



ACCREDITATION

NEWSLETTER

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Introducing The Commission

On Thursday, June 11, 2026, the Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Inc., voted to market its accreditation services under the trade name “The Commission on Colleges and Universities,” effective September 1, 2026, to more accurately reflect the global reach of its operations.

While the corporation will do business as “The Commission on Colleges and Universities” or as “The Commission,” it will continue to accredit institutions under the name of the Department of Education-approved accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Inc. (SACSCOC), to prevent any disruption for its accredited institutions. Read the full article [here](#).



ACCREDITATION NEWSLETTER

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LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

Accreditation Highlights: A Year in Review

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, we are proud to share highlights from the Office of Accreditation and Educational Effectiveness at Baylor College of Medicine.

Spanning *July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026*, these achievements represent our continued commitment to educational excellence, accreditation success, and continuous quality improvement.



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Successful SACSCOC reaffirmation site visit in May 2026
- SACSCOC Mock Site Visit in January 2026
- Number of data requests fulfilled: 20
- New and renewed Affiliation Agreements signed: 47
- Addendum A's processed for external student rotations: 69
- Revised instrument and process for institutional Student Experiences Survey; disseminated April - May 2026 with an overall response rate of 37%
- Dr. Caroline Young's provided several Assessment Reporting Trainings
- Hosted workshop in partnership with Dr. Sherita Love and Master Hyunhoon Lee: A Taekwondo-Inspired Approach to Curriculum Design & Active Learning; April 21, 2026



- SACSCOC Annual Meeting
- SACSCOC Summer Institute
- SACSCOC Small Colleges Initiative
- Staff Professionals Across the Continuum of Education Virtual Conference
- Innovation Education Conference – University of Rhode Island (Virtual)
- New Jersey Association for Institutional Research Virtual Conference
- AIR (Association of Institutional Research) 2026 Forum (Washington, D.C.)
- TAIR (Texas Association of Institutional Research) 2026 Conference (Galveston, TX)
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Continuous Improvement Summit (Virtual)

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

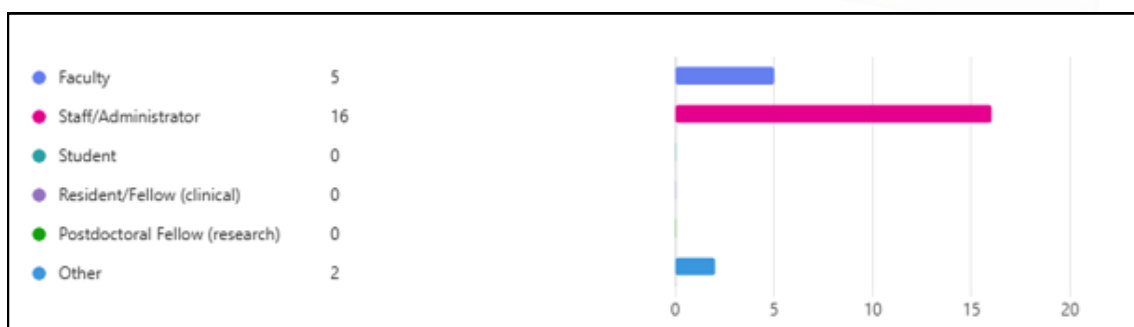
Accreditation Highlights: A Year in Review

1. Embry-Riddle Continuous Improvement Summit (Virtual); February 2026
 - "Using Data to Illuminate Attrition: A New Lens for Continuous Improvement in Student Success"
 - Presenters: Dr. June Zhou and Ricky Mercado
2. 2026 Texas Association for Institutional Research Conference; February 2026
 - "Measuring Student Success Without Blind Spots"
 - Presenters: Dr. June Zhou with co-presenters from the University of North Texas Health Fort Worth, the UT Southwestern Medical Center, and UT San Antonio
3. 2026 Innovation Education Conference – University of Rhode Island (Virtual); April 2026
 - "Advancing Institutional Effectiveness Through Strategic Alignment"
 - Presenters: Dr. Caroline Young with co-presenter Anju Bolton (Office of the President)
4. 2026 Associate for Institutional Research Forum; May 2026
 - "Beyond IPEDS: Rethinking Student Success for Today's Diverse Learners"
 - Presenters: Dr. June Zhou with co-presenters from the University of North Texas Health Fort Worth, the UT Southwestern Medical Center, and UT San Antonio
5. 2026 Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Staff Track Virtual Conference; June 2026
 - "Taekwondo Pedagogy as a Creative Framework for Assessment Skill Building in Medical Education"
 - Presenters: Dr. Caroline Young with co-presenters Dr. Sherita Love (Center for Teaching and eLearning) and Master Hyunhoon Lee (Leaders Taekwondo)
6. 2026 Staff Track Virtual Conference, hosted by Staff Professionals Across the Continuum of Education (SPACE); July 2026
 - "Visualizing Admissions Data to Support Strategic Decision-making in Medical Education"
 - Presenters: Dr. June Zhou and Ricky Mercado



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Data Request Processed



who?

