor

Dependent Variable	Type of Respondent	Mean	Std. Error	95% Level of Confidence	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Effectiveness 2 - Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	Presidents	2.049	.050	1.951	2.147
	Political Leaders	3.024	.149	2.732	3.317
Effectiveness 3 - State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	Presidents	2.361	.049	2.265	2.458
	Political Leaders	3.341	.147	3.053	3.630
Effectiveness 4 - Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	Presidents	1.883	.045	1.796	1.971
	Political Leaders	2.854	.133	2.591	3.116
Effectiveness 7 - Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	Presidents	4.033	.047	3.940	4.125
	Political Leaders	3.268	.141	2.990	3.546
Effectiveness 16 - Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges	Presidents	4.514	.032	4.450	4.577
	Political Leaders	4.220	.097	4.029	4.410
Effectiveness 18 - To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	Presidents	4.402	.043	4.319	4.486
	Political Leaders	3.561	.127	3.311	3.811

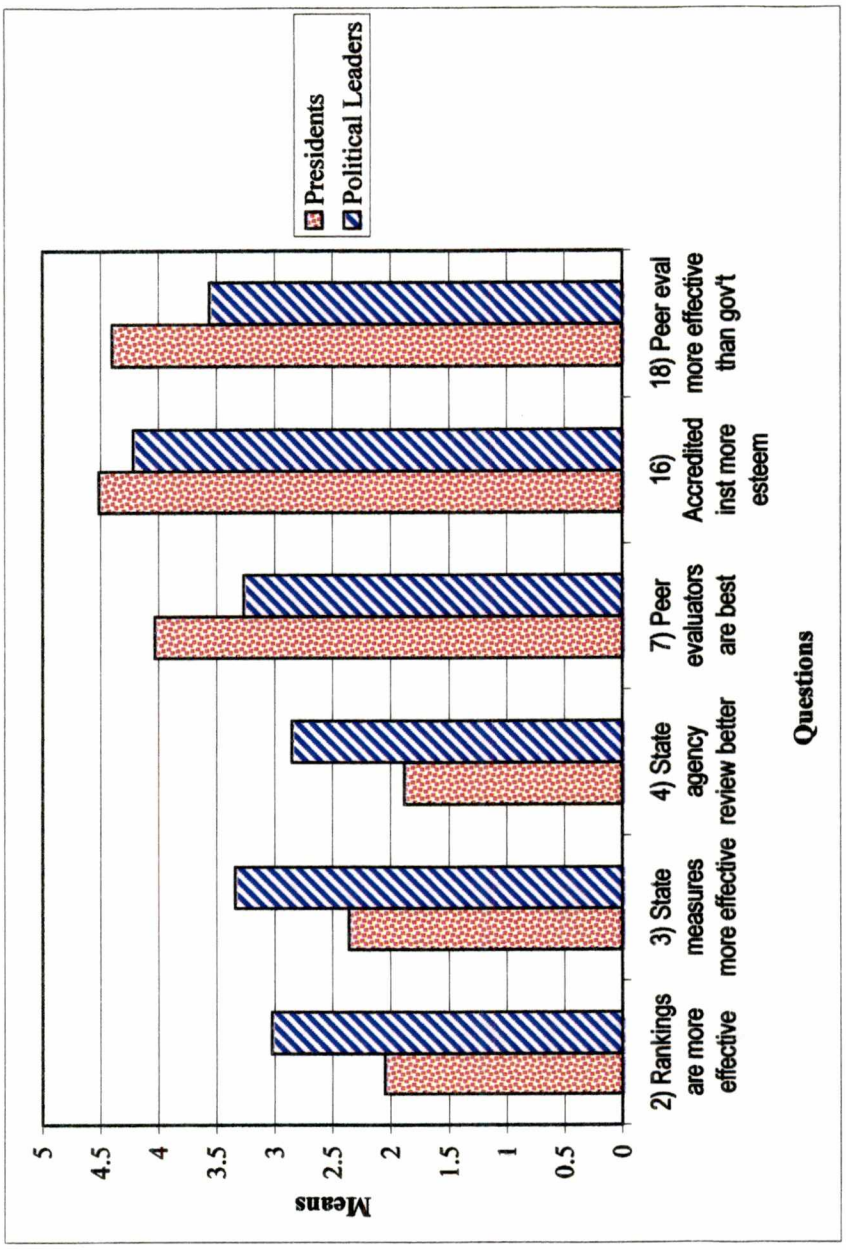


Figure 6.1 Comparison of responses to effectiveness questions with at least 75% response from political leaders

Table 6.19 GLM multivariate analysis of all respondents with main effects for responses with at least 75% response of political leaders to critique and reform questions using four factors and Wilks' Lambda[b]

Effect	Value	F	df	Error df	Sig.
Type of respondent	.765	5.935[a]	12.000	232.000	**<.001**
Participation in accreditation	.983	.342	12.000	232.000	.981
Party	.939	1.263[a]	12.000	232.000	.242
Grouped political self-description[c]	.905	.995[a]	24.000	464.000	.472
Type of respondent * Participation in accreditation	.973	.531[a]	12.000	232.000	.894
Type of respondent * Party	.982	.364[a]	12.000	232.000	.975
Type of respondent * Grouped political self-description[c]	.948	.521[a]	24.000	464.000	.972

c) Exact statistic.
d) Design: @@TYPE2+@@PARTY+@@LIBCN3+@@TYPE2* @@PARTC2+@@TYPE2*@@PARTY+@@TYPE2*LIBCN2
b) Political self-description groups: conservative, middle of the road, and other

political leaders. These questions concerned replacing compliance/noncompliance with graduated performance assessment, use of professional evaluator teams, closer coordination between regional and specialized accreditation, and use of a portfolio instead of a self-study report. For the remaining critique and reform questions, type of respondent was significant for all questions, as shown in Table 6.20.

