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SITE VISIT MANUAL FOR SITE VISIT TEAM MEMBERS

2023 Edition

SITE VISIT MANUAL – FOR SITE VISIT TEAM MEMBERS

Table of Contents

PREFACE

The purpose of this manual is to introduce you to the role and responsibilities of a Site Visitor and to assist you in determining assessments of compliance with accreditation standards and criteria. A successful Site Visit depends on the Site Visitors: your preparation, your collection of information and your assessment, and your written report. The Site Visit Report (SVR) should provide proactive, constructive, and positive insights focused on improving the quality of planning education.

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 preconditions to PAB 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. Additionally, this manual includes policies and requirements that govern the Site Visitor Pool.

- *Self-Study Report Manual and Template*
  This document details the process and procedures for writing and distributing a Self-Study Report (SSR). It contains guidance for demonstrating compliance with the standards. The sole appendix to the manual is an example of the SSR template.

- *Site Visit Manual for Program Administrators*
  This document contains the processes and procedures used for conducting a Site Visit. It includes guidance for Program Administrators in preparing for the Site Visit.

- *Fee Schedule*
  The fee schedule posted on the PAB website contains the current fees associated with accreditation.

Questions about the accreditation process as administered by the Planning Accreditation Board should be directed to:

Planning Accreditation Board, 2334 W. Lawrence Avenue, Suite 209, Chicago, IL 60625
T: (773) 334-7200/10; www.planningaccreditationboard.org

ACCREDITATION AND THE PROCESS

Accreditation is about quality assurance and improvement. *Accreditation* applies to institutions or programs; *certification* or *licensure* applies to individuals. Accreditation from the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) is recognition that a bachelor's or master's degree in planning meets established qualifications and educational standards through initial and periodic evaluations.

To the **public,** the value of accreditation includes:
- an assurance of external evaluation of the Program and a finding that there is conformity to general expectations of the profession;
- identification of programs that have successfully undertaken activities directed at improving the quality of the institution and the education delivered; and
- an improvement in the professional services available to the public as accredited programs modify their requirements to reflect changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, and practice.

To **students and prospective students**, accreditation provides:
- an assurance that the educational activities of an accredited program have been found to be satisfactory and, therefore, meet the needs of the students; and
- enhanced eligibility relative to the exam qualifications for individual certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

Institutions benefit from accreditation through:
- self-evaluation and self-directed program improvement;
- the strengthening of program self-evaluation and through a subsequent review by the Site Visit Team;
- the enhancement of the reputation of the Program because of public regard for accreditation; and
- the use of accreditation in decision-making for the investment of public and private funds.

And finally, accreditation serves the **planning profession** by:
- providing a voice in identifying knowledge, skills, and values of the profession in the professional degree; and
- assuring that future practitioners will be adequately prepared.

Accreditation Standards
Accreditation standards are statements that define and set expectations about the foundation for quality education. The standards serve as the basis for each program evaluation:
- They address educational and operational issues associated with generating results while maintaining academic protocol.
- They reflect the consensus of professionals in the field and experts in higher education.
- To earn accreditation, programs must demonstrate substantial compliance with the standards regardless of locations or modalities of delivery.

The Accreditation Process

Self-Study Report	Site Visit	Site Visit Report	PAB Accreditation Review
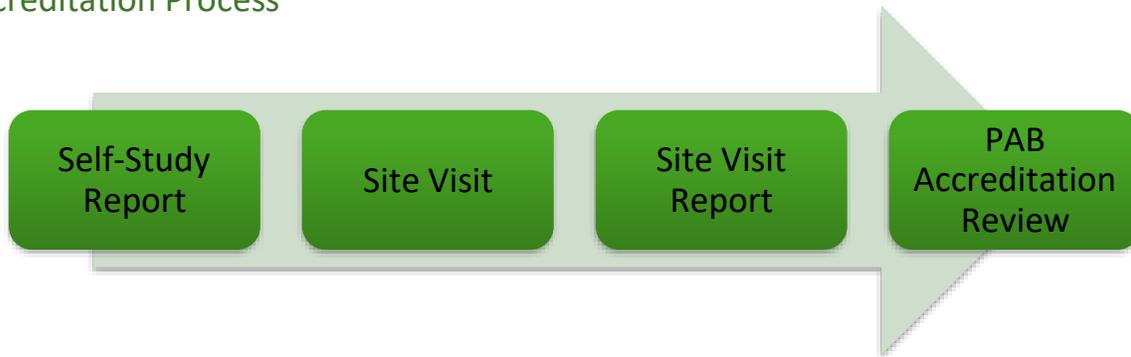
Self-Study Report (SSR)

The Self-Study Report (SSR) is a critical component of the accreditation process. In it, the Program provides quantitative and qualitative information demonstrating compliance with PAB standards, identifies strengths and weaknesses, and outlines steps necessary for improvement. In addition to responding to the PAB accreditation standards, the Program provides a great deal of data, abbreviated faculty CVs, and syllabi for all courses. SSR preparation begins approximately one year before the Site Visit, and serves, in effect, as a planning document for the Program.

Site Visit Team (SVT)

Accreditation is based upon peer review with representation from both the academy and the profession. The SVT is comprised of 3 individuals: 2 planning educators, one of whom serves as the SVT Chair, and 1 professional planner. SVT Chairs are experienced Site Visitors with additional training.

Individuals in PAB's Site Visit Pool are nominated by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) and the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). SVT members and SVT Chairs are trained by PAB. Each SVT member participates in the evaluation process, and in the verbal and written presentation of findings.

