SITE VISIT INTERVIEW BOOK

Published January 1, 2015

Interview Book for Site Visit Teams

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

This book was created to assist Site Visit Team members with sample questions, organized by standard, for the various individuals and groups they will meet on campus.   These sections include a wide range of possible questions with questions for any program along with questions that would be relevant (given time constraints) only in certain situations. Campus meetings are brief; there is no way nor is there the expectation that all of these questions will be either asked or needed. Instead please see them as a catalog from which they can be drawn when circumstances warrant.

This manual should be used in conjunction with the following documents, all of which are available on the PAB website:

- *Accreditation Standards*
  This document contains PAB's preconditions to accreditation and the accreditation standards and criteria. All accredited programs and those applying for accreditation must demonstrate substantial compliance with the standards.

- *Policies and Procedures Manual*
  This document describes the policies and procedures used by the PAB in the accreditation of planning programs. It provides guidance on the review process and expectations of the PAB.

- *Self-Study Report Manual and Template*
  This document details the process and procedures for writing and distributing a Self-Study Report. The document also contains the rationale for each accreditation standard and guidance for demonstrating compliance with the standards. The sole exhibit to the manual is the template which must be used when submitting a Self-Study Report.

- *Site Visit Manual for Site Visitors*
  This document contains the processes and procedures used for conducting a Site Visit. It includes guidance for Site Visitors in preparing for an accreditation review and the Site Visit. This document contains the Self-Study Report Manual as an exhibit.

<p style="text-align: center;">**Interview with the Program Administrator**</p>

The Site Visit schedule begins on day one with a 1-hour introductory interview with the Program Administrator.

The four objectives of this introductory meeting are to:
1. clarify any special needs or concerns with regard to the Site Visit schedule and/or anyone with whom the team is scheduled to meet;
2. resolve any ambiguities or uncertainties based on the Self-Study Report and/or request additional materials that may be missing from it;
3. learn of any changes the Program has undergone since the SSR was written (e.g., faculty hires, retirements, etc.); and
4. get greater clarity about how the Program sees itself in the context of the university, and the university in the contexts of the profession and higher education.

The Program Administrator will also check in with the team from time to time during the Site Visit, to address any outstanding issues and/or questions that arise from any of the team's scheduled meetings.   Helping the Program see itself as others in the University see it may constitute an important dimension of the team's consultative role.

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and why you are there. The team chair sets the ground rules, including the timeframe and an assurance of confidentiality.

The Program Administrator is also interviewed in his/her role as a faculty member. Questions for individual faculty interviews can be found on page 7. What follows are questions unique to program administrators.

Opening questions
1. Are there issues that concern that were not discussed in the SSR of which we should be aware or that you want to highlight?
2. Have there been any significant changes since the SSR was submitted that we should be aware of?
3. Do you have any concerns about the Site Visit?
4. We feel we need additional data to perform our work. Please provide us with…. in time to review while we are still here.

Site Visit Schedule
1. Let's go over the site visit schedule together.   Are there any last minute changes?
2. Are there individuals on the schedule who give you concern, or whose circumstances we should know about?
3. We have these concerns about the schedule, which we hope can be addressed….

Program Context
1. Beyond what was said in the SSR, can you help us understand how the Program sees itself in this university? Are you a leader? In what ways? Are you challenged? In What ways?   How does the administration see the Program?   How do faculty across campus see the Program?
2. How does this university see itself with regard to the professions, including planning?
3. How does this university see itself with regard to the region/nation?
4. How does this university see itself with regard to other universities?

Closing questions
1. Are there any other concerns you have with respect to the Site Visit or the accreditation review?
2. Would you please tell us just a bit about your dean, provost and president so that we are prepared to meet them?

Interview with the Dean

After the initial introductory meeting with the Program Administrator [and/or Department Chair], the Site Visit Team has an introductory meeting with the Dean. The length and range of topics to cover will vary from program to program, depending on the Dean's involvement. Many Deans appreciate the insights a Site Visit provides into their planning programs and the field of planning more generally. The Site Visit presents an opportunity for Deans to gain a broader perspective on planning education, and how their program fits into it.

Topics typically discussed with the Dean include the functioning of the Program within the institution and the Dean's perception of opportunities and/or constraints regarding the Program's future. The SVT should ask the Dean if there are any particular items he/she would like the SVT to specifically examine or address during the visit, but should be careful not to promise information that is outside the legitimate scope of the accreditation review.