Presidents had lower means for most critique and reform questions, as shown in Table 6.21 and graphically illustrated in Figure 6.2. Political leaders had significantly higher means for the following critique and reform questions: 1) there should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting minimal standards; 2) each sector should have separate accrediting standards; 3) standards should focus more on undergraduate practice; 5) visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audits; 6) there should be more public and lay members on regional accreditation governing and policy boards; 7) institutions should be required to publish trend data; 8) well-known and large institutions should be exempt from accreditation; 9) some visiting team members should be from outside the Southern region; 10) standards should be national; 11) governing boards or the state should be able to request special accreditation reviews; and 12) accreditation results should be more publicly known. Political leaders had significantly lower means for critique and reform question 13), which asked whether regional accreditation should be required for continued state incorporation of an

Table 6.20 Tests of between-subjects effects for all respondents with type of respondent as the fixed factor for critique and reform questions with at least 75% response from political leaders

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Source: Type of Respondent					
Critique and reform 1 - There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g. a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards.	5068.006	2	2534.003	2753.799	<.001
Critique and reform 2 - Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e. g. community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.).	4.169.393	2	2084.696	1488.519	<.001
Critique and reform 3 - Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice.	5287.398	2	2643.699	3574.226	<.001
Critique and reform 5 - Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits.	2052.886	2	1026.443	1146.163	<.001
Critique and reform 6 - There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation.	3439.999	2	1719.999	1750.551	<.001
Critique and reform 7 - Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.	4318.957	2	2159.478	2066.496	<.001
Critique and reform 8 - Well known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.	925.443	2	462.721	837.486	<.001

Table 6.20 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Critique and reform 9 - Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	3895.037	2	1947.519	1795.452	<.001
Critique and reform 10 - Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional.	3942.293	2	1971.146	1459.146	<.001
Critique and reform 11 - An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review.	4457.767	2	2228.884	2261.409	<.001
Critique and reform 12 - The results of accreditation should be more publicly known.	5179.315	2	2589.658	3169.061	<.001
Critique and reform 13 - For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state.	5039.195	2	2519.597	2256.246	<.001

Table 6.21 Means for critique and reform questions with 75% response from political leaders with type of respondent as the fixed factor

Dependent Variable	Type of Respondent	Mean	Std. Error	95% Level of Confidence	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Critique and reform 1 - There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g. a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards.	Presidents	3.462	.052	3.361	3.564
	Political Leaders	4.018	.127	3.768	4.267
Critique and reform 2 - Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e. g. community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.).	Presidents	3.156	.064	3.031	3.281
	Political Leaders	3.561	.157	3.253	3.870
Critique and reform 3 - Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice.	Presidents	3.546	.046	3.544	3.637
	Political Leaders	4.053	.114	3.829	4.277
Critique and reform 5 - Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits.	Presidents	1.991	.051	1.891	2.091
	Political Leaders	3.456	.125	3.210	3.703
Critique and reform 6 - There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation.	Presidents	2.749	.053	2.644	2.853
	Political Leaders	3.807	.131	3.549	4.065

Table 6.21 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type of Respondent	Mean	Std. Error	95% Level of Confidence	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Critique and reform 7 - Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.	Presidents	3.142	.055	3.034	3.250
	Political Leaders	3.982	.135	3.716	4.249
Critique and reform 8 - Well known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.	Presidents	1.465	.040	1.387	1.544
	Political Leaders	.789	.098	1.596	1.983
Critique and reform 9 - Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	Presidents	2.986	.056	2.875	3.096
	Political Leaders	3.772	.138	3.501	4.043
Critique and reform 10 - Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional.	Presidents	3.092	.062	2.970	3.215
	Political Leaders	3.333	.054	3.031	3.636
Critique and reform 11 - An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review.	Presidents	3.223	.053	3.118	3.327
	Political Leaders	3.895	.131	3.636	4.153
Critique and reform 12 - The results of accreditation should be more publicly known.	Presidents	3.471	.049	3.376	3.567
	Political Leaders	4.211	.120	3.975	4.446

Table 6.21 (continued)

Dependent Variable	Type of Respondent	Mean	Std. Error	95% Level of Confidence	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Critique and reform 13 - For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state.	Presidents	3.549	.057	3.437	3.661
	Political Leaders	3.456	.140	3.181	3.731

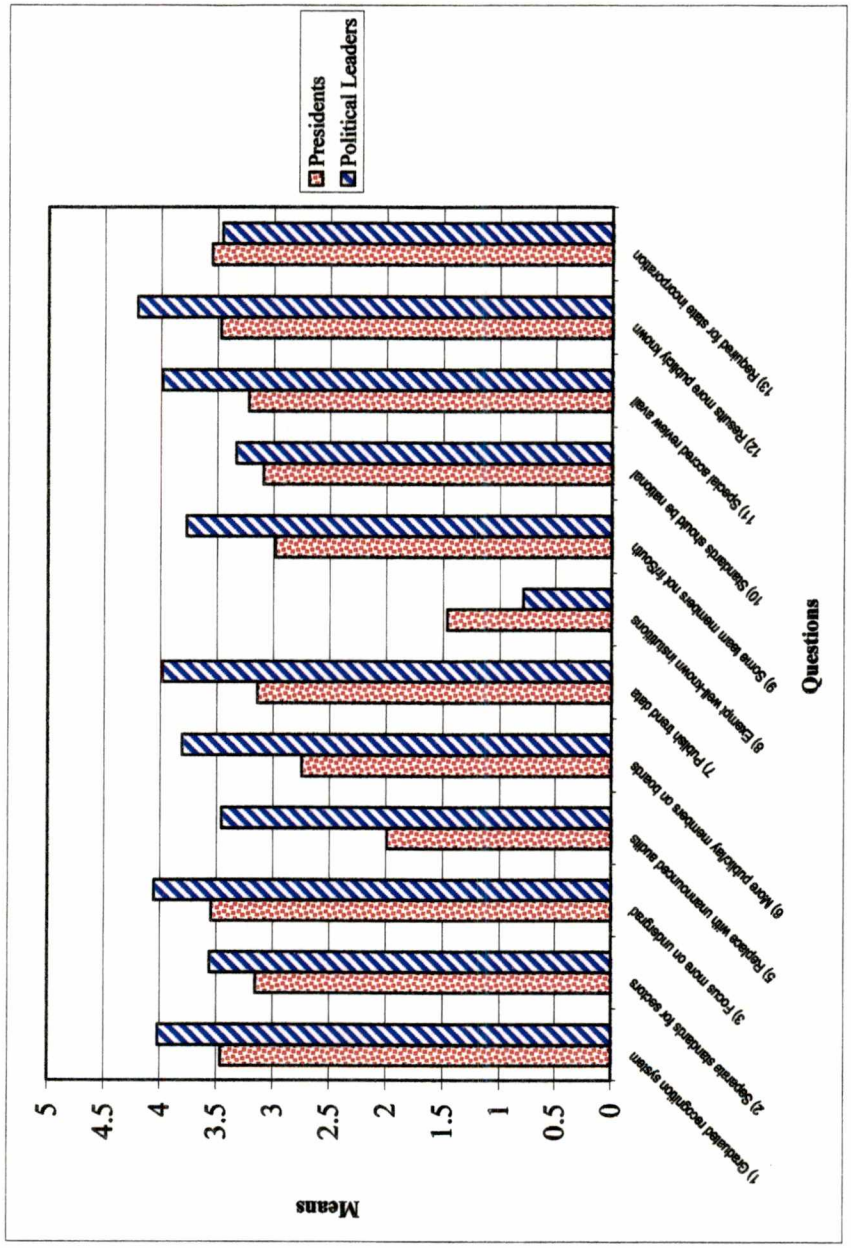


Figure 6.2 Comparison of responses to critique and reform questions with at least 75% response from political leaders

institution.