Site Visit

The SVT spends 2.5 days on campus – typically Monday through noon Wednesday. The SVT arrives on campus on Sunday evening for a SVT working dinner. Each day is filled with meetings (faculty, senior administration, students, alumni, etc.) in addition to reviewing student work and touring the facilities. While the SVT is in meetings during the first and second days of the visit, evenings include a working session during and after dinner. On the final day the SVT conducts exit interviews with the Program Administrator and college/school and university administration to verbally share its findings. In rare instances, an alternative schedule (arrival on Tuesday with Wednesday to Friday meetings) may be used.

For institutions with both an accredited bachelor's and master's program (known as a Dual Program Review), the Site Visit could be up to one-half day longer to accommodate additional meetings.

Multi-Campus Site Visit

Institutions with multiple campuses will also require a longer Site Visit, as the SVT must visit all locations. The length of the visit will vary, depending on the number of, and distance between, locations. Autonomous and/or independent campuses, with their own faculty, students, alumni, employers, etc., will require the most time as the SVT will, in effect, conduct a mini-visit at each location. Given the complexities involved in scheduling multi-campus reviews, the Program should prepare its draft schedule earlier than the typical 6 weeks before the visit.

Four Principles of a Site Visit

Verify	Gather
• *information in the SSR*	• *new information through observation and interviews*
Assess	**Identify**
• *the degree to which the Program meets the standards*	• *strengths and areas in which Program can seek improvement and move toward excellence*

Site Visit Report (SVR)

The SVT writes a formal report wherein it documents strengths of the Program, assessments of compliance with PAB standards and criteria, and recommendations for areas in which the Program can seek improvement. The Program has the opportunity to comment on both the draft and final versions of the SVR.

PAB Accreditation Review

PAB meets in-person twice annually: in the spring during the APA national conference; in the fall during the ACSP national conference. Programs hosting fall Site Visits are reviewed by PAB for accreditation the following spring; programs hosting spring visits are reviewed the following fall. The Program Administrator and the SVT Chair are each scheduled to meet individually with PAB. All accreditation decisions are effective January 1, unless otherwise noted by PAB.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All PAB members, Site Visitors, and staff adhere to the Standards of Conduct in all PAB-related activities.

Conflict of Interest

Conflicts of Interest for a Site Visitor include:
- serving on a previous Site Visit Team (SVT) for the Program under consideration;
- serving with the head of the Program on a previous SVT;
- attending, teaching, or receiving a degree from any unit of the host institution;
- teaching at an institution where the head of the Program used to teach or from which a SVT member received a degree;
- serving as head of a program visited by a SVT chaired by the Program Administrator; and
- residing in the same region or competing within the same geographic market as the Program.

Site Visitors must disclose any conflicts prior to serving on a Site Visit. If a conflict of interest between a Program and Site Visitor is discovered before or during a Site Visit, the Site Visitor with the conflict will be immediately replaced, or removed from the SVT, and will also be removed from the Site Visitor Pool. The failure by either a

Site Visitor or a Program Administrator to disclose a conflict of interest will be considered cause for disqualification of the SVR and for the removal of the Site Visitor from the pool.

Confidentiality

SVT members are expected to maintain strict confidentiality regarding accreditation reviews. The entire Site Visit process, including information shared by interviewees, is confidential. SVTs may discuss the Site Visit with the PAB Board and staff only.

Professionalism

Site Visitors serve as representatives of PAB and are invited guests of the University and the Program. PAB expects Site Visitors to exhibit professional behavior at all times during the Site Visit. Site Visitors should be competent, considerate, empathetic, courteous, cooperative, and committed. Unprofessional conduct before, during or after the Site Visit will result in removal from the Site Visitor Pool.

Harassment, including Sexual Harassment

PAB is committed to providing a harassment-free environment for all participants in the accreditation process, including Site Visitors, Programs, PAB members, and staff. PAB does not and will not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination. Any form of harassment or discrimination related to an individual's race, color, religion, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, military status, disability, or any other status or condition protected by applicable state and federal laws, is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

The term "harassment" includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, sex (including same-sex), religion, national origin, citizenship, age, or disability. "Harassment" also includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome or offensive touching and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct, or electronic communications (including e-mail) of a sexual nature involving either members of the same sex or opposite sex. Prohibited harassment includes conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or experience or creating an environment that is hostile, intimidating or offensive.

When Discrimination is Experienced or Suspected
If you believe you have been the victim of harassment by a PAB representative, or while you are representing PAB, report it immediately to the PAB Executive Director. If you are aware of harassment directed at, or by, another PAB representative, report it immediately to the PAB Executive Director. You are protected when filing a complaint of discrimination or assisting in an investigation of discrimination.

If these avenues of reporting are not satisfactory to you, then you can direct your questions, suggestions, problems, or complaints to the PAB Chair. If for any reason you do not want to discuss the matter with this individual, then report to the PAB Vice Chair.

You are not required to directly confront the person who is the source of your report, question, or complaint before making a report of harassment. But if you are harassed, you are required to make a reasonable effort to make harassment known should it exist. Discussing or reporting acts of harassment to any person not listed above does not constitute a report of harassment.

Retaliation or discrimination for making a good faith report or participating in an investigation of harassment is also strictly prohibited.

PAB will investigate allegations of discrimination, including harassment. PAB may use third parties to assist in such investigations.

Disciplinary Action
If harassment is found to have occurred, appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action will be swiftly taken including, but not limited to, removal from the Site Visitor Pool. Disciplinary and/or corrective action will also be taken against individuals who make knowingly false or frivolous accusations including accusations made maliciously or recklessly.

Serving as an Independent Consultant

Planning programs accredited by or seeking accreditation with PAB occasionally ask PAB Site Visitors to serve as independent consultants. Site Visitors may accept independent compensated consulting assignments to accredited programs or those seeking accreditation; however, Site Visitors may not accept a compensated or non-compensated consulting assignment if they previously evaluated the program as part of a PAB Site Visit for a minimum of three years after the PAB accreditation action. The complete policy governing this arrangement can be found in Section 3.15 of the *PAB Policies and Procedures Manual*.

