



Coming Attractions!

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President

Coming Attractions

- ▶ Torch Report/Law or Lore - Monthly
- ▶ New Dashboard - March/April
- ▶ Reduced Hour Bachalaurette - March
- ▶ Lumina Grant - March
- ▶ Principles of Accreditation Revision - April

▶ But First!

▶ The QEP will NOT reappear and catch you in 2027 and beyond!

Torch Report/Law or Lore

February 26, 2026

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Bold Actions Toward Workforce Alignment

As we move further into 2026, I want to share several important updates that reflect both our progress and our growing commitment to supporting institutions as they prepare students for meaningful careers.



Dr. Stephen Pruitt

Over the past month, our conversations with campuses, state leaders, and national partners have continued to reinforce a shared truth: every institution contributes to the workforce, and those contributions look different depending on institutional mission, student populations, and community needs. Honoring that diversity while strengthening clarity, transparency, and alignment remains central to the work ahead.

This month's update focuses on how we are advancing that commitment, including through our new Lumina Founde



Above: During his recent visit to The Bahamas, SACSCOC President Stephen Pruitt met with national and university leadership following the Commission's decision in 2025 to grant the [University of The Bahamas](#) candidacy status for membership.

We must respect that as we move forward.

contributions.

The screenshot shows the SACSCOC website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home' and 'FAQs' links, a search bar, and a menu with items like 'About', 'First 100 Days', 'Principles Review', 'Institutions', 'Accreditation', 'Documents', 'News & Events', and 'Public Comments'. The main content area features the article title 'Pruitt's Law or Lore' and the introductory text: 'While SACSCOC has begun work on a full revision of the Principles of Accreditation as well as our processes, there are current issues that have remained persistent over the years. Law or Lore is designed to shed light and perspective on consistently misunderstood or misapplied policy and practices of SACSCOC.' Below this, there are several paragraphs of text discussing accreditation principles, the purpose of the 'Law or Lore' series, and the author's commitment to transparency. The article concludes with 'Stay tuned as we separate fact from fiction - one topic at a time.' The page footer includes a link to the article title and a date: 'SACSCOC staff really make the decisions... peer evaluators are just window dressing' - 3/2/2026.



New Dashboard

SACSCOC TORCH AWARDS

Gold Status Institutions

Institutions with the most Silver statuses in a Topic.

2: Gold Statuses

Each Topic has several Indicators. Gold Status institutions have the highest number of Silver Statuses in a Topic within it's own level.

Select Impact Detail

- ▼ 2: Gold Status
- ▼ Student Achievement
 - > AFFORDABILITY
 - > STUDENT SUPPORT AND COMPLETION
 - > SUCCESS AFTER COLLEGE

Institutions, Topic and Statuses Awarded Summary

Institution	Level	Award Summary
Marion Military Institute	1	3 of 6 Gold Statuses
Northern Virginia Community College	1	3 of 6 Gold Statuses
The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston	6	5 of 6 Gold Statuses
Trinity University	3	5 of 6 Gold Statuses
Virginia Military Institute	2	4 of 6 Gold Statuses
Washington and Lee University	5	5 of 6 Gold Statuses
William Marsh Rice University	6	5 of 6 Gold Statuses

Selected Institutions' Indicators and Value

Institution	Indicator	Value
▲ Marion Military Institute	Median Earnings: 10 Year Post-Entry	\$50,097
Marion Military Institute	Percent Earning Above High School Graduate	72.5 %
Marion Military Institute	Student Debt Service Ratio	3.97 %
Northern Virginia Community College	Median Earnings: 10 Year Post-Entry	\$50,387
Northern Virginia Community College	Percent Earning Above High School Graduate	61.3 %
Northern Virginia Community College	Student Debt Service Ratio	4.67 %
The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston	Federal Loan Non-Progress Rate	14.3 %

Reduced Credit Hour Baccalaureate

- ▶ New policy to be reviewed by the Executive Council in March
- ▶ New Program SubChange process
- ▶ Five proposed components to the new policy

Proposed Requirements

- ▶ The name of the reduced-credit undergraduate degree program must clearly distinguish itself from traditional baccalaureate degree programs
 - ▶ Compressed Bachelor of (Discipline),
 - ▶ Reduced-Hour Bachelor of (Discipline),
 - ▶ Fast Track Bachelor of (Discipline),
 - ▶ Three-Year Bachelor of (Discipline)
- ▶ Reduced-credit undergraduate degree programs must be based on at least 90 semester credit hours or the equivalent.

Proposed Requirements

- ▶ Reduced-credit undergraduate degree programs may only be offered in specialized or applied disciplines that address workforce needs and prepare graduates for direct entry to employment.
- ▶ The institution provides an appropriate justification for any reduced-credit undergraduate degree program as appropriate to the mission and goals of the institution and complies with the *Principles* including
 - 1) general education requirements that ensure a breadth of knowledge and alignment with commonly-accepted higher education competencies, and
 - 2) faculty responsibility for program development, quality, integrity, and review.

Proposed Requirements (cont.)

- ▶ The institution ensures that its recruitment, admissions, and other marketing materials, as well as transcripts, accurately represent the reduced-credit undergraduate degree programs.

