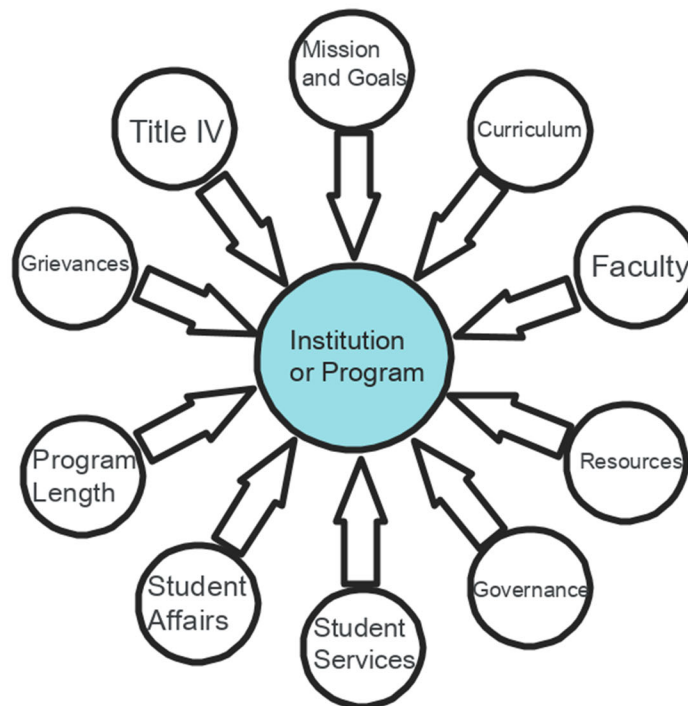


## Overview of how the standards are laid out

MEAC’s 2020 Standards for Accreditation are broken into ten sections. Each section, while related to the others, looks at a distinct aspect of the program or institution to give a whole picture of how that program or institution is functioning as a place of higher education. While it may seem that a benchmark in one standard is asking for a similar thing as a benchmark in another standard, each is purposefully looking at the program or institution from a different viewpoint. Because of this, when responding to benchmarks, it is important to remember which overall standard or viewpoint you are being asked to speak to.



Each of the ten sections in MEAC’s standards also correspond to the ten areas that accreditors are required to evaluate, under federal regulation, in order to be recognized by the US Department of Education<sup>1</sup>. The standards could be grouped in a number of other ways as well, such as by topic or area of focus (ex: orientation and training, equity and access, student learning and outcomes, and so on). As a USDE recognized accreditor, MEAC has structured our standards in a way that most easily allows us to demonstrate compliance with USDE requirements.

Most of the benchmarks within MEAC’s standards are also designed to assess both the process used for arriving at a quality endpoint as well as the endpoint itself. Both pieces are important in accreditation as it ensures that the school is at a quality place (in compliance) during the snapshot in time captured within the specific review, and that the systems and processes the school has in place are reliable for reasonably ensuring that the school will have ongoing compliance between reviews.

<sup>1</sup> [34 CFR 602.16\(a\)\(1\)\(i-x\)](#)