TRAVEL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Travel and Reimbursement

SVT members are responsible for making their own transportation arrangements to and from the institution and should do so as early as possible in order to take advantage of low-cost fares. SVT members are encouraged to take cost saving measures when making their travel arrangements. SVT members pay their own travel costs in advance. After the Site Visit, PAB reimburses the SVT for all travel and out-of-pocket expenses associated with the Site Visit. Expenses submitted to PAB after 90 calendar days of the visit will not be reimbursed.

Air and Rail Travel
SVT members are encouraged to use the lowest available fares, and typically this is economy cabin. Fees for checked baggage will be reimbursed, but discretionary fees (travel insurance, seating upgrades, early check-in, and/or earlier seat assignment) will <u>not</u> be reimbursed.

Travel by Privately-Owned Automobile
Reimbursement for privately-owned automobile travel is figured at the current IRS per mile rate. SVT members should itemize expenses for tolls, ferries, and parking fees in order to be reimbursed for them. If automobile parking would be more expensive than round-trip taxi, ride-share or limousine fares, SVT members should use the latter.

Transportation within the Locale, and to and from Carrier Terminals
The Program is responsible for informing the SVT members about ground transportation arrangements. A rental car for the SVT is usually not needed during the Site Visit; the Program is normally able to accommodate specific transportation requests of the SVT. When the institution location mandates a rental car, the SVT is expected to coordinate travel arrangements such that only one rental is required.

Reimbursement is allowed for taxi, limousine, and ride-share fares between common carrier terminals. Travel expenses by automobile to and from the terminal, and/or parking at the terminal, are allowed as outlined in the above section on automobile travel.

Lodging Arrangements

The Program is responsible for making the SVT's lodging arrangements and for informing the SVT promptly about them. The Program may choose to have the SVT members pay for their own lodging on the front end (to be reimbursed later by PAB), or the Program may arrange for direct billing. Whichever the case, the Program should let the SVT members know what to expect regarding billing.

The lodging for SVT members should be reasonably accessible to the campus. The hotel arrangements should provide for a working room in the hotel for the SVT's evening work sessions. Options for SVT meetings include: hotel business center, a suite-type room for the SVT Chair, or a separate conference room. A regular hotel room is not acceptable for this purpose.

Meals
While limits are not established for the cost of meals, SVT members are always expected to exercise discretion and to be fiscally conservative. Remember to keep itemized receipts for all meals.

Dress Code
SVT members are expected to dress in business or business casual attire for all Site Visit activities; however, a full suit is not required.

Time Commitment
When contacted to conduct a Site Visit, Site Visitors need to assure they have adequate time in their calendar to devote to the entire Site Visit process, including writing the SVR. The Site Visit lasts two and a half days. Additional time for the entire process should also be factored into your decision, such as the time it will take to review the SSR, travel time, and the generation of the draft and final reports. The time spent can vary, but minimally a Site Visitors should allot five days for the whole process.

Remaining Current on Issues of Accreditation
PAB recommends all active Site Visitors periodically visit the PAB website to remain up-to-date on accreditation policies and the Site Visit process. PAB also publishes an electronic newsletter semi-annually focusing primarily on accreditation matters, including recent and upcoming events at PAB. PAB continually monitors the effectiveness of its policies and procedures and revises them as appropriate. Site Visitors who have not participated in a training session or on a Site Visit in a five-year period must participate in a refresher training session before participating on a Site Visit Team.

Contacting the PAB Office
If you are on a Site Visit and a situation arises or you have questions regarding compliance with a standard, please contact the PAB office.

PREPARING FOR THE SITE VISIT

Self-Study Report (SSR)
The first step in the accreditation process is the Program's SSR, wherein compliance with accreditation standards is documented and evidenced. The SSR template is available as the appendix to the *Self-Study Report Manual*.

The SSR is provided to the members of the Site Visit Team in electronic format by PAB. Each member of the team is expected to read and be familiar with the SSR well in advance of the visit itself.

Program materials provided by PAB to Site Visit Teams include:
- Current SSR
- Prior SVR
- Progress Report (if applicable)
- Significant correspondence since the prior Site Visit

The burden of proof for documenting compliance rests with the Program submitting the SSR. PAB's Self-Study Report Manual assists programs in preparing a well-written and comprehensive document. Attached as Appendix A is a detailed excerpt from that manual, to assist and guide the SVT in determining compliance.

Reading the Self-Study Report

1. *Read and review the complete SSR well in advance of the visit. Pay particular attention to the sections that may be assigned by the SVT Chair*
2. *Read Appendix A to this manual for insight into the expectations for the standards and criteria*

Pre-Site Visit Team Meeting

About two to three weeks before the visit, PAB staff will arrange a pre-Site Visit meeting with all SVT members. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce and familiarize members with one another, coordinate the initial on-site meetings, and discuss preliminary findings based on the SVT's review of the SSR and historical documents. The SVT Chair may assign each SVT member specific standards before or during this meeting. PAB will provide an agenda for the meeting to help guide the discussion.