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and why you are there. The team chair sets the ground rules, including the timeframe and an assurance of confidentiality.

Specific questions for team members to ask the Dean include:

Standard #1 - Mission and Strategic Plan
1. Describe the college/school's mission statement/
2. What is your vision for the College/School and its professional programs?
3. Describe the Program's mission statement and how it relates to that of the College/School.
4. How does the Program coordinate development of its goals and objectives with other sets of goals and objectives within the University?
5. Are the stated objectives appropriate and consistent with the Program's mission?
6. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
7. What resources (financial, personnel, physical, etc.) are needed to address the identified weaknesses, and other plans set forth by the institution? What is the College/School's plan for obtaining these resources?
8. What plans does the College/School have for its professional programs? Summarize the College/School's strategic plan or goals and objectives for future development.

Standard #2 - Students
1. How would you characterize students in this College/School? Are there ways in which they are unusual in the national context?
2. Is it your impression that planning students stand out among students in this College or on this campus?
3. Are there notable resources for students in this College/School that we should be aware of? Are these well utilized by planning students?

Standard #3 - Faculty
1. In your opinion, what are the hallmarks of a successful faculty member in this college/school?
2. What are the College priorities and how do they affect planning faculty?
3. How do planning faculty compare with other college faculty in terms of teaching? Scholarship? Service?
4. What are your expectations of junior faculty?
5. How much weight does the Program give to professional activities and/or community engagement in tenure decisions, merit raises, etc.?
6. How do individual planning faculty contribute to the College and University?
7. What support is available from the College for faculty work?
8. What are the College priorities and how do they affect planning faculty?

Standard #4 - Curriculum and Instruction
1. Are there any concerns you have about the planning curriculum or about the way teaching is carried out in the planning program?

Standard #5 - Governance
1. What is the Dean's role regarding instructional needs, program development or faculty hires?
2. What is the relationship between the Dean and the Department/Program in terms of budget and resource allocation?
3. How important is faculty involvement in governance in this College/School?

Standard #6 - Program Assessment
1. How does the Program assess its overall mission and goals? How often is the assessment done? Who is involved in the process?
2. How has information obtained from programmatic assessments been used to enhance the Program and student learning?

Standard #7 - Progress
1. What progress do you believe has the Program made since the last Site Visit?
2. [Summarize the issues from the prior SV] Can you describe how these issues have been addressed?

Motivating Programs to Achieve Excellence
1. What are the strengths of the Program?
2. What are areas of untapped or underutilized potential?
3. What differentiates this program from its peers and competitors?
4. What is excellent or noteworthy about this program?
5. Describe the current innovative efforts within the institution.
6. Who are the Program's peers? Competitors? How would you compare the Program with these peers and competitors?

Closing Questions
1. What would you like the PAB SVT to remember from this meeting?
2. What single message, if any, would you like the team to convey to the Program Administrator, Provost or President of the University?
3. Do you have any questions for the Site Visit Team?

Interview with the Provost

After the initial introductory meeting with the Program Administrator [and/or Department Chair], and the Dean, the Site Visit Team has an introductory meeting with the Provost. The initial meeting with the Provost is typically brief, and primarily serves as an introduction of SVT members and their activities during the visit. The SVT often uses this time to provide the administrators with a general overview of the accreditation process and PAB's standards, as well as any other matters that will help the administrators understand the purposes, benefits, and potential outcomes of the Site Visit. This is also a time to collect cues that will help the SVT understand the institution.

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and why you are there. Outline the PAB process very briefly (the Provost probably meets 20 of these teams a year!). Distinguish certification of minimum compliance from striving for excellence and indicate PAB hopes to contribute toward both, as appropriate. The team chair sets the ground rules, including the timeframe and an assurance of confidentiality.

Be aware that this is very much an interview of you, as well as of the Provost. S/he will be forming opinions about how much s/he can rely on what you will find. Be sure to identify yourselves in terms that will be meaningful to a university administrator (what universities you are from; what your primary jobs are; the extent of your prior involvement with accreditation or other academic program reviews). Make every attempt to listen effectively and to demonstrate that you understand the messages you are given. Be open to cooperating with the Provost's needs to learn from your visit. At the same time, be careful not to position yourselves as supplicants who only want to please: you have a job to do and you intend to do it properly.

Specific questions for team members to ask the Provost include:

The University
1. What is the mission of the university? What parts of this are particularly challenging? How is this mission unique among universities?
2. Has this mission changed in recent years? If so, why were these changes made?
   2. What institutions does this university see as its peer institutions?
   What are the issues facing this university that require attention?