It is clear from this analysis that the political leaders would welcome reforms more than the presidents. The differences between a few of the means, such as the means for critique and reform question 5 concerning unannounced performance audits, showed more marked differences than other analyses in this study. However, many differences between political leaders and presidents simply seen to indicate that the political leaders have a stronger preference for reform rather than a wide divergence of opinions with the presidents. While this study addresses reforms related to regional accreditation of higher education institutions, the political leaders may have more broad-based concerns about higher education which are reflected in their responses.

Chapter 7, the final chapter of this study, will discuss the implications of the study results, and will also make recommendations for accreditation and for further study. While the data has shown that accreditation has wide acceptance and support, it is clear that political leaders have more interest in reforms than presidents of higher education institutions.

Chapter 7

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

Regional accreditation, which developed, grew and managed to survive threats during the 20th century, has a strong base of support going into the 21st century. However, that support, from both presidents of higher education institutions and political leaders, is not unequivocal. It is clear that presidents are satisfied overall with the process. They value peer review highly, and perceive the process as worthwhile and as useful to their institutions. The presidents also view self-evaluation as useful and meaningful, and perceive regional accreditation as a way of assuring the public that their institutions meet quality standards.

Political leaders, while accepting the process as the best available alternative, appear to be somewhat cynical about the self-policing of higher education. While presidents overwhelmingly support the current process of regional accreditation, political leaders are less confident that the process ensures quality. As Worthen, Sanders and Fitzpatrick (1997) theorized, they are less trusting of the process. The political leaders are aware that regional accreditation only assures that institutions meet minimum standards. Yet, they appear to be somewhat reluctant to intervene. One speculation is that political leaders, contrary to what some might believe, prefer to

leave the process alone unless they feel forced to intervene to protect the public or to answer their own questions about higher education performance.

Presidents are not naïve, however. They appear to realize that accreditation does not have much control over sports, which can be a major source of income for institutions. The presidents know that the process is only as good as the institution, the chair, the visiting team, and the regional staff can make it.

Presidents appear very reluctant to embrace major changes in the regional accreditation. While political leaders appeared to feel that many of the critiques and reforms had some merit, most were not embraced by the presidents. They did not like state accountability requirements or state agency review, rankings and ratings, unannounced audits, or exempting well-known institutions.

Political leaders did not respond in great numbers, which was not unexpected. Those that did respond clearly had different opinions based on their involvement in accreditation. Those with experience in accreditation were more supportive of the regional accreditation process and less supportive of other options, such as rankings and ratings, than those with no experience. Perhaps unfortunately for higher education, there were no differences between those who had more or less experience on the Education Committee in the Senate or House in their state.

Despite significant differences in the mean responses of presidents and political leaders, the differences were less than might have been expected. In the purpose questions, for example, both presidents and political leaders had a mean

above or near "agree" for five of the purpose questions that showed significant differences. For purpose question 3, the mean was below "agree" but the presidents and political leaders were only separated by a .02 mean difference. The only major disagreement was purpose question 5, which asked if peer evaluation is a major strength of regional accreditation. Presidents had the highest mean for that question of all the questions, 4.67, but the political leaders only had a mean of 3.71.

As with most of the purpose questions, the significant differences between presidents and political leaders still indicated a relatively positive view of regional accreditation. Presidents were more confident of the effectiveness of the self-study in process question 2, scoring a mean of 4.27, while political leaders were somewhat less impressed, scoring a mean of 3.86. Both had means above "agree" for process question 2 about the effectiveness of criteria and standards.

Perhaps not surprisingly, political leaders were much more supportive of the use of ratings and rankings in effectiveness question 2, the use of state accountability requirements in effectiveness question 3, and review of institutions by a state agency in effectiveness question 4. These questions yielded some of the strongest differences in means, either above to close to 1.000. Political leaders and presidents were almost as far apart, with a difference of .84, on effectiveness question 18, which asked whether peer review was more effective than government review. Political leaders were close to neutral on the question of whether peer evaluators were the best judges of higher education performance and quality in effectiveness question 7, while the

mean of presidents was at "agree." Both political leaders and presidents agreed that regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public esteem.

Several critique and reform questions resulted in sharp differences. Presidents disagreed with the idea of unannounced performance audits in critique and reform question 5, giving it one of the lowest means at 1.991 of all the questions. However, political leaders had a mean of 3.456 for the question, scoring it midway between "neutral" and "agree," for a difference of 1.465. Political leaders had an even higher mean at 3.807 for the idea in critique and reform question 6 that there should be more public and lay members on regional accreditation governing and policy boards. Presidents were much less enthusiastic, having a mean of 2.749 for the question, which was below "neutral" and 1.058 lower.

Critique and reform question 7 on the requirement to publish performance data resulted in a difference of .84 between presidents and political leaders. Presidents were close to "neutral" at 3.142, while political were close to "agree" at 3.982. The means of the presidents was slightly below "neutral" at 2.986 for critique and reform question 9, which asked whether some peer reviewers should be selected from outside the region. Political leaders had a mean of 3.772 for the question. There was a difference of .74 between the means of presidents and political leaders for critique and reform question 12. Political leaders had a mean of 4.211, above "agree," while presidents had a mean of 3.471, between "neutral" and "agree."

Responses for critique and reform question 11, which focused on whether a board of trustees or the state should be able to request a special accreditation review, showed a difference of .672 between the means. Political leaders were closer to "agree" at 3.895, while presidents were closer to "neutral" at 3.223.

Opinions were closer, with differences ranging between .556 and .093 for critique and reform question 2 (a graduated recognition system, which political leaders favored more), critique and reform question 3 (increased focus on undergraduate practice, which political leaders favored more), critique and reform question 2 (separate standards for different types of institutions, which political leaders favored more), critique and reform question 10 (national accreditation, which political leaders favored more), and critique and reform question 13 (require regional accreditation for continued state incorporation, which presidents favored more). All of the responses for these questions ranged between "neutral" and "agree."

Conclusions

There are real differences in perceptions between presidents and political leaders about needed changes in regional accreditation. Political leaders appear willing to accept accreditation, although they are less enthusiastic about the process than most presidents. When the next crisis emerges, it seems reasonable to predict that political leaders may impose their own version of a solution on higher education, as occurred when with the student loan crisis. Higher education was able to successfully resist what they perceived as the worst aspect of the amendments to the

Higher Education Act in 1992, but their victory may not have been final. The storm of protest from higher education appears to have made political leaders realize that SPREs were not politically feasible. However, the results of this study show that political leaders believe in the utility of government imposed accountability measures for higher education. Currently, political leaders appear to be somewhat cynical about regional accreditation. It might not take much of another crisis to have political leaders impose more restrictions on higher education. It is clear that very few presidents would welcome these governmental controls.