Pre-Site Visit Timeline

SVT receives information and electronic materials from PAB staff

PAB staff arranges initial Pre-Site Visit meeting for Site Visit Team

| 8 wks | 6 wks | 4 wks | 3 wks | 2 wks | Site Visit |

SVT members make travel arrangements for Site Visit

SVT Chair receives draft schedule for review and comment*

Initial Pre-Site Visit Team Meeting
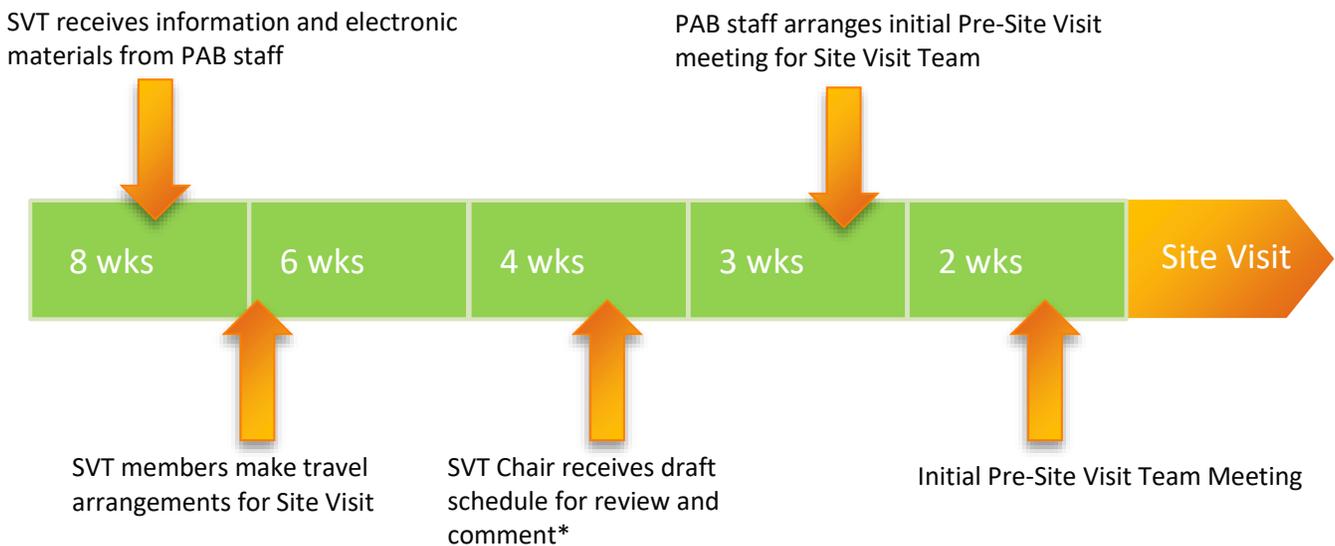
*PAB staff works directly with the Program to prepare the schedule. SVT members have no formal communication with the program regarding the schedule.

SITE VISIT AND INTERVIEWS

The manner in which the SVT conducts interviews, reviews work and facilities, takes care in determining findings and drafting the SVR, and the way that findings are presented to the various constituents of the host institution impact the perception, quality and, thus, the success of the Site Visit. Every step in the process requires a thoughtful professional demeanor.

Interviews

It is important that the interviews be consistent. PAB has a book of sample questions for each individual and/or group (administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and practitioners) with whom the SVT team will meet. The SVT should agree in advance on the core questions to be asked in each interview. It should identify the most important areas to cover, leave time in each interview to probe areas of concern, and allow the interviewee the chance to ask any questions they may have. The SVT should extend an invitation to all faculty and students to meet with the SVT or a member of the SVT individually (under conditions of confidentiality) to discuss specific issues of concern.

Initial Interview with the Program Administrator
The Site Visit schedule begins with a 1-hour introductory interview with the Program Administrator, followed by the Department Chair (if the Program is located within a department). Interviews with the Dean, Provost (optional), and President (optional) will follow.

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

The objectives of this introductory meeting are threefold: clarify any special needs or concerns with regard to the Site Visit schedule and/or anyone with whom the SVT is scheduled to meet; resolve any ambiguities or uncertainties based on the SSR and/or request additional materials that may be missing from it; learn of any changes the Program has undergone since the SSR was submitted (e.g., faculty hires, etc.). This meeting also serves as the interview of the Program Administrator in their role as a faculty member.

The Program Administrator will check in with the SVT from time to time during the Site Visit, to address any outstanding issues and/or questions that arise from any of the SVT's scheduled meetings.

Interview with the Dean
The SVT's introductory meeting with the Dean will follow the one with the Program Administrator [and/or Department Chair]. The length and range of topics to cover will vary from program to program, depending on how closely involved the Dean is with the Program. Many Deans appreciate the insights a Site Visit provides into their planning programs and the field of planning more generally. The Site Visit often presents an opportunity for Deans to gain a broader perspective on planning education.

Site Visit Team Expectations

1. *Read and review all documents well in advance of the visit. The SVT chair may assign team members to "manage" certain accreditation standards.*
2. *Organize the information and your thoughts according to the accreditation standards.*
3. *Identify key issues before all interviews and know which questions to ask whom.*

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and why you are there. The SVT Chair sets the ground rules, including the timeframe and an assurance of confidentiality. Topics typically discussed with Deans 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 they would like the SVT to specifically examine or address during the visit.

Interview with the Provost and President (optional)
Initial contact with one or both of these administrators is optional and brief. The initial meeting introduces the 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 meeting can also help the SVT understand the institution.

Interview with Office of Information Technology
For programs delivered via hybrid or distance education, the SVT shall meet with the relevant institutional, collegiate, and/or departmental office to assess institutional support.

Faculty Interviews
During the Site Visit, SVT members will meet with the Program faculty in four groups: full-time in planning unit tenured/contract faculty; full-time in planning unit tenure track faculty; part-time in planning unit tenured/tenure track/contract faculty; and adjunct faculty. The SVT should meet separately with tenure track faculty. However, programs have some flexibility in the composition of group meetings. For example, a Professor of Practice may be scheduled with the full-time tenured/contract faculty, if appropriate. Contract faculty may be full-time in the Program for multiple years and/or with a continuing appointment that is a status similar to tenured faculty. Programs delivered via hybrid or distance education shall arrange to have all full-time and part-time faculty present to meet with the SVT in person and/or via video-conferencing.