The Planning Program and the College/School
1. What is your impression of the Planning Program? Do you see it as a strong contributor to the university? What could it do to get better?
2. What is your impression of the _____ College/School? Do you see it as a strong contributor? What could it do to get better?

Closing Questions
1. Are there any other things you believe we should be aware of?
2. Are there any ways in which we can be helpful while we are here?

Individual Faculty Interviews

During the Site Visit, team members will meet with multiple fulltime, part-time and adjunct faculty. The primary purpose of the individual interviews is to provide the opportunity for faculty to have confidential input into the evaluation process.

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and why you are there. The team chair sets the ground rules, including the timeframe and an assurance of confidentiality. The objectives of the team include the verification of statements and impressions presented in written materials (Self-Study Report, supplemental information) or in general group sessions during the Site Visit.

Be prepared for a wide variety of reactions from individual faculty, ranging from quiet or withdrawn behavior (requiring more probing on the part of the team) to assertive behavior (requiring redirection or restraint by the team).

Faculty members should have an opportunity address issues and questions raised so perceptions can be compared. Those in the Program should have an opportunity to respond if negative impressions were expressed from outside the Program. Helping the Program see itself as others in the University view it may constitute an important dimension of the team's consultative role.

Specific questions for team members to ask individual faculty include:

Standard #1 - Mission and Strategic Plan
1. What are the Dean's and/or the Program Administrator's expectations for the Program? Have these expectations lead to faculty debate?
2. Describe the Program's mission statement and how it relates to that of the College/School.
3. What are your expectations for the Program's faculty, students and graduates?
4. What has been the most significant development in the Program over the last five years?
5. Describe the process for establishing and revising program goals and objectives?
6. Do you foresee any changes in the Program's parent unit in the next three to five years that will affect the Program's mission, character or operation?
7. What are the innovative and unique aspects of the Program?
8. What process was used to conduct and create the Self-Study Report? Who participated (e.g. students, alumni, faculty)? Have you read the SSR? How and when did you learn of this peer review process?
9. How is the Program regarded by other programs/departments/schools/colleges [as appropriate] within the institution?
10. What are the major findings of the Self-Study Report? Do you agree with them? Were there any errors of commission or omission?
11. To what extent did the Self-Study Report process bring faculty together?
12. Did faculty members receive a complete, final version of the Self-Study Report for their review?   Was the Self-Study Report validated by a vote of the faculty? Did students and/or alumni participate or review?
13. Does the majority of faculty concur with the findings of the Self-Study Report? Summarize any minority viewpoints.
14. How does the faculty participate in the objective-setting process?
15. Describe and assess how the institution systematically assures achievement of its stated goals.   How effective are these measures?
16. What is the faculty role in the planning for program development?
17. Is there an adequate flow of information and communication within the College/School? Are you involved in the College/School's affairs?
18. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?

Standard #2 - Students
1. How would you characterize the "typical" student you encounter in relation to the goals of the Program?
2. What type of student is attracted to this program?
3. Describe your perceptions of the students and their professional development.
4. What percentage of graduating students find planning or planning related jobs? Are they satisfied with the types of positions they obtain?

Standard #3 - Faculty
1. What role does the faculty play in the planning for program development?
2. What are the prevailing standards and procedures regarding faculty selection, development, promotion, and tenure? Are these standards adequate? Are they widely disseminated?
3. Does the Dean or the Program Administrator help faculty members to obtain their professional goals and interests? Elaborate.
4. What are your individual goals and objectives? What do you require to address your individual needs, departmental goals, and collegiate goals?
5. For junior faculty: Do you know "what it takes" to get tenure? Have you been adequately informed about expectations for advancement? How are the Program's expectations distributed across the areas of research, teaching and service? Are you comfortable with the Program's expectations in each area? Have you been mentored by senior faculty or administrators?
6. For adjunct faculty: What role do you serve within the Program? Describe the Program's efforts to integrate the profession into the curriculum. What is your involvement in assessment of student learning?
7. Describe your perceptions regarding the professional development process and your personal developmental opportunities.
8. How effective are the adjunct faculty members?
9. What factors were important in your decision to join this program and institution? What would you say to a PhD graduate seeking a position as a junior faculty in this Program?
10. What do you find exciting about serving on this faculty?
11. Is your long-term professional growth well-served by remaining on this faculty?
12. What do you find frustrating about serving on this faculty?
13. What are your current teaching-research-service interests? Are reduced teaching loads and/or other assistance available to pursue these interests? Are students in your research?
14. Do you understand the policies and procedures that lead to your next level of advancement and do you have the mentoring and support to succeed?