Recommendations

It has been said that the best offense is a good defense. If regional accreditation is to survive in the next century, and perhaps even to prosper, some initiatives would appear to be wise and prudent. First, political leaders need to know more about regional accreditation. If they have any knowledge of accreditation, it is much more likely to be specialized accreditation, which one political leader referred to as "white collar extortion." They view accreditation as forcing them to unfairly allocate scarce resources.

Involving political leaders in regional accreditation will not be easy. However, providing them with easily read materials that clearly define the difference between specialized and regional accreditation and explain the regional accreditation process, offering assistance on higher education matters to legislative and gubernatorial staff, inviting political leaders to speak at regional accreditation meetings, and requesting

the participation of political leaders on boards and visiting teams would help inform political leaders. Regional agencies may already be pursuing some of these options, but a broader effort apparently is needed. When there is no difference in perceptions between those who have served on Education Committees for long periods of time and very short periods of time, there is a problem.

The public also needs to be better informed about regional accreditation. In contrast to the time when regional accreditation was initiated, great numbers of Americans have themselves received a college education. They know that there are real differences between institutions, which regional accreditation makes no attempt to define. While ratings and rankings may not be the solution, political leaders and the public are searching for some other means of judging quality than regional accreditation. If regional accreditation itself could serve that need, it could undercut the other measures.

Reforms in regional accreditation, while they may be worthwhile, are unlikely to fully restore public confidence in higher education. As Bogue (199) notes, however, higher education has always been criticized and is perceived as being in constant state of crisis. Today public officials and the general public are much better educated, and many have earned college degrees. Rather than just critics or consumers, political leaders and the public need to be regarded as, and regard themselves as, partners in higher education as well as in regional accreditation. To encourage this partnership, Bogue (1999) commends more public involvement in the

governing boards of accrediting associations. Involvement is a key to increasing knowledge, as well as improving and developing ownership of the process.

Presidents realize that regional accreditation is not perfect. The regional agencies and their boards should make every attempt to be inclusive and to address some of the other issues pinpointed by the presidents themselves. The usefulness of accreditation to a specific institution rests on two key elements: the self-study and the visiting team. These are praised, but also criticized. If improvements could be implemented in selecting and training the visiting teams, the results would be very beneficial.

The regional agencies need to be closely involved in improving the process. There needs to be a clear understanding of staff responsibilities, and the staff needs to understand their role--and their boundaries--in the process. The regional agencies should take the lead in responding to the critiques and evaluating the reforms that political leaders appear to favor. As SACS is apparently doing with its alternative self-study, developing one or more pilot project can demonstrate the applicability of and challenges inherent in implementing of some of the reforms that political leaders favor.

Therefore, one specific recommendation resulting from this study is to develop and implement a carefully selected group of pilot projects that incorporate different accreditation reforms to allow a comparison between approaches. For example, a high priority would be for SACS to develop a pilot project that would test the feasibility of

using unannounced audits every five years, which political leaders clearly favor in their response to critique and reform question 5, along with the traditional self-study every ten years. The audits would focus on performance, while the self-study would focus on quality issues and improvements. Another priority would be to develop a report card, rather than a rating system, in cooperation with a selected group of institutions and test its usefulness and acceptability using focus groups and other public participation and feedback techniques. Other reforms favored by political leaders that could easily be implemented on a limited basis and evaluated before deciding whether to require them include: incorporating more public and lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation agencies; selecting some of the visiting team members from outside the region; and publishing trend data to better inform the political leaders and the public.

Higher education institutions and regional agencies may discover that, not only are reforms favored by political leaders not a burden, they offer significant benefits to higher education institutions and agencies. The bonus of testing and implementing desired reforms is that, along with potentially providing institutions and agencies with better ways of pursuing quality in higher education, the effort to be responsive to the concerns of political leaders can improve the public's perception of higher education.

The public perception of higher education can also be improved by involving political leaders and other key stakeholders in the governance and accreditation of higher education. It is quite clear that involvement in accreditation generally improves

the perceptions of political leaders. Unfortunately, the number of years on the Education Committee does not appear to have the same positive impact. While college and university presidents were not warm to the idea of more public and lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation, they need to realize that they are missing a significant opportunity to develop more support for regional accreditation and higher education. With involvement, political leaders and the public in general will begin to develop some ownership in regional accreditation process and therefore increase their level of trust in the process. In the best of all worlds, this trust would translate to increased governmental support for both public and private institutions.

Regional accreditation agencies have an opportunity to choose their own future. They may continue along a path that, if not perfect, has satisfied those in the academy. The risk is that, by ignoring the concerns of political leaders and the public, this path may lead to the eventual downfall of regional accreditation. By incorporating carefully chosen reforms and sharing the process with political leaders and the public, regional accreditation may be stronger than ever in the new millenium.

This study is intended to be a beginning, not an end. A follow-up study of the opinions of key political leaders is currently underway. Future studies could examine the perceptions of political leaders and presidents in the other five regions, or could focus on specific aspects of purpose, process, effectiveness, or critique and reform. The most satisfying result would be an opening of discussion in regional accreditation

agencies about the results of the study, and seeing meaningful changes occur that benefit higher education and the public it serves.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AFFECTING REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

	1700's
1787	Board of Regents of the State of New York directed to visit each college once a year.
	1800's
1819	Dartmouth decision gives control of colleges to boards of trustees.
1847	American Medical Association founded.
1862	Land-Grant (Morrill Act) passed for white institutions.
1870	The Commissioner of Education of the US Bureau of Education issues a list of 369 higher education institutions that are authorized to award degrees and have students.
1876	John Hopkins, the first American university and graduate school, founded.
1878	New York regents exams introduced.
1882-1910	Elective system introduced at Harvard University
1885	New England Association of Schools and Colleges founded as the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools (changed to New England Association of and Colleges Secondary Schools in 1914 and to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges in 1971).
1887	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools founded as the College Association of Pennsylvania.
1890	Second Land-Grant College Act for African-American institutions passed.
1895	North Central Association of Colleges and Schools founded.
	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools founded as the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Southern States.
	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools founded.

