



ROAD TO SACSCOC REAFFIRMATION

# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026



## What is Reaffirmation of Accreditation?

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

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

## Newsletter Archive

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## SACSCOC SITE VISIT SAVE THE DATE!!

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

**March 23rd - 26th, 2026**

# STANDARD SHOWCASE:

Standard of the Month

## SECTION 7: INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EFFECTIVENESS

### 7.1: INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

#### **Standard 7.1 : The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that:**

#### **(a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and**

#### **(b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission.**

Baylor College of Medicine engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and (b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission.

These processes involve institutional stakeholders including: the Board of Trustees, administrative and academic leadership, faculty, staff, students and trainees, affiliates, and partners. BCM applies review and assessment of results to ensure continuous improvement and advancement of its strategic initiatives. BCM's institutional level planning and evaluation processes incorporate a variety of inputs (e.g., strategic planning, master facility planning, marketing planning, assessment results, and market analysis of key external drivers) to guide budget planning and improvement efforts to accomplish its mission.

Annual program/unit level planning, assessment, review and analysis of results, and implementation of interventions are aligned with institutional level planning to effectively accomplish the institutional mission and guide the allocation of resources for quality improvement interventions. Because institutional and unit level planning and evaluation processes and elements have resulted in continuing quality improvements throughout the organization (e.g., establishment of new educational programs; needed expansion and improved access to student services; financial, operational and administrative improvements; expansion of research infrastructure, services and centers; and community partnerships and programs advancing education and health) that are aligned with the mission.

#### **Brief Overview of Baylor College of Medicine's Mission Areas**

Baylor College of Medicine's mission as a health sciences university is to create knowledge and apply science and discoveries to further education, healthcare and community service locally and globally. The institution focuses on four core mission areas as written below:

- 1. Education** - Overseen by the senior dean of the Schools of Medicine and Health Professions, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine (NSTM), and the dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and vice president of Education Affairs, under the authority of the executive dean, this area includes four schools offering degrees and certificates in medicine, biomedical sciences, and health professions. The NSTM currently does not offer for-credit academic programs. BCM recruits academically talented students, maintains quality educational programs, and prepares students for post-graduate training and/or the workforce. BCM also offers professional training including residency programs, post-doctoral fellowships, and Continuing Professional Development.
- 2. Research** - Led by the senior vice president and dean of research, BCM supports a robust research enterprise with significant National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding and national recognition. BCM recruits outstanding research faculty, maintains external grant funding, establishes strategic research centers, and enhances research infrastructure to advance discovery and the applications of discovery to support education and healthcare. Baylor College of Medicine was recognized as a top institution for medical research, earning Tier 1 status in the U.S. News & World Report 2025 Best Graduate Schools rankings. Baylor is one of only 16 medical schools in the nation to receive this designation, and one of only two in Texas. Research takes place in academic units (departments and centers) that have allocated space and budgeted resources within the BCM operating budget. BCM students and educational programs greatly benefit from the participation of research faculty in teaching and mentoring.

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3. **Healthcare** – Managed by the executive vice president & dean of clinical affairs and the vice president & chief medical officer for the Faculty Group Practice, this area integrates clinical training, patient care, and research. BCM's healthcare mission area supports the training of students in biomedical science, medicine, and health professions programs, as well as clinical research programs. Students train with highly qualified clinical faculty in BCM facilities and in the facilities operated by our affiliate partners. Faculty engaged in the healthcare mission area support the educational mission through teaching and training students, by direct patient care for our community locally and globally, and through participation in clinical research projects.

4. **Community Service** – Coordinated by the Office of Communications and Community Outreach under the leadership of the chief communications officer, this area delivers impactful programs locally and globally. BCM's community and public service programs are planned, operated, and evaluated to align directly with the institutional mission and strategic plan, as well as with the missions and/or goals of units responsible for them. Each year, thousands of patients, students and trainees, educators, members of the public, and other constituents in Houston, the United States, and worldwide are impacted by the College's wide-ranging service programs which fall within all areas of BCM's mission.

All of the mission area leaders and executive leaders report to Dr. Paul Klotman, president, CEO, and executive dean, and comprise the executive leadership team

#### **Planning and Evaluation at Baylor College of Medicine**

##### *Strategic Planning (long-term planning and evaluation)*

BCM develops a strategic plan approximately every five to ten years, which incorporates a systematic review of the institutional mission, priorities, goals, and objectives. The institution utilizes outcomes to measure the success of strategic priorities and goals. Goals and tactics are reviewed annually to ensure alignment with strategic priorities as appropriate as part of the annual planning process during the intervening years. The strategic plan is the foundational document that guides the planning effort along with the review and analysis of results.