Standard #4 Curriculum and Instruction
1. What do you think of the current curriculum? What changes would you recommend?
2. Describe any new courses you been involved with developing in the past two years.
3. Explain how course evaluations affect the Program's curriculum and/or the manner in which you teach.
4. Describe the composition and function of the Curriculum Committee. Is there student representation on the committee? What steps are taken to ensure student attendance?
5. How does the curriculum address contemporary issues?
6. How is the internship program (if offered) managed, including obtaining jobs in line with student interests, evaluation of students and assignment of credit?
7. What curricular changes have been made since the last accreditation review? What changes are currently being contemplated?
8. What is being done to examine and address inter-disciplinary education, cultural competence and professionalism in the curriculum?
9. Describe specific curricular areas and/or approaches in detail (NOTE: refer to the Accreditation Standards for specific areas, which are expected to be included).

10. Are computer and library resources readily available and adequate? Do students avail themselves of these resources? Elaborate.
11. Comment on the physical facilities that house the Program.
12. Are administrative and support resources generally adequate?

Standard #5 Governance
1. How do faculty participate in planning for program development?
2. What effect has long-range planning had on important policy decisions, particularly those involving faculty committee considerations? Have the Program's objectives influenced these considerations?
3. Are school-wide or program-wide faculty committees typically controlled by any one segment of the faculty?
4. How effective is the students' participation in the governance and development of the Program?
5. Describe the leadership and direction of the Dean, associate and assistant Dean(s), and your [Department Chair]/Program Administrator.
6. On matters directly affecting the Program, is the Dean's or Program Administrator's decision subject to substantial modification by any other Dean or university officials outside of the Program?
7. What are the standards and processes relating to faculty selection, development, promotion, tenure, etc.?

Standard #6 Program Assessment
1. How does the Program assess its overall mission and goals? How often is the assessment done? Who is involved in the process?
2. How does the Program assess course effectiveness in meeting curriculum goals?
3. Who is responsible for assessment activities?
4. Describe the specific aspects of the assessment plan in detail regarding the following types of assessment: (a) institutional/programmatic assessment; (b) curricular assessment; and (c) student learning outcomes assessment.
5. Comment on the effectiveness of the Program's current assessment/evaluation efforts. What changes should be made? Will the University provide resources to implement changes? Does the University have resources to help you in these areas?
6. Should assessment-related changes be proposed for the institution, program, or courses?
7. What are the Program's student learning goals? Explain how assessments are used to improve student learning.
8. How has information obtained from programmatic assessments been used to enhance the Program and student learning?
9. How are educational achievements of students documented?
10. How are assessment activities monitored? How are assessment efforts evaluated?
11. What assessment changes have been made since the last accreditation evaluation? What changes are currently being contemplated?
12. How does the Program assist in preparing graduates for employment or additional educational opportunities?

Standard #7 Progress
1. What progress has the Program made since the last Site Visit?
2. [Summarize the issues from the prior SV] Describe how these issues have been addressed.
3. How will the Self-Study Report be used to support plans and progress by the institution?
4. Are the required PAB outcomes available on the Program's website?

Motivating Programs to Achieve Excellence
5. What are the strengths of the Program?
6. What are areas of untapped or underutilized potential?

7. What differentiates this program from its peers and competitors?
8. What is excellent or noteworthy about this program?
9. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?
10. Describe the current innovative efforts within the institution.
11. Who are the Program's peers? Competitors? How would you compare the Program with these peers and competitors?

The Program and Practice Applications
1. How does the faculty interface with the planning community?
2. What has been the influence of alumni and practitioner contact in facilitating the Program's mission?
3. How is the Program perceived beyond the institution?
4. How has the profession been involved in developing the Program's goals and objectives? In the curriculum?
5. How has the profession been involved in assessment of student learning and achievement?
6. How much information do students receive about the planning profession to help them make career choices, including academic careers?
7. How are academic assignments designed to help students make career choices?
8. Describe the process used to assess professional practice preparedness.

Closing Questions
1. What would you like the PAB Site Visit Team to remember from this meeting?
2. What single message, if any, would you like the team to convey to the Dean, Program Administrator, or President of the University?
3. Do you have any questions for the Site Visit Team?