Appendix A (continued)

1900's	
1900	Association of American Universities founded.
	Association of American Law Schools founded.
	College Entrance Examination Board founded.
1901	Joliet (IL) Junior College, the first permanent junior college, opened.
1905	Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching founded with funds from Andrew Carnegie that were used to establish a pension fund for college faculty, leading to the definition of a college based on the definition of the New York State regents: 6 full-time professors, four years of preparation, four years of course work, and a minimum income of $100,000 (public) to $200,000 (private, excess endowment over debt).
	AMA's Council on Medical Education first publishes a classification of medical schools using the pass percentage on licensure examinations.
1906	AMA begins inspecting medical colleges.
1907	AMA classifies medical colleges as approved, on probation, or unapproved.
1910	The Flexner report, *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*, published as a result of a two year study requested by the AMA from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
	North Central Association develops accreditation standards.
1912	At the request of the AAU, Kendrick Babcock of the Office of Education generates a classification of 344 higher education institutions in four categories according to the success of their graduates in graduate school. After a public outcry from the lesser ranked institutions, the list is suppressed, although later issued by AAU when Babcock leaves the Office of Education.
1913	The Association of American Universities publishes a list of 119 institutions whose degrees would be accepted by German universities.
1914	Smith-Lever Act passed; authorized extension program.
	Association of American Colleges founded.

Appendix A (continued)

1900's (continued)	
1917	Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges founded.
	Only 70 colleges eligible for the Carnegie pension fund.
	Office of Education begins publication of a directory and supplement approximately once every four years until 1965, initially including institutions recognized by state agencies.
1919	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools develops accreditation standards.
1921	The Middle States Association develops accreditation standards.
	The Northwest Association develops accreditation standards.
1934	The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools adopts the principle that institutions will be judged based on the stated purposes of the institution.
1939	Chancellor of the University of Buffalo, Samuel Capen, delivers a speech on accreditation titled "Seven Devils in Exchange for One."
1949	National Commission on Accrediting (NCA) established.
	NCA establishes a National Committee of Regional Accrediting Agencies (NCRAA), which begins issuing an annual list of accredited institutions.
1952	New England Association of Schools and Colleges votes to require institutions to be evaluated (accredited) to attain or retain membership beginning in 1954.
	US Office of Education begins recognizing accreditation agencies as eligibility for funds from the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act is based on accreditation.
1962	Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) founded. Preceded by the Western College Association, which was established in 1924 as a discussion group, and began accrediting activities in 1948.
1964	Federal of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE) is formed from the National Committee of Regional Accrediting Agencies.
1975	National Commission on Accrediting (NCA) merges with the Federation of Regional Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE) to form the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA).

Appendix A (continued)

1900's (continued)	
1992	Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act creates State Postsecondary Review Entities (SPREs).
1993	Council on Postsecondary Accreditation disbands. Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) incorporates.
	Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) incorporates.
1994	Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Education (CORPA) forms.
	National Policy Board on Higher Education Institutional Accreditation (NPB) convened (January).
	Higher Education Accreditation Board proposed by NPB (October).
1995	Accreditation Coordinating Council proposed by NPB (March).
	Presidents Work Group on Accreditation formed (July).
	Presidents Work Group proposes Council for Higher Education Accreditation or CHEA (October).
1996	Revised CHEA proposal submitted to college and university presidents (March).
	CHEA approved, with 94 percent approval and 54 percent of colleges and universities voting.
	First meeting of the Board of Directors of CHEA (July) held.

Appendix B

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

College of Education
Leadership Studies in Education
238 Claxton Addition Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3400
(423) 974-2216
FAX (423) 974-6146

6 July 1998

Dr. «FNAME» «MI». «LNAME»
President
«FULLNAME»
«STREET»
«ABRCITY», «STATE» «ZIP5»-«ZIP4»

Dear Dr. «LNAME»:

During the 1990's regional accreditation of colleges and universities has been examined more closely than at any other time during its ninety year history. Regional accreditation of higher education institutions, as distinct from specialized accreditation of professional programs such as law and medicine, is offered by six regional agencies in the United States. In the southeast, as you may know, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits colleges and universities.

We would like to ask you to participate in a study which is designed to determine how governors, state legislators and college and university presidents perceive regional accreditation. The study, which is being conducted by the Leadership Studies Unit of the University of Tennessee College of Education, focuses on political leaders and presidents because they are critical to a successful accreditation process. Governors and state legislators are key to the funding of public higher education institutions, yet their concerns have seldom been explored. College and university presidents are involved in various facets of accreditation: being evaluated, developing evaluation criteria, and evaluating other institutions.

The enclosed questionnaire is designed to be completed in fifteen minutes. We would appreciate your cooperation in completing the questionnaire, and in providing frank comments both about the accreditation process and this study. Responses will be confidential. A self addressed stamped envelope is included for your convenience. The study is to be completed by December and will be available on request from the authors.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

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Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

A) How many years have you served as the president of your current college and of any other institution(s)?

- ☐ 1-5 years at current institution
- ☐ 6-10 years at current institution
- ☐ Over 10 years at current institution
- ☐ 1-5 years total at any other institution(s)
- ☐ 6-10 years total at any other institution(s)
- ☐ Over 10 years total at any other institution(s)

B) What is the Carnegie classification of your college or university?

- ☐ Research University I or II
- ☐ Doctorate-Granting University I or II
- ☐ Comprehensive University/College I or II
- ☐ Liberal Arts College I or II
- ☐ Two Year Institution
- ☐ Specialized Institution
- ☐ Nontraditional Institution

C) Is your college or university public or private? ☐ Public ☐ Private

D) How many total students are there at your institution?

☐ Less than 1,000 ☐ 1,001 - 5,000 ☐ 5,000 - 10,000 ☐ 10,001 - 20,000 ☐ Over 20,000

E) What percent of the students are part-time?

☐ Less than 25% ☐ 25-50% ☐ 50-74% ☐ 75% -99% ☐ 100%

F) Have you ever served as a member of any of the following?

	Never	Once	2-5 times	5-10 times	Over 10 times
• Commission on Colleges (COC)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Executive Council of the COC	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Visiting Team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Committee on Criteria & Reports	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Ad Hoc Special Committee	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

G) Have you ever chaired a visiting team? ☐Never ☐Once ☐2-5 times ☐6-10 times ☐Over 10 times

H) Have you ever been employed by a regional accreditation association?

☐ Yes (If yes, how many years? _____ years) ☐ No

I) How often have you participated in the regional accreditation process?

☐Never ☐Once ☐2-5 times ☐6-10 times ☐Over 10 times

J) Is your college or university currently fully accredited? ☐ Yes ☐ No

K) In what field did you receive your terminal degree?

☐ Agriculture ☐ Business ☐ Communications ☐ Education
☐ Health Care ☐ Liberal arts ☐ Science ☐ Other _____

L) What is your party affiliation?

☐ Democrat ☐ Republican ☐ Independent ☐ None ☐ Other: _____

M) How would you describe yourself?