- Academic Program Assessment and Evaluation (Nuventive, Program Review, etc.)
- Accreditation
- Continuous Improvement/Student Success
- Grants/Funding
- Non-Academic Unit Assessment and Evaluation
- Reporting (Internal/External)
- Research
- Other

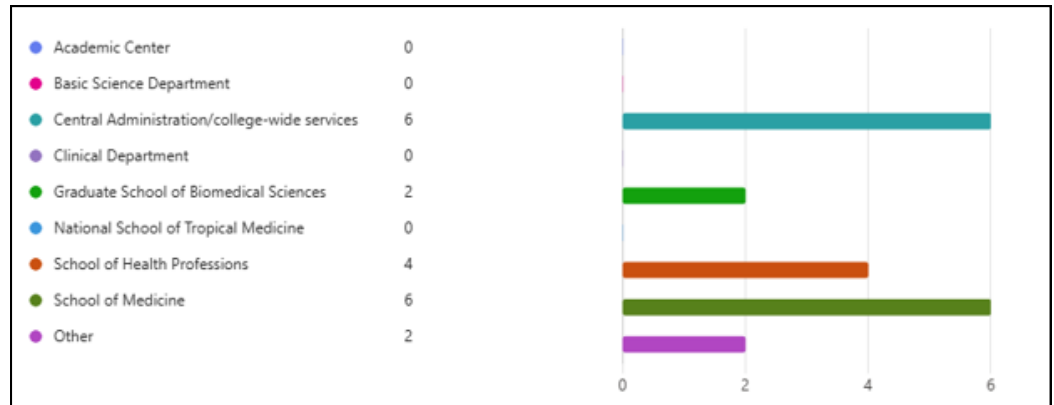


Purpose?

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

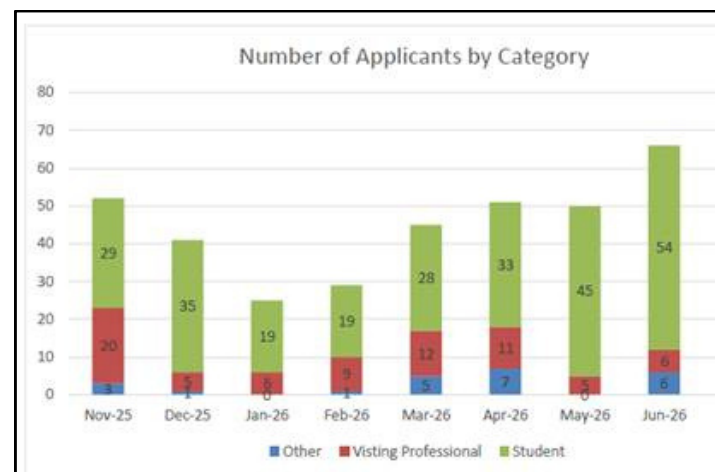
Accreditation Highlights: A Year in Review

Organizational Unit?



External Learner/Clinical Observer Program

During the period November 2025 through June 2026, 359 applications to the External Learner/Clinical Observer Program were processed. Over seventy percent of the applicants were eligible students earning undergraduate degrees with interest in careers in health care. Twenty percent of the applicants were established physicians or faculty members at outside institutions requesting visiting physician opportunities; almost all of these were international individuals. A small percentage of applicants (listed as “other”) held non-traditional credentials that did allow eligibility.



Advancing Assessment: 2026-2027 Cycle Underway

The 2026-2027 program assessment cycle is officially underway, marking the beginning of another year of reflection, continuous improvement, and work focused on student success. Each year, assessment provides an opportunity for programs to examine what is working well, identify areas for growth, and use evidence to inform meaningful improvements.

This work remains an important part of our commitment to academic excellence and institutional effectiveness. It was also recognized during our successful SACSCOC site visit in March, where the strength of our assessment processes and our commitment to continuous improvement were highlighted.