Meeting with the Students

This meeting provides students with an opportunity for students to present their perspectives and concerns regarding the Program. PAB requires volunteers for these sessions; it is important to verify that students are self-select to participate. In addition to the on-site meeting, the student association is asked to provide written comments two weeks before the Site Visit.

Initiate the session with introductions, the objective of the meeting, and the format to be used. It is helpful if students indicate their class level and provide an indication of their interests and goals (i.e., career aspirations, post-graduate education, etc.) as a component of their introduction. Names of attendees are asked to be made available to the team in advance of the meeting, if possible.

Specific questions to ask the students include:

Standard #1 - Mission and Strategic Plan
1. What is the mission of the Program?
2. What do you perceive are the goals and objectives of the Program?
3. Has the Program made any major changes in its outlook during your time here?
4. What are the innovative and unique aspects of the Program?
5. How were you involved in the preparation of the Self-Study Report?   Have you read the SSR?
6. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weakness of the Program?
7. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?

Standard #2 - Students
1. Why did you enter this program? Would you make the same decision again? Elaborate.
2. Will this program succeed in meeting your professional objectives?
3. Would you recommend this program to others? Explain.
4. Describe the Program's diversity recruitment efforts for both faculty and students.
5. Describe how successfully the Program has met your expectations. Include specifics about satisfying and disappointing aspects.
6. Do/did academic support services – e.g. advising, computer center, library facilities, etc. Meet your needs? Explain.
7. [For graduate students] Are professional staff and faculty members available as research advisors?
8. What kinds of financial assistance are available to students?
9. What activities and organizations are available to students?
10. Do the recruitment brochures, catalogs, the website, etc., accurately reflect the Program's available resources, academic policies, rate of progression, etc.?
11. How does the Program recruit students? What would you suggest the Program add to be more effective?
12. How is the Program website used internally as a resource for faculty and students?
13. What was your experience with student support services?
14. Describe the involvement/activities of the students in the Chapter.
15. What is the relationship between the APA Chapter and the Program?
16. Has the APA Chapter made specific efforts to involve students? Have these efforts been successful?
17. Is there a chapter-sponsored mentoring program for the planning students? Explain.
18. Have the students ever reached out to the chapter to get involved? If so, have they been successful? How?
19. Does the APA Chapter have a student member on its board of directors?
20. Are there special student rates for chapter events?

Standard #3 – Faculty
1. How do you regard the faculty and staff?

2. How accessible are the faculty outside of class?
3. Does the faculty foster professionalism and professional ethics? Do the faculty serve as role models?
4. How do the faculty and students interact outside the classroom?
5. How would you characterize the "typical" professor in this Program? Do you know if this profile has changed?
6. Are faculty concerned about their teaching performance? How does the Program emphasize good teaching?
7. Describe how faculty relate their research and service activities to class lectures.
8. Do faculty prepare students adequately for professional practice in planning? Do they "teach you how to plan?"
9. Do faculty participate and encourage participation in professional society activities?
10. Does the faculty encourage future involvement with professional certifications (AICP, LEED, etc.)?
11. How effective are the adjunct faculty members? Are they adequately prepared for class? Are they accessible?
12. Do you have any involvement in the hiring process for new faculty?
13. Comment on the faculty interaction with the local APA Chapter. Do faculty encourage student membership and participation in Chapter activities?

Standard #4 - Curriculum
1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum?
2. Is the curriculum is consistent with the Program's goals and objectives?
3. Is the curriculum what you expected when you enrolled in the Program?
4. Do you have access to the courses you need to graduate within the proscribed time (e.g. two or four years)?
5. Has the Program made any major changes in the curriculum while you have been here?
6. How are faculty research and scholarship introduced into the curriculum?
7. Which single educational experience in the Program have you most enjoyed? Least enjoyed?
8. Are the Program's handbook, website, and course literature accurate in describing the course content? Is this material effective in helping you select classes to meet your educational objectives?
9. How would you characterize the physical facilities? If you could change one thing, what would that be?
10. Have you been expected to utilize the library resources in your courses? Computer resources? How would you characterize those resources?
11. Do faculty provide a good balance between theory and practice?

Standard #5 - Governance
1. To what extent are students involved in the policy-making decisions of the school? Have good ideas advanced from such student involvement been implemented? Give an example.
2. Describe how students participate in the governance and development of the Program.
3. What is the system of student governance used by the Program?