☐ Liberal ☐ Conservative ☐ Middle of the road Other: _____

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements by checking (✓) the box under the response which best represents your opinion.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
PURPOSE						
1) Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) There is an effective distinction between the purpose of regional (institutional) accreditation and the purpose of professional or major field (program) accreditation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Graduation from a regionally accredited institution is important for being licensed in a profession.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PROCESS						
1) The requirement that an institution conduct a self study every ten years is an effective feature of accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) The review of an institutional self study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from other campuses with similar missions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is primarily made by professional staff of the SACS Commission on Colleges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
8) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) Regional accreditation has moved from a preoccupation with process to an accent on results--from standards (e.g. number of Ph.D.s on the faculty) to a concern with institutional effectiveness (identifying goals consistent with mission and assessing performance on the basis of those goals).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
EFFECTIVENESS						
1) The regional accreditation of a college is a major factor in parent/student decision to attend a particular college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to transfer credits from one institution to another.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) The principles and practices of Total Quality Management/ Continuous Quality Improvement are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are relatively ineffective in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in large comprehensive and research universities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in smaller schools such as some community colleges and liberal arts schools.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
13) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represent an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14) Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by:						
• Parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Administrators	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Board of Trustee Members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Political Leaders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Civic and Corporate Leaders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16) Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17) Regional accreditation standards and review permit many weak and low quality institutions to be accredited	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18) To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19) Regional accreditation has been effective in monitoring the quality and integrity of intercollegiate athletics programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20) Most accreditation exercises at the campus level are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty/staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21) The current self study process is seen by most faculty as an exercise in "busy work" rather than an effective instrument of quality assurance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CRITIQUE AND REFORM						
1) There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g. a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e. g community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	*Don't Know*
3) Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on the quality of undergraduate practice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) More discrimination should be used in evaluating institutional compliance with standards--e.g. replace compliance/non compliance with a graduated performance assessment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) Well known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10) Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11) An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12) The results of accreditation should be more publicly known.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13) For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14) The effectiveness of regional accreditation would be enhanced by using professional evaluator teams selected and trained for that purpose.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15) There should be closer coordination between regional accreditation and specialized accreditation as a means of reducing both costs and time demands on an institution.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16) A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

- ***If you could identify one strength or positive feature of regional accreditation, what would it be?***

- ***What is the greatest weakness or drawback of accreditation?***

- ***Other comments.***

If someone other than the addressee completed this questionnaire, please list your title:

_____

THANK YOU

Appendix C

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

College of Education
Leadership Studies in Education
238 Claxton Addition Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3400
(423) 974-2216
FAX (423) 974-6146

6 July 1998

The «FullName»
«WAddress1»
«WAddress2»
«WCity», «St» «WZip»

Dear «Chamber» «LName»:

During the 1990's regional accreditation of colleges and universities has been examined more closely than at any other time during its ninety year history. Regional accreditation of higher education institutions, as distinct from specialized accreditation of professional programs such as law and medicine, is offered by six regional agencies in the United States. In the southeast, as you may know, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits colleges and universities.

We would like to ask you to participate in a study which is designed to determine how governors, state legislators and college and university presidents perceive regional accreditation. The study, which is being conducted by the Leadership Studies Unit of the University of Tennessee College of Education, focuses on political leaders and presidents because they are critical to a successful accreditation process. Governors and state legislators are key to the funding of public higher education institutions, yet their concerns have seldom been explored. College and university presidents are involved in various facets of accreditation: being evaluated, developing evaluation criteria, and evaluating other institutions.

The enclosed questionnaire is designed to be completed in fifteen minutes. We would appreciate your cooperation in completing the questionnaire, and in providing frank comments both about the accreditation process and this study. Responses will be confidential. A self addressed stamped envelope is included for your convenience. The study is to be completed by December and will be available on request from the authors.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

E. Grady Bogue, Ed. D.
Professor
423-974-6140
bogue@utk.edu

Nancy Benziger Brown, AICP
Ph. D. Candidate
423-523-4342
brownnb@aol.com/nbrown3@utk.edu

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

STATE LEGISLATORS

A) How many years have you served as a state legislator?
House: ☐ 1-2 years; ☐ 3-5 years; ☐ 6-10 years; ☐ 10-20 years; ☐ over 20 years.
Senate: ☐ 1-2 years; ☐ 3-5 years; ☐ 6-10 years; ☐ 10-20 years; ☐ over 20 years

B) What is your party affiliation?

☐ Democrat ☐ Independent
☐ Republican ☐ Other (please list): _____

C) What is your primary occupation outside the legislature?

☐ Full-time legislator ☐ Farmer
☐ Business owner (type of business): _____ ☐ Educator (please check level): ____ K-12 ____ Higher Education
☐ Physician/dentist/other health care ☐ Retired
☐ Lawyer ☐ Other (please list): _____
☐ Other manager/professional _____

D) How would you describe yourself?
☐ Liberal, ☐ Conservative; ☐ Middle of the road; ☐ Other: _____

E) Have you ever served on the Education Committee in the House or Senate?
☐ Yes (If yes, how many years? _____ years) ☐ No

F) Have you ever participated in the accreditation process of any college or university?
☐ Yes (If yes, how many times? _____ times), ☐ No

Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements by checking (✓) the box under the response which best represents your opinion.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
PURPOSE						
1) Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) There is an effective distinction between the purpose of regional (institutional) accreditation and the purpose of professional or major field (program) accreditation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
6) Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Graduation from a regionally accredited institution is important for being licensed in a profession.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PROCESS						
1) The requirement that an institution conduct a self study every ten years is an effective feature of accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) The review of an institutional self study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from other campuses with similar missions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is primarily made by professional staff of the SACS Commission on Colleges	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) Regional accreditation has moved from a preoccupation with process to an accent on results--from standards (e.g. number of Ph.D.s on the faculty) to a concern with institutional effectiveness (identifying goals consistent with mission and assessing performance on the basis of those goals).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
EFFECTIVENESS						
1) The regional accreditation of a college is a major factor in parent/student decision to attend a particular college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
4) Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to transfer credits from one institution to another.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) The principles and practices of Total Quality Management/ Continuous Quality Improvement are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are relatively ineffective in the evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in large comprehensive and research universities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in smaller schools such as some community colleges and liberal arts schools.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represent an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14) Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by:						
• Parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Administrators	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Board of Trustee Members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Political Leaders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Civic and Corporate Leaders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
16) Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17) Regional accreditation standards and review permit many weak and low quality institutions to be accredited.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18) To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19) Regional accreditation has been an effective in monitoring the quality and integrity of intercollegiate athletics programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20) Most accreditation exercises at the campus level are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty/staff.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21) The current self study process is seen by most faculty as an exercise in "busy work" than an effective instrument of quality assurance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CRITIQUE AND REFORM						
1) There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards: e.g a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e. g. community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on quality of undergraduate practice and quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) More discrimination should be used in evaluating institutional compliance with standards--e.g. replace compliance/non compliance with a graduated performance assessment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) Well known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
10) Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11) An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12) The results of accreditation should be more publicly known.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13) For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14) The effectiveness of regional accreditation would be enhanced by using professional evaluator teams selected and trained for that purpose.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15) There should be closer coordination between regional accreditation and specialized accreditation as a means of reducing both costs and time demands on an institution.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16) A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- ***If you could identify one strength or positive feature of regional accreditation, what would it be?***

- ***What is the greatest weakness or drawback of accreditation?***

- ***Other comments.***

If someone other than the addressee completed this questionnaire, please list your title:

_____

THANK YOU

Appendix D

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

College of Education
Leadership Studies in Education
238 Claxton Addition Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3400
(423) 974-2216
FAX (423) 974-6146

6 July 1998

The Honorable «FullName»
Governor of «St»
«WAddress1»
«WAddress2»
«WCity», «St» «WZip»

Dear Governor «LName»:

During the 1990's regional accreditation of colleges and universities has been examined more closely than at any other time during its ninety year history. Regional accreditation of higher education institutions, as distinct from specialized accreditation of professional programs such as law and medicine, is offered by six regional agencies in the United States. In the southeast, as you may know, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits colleges and universities.