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and why you are there. The SVT Chair sets the ground rules, including the timeframe and an assurance of confidentiality. The faculty members may provide a brief introduction to supplement the abbreviated CV in the SSR if warranted.

Be prepared for a wide variety of personalities from faculty, ranging from quiet or withdrawn behavior (requiring more probing by the SVT) to assertive behavior (requiring redirection or restraint by the SVT). The objectives of the SVT include the verification of statements and impressions presented in written materials (SSR, supplemental information) or in general group sessions during the Site Visit.

Conducting a Successful Site Visit

1. *Be objective: your role is to observe, analyze and report.*
2. *Listen more than you talk.*
3. *Have a positive attitude and tone in the interviews; do not express views that could be interpreted as biased regarding program content and outcomes.*
4. *Remind those you interview that what they say is confidential.*
5. *Focus on important issues related to accreditation standards; avoid small problems.*
6. *Be thorough; ask the same questions of many people to get a balanced view of the situation.*
7. *Ongoing communication with the Program Administrator during the visit is very important. Misunderstandings can be corrected quickly and greater time is available to gather additional information as needed.*
8. *Stay on schedule.*
9. *Prepare as much of the SVR as possible while on campus.*

The SVT should prepare questions in advance for each faculty group meeting, to maximize information from different perspectives based on seniority, responsibility, etc. This is often a challenge given the limited amount of time scheduled, so preparation is the key.

Faculty members should also have an opportunity to address issues and questions. Certainly, those in the Program should have an opportunity to respond if negative impressions were received from those outside the Program. Helping the Program see itself as others in the university see it may constitute an important dimension of the SVT's role.

Faculty members may request to meet with the SVT individually and/or the SVT may request to meet with a faculty member or staff outside of the pre-scheduled group meetings. The SVT will have a three-hour working session on the second day where any individual faculty/staff meetings can be scheduled.

Meeting with Students
Sessions with students provide an opportunity for students to present their perspectives and concerns regarding the Program. Students are to be self-selected for participation in these sessions; it is important to verify exactly how this selection was made. In addition to the on-site meeting with students, 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 SVT in advance of the meeting, if possible.

To the extent feasible, students should be put at ease with respect to confidentiality. They should also be encouraged to ask for private time with the SVT if they have comments they are not comfortable making in front of their peers. In some situations, with large student groups or over a meal, it may be necessary for the SVT Chair to split the group into sub-groups based on year of study, specialization or some other feature, with individual SVT members meeting with each sub-group. This will also generate more detail and information. The recommended format, however, is for the full SVT to meet with the entire student group.

Programs delivered via hybrid or distance education shall arrange to have a meaningful number of students available to meet with the SVT in person, and/or via video-conferencing. While the student experience will be different for the distance education students, it is important for the Program to demonstrate that thoughtful consideration has been given to what is appropriate for these students and to explain where and why it may differ from in-person education.

Meeting with Alumni, Local APA Chapter, and Employers
One group/joint meeting can be held with alumni, representatives of the local APA Chapter and employers. Each stakeholder has different experiences and perspectives about the Program, so it is important that the SVT structure and focus the conversation to accommodate this. A group/joint meeting should contain both Chapter members who are not employers or alums, and employers who are not APA members or alums. For institutions with two accredited degrees, this joint meeting should include an equal representation of alumni from both the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Alumni provide an opportunity for former students to present their perspectives on the quality of their educational experience, quality of learning, and preparedness to enter the workforce and contribute to the profession. Alumni will be recent, most often those who graduated since the most recent Site Visit. The impact of education to one's professional abilities is most easily observed the closer to the time of graduation (within 5 years after graduation). After about 5 years, work experience will impact skills and knowledge in a much more meaningful way.

The local APA chapter and employer group provide the profession with 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 introductions, the objective of the meeting, and the format to be used. It is helpful if alums indicate their year of graduation and the job title for which they were hired after graduating from the Program. Names and titles of attendees, and employers' names are to be made available to the SVT in advance of the meeting.

Engagement with the profession will differ for distance education students, depending on the nature of the classes. The SVT will need to determine if the differences are appropriate. Students who are employed as planners while enrolled in the Program meet the requirement of engagement in the profession.

This meeting may occur in-person, via video conference or hybrid format. If the meeting occurs virtually or in a hybrid format, it may be necessary to conduct two separate group meetings: Alumni; APA Chapter and Employers.

Tour of Facilities
The SVT should visit classrooms, studios, student work areas, and computer facilities. Depending on time constraints, the SVT Chair may assign one SVT member to tour one or more of the facilities.

The Site Visit schedule for programs delivered via hybrid or distance education shall include a meeting with the people responsible for maintaining the technology used for the educational delivery, training and supporting the faculty and students on its use, as well as a tour of the facilities housing the equipment itself.

Review of Student Work
An important part of every accreditation visit is the SVT's review of student work, including theses, research projects, term papers, studio projects, and in-class exams. The Program will provide a range of student outputs to assure the SVT that it is successfully delivering its curriculum and meeting its educational mission, goals, and objectives. The Program will allocate two separate one-hour time slots for the SVT's review of a variety of student products. The first hour will include a presentation by the Program Administrator (and other representative, if necessary) on the Program's approach to the assessment of student learning and achievement.

The specific student work provided is at the Program's discretion. The aim should be twofold: 1) Showcase or highlight what students are capable of doing, and 2) show how students progress in meeting the learning objectives set forth by the Program. Ideally, this progression should include work during a single semester or quarter (e.g., improvements from a first draft to a final product) and progress through the years (e.g., student work from the first semester or quarter to their final semester or quarter). The aim is not to find fault with student work. The aim is to learn more about the competencies that students graduate with, in light of the program's strategic plans and learning objectives. The Program is expected to present the work of at least 10 to 12 students.