#### **Annual Institutional and Operational Planning**

To operationalize the strategic plan, annual planning at institutional, mission area, and unit levels occurs in accordance with the planning calendar. These activities involve every level of the organization to ensure alignment with the institutional mission and culminate with the development and approval of annual performance goals and the budget by the Board of Trustees prior to the start of the next fiscal year.

The institutional and mission-level planning process is overseen by the president with the support of the Office of Strategic and Institutional Planning, engaging mission leaders and other executive leadership and academic groups. Each mission leader conducts planning sessions with their respective advisory council (e.g., Education Advisory Council, Scientific Advisory Council and Faculty Group Practice Board of Governors) to develop mission area goals and initiatives that are aligned to the College's mission and strategic plan. Leaders prioritize goals based on a synthesis of internal and external factors and collaborative planning activities. The president reviews and finalizes annual goals and presents the annual goals and initiatives to the Human Resources and Compensation Committee (HRCC) of the Board of Trustees who are delegated to approve president and executive level goals.

#### **Integration of Planning**

By refining institutional priorities, setting measurable outcomes, and mandating regular evaluation of progress toward goals, BCM continues under the guidance of its Board of Trustees to focus on academic investment and performance. This approach aligns with College priorities and assures alignment with the BCM 2020 – 2030 Strategic Plan. The comprehensive planning, performance, and accountability cycle of the institution is vertically integrated and reproduced at multiple micro levels. At the institutional level, this approach encourages integration of planning priorities with budgeting and with strategic planning at the level of mission areas.

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#### *Annual Program and Unit Level Planning*

Within an integrated, research-based, comprehensive process, programs and units engage in the development and monitoring of strategies and tactics aligned with the goals of BCM's Strategic Plan. This ongoing work ensures alignment of initiatives aimed at continuous improvement across the College.

#### *Linking Institutional Planning and Effectiveness to Institutional Budget Planning*

Performance accountability across BCM is aligned with decision-making responsibility. School deans are responsible for academic quality assurance across their programs and campuses. School deans are directly responsible for strategic performance planning, decision-making, and performance across their academic programs to enhance BCM's position nationally.

The budget and resource allocation processes are informed by Operating Budget Assumptions, which provide detailed guidelines and projections for the upcoming fiscal year. These assumptions are reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees to ensure alignment with the College's strategic priorities and financial sustainability.

#### *Periodic Reviews*

Baylor College of Medicine conducts periodic reviews of its departments and centers as part of its ongoing institutional review and assessment efforts. Internal reviews are periodic, occurring no less than 5 years but no greater than 10 years. Outcomes from the periodic reviews are integrated into the department or center's annual goals.

# REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION TIMELINE:

All dates subject to change throughout the process

Target Date	Accreditation Process
October 2024	SACSCOC Executive Committee Established and First Meeting SACSCOC Reaffirmation 2026 Kick-Off Review of SACSCOC narratives begins
November 2024	Reaffirmation Newsletter Review of SACSCOC narratives
December 2024	SACSCOC Annual Meeting, Austin, TX (12/7 to 12/10) Reaffirmation Newsletter Review of SACSCOC narratives
January 2025	Reaffirmation Newsletter
February 2025	Reaffirmation Newsletter
March 2025	Reaffirmation Newsletter
April 2025	Leadership Review of Compliance Certificate begins Reaffirmation Newsletter
July 2025	Compliance Certificate Draft Completed
August 2025	Final Review of Compliance Certificate
September 2025	Compliance Certificate Due (9/8)
November 2025	Site Visit Prep Off-Site Peer Review Conducted (11/4 to 11/7)
December 2025	Site Visit Prep Mock Visit Prep
January 2026	Site Visit Prep Mock Visit (1/12 to 1/14)
February 2026	Site Visit Prep Focused Report Due (2/09)
March 2026	<b>On-Site Peer Review Conducted (3/22 to 3/26)</b>
December 2026	Review by SACSCOC Committee Board (12/3 to 12/6)

# OUR MISSION, OUR PURPOSE

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

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

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

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

## CONTACT US

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