Standard #6 - Program Assessment
1. Is the Program preparing you for what you think you will be doing as a planner?
2. Describe the efforts the Program uses to assess its outcomes, regarding (a) institutional/programmatic assessment; (b) curricular assessment; and (c) student learning outcomes assessment.
3. Have the results of course evaluations resulted in changes to courses and/or faculty behavior? Explain.
4. Have the results of course evaluations resulted in changes to courses and/or faculty behavior? Explain.
5. Describe any suggestions to improve the institution and/or the Program.
6. Does the Program recognize "distinguished alumni?"
7. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?

Standard #7 - Progress

The Profession and Practice Applications
1. Describe your sense of the profession as gleaned from the faculty.
2. What kind of learning activities have you done with varieties of practice to help you make a career choice?
3. Will your education prepare you for entry into and/or advancement in the field of planning?
4. How did the Program prepare you for your career in planning?
5. Were you prepared to handle the work expectations upon graduation? 5 years? Now?
6. How would you characterize the faculty's knowledge of the profession?
7. How would you characterize the faculty's involvement with the profession?
8. How would you characterize the relationship between the chapter and the Program?

Motivating Programs to Achieve Excellence
1. What are the strengths of the Program?
2. What are areas of untapped or underutilized potential?
3. What differentiates this program from its peers and competitors?
4. What is excellent or noteworthy about this program?
5. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?
6. Describe the current innovative efforts within the institution.
7. Who are the Program's peers? Competitors? How would you compare the Program with these peers and competitors?

Closing Questions
1. What would you like the PAB SVT to remember from this meeting?
2. What single message, if any, would you like the team to convey to the Dean, Program Administrator, or President of the University?
3. Do you have any questions for the Site Visit Team?

Meeting with Alumni

Sessions with alumni provide an opportunity for former students to present their perspectives about the value of their educational experience, quality of learning, and their preparedness to enter the workforce and contribute to the profession.

Programs seeking accreditation of two degrees should arrange separate meetings for alumni from each of the degree programs.

Initiate the session with introduction, the objective of the meeting, and the format to be used. It is helpful if alums indicate their year of graduation and provide an indication of their interests in the Program relative to their current employment situation. Names and titles of attendees, and employers' names are to be made available to the team in advance of the meeting.

Specific questions to be asked the alumni include:

Standard #1 - Mission and Strategic Plan
1. What is the mission of the Program?
2. How do the Program's current goals and objectives compare with those when you were enrolled?
3. What are the innovative and unique aspects of the Program?
4. How were you involved in the preparation of the Self-Study Report? Have you read the SSR?
5. What are the strengths and weakness of the Program?
6. Describe your participation in the Program's strategic planning efforts.
7. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
8. What is the reputation of the Program in the broader community?
9. Describe the Program's interface with other departments, schools, programs and other components of the University?

Standard #2 - Students
1. Why did you enter this program? Would you make the same decision again? Elaborate.
2. Will this program succeed in meeting your professional objectives?
3. Would you recommend this program to others? Explain.
4. Describe the Program's diversity recruitment efforts for both faculty and students.
5. Describe how successfully the Program has met your expectations. Include specifics about satisfying and disappointing aspects.
6. Do/did academic support services – e.g. advising, computer center, library facilities, etc. Meet your needs? Explain.
7. What kinds of financial assistance are available to students?
8. What activities and organizations are available to students?
9. Do the recruitment brochures, catalogs, the website, etc., accurately reflect the Program's available resources, academic policies, rate of progression, etc.?
10. How does the Program recruit students? What would you suggest the Program add to be more effective?
11. How is the Program website used internally as a resource for faculty and students?
12. What was your experience with student support services?
13. Now that you have experience in professional practice, how would you change the Program and/or the curriculum?
14. Which single educational experience did you most enjoy?
15. Describe the involvement/activities of the students in the APA Chapter.
16. What is the relationship between the APA Chapter and the Program?
17. Has the Chapter made specific efforts to involve students? Have these efforts been successful?

18. Have the students ever reached out to the chapter to get involved? If so, have they been successful? How?
19. Does the APA Chapter have a student member on its board of directors?
20. Are there special student rates for chapter events?