Reviewing Student Work

1. *Determine an overall general competence level based on samples reviewed. Evaluate the Program's assessment of student learning outcomes.*
2. *Look for samples with appropriate grading and feedback provided.*
3. *Consider the quality and range of analytic/quantitative work, writing quality, and inclusion of a comprehensive approach.*
4. *Verify that the examples provided cover the entire curriculum for required courses as detailed in Standard 4/Curriculum.*
5. *Make sure the examples show integration of planning knowledge and application.*

The Program should provide a range of work that is representative of the full curriculum and should span multiple years within their current accreditation cycle. It is always the SVT's prerogative to request to see additional work while on campus, and/or to request the inputs corresponding to each project (e.g., assignment instructions, limitations on student access to information, etc.) if necessary. If the work to be reviewed is accessible online, the SVT should be provided with the appropriate ID and passwords for convenient access.

SVT Work Sessions

The SVT has 3 work sessions: the arrival day (arrival), the evening following the first full day of meetings (day one), and the afternoon and evening following the second day on campus (day two).

Arrival

The SVT's first on-site meeting is a working dinner, designed to allow the members of the SVT get to know each other and continue the discussion begun via pre-visit communications. Once the Site Visit begins on day one there is little-to-no time available to prepare for interviews, so the SVT should use this evening to prepare questions for the day one meetings. The SVT Chair should ensure that SVT members understand their role in the upcoming interviews. The SVT should also use this time to develop a list of additional information it may need to evaluate the Program under PAB accreditation standards.

As a result of the pre-Site Visit meeting and the working dinner, the SVT should have a good sense of which criteria are not fully met based solely on the SSR. Getting sufficient detail on compliance with those criteria will drive the questions asked on day one.

Day One

During the evening work session, the SVT should be able to assess (met, partially-met, unmet) the Program in as many PAB criteria as possible and also determine what additional information it still needs to gather in order to fully evaluate the Program. The SVT should also develop its plan for the next day (i.e., decide how it will obtain the information it still needs – through written materials, subsequent interviews, physical tours, etc.) and assign specific tasks to each SVT member.

Day Two

The SVT is allotted approximately three hours in the afternoon to work on campus. The SVT should use this time to finalize its assessment of Program compliance with any outstanding criteria; alter previous evaluations as necessary; and develop a list of the Program's strengths, additional recommendations and scripts for the exit interviews. The SVT should begin to draft the SVR on site. The SVT may also use the evening for a work session. At the conclusion of day two, the SVT should agree on a timetable for completing the SVR. The SVT Chair should assign each member responsibility for completing specific portions of the SVR by a specified date and for reviewing the draft SVR.

End of the Site Visit: Exit Interviews

At the conclusion of the Site Visit, there are **four exit interviews: the Program Administrator** [followed by the department chair, if relevant], **the Dean, the Provost or designee, and the President/Chancellor (optional)**. Each of the exit interviews should take place independently and none of the individuals involved should be present at any interview other than their own. The SVT meets with the Program Administrator first as they can correct any possible misinterpretations prior to the other interviews.

The exit interview is one of the most impactful moments of the Site Visit at each level, particularly with the Provost and the President/Chancellor. Begin each interview by thanking each individual who met with or otherwise contributed information to the SVT. Emphasize that the exit interview includes a summary of the

SVT's preliminary assessments (without providing detail on which criteria are partially-met and unmet). It is important to present a balanced view of the Program: summarize strengths, including areas of excellence and possibilities for excellence, in addition to challenges. Reiterate the SVT findings are not final until the written report is finalized, which includes a review and comment period by the Program. Reinforce that the PAB has the ultimate authority for determining compliance and determining the period of accreditation, and that the written report is but one of several pieces of information PAB will review in its decision.

While the details supporting compliance with standards decrease in specificity as the SVT "ascends" the administrative hierarchy, the topics themselves do not. Share a verbal summary of problems and/or deficiencies as identified by the SVT. If the SVT has determined that one or more of the criteria is deficient, that should be clearly stated (without stating the level of compliance, i.e., partially-met or unmet). Reiterate that the Program will have several opportunities to respond. If there is bad news for the Program, it is best to simply state it as early in the exit briefing as possible. If the SVT is not certain about a Program's compliance with a criterion, it is best to state clearly that the SVT has concerns but has not yet reached an assessment. Reiterate Program strengths and state positively that those areas in need of improvement or shortfalls in compliance with the standards can be addressed. Remind listeners that these observations are provided to give a sense of the SVT's impressions but are neither comprehensive nor final. Thank each individual again, and cordially leave.

All SVT members participate in exit interviews. The exit interviews should provide a balanced picture of the SVT's findings. Observations and recommendations should be reported to all individuals. Use the draft SVR to ensure consistency across presentations (but do not share the draft SVR with the Program at this point).

This will also help ensure that no findings and/or recommendations in the written report are left out of the exit interviews. **The greatest mistake that can be made in an exit meeting is to give the Program the impression that things are at least OK, and then identify important problems or deficiencies in the written report**. It is imperative that the exit meetings are an accurate reflection of the impending SVR. While not easy, making the Program aware of any/all accreditation deficiencies as soon as possible is the responsibility of the SVT.

Motivating Programs to Achieve Excellence

While an accredited program designation means the public can rely on a certain level of educational quality with regard to teaching, learning, and student achievement, programs should aspire to continuous quality improvement. PAB seeks to recognize and promote those programs whose results are truly exceptional. To the extent the SVT identifies excellence in a program, the SVT should share that information during exit interviews and document it in the Site Visit Report. PAB will collect such examples of noteworthy practices and showcase them on the PAB website.