Lumina Grant - Purpose

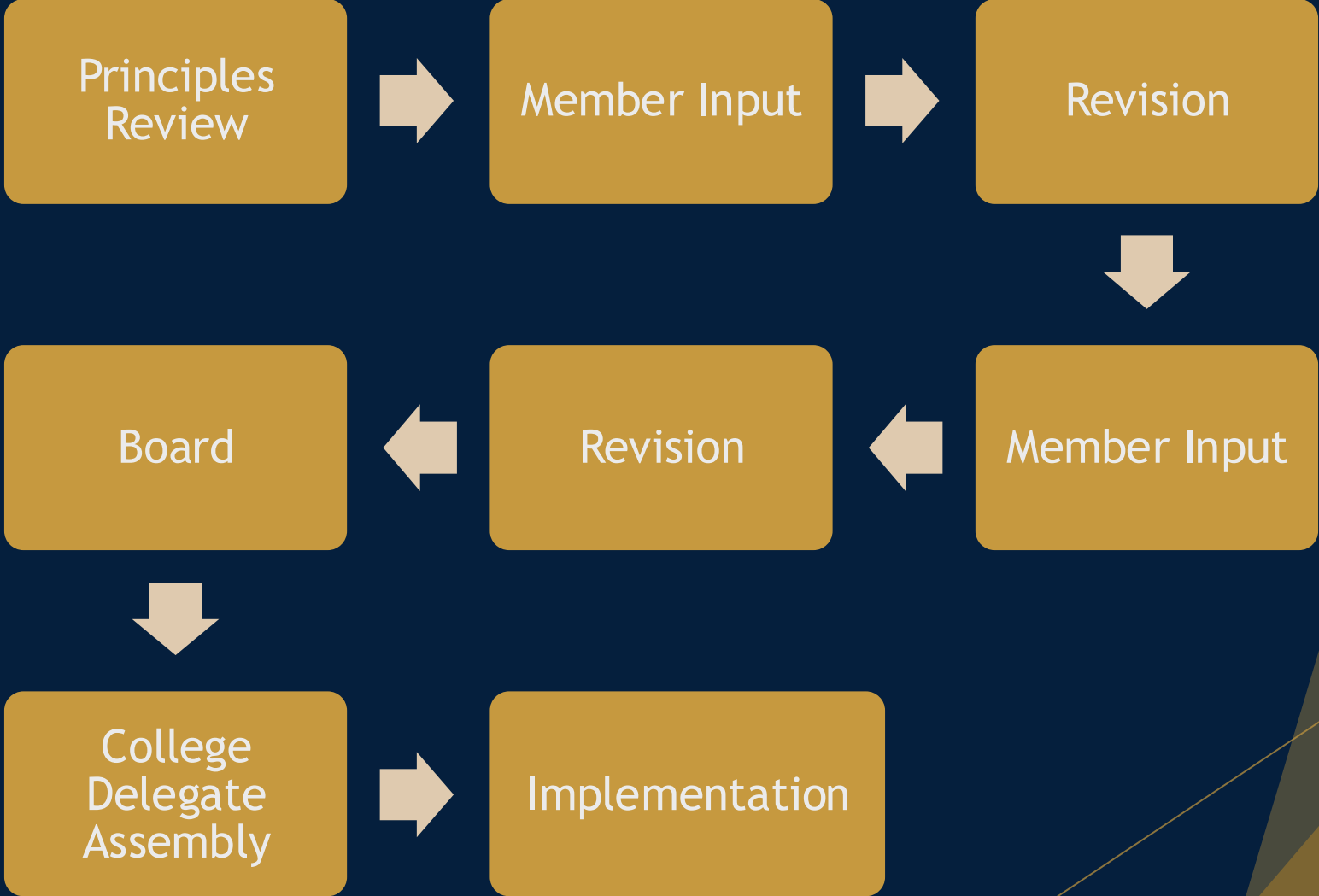
- ▶ The grant's focus is to strengthen the alignment between postsecondary education and state workforce priorities across the membership. The goal is to help colleges and universities leverage accreditation to better prepare learners particularly adult and returning students for high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand careers while maintaining educational quality and institutional autonomy.

Lumina Grant - The Project

- ▶ **State-Level Workforce Data Analysis**
Partner with state workforce agencies, higher education agencies, and data systems to analyze labor market projections, high-need career priorities, and existing institutional programs.
- ▶ **Cross-State Mapping and Gap Analysis**
Compare workforce demand with current degrees, certificates, and short-term credentials to identify gaps in capacity, completion, geographic access, and time-to-credential.
- ▶ **Guidance and Best Practices Development**
Develop practical guidance for institutions on workforce-aligned program design, assessment, stackable credentials, prior learning assessment, employer engagement, and quality assurance.

Principles Review (Revision)

Revision Process



Review Committee

- ▶ Review and Streamline Standards
- ▶ Representation from All Institution Levels
- ▶ Connect Accreditation to Workforce and Student Success
- ▶ Support Innovation and Continuous Improvement
- ▶ Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

Special Committees

1. Stakeholder Review Committee

- ▶ Workforce Alignment
- ▶ Differentiation
- ▶ Recognition of Excellence
- ▶ International Members

2. Financial Review Committee

3. Legislative Advisory Committee

Thank You!