Standard #3 - Faculty
1. How do you regard the faculty and staff?
2. How accessible are the faculty outside of class?
3. Does the faculty foster professionalism and professional ethics? Do the faculty serve as role models?
4. How do the faculty and students interact outside the classroom?
5. How would you characterize the "typical" professor in this Program? Do you know if this profile has changed?
6. Are faculty concerned about their teaching performance? How does the Program emphasize good teaching?
7. Describe how faculty relate their research and service activities to class lectures.
8. Do faculty prepare students adequately for professional practice in planning? Do they "teach you how to plan?"
9. Do faculty participate and encourage participation in professional society activities?
10. Does the faculty encourage future involvement with professional certifications (AICP, LEED, etc.)?
11. How effective are the adjunct faculty members? Are they adequately prepared for class? Are they accessible?
12. Are faculty engaged with alumni, either individually or with the Alumni group?
13. Do you have any involvement in the hiring process for new faculty?
14. Do faculty consult you for guest lectures, internships or jobs?
15. Comment on the faculty interaction with the local APA Chapter. Do faculty encourage student membership and participation in Chapter activities?
16. Are faculty interested and competent in areas of planning that are relevant to the community?

Standard #4 - Curriculum and Instruction
1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum?
2. Is the curriculum is consistent with the Program's goals and objectives?
3. Is the curriculum what you expected when you enrolled in the Program?
4. Do you have access to the courses you need to graduate within the proscribed time (e.g. two or four years)?
5. Has the Program made any major changes in the curriculum while you have been here?
6. How are faculty research and scholarship introduced into the curriculum?
7. Which single educational experience in the Program have you most enjoyed? Least enjoyed?
8. Are the Program's handbook, website, and course literature accurate in describing the course content? Is this material effective in helping you select classes to meet your educational objectives?
9. How would you characterize the physical facilities? If you could change one thing, what would that be?
10. Have you been expected to utilize the library resources in your courses? Computer resources? How would you characterize those resources?
11. Do faculty provide a good balance between theory and practice?
12. Is the Program well-supported academically and financially by the Department or school in which it is located, and by the University?

Standard #5 – Governance
1. To what extent are students involved in the policy-making decisions of the school? Have good ideas advanced from such student involvement been implemented? Give an example.
2. Describe how students participate in the governance and development of the Program.

Standard #6 - Program Assessment
1. Is the Program preparing you for what you think you will be doing as a planner?
2. Describe the efforts the Program uses to assess its outcomes, regarding (a) institutional/programmatic assessment; (b) curricular assessment; and (c) student learning outcomes assessment.
3. Have the results of course evaluations resulted in changes to courses and/or faculty behavior? Explain.
4. What sorts of contact do you have with the Program?
5. Describe any suggestions to improve the institution and/or the Program.
6. Describe your interaction with the Program.
7. Does the Program recognize "distinguished alumni?"
8. Are you in contact with any of your classmates?
9. If requested, and were you available, would you consider advising, participating in the Program and/or serving on an Advisory Board?
10. Have you hired any program graduates recently? Would you recommend hiring a graduate?
11. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?

Standard #7 - Progress

The Profession and Practice Applications
1. Describe your sense of the profession as gleaned from the faculty.
2. What kind of learning activities have you done with varieties of practice to help you make a career choice?
3. Will/did your education prepare you for entry into and/or advancement in the field of planning?
4. How did the Program prepare you for your career in planning?
5. Were you prepared to handle the work expectations upon graduation? 5 years? Now?
6. How would you characterize the faculty's knowledge of the profession?
7. How would you characterize the faculty's involvement with the profession?
8. How would you characterize the relationship between the chapter and the Program?
9. Does the Program contribute to the profession at large? Locally? Regionally? Nationally? Internationally?

Motivating Programs to Achieve Excellence
1. What were the innovative and unique aspects of the Program when you attended it? What are they now?

Closing Questions
1. What would you like the PAB Site Visit Team to remember from this meeting?
2. What single message, if any, would you like the team to convey to the Dean, Program Administrator, or President of your university?
3. Do you have any questions for the Site Visit Team?

Meetings with members of the local APA Chapter and Employers

Sessions with representatives of the local APA Chapter and with employers are sometimes separate meetings. They are more often than not combined, however, due to time constraints and potential geographic/travel-related challenges getting people to a college campus. A joint meeting is to contain both Chapter members who are not employers or alumni, and employers who are not APA members or alums.

The American Planning Association (APA) is one of PAB's sponsoring organizations: it and/or its institute – the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) – appoints 4 of the 8 PAB members and provides 50% of PAB funding for operations. The AICP and the APA governing boards have a role in the process by which PAB sets its accreditation standards and criteria. It is important that the Program and its students have a strong and healthy relationship with the local chapter.

