Quality is the way to Accreditation

Disseminating the Concepts of Quality Assurance

Definition of Quality Assurance:
An effective quality assurance system rests on several assumptions, including the following:

1. that an institution has a well-defined mission and goals,
2. that an institution’s mission and goals are widely communicated and understood throughout the organization,
3. that an institution has clearly defined quality within the context of its mission and goals, and
4. that an educational institution has a strong communications network.

Any institution that lacks these basic “preconditions” will have a difficult time implementing a successful campus-wide program of quality assurance.

Quality Assurance is the Responsibility of Whom?
A quality assurance programme should include the following:

1. Everyone at the institution has a responsibility for maintaining quality; i.e. any sub-standard outcomes are corrected at the source,
2. Everyone at the institution has a responsibility for enhancing quality; i.e. though an institution may have a quality director or quality council, their role is that of coordination. Oversight; they are not the only entities responsible for quality;
3. Everyone at the institution understands and feels ownership of the systems which are in place for maintaining and enhancing quality. This may be generally achieved by broad-based participation in the design and implementation of a quality assurance program; and administrators who are often working with faculty and the customer or client can regularly monitor the
effectiveness of the quality assurance system.

What Quality Assurance is not?
Equally important in understanding quality assurance is defining what quality assurance is not. Quality assurance should not be confused with any of the following:

1. **Quality Control**
   Such a system is used to check whether institution inputs and outputs meet a predefined quality threshold and that substandard inputs and outputs are rejected. Quality control usually relies on inspectors and is generally not regarded as sufficient in light of more sophisticated quality systems.

2. **Quality Audit**
   An external group of auditors ensures that the quality assurance and quality control processes are appropriate and working effectively. A quality audit usually accompanies a quality assurance system but both are not to be confused with each other.

3. **Accreditation**
   This process is used to assure the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution or program 1. has clearly defined and educationally appropriate objectives,
2. maintains conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected,
3. is in fact accomplishing its achievements substantially, and
4. It has a sustainable system that can be expected to continue to do so.

4. **Peer Review**
   This term generally denotes the involvement of external professionals in making judgments and/or decisions about proposals for new programs, the continuation or modification of existing programs, the quality of research programs, or the quality of institutions.

While any of these may be components of a quality assurance system, they are not synonymous with quality assurance.

Have You Seen QAU Room?
The QAU for FoE is located at room A232. Come and visit and participate in the QAU activities in your department.