We would like to ask you to participate in a study which is designed to determine how governors, state legislators and college and university presidents perceive regional accreditation. The study, which is being conducted by the Leadership Studies Unit of the University of Tennessee College of Education, focuses on political leaders and presidents because they are critical to a successful accreditation process. Governors and state legislators are key to the funding of public higher education institutions, yet their concerns have seldom been explored. College and university presidents are involved in various facets of accreditation: being evaluated, developing evaluation criteria, and evaluating other institutions.

The enclosed questionnaire is designed to be completed in fifteen minutes. We would appreciate your cooperation in completing the questionnaire, and in providing frank comments both about the accreditation process and this study. Responses will be confidential. A self addressed stamped envelope is included for your convenience. The study is to be completed by December and will be available on request from the authors.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

E. Grady Bogue, Ed. D.
Professor
423-974-6140
bogue@utk.edu

Nancy Benziger Brown, AICP
Ph. D. Candidate
423-523-4342
brownnb@aol.com/nbrown3@utk.edu

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

GOVERNORS

A) How many years have you served as an elected official at the state level?

☐ 1-2 years; ☐ 3-5 years; ☐ 6-10 years; ☐ 10-20 years; ☐ over 20 years.

B) What is your party affiliation?

☐ Democrat ☐ Independent

☐ Republican ☐ Other (please list): _____

C) What is your primary occupation when you are not serving as governor?

☐ Full-time legislator or other elected official

☐ Business owner (type of business): _____

☐ Physician/dentist/other health care

☐ Lawyer

☐ Other manager/professional

☐ Farmer

☐ Educator (please check level): ____ K-12 ____ Higher Education

☐ Retired

☐ Other (please list): _____

D) How would you describe yourself?

☐ Liberal; ☐ Conservative; ☐ Middle of the road; ☐ Other: _____

E) Have you ever served on the Education Committee in the House or Senate?

☐ Yes (If yes, how many years? _____ years) ☐ No

F) Have you ever participated in the accreditation process of any college or university?

☐ Yes (If yes, how many times? _____ times); ☐ No

Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements by checking (✓) the box under the response which best represents your opinion.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
PURPOSE						
1) Regional accreditation is an important instrument in improving the quality of colleges and universities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Regional accreditation is an important means of assuring the public that institutions meet established quality standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) The six regional accrediting agencies form an effective national system for assuring and improving quality in higher education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) There is an effective distinction between the purpose of regional (institutional) accreditation and the purpose of professional or major field (program) accreditation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Peer evaluation, as opposed to governmental review, is a major strength of regional accreditation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
6) Regional accreditation benefits students by enhancing admission to graduate and/or professional study.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Graduation from a regionally accredited institution is important for being licensed in a profession.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) Colleges and universities benefit from periodic self-evaluation required by the regional accreditation self study	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PROCESS						
1) The requirement that an institution conduct a self study every ten years is an effective feature of accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) The review of an institutional self study and evaluation of its performance against criteria/standards by a visiting team of peer evaluators is an effective feature of accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to evaluate compliance of institutional practice with published criteria or standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) The primary purpose of the visiting team is to assist the institution in identifying areas for improving its educational practice and policy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Most visiting teams are composed of college presidents from other campuses with similar missions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) Most visiting teams are composed of faculty, staff, and presidents from institutions with similar missions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is primarily made by professional staff of the SACS Commission on Colleges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) The selection of peer evaluators for visiting teams is a shared decision among Commission on Colleges staff, visiting team chair, and the president of the campus to be visited.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) Regional accreditation has moved from a preoccupation with process to an accent on results--from standards (e g. number of Ph.D.s on the faculty) to a concern with institutional effectiveness (identifying goals consistent with mission and assessing performance on the basis of those goals).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
EFFECTIVENESS						
1) The regional accreditation of a college is a major factor in parent/student decision to attend a particular college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Rankings and ratings of colleges, such as those appearing in U. S. News World Report, are more effective in developing and demonstrating quality than accreditation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) State level requirements for accountability reporting on selected performance indicators are more effective in quality assurance than regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
4) Improvement and accountability goals--for both public and private institutions--would be more effectively served by having institutions reviewed by a designated state agency.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to transfer credits from one institution to another.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) One of the principal advantages of accreditation is the ability to qualify for federal research grants and student aid.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Peer evaluators are the best judges of higher education performance and quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) The costs of regional accreditation are justified by results.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) The principles and practices of Total Quality Management/ Continuous Quality Improvement are more effective in assuring quality than regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are relatively ineffective in the evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in large comprehensive and research universities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation are effective in causing/stimulating quality improvements in smaller schools such as some community colleges and liberal arts schools.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13) The current policy and practice of regional accreditation represent an effective and distinctive approach to quality assurance as compared to practices in many other countries.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14) Regional accreditation is more an exercise in professional backscratching than an effective quality assurance instrument.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15) Regional accreditation is respected as a quality assurance tool by.						
• Parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• College Administrators	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Board of Trustee Members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Political Leaders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Civic and Corporate Leaders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
16) Regionally accredited colleges are held in higher public and professional esteem than non accredited colleges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17) Regional accreditation standards and review permit many weak and low quality institutions to be accredited.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18) To have the quality and performance of an institution evaluated by professional peers is more effective than having these evaluations done by government officials or agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19) Regional accreditation has been an effective in monitoring the quality and integrity of intercollegiate athletics programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20) Most accreditation exercises at the campus level are relatively pro forma affairs with little substantive involvement of campus faculty/staff.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21) The current self study process is seen by most faculty as an exercise in "busy work" than an effective instrument of quality assurance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CRITIQUE AND REFORM						
1) There should be more emphasis on and recognition of institutional performance beyond meeting the minimal standards. e.g. a graduated recognition system that identifies institutions that exceed minimal standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) Each sector in higher education should have separate accrediting criteria/standards (e. g. community colleges, liberal arts colleges, doctoral and research universities, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) Accrediting standards for all institutions, but especially for larger graduate institutions, should focus more closely on quality of undergraduate practice and quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) More discrimination should be used in evaluating institutional compliance with standards--e.g. replace compliance/non compliance with a graduated performance assessment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) Visits every ten years should be replaced with unannounced performance audit visits.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) There should be more public/lay members on the governing and policy boards for regional accreditation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) Each accredited campus should be required to publish both current and trend data on a set of public performance indicators which reflect its mission and performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) Well known institutions, such as large public and private research universities, should be exempted from accreditation review.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) Some members of peer review teams making visits to campus should be selected outside the Southern region.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perceptions of Regional Accreditation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
10) Accreditation standards for institutions should be national rather than regional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11) An institution's governing board or state level officers should be able to request a special accreditation review	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12) The results of accreditation should be more publicly known.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13) For consumer protection, regional accreditation of a degree granting institution should be required for the institution to be recognized for continued incorporation in a state.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14) The effectiveness of regional accreditation would be enhanced by using professional evaluator teams selected and trained for that purpose.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15) There should be closer coordination between regional accreditation and specialized accreditation as a means of reducing both costs and time demands on an institution.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16) A portfolio would provide a more useful picture of an institution than the current self-study report.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- ***If you could identify one strength or positive feature of regional accreditation, what would it be?***