The objective of these meetings is for the profession to provide a formal voice to the accreditation review. The Program is expected to have a relationship with the profession, the local planning community (at the programmatic, faculty and student levels), and the local APA Chapter. Employers provide added insight as they can contribute evidence and judgments regarding the qualifications of the Program's interns and graduates

Initiate the session with introduction, the objective of the meeting, and the format to be used. Names of attendees, organizations represented, and titles are to be made available to the team in advance of the meeting

Specific questions to ask the local APA Chapter and Employers include:

Standard #1 - Mission and Strategic Plan
1. What is the mission of the Program?
2. How were you involved in the preparation of the Self-Study Report?   Have you read the SSR?
3. What are the strengths and weakness of the Program?
4. Describe your participation in the Program's strategic planning efforts.
5. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
6. What is the reputation of the Program in the broader community?

Standard #2 - Students
1. Would you recommend this program to others? Explain.
2. Describe the involvement/activities of the students in the APA Chapter.
3. What is the relationship between the APA Chapter and the Program?
4. What is your firm's/agency's/organization's hiring profile (interns vs. graduates; frequency of hires)?
5. How would you compare these students/grads with students/grads hired from other programs with regard to the knowledge, skills, and values of the profession?
6. Has the Chapter made specific efforts to involve students? Have these efforts been successful?
7. Is there a chapter-sponsored mentoring program for the planning students? Explain.
8. Have the students ever reached out to the chapter to get involved? If so, have they been successful? How?
9. Have you recruited students as interns? Explain
10. Does the APA Chapter have a student member on its board of directors?
11. Are there special student rates for chapter events?

Standard #3 - Faculty
1. How accessible are the faculty outside of class?
2. How would you characterize the "typical" professor in this Program? Do you know if this profile has changed?
3. Do faculty participate and encourage participation in professional society activities?

4. Does the faculty encourage future involvement with professional certifications (AICP, LEED, etc.)?
5. Do you have any involvement in the hiring process for new faculty?
6. Do faculty consult you for guest lectures, internships or jobs?
7. Comment on the faculty interaction with the local APA Chapter. Do faculty encourage student membership and participation in Chapter activities?
8. Are faculty interested and competent in areas of planning that are relevant to the community?

Standard #4 Curriculum and Instruction
1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum?
2. Is the Program well-supported academically and financially by the Department or school in which it is located, and by the University?

Standard #5 Governance

Standard #6 Program Assessment
1. Is the Program preparing you for what you think you will be doing as a planner?
2. Describe the efforts the Program uses to assess its outcomes, regarding (a) institutional/programmatic assessment; (b) curricular assessment; and (c) student learning outcomes assessment.
3. What sorts of contact do you have with the Program?
4. Describe any suggestions to improve the institution and/or the Program.
5. Describe your interaction with the Program.
6. If requested, and were you available, would you consider advising, participating in the Program and/or serving on an Advisory Board?
7. Have you hired any program graduates recently? Would you recommend hiring a graduate?
8. What is the quality of the Program's students, faculty and leadership?
9. How is the future of this program perceived in the community?
10. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?

Standard #7 Progress

The Profession and Practice Applications
1. Describe your sense of the profession as gleaned from the faculty.
2. What kind of learning activities have you done with varieties of practice to help you make a career choice?
3. Will/did your education prepare you for entry into and/or advancement in the field of planning?
4. How did the Program prepare you for your career in planning?
5. How would you characterize the faculty's knowledge of the profession?
6. How would you characterize the faculty's involvement with the profession?
7. Does the Program contribute to the profession at large? Locally? Regionally? Nationally? Internationally?
8. Does the Program make a contribution to the field of planning beyond placing its graduates, e.g., does it produce worthwhile research, consulting and similar services?
9. In what ways have faculty been responsive to requests for speaking, lecturing, advising or other professional practice issues?

Motivating Programs to Achieve Excellence
1. What are the strengths of the Program?
2. What are areas of untapped or underutilized potential?
3. What differentiates this program from its peers and competitors?
4. What is excellent or noteworthy about this program?
5. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?
6. Describe the current innovative efforts within the institution.

7. Who are the Program's peers? Competitors? How would you compare the Program with these peers and competitors?

Closing Questions
4. What would you like the PAB Site Visit Team to remember from this meeting?
5. What single message, if any, would you like the team to convey to the Dean, Program Administrator, or President of the University?
6. Do you have any questions for the Site Visit Team?