This year, we are also continuing to explore ways that AI-assisted support can make the assessment process more efficient and manageable. Following last year's pilot and a presentation of the work at the 2025 Association for Assessment of Learning in Higher Education conference, this optional approach is designed to reduce some of the mental load associated with developing action plans while maintaining faculty expertise, judgment, and oversight at the center of the process.

The start of the 2026-2027 assessment cycle provides another opportunity for thoughtful assessment, collaboration, and meaningful program improvement. Thank you to everyone who contributes to this work and to the culture of continuous improvement across the institution.



SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation Review

The future of accreditation is strengthened through meaningful engagement with the institutions and stakeholders it serves. As part of its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, SACSCOC is undertaking a comprehensive review and revision of its Principles of Accreditation: The Standards for Accreditation and Reaffirmation.

The Principles Review Committee, composed of peer representatives from across the SACSCOC membership, has developed a draft of the revised standards following extensive collaboration and thoughtful consideration of the evolving higher education landscape. The revisions are intended to ensure that the accreditation process remains rigorous, transparent, mission-focused, and responsive to the needs of member institutions.

SACSCOC is actively seeking feedback from institutions, educators, administrators, and other interested stakeholders to help inform the final version of the revised standards. Stakeholder input is a critical component of the review process and will contribute to the development of accreditation standards that support institutional quality, student success, innovation, and effectiveness.

The Committee will meet monthly over the course of 14-18 months to revise the Principles based on public and institutional feedback, Stakeholder Committee Feedback, and committee expertise. Twice during the process, the SACSCOC membership will receive an update summarizing the suggested standards, changes to the process, and design of SACSCOC accreditation.

For more information on the Principles Review, please go [here](#).

Orthotics and Prosthetics Program: NCOPE Residency Accreditation

The Orthotics and Prosthetics (O&P) Program at Baylor College of Medicine is proud to announce the successful reaccreditation of its residency program by the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education (NCOPE). This accomplishment reflects the program's ongoing commitment to excellence in clinical education, resident training, and professional development. Reaccreditation affirms that the Baylor College of Medicine O&P residency program continues to meet NCOPE's rigorous standards and provides residents with the knowledge, skills, and hands-on experience necessary to deliver high-quality patient care. This achievement underscores the program's dedication to continuous improvement and its role in preparing the next generation of orthotic and prosthetic professionals.



Student Achievement Reporting Cycle: Highlights and Next Steps

Reporting at a Glance

The AY 2025-2026 Student Achievement reporting cycle reflects another year of strong student outcomes across Baylor College of Medicine's degree and non-degree programs. Most programs met both their established thresholds of acceptability and targets across student achievement measures. Several programs met their thresholds but did not reach their desired targets in selected areas, providing an opportunity to examine contributing factors and identify strategies for continued improvement.



This reporting cycle began in late April with data requests to degree programs for measures such as first-time pass rates and job placement outcomes. The cycle will conclude in mid-September with updates to the [Student Achievement Data](#) website and [dashboards](#), formally closing the loop from data collection → results → program review → action planning → public reporting.

What's New This Year

One improvement introduced during the AY 2025-2026 cycle was a streamlined process for reviewing and updating benchmarks for degree-program student achievement metrics. Incorporating benchmark review into the annual cycle helps ensure that thresholds and targets continue to be informed by relevant national, accreditation, professional, and historical program data.

Continuous Improvement for the Next Cycle

Feedback from programs also identify opportunities to strengthen the process. Suggestions included providing additional context for subgroup sample sizes and embedding calculation formulas in the Excel sheet when sharing the raw data for program validation and review. These suggestions will be considered as we refine the process for the next reporting cycle.

Closing the Loop: From Results to Action

An important part of the annual reporting cycle is moving beyond reviewing the numbers to asking, "What should we continue doing, and where can we improve?". Through this year's action plan form, programs reported a variety of ongoing and new strategies. These included enhanced student onboarding and mentoring, expanded tutoring and academic support, study-skills development, increased access to mental health and student-support resources, curriculum adjustments, additional board-exam preparation, regular student progress monitoring, and greater use of student and stakeholder feedback. Together, these efforts help close the loop by connecting student achievement results with meaningful program actions.

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
- Conducting and reporting the results of academic program reviews
- Conducting general institutional research and data analysis
- Reporting key academic performance metrics to federal, state, and professional organizations
- Conducting general institutional research and data analysis
- Providing process expertise in the approval of substantial changes to existing programs
- Managing educational affiliation agreements, observerships, and external learners

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