SITE VISIT REPORT (SVR)

The SVR is but one discrete, albeit important, evaluative step in the accreditation process. The SVR details areas of strength and non-compliance with the standards, as the SVT assessed them. In the SVR, the SVT also provides recommendations that the Program can decide to adopt to make improvement for both the standards and overall academic excellence. The Program can respond to both the draft and final versions of the SVR prior to PAB's decision. PAB, in its review, will make use of all the available information: the SSR, the SVR, the Program's final comments to the SVR (if applicable), any interim Progress Report, and any interim communication.

PAB considers the SVR to be confidential, and the property of the University or College/School. Once PAB has taken action, a program may make its SVR public, but only in its entirety.

The SVR is written for several audiences: the PAB, the faculty in the Program, university administrators, and those with whom the Program may share the report after PAB's decision. Although accreditation is a threshold test, its aspirational objective is the quest for academic excellence. While the SVT's recommendations for improvement may at times go beyond the standards, PAB's accreditation decisions focus on the accreditation standards.

An outline of the SVR and agreement on major findings should be completed by the conclusion of the Site Visit. Ideally, the SVT will have a rough draft of the report before they leave campus. The draft report is due to PAB staff two weeks after the Site Visit. It is critical that the initial draft be completed in the timeframe provided. Late or delayed reports reflect poorly on the PAB, may adversely affect the Program's ability to provide meaningful comments, and may contribute to diminished recall on the part of the SVT to effectively address those comments.

The SVR is composed of the following sections:

> ***Writing a Good SVR***
>
> 1. *Provide as much detail as necessary to explain the team's assessment of any partially-met or unmet criteria.*
> 2. *Write for 4 audiences: the Program, university administrators, PAB, and other affiliated groups (student representatives, local APA chapter representatives, alumni advisory boards, etc.).*
> 3. *Remember most SVR readers are not familiar with the prior SVR or the SSR; write a self-contained document that does not over-reference other documents.*
> 4. *Avoid individual names and superlatives, even when describing very strong or very weak aspects of a program.*
> 5. *Address the Program's progress towards compliance on issues raised by the prior team in the prior SVR.*
> 6. *Aim to get all of the report, or as much as possible, written during the Site Visit itself.*

Program Overview and Progress

The introduction sets the tone of the SVR, gives the reader a sense of the Program's institutional and regional context, and includes a brief summary of the SVT's findings. The assessment should include a statement about the focus of the Program, its unique characteristics, and a summary of its strengths and challenges.

In this section, the SVT should also cite specific criteria from the prior Site Visit that were less than fully-met and share the SVT's assessment of whether the issues have been addressed. If any of these items are still of concern, they should be addressed in the appropriate section of the report.

Assessment and Recommendations

The SVT will assess each criterion as met, partially-met, or unmet. The SVT should provide a brief explanation of how the Program meets, partially-meets, or does not meet each criterion. The SVT must provide an explicit rationale for each of its assessments.

- **Met**: Evidence shows that overall program performance in this area meets PAB minimum standards and criteria. The SVT's rationale may appropriately cite areas of strength as well as concern.

- **Partially-met**: Deficiencies exist in an area directly bearing on accreditation. The problem or problems have observable effects on compliance with the specified criterion. A finding of "partially-met" must be supported by evidence the SVT considered, the deficiencies found, and why, in the SVT's view, the deficiencies have an impact on overall program quality.

- **Unmet**: The cited deficiency is so severe that the overall quality of the Program is compromised and its ability to deliver adequate planning education is impaired. A finding of "unmet" must be supported by evidence that the deficiency(ies) in the area are so severe that overall program quality is unacceptably compromised.

Recommendations affecting the quality of the Program are derived from the identified areas of weakness as they relate to a specific accreditation criterion. The SVT should take care to not prescribe the solution(s) or action(s) that should be taken – that determination should be left to the Program based on its unique mission and its context within the larger university environment. As an example:

An inappropriate recommendation would be:
"Make planning law a required course to ensure that the subject matter is better covered in the required curriculum."

A better way of stating the recommendation would be:
"The Program could assign planning law a higher priority in a variety of ways, including: making it a required course; devoting a substantial portion of the required course on planning administration to the subject of planning law; or providing for coverage of planning law in several required courses, each focused on different aspects of the subject."

Program Strengths
In this section the SVT may commend the Program on outstanding efforts and accomplishments. Include areas of excellence, noteworthy practices if they exist, as well as the potential for excellence. Within the framework of peer review and accreditation (and without compromising the judgment to be made by PAB), it is appropriate for the SVT to identify items that are done well or that are innovative in the field. This recognition of attainment and success can build upon items covered in assessment of compliance.

> ### *SVT Recommendations for Improvement*
>
> 1. *Do not issue prescriptive recommendations; it is ultimately the responsibility of the Program to determine how to best address an out-of-compliance situation. Respect the autonomy and academic freedom of the Program and the institution; assume the Program will be able to establish the best method to address shortfall in compliance.*
> 2. *Limit recommendations to those affecting the Program. Do not present recommendations for other parts of the institution.*
> 3. *Be very cautious regarding recommendations requiring increased funding. Such comments should be reserved for instances of unusual need, or in instances when the impact of the lack of financial resources directly impairs student learning and achievement.*
> 4. *Be creative; recommend improvement through the reallocation of funds, or better utilization of existing resources.*

Furthering Excellence
This section consists of suggestions for improvement that go beyond the scope of PAB's accreditation standards.

Suggestions for improvement include areas where the Program can build on its strengths or address an area of concern or opportunity that does not directly affect accreditation. Some recommendations may derive from the SVT's view that, if left unattended, these concerns could lead to a future determination of "partially-met" or "unmet." Other suggestions may derive from items that, in the SVT's opinion, can become stronger or provide

improvement to the Program. These recommendations must flow from the mission of the Program and must avoid personal opinions of the SVT about how things should be done.

