5.3.F. Structure of the Institutional Analysis
The main body of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report must identify and address each of the Accreditation Standards including the subsections. When preparing this part, it is useful for institutions to keep the principles underlying the Accreditation Standards in mind, i.e., the Commission expects institutions to:

- design and implement an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, re-evaluation, and improvement,
- analyze its programs and services while paying particular attention to program review data, student achievement data, and student learning outcomes data, and
- take action to improve based on the analysis supported by adequate sources of data and other evidence and make improvement plans when warranted.

The following three elements should guide the structure of the analysis of each of the Standards.

Evidence of Meeting the Standard
The institution should describe and document the factual conditions at the college, including college practices and policies, which demonstrate how each Standard is being met.

Analysis and Evaluation
Based on the evidence provided, the institution should analyze and systematically evaluate its performance against each Accreditation Standard and its institutional mission. This analysis should result in actionable conclusions about institutional effectiveness, educational quality, and decisions for improvement. The basic questions to explore are whether or not, and to what degree, institutional evidence demonstrates that the institution meets each Accreditation Standard and how the institution has reached this conclusion. The Commission expects current and sustained compliance with Standards, focusing on accomplishments and outcomes that have been achieved and not just structures or processes used.

5.3.G. Quality Focus Essay
Continuous quality improvement is a mark of institutional effectiveness. As an institution evaluates its programs and services in the continuous cycle of data analysis, planning, resource allocation, and evaluation, it examines its effectiveness in accomplishing its mission in the context of student learning and student achievement. During that examination, it identifies areas of needed change, development, institutionalization, and expansion. Within the accreditation focus on continuous quality improvement, the institution will identify two or three areas coming out of the institutional evaluation on which the institution has decided to act, and which will have significance over a multi-year period. These will be described in a Quality Focus Essay. The Essay will have a 5,000 word limit and will discuss in detail the identified areas to be acted upon, including the manner, timeline, and anticipated outcomes, and including impact on academic quality and institutional effectiveness. The Essay will be related to the Accreditation Standards and should come out of data, be realistic, observable and measurable. The Essay should be consistent in its factual basis and analysis with the other portions of the college’s Self Evaluation Report. It will provide the institution with multi-year, long-term directions for improvement and demonstrate the institution’s commitment to excellence. The areas identified in the Essay will become critical focal points for the institution’s Midterm Report.