

THREE-PART SELF-STUDY PROCESS

The comprehensive evaluation has three distinct components:

- an institutional **self-study**, in which the institution evaluates how well it meets the Commission's [*Standards for Accreditation*](#) and makes realistic, specific projections for improvement;
- an **on-site evaluation** by a trained group of peers, which provides a valuable external perspective to the institution and to the Commission;
- a **review and decision** by the Commission.

The **institutional self-study** is a product that addresses the *Standards for Accreditation* and presents a clear, concise, accurate picture of the institution as a dynamic entity with a sense of its history, an understanding of its present, and a vision of its future. Self-study is also an intensive process that demonstrates the institution's capacity for reflecting candidly on its strengths and weaknesses and using that analysis for improvement. As such, self-study should be an integral part of ongoing planning and evaluation efforts, not an isolated phenomenon that occurs only when an evaluation team is expected.

The **on-site evaluation** by a group of faculty and administrators provides the institution and the Commission with a valuable external perspective. Evaluation team members are selected because of their experience at an institution comparable to the one being evaluated. They are trained by Commission staff to validate the self-study in light of the institution's mission.

Commission review of the self-study, team report, and any institutional response occurs at one of the Commission's four regular meetings each year. In addition, in keeping with federal regulations, the Commission seeks and considers public comments regarding each institution undergoing a comprehensive evaluation. The Policy and Procedures for Public Comments, including information for institutions about their role in soliciting public comment during the comprehensive evaluation, can be found on the Commission website <http://cihe.neasc.org>.