- ***What is the greatest weakness or drawback of accreditation?***

- ***Other comments.***

If someone other than the addressee completed this questionnaire, please list your title:

_____

THANK YOU

Appendix E

PERCEPTIONS OF REGIONAL ACCREDITATION EFFECTIVENESS & REFORM

In July 1998, a questionnaire on regional accreditation effectiveness was sent to you as a governor, state legislator, or college president.

- If you have returned the questionnaire, please accept our thanks.
- If have not returned the questionnaire, we would really appreciate your completing and returning it.
- If you did not receive a questionnaire or have misplaced it, please e-mail Nancy Brown at nbrown3@utk.edu or call the Leadership Studies office at 423-974-2216.

We appreciate your support of this study.

Dr. E. Grady Bogue & Nancy Benziger Brown
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Appendix F

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

College of Education
Leadership Studies in Education
238 Claxton Addition Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3400
(423) 974-2216
FAX (423) 974-6146

October 1, 1998

«PTITLE». «FNAME» «LNAME»
«ATITLE»
«FULLNAME»
«STREET»
«ABRCITY», «STABR» «ZIP5»-«ZIP4»

Dear «PTITLE». «LNAME»:

This summer we initiated a study of Presidential and Political Perceptions of Regional Accreditation and Reform. We are highly pleased with the response rate, which is approaching 60 percent. However, we are anxious to promote the highest possible return, as accreditation reform is both an important and a timely topic.

If you have not yet participated in the study and would be willing to complete a questionnaire, please call the Leadership Studies office at 423-974-2216 or send an e-mail to nbrown3@utk.edu. If you have already returned the questionnaire, please accept our thanks.

Sincerely,

E. Grady Bogue, Ed. D.
Professor
423-974-6140
bogue@utk.edu

Nancy Benziger Brown, AICP
Ph.D. Candidate
423-523-4342
nbrown3@utk.edu

Appendix G

RESIDENTIAL & POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS OF
REGIONAL ACCREDITATION EFFECTIVENESS & REFORM

This summer we mailed a questionnaire on regional accreditation to all legislators who were members of a House or Senate Education Committee in the 11 states that are part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). We also mailed questionnaires to all presidents of colleges and universities in the SACS region. To date, we have received a very good response from presidents, approaching 60 percent. However, we have only received 81 responses, or 21.3 percent, from legislators.

Could you please take a few moments to answer the following 3 open-ended questions and 6 short questions about your background and experience? If you would like to complete the longer questionnaire, please contact Nancy Brown at 423-974-2216 or nbrown3@utk.edu. If you have already completed the questionnaire, please accept our thanks.

The questionnaire may be edited on-line and e-mailed back to nbrown3@utk.edu, faxed to 423-974-6146, or mailed to: Leadership Studies, ATTN: Nancy Brown, 238 Claxton Addition, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-3400. A document file is also attached to this message.

We appreciate your help.

E. Grady Bogue & Nancy Brown, Leadership Studies
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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1. If you could identify one strength or positive feature of regional accreditation, what would it be?

2. What is the greatest weakness or drawback of accreditation?

3. Other comments about regional accreditation.

Please answer these brief questions about your background and experience.

4. How many years have you served as a state legislator?

House: _____ years
Senate: _____ years

5. What is your party affiliation?

6. What is your primary occupation outside the legislature?

7. How would you describe yourself (please check one)?

_____ Liberal
_____ Conservative
_____ Middle of the road
_____ Other: _____

8. Have you ever served on the Education Committee in the House or Senate?

_____ Yes, _____ times
_____ No

9. Have you ever participated in the accreditation process of any college or university?

_____ Yes, _____ times
_____ No

10. Please list any other pertinent information about your background and experience.

THANK YOU.

Again, please return your response by e-mail to nbrown3~utk.edu, by fax to 423-974-6146, or by mail to Leadership Studies, ATTN: Nancy Brown, 238 Claxton Addition, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-3400. If you have questions, phone 423-523-4342.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS, please call, e-mail, or
fax Nancy Brown.

Nancy Benziger Brown, AICP
NBBrown & Associates
4023 Stillwood Drive
Knoxville, TN 37919
423-523-4342 (Phone/Fax/Voice)
423-515-1290 (Beeper - leave number)
423-974-2216 (UT Leadership Studies office)

VITA

Nancy Benziger Brown, AICP, earner her Bachelor of Arts in American Studies and her Master of Science in Planning from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. As an undergraduate, she was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Mortar Board. After receiving her master's degree, she worked for the Tennessee Valley Authority for 18 years as a regional planner, manager, and program coordinator, and became a certified planner. At TVA, she developed the River Heritage program, which focused on the economic development of the Tennessee River; provided training and technical assistance to regional and international clients; and worked with many small communities. Active in the American Planning Association, she served as President of the Tennessee Chapter and Chair of the Small Town and Rural Planning Division. In 1996 she was elected to the Board of Directors of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). After leaving TVA, she formed NBBrown & Associates, a consulting firm, and taught part-time at the UTK School of Planning. A frequent speaker at state, national, and international conferences, she has also authored a number of publications. In 1994 she began pursuing a Ph.D. in Leadership Studies with a specialization in Higher Education Administration. She received her Ph.D. in May 1999. She is married to Robert Alan Brown, a certified public accountant, and has two children, Matthew and Sarah.