Appendix

At a minimum, the Site Visit schedule is included as an appendix to the report. Any relevant information provided directly to the SVT that was not included in the SSR should also be attached as an appendix.

SVR Submission and Distribution

The draft SVR is due to PAB staff two weeks after the Site Visit. It is <u>critical</u> that the initial draft be completed in the timeframe provided. PAB staff will review the draft SVR to determine it is complete and in good order; PAB staff comments will be shared with the SVT. PAB staff will forward the revised draft report to the Program Administrator.

Within two weeks of receipt, the Program Administrator will submit comments regarding accuracy, omission, and substantive matters discussed in the SVR. The comments will be forwarded by PAB staff to the SVT, who will revise the report as appropriate, for the final SVR. The Program's comments on the preliminary version will be considered by the SVT only.

The final SVR will be submitted to PAB within two weeks of the SVT's receipt of the Program Administrator's comments. The final version of the SVR will be sent to the Program Administrator, for transmission to the planning student organization, the Dean (or next higher administrator), the Provost, and the President/Chancellor of the university, with invitations to comment within a period of one month. This review period is for the purpose of addressing substantive matters discussed in the report. All comments received to the final SVR will be forwarded to the SVT and PAB.

Post-Site Visit Timeline

Draft SVR due to PAB staff

Revise SVR for Program's comments; Submit final SVR to PAB staff

| After Site Visit | 2 wks | 4 wks | 6 mo |

*Reimbursement form and policies available on the PAB website

Submit expense reimbursement form and receipts to PAB staff*

SVT Chair meets with PAB during accreditation review
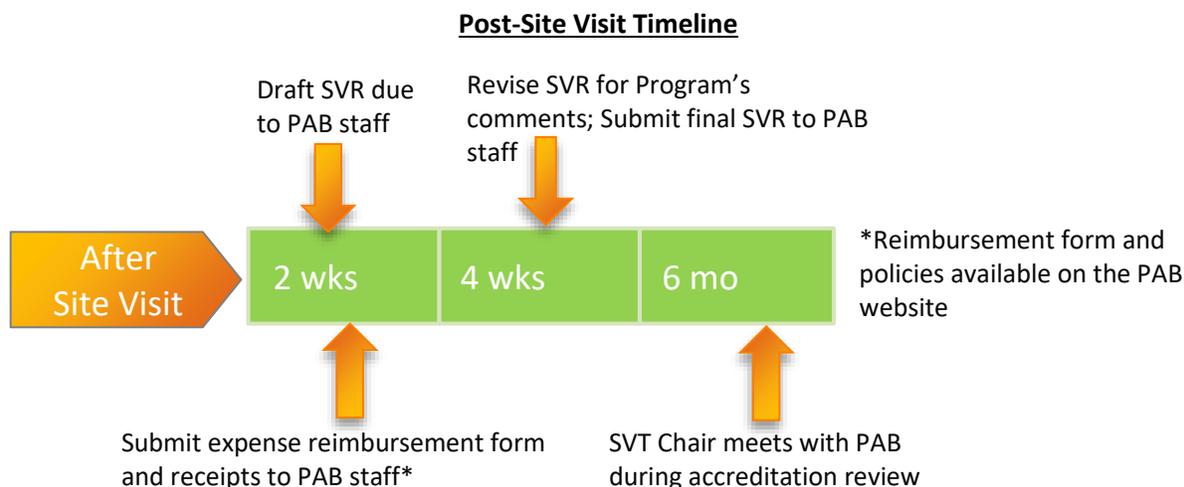
PAB ACCREDITATION REVIEW

PAB meets in-person twice annually to conduct accreditation reviews: in conjunction with the APA conference in the spring and the ACSP conference in the fall. PAB will review all the materials the SVT reviewed, as well as the final SVR, any comments to it by the Program Administrator or others, and Post-Site Visit Report (if applicable). During the bi-annual meetings, PAB will meet with both the Program Administrator and the SVT Chair individually. PAB deliberates once the Program Administrator and SVT Chair meetings are over and makes its

accreditation decision. The accreditation decision is formally communicated to the university President/Chancellor (with copies to the Provost, Dean, Program Administrator and/or Department Chair) within 30 calendar days of the meeting. Once the Program is notified of the decision, all SVT members will be notified of PAB's decision.

Accreditation may be granted up to seven (7) years or for a minimum of two (2) years; a 2-year term is accompanied by a Probationary Accreditation designation. Any timeframe between these two endpoints is possible. A program receiving accreditation may be required to submit an interim "Progress Report" with a possible extension of accreditation if sufficient progress towards compliance is documented. Decisions on accreditation terms of less than seven years may not be appealed. PAB can also revoke accreditation, deny accreditation or defer the decision pending additional information. The *Policies and Procedures Manual* contains further detail on the accreditation decision categories.

Appendix A: Self-Study Report Manual Excerpt

PRECONDITIONS TO ACCREDITATION

All programs applying for accreditation review must meet five preconditions. Programs must demonstrate in their SSRs that they meet the preconditions to accreditation at each accreditation review. The existence of a campus-based program which meets all preconditions is a prerequisite for an application from a program delivered via distance education. For accreditation purposes, programs are evaluated in the same way regardless of locations or modalities of delivery.

As PAB is desirous of promoting innovation and experimentation in planning education, programs which do not meet the preconditions in a strictly literal sense, but which meet the spirit of these provisions, may petition PAB for special consideration. Such petitions and SSRs must provide evidence that the Program meets the spirit of the preconditions.

1. **Program Graduates**

Programs shall have granted the degree for which accreditation is sought to at least 25 students.

2. **Accreditation Status of the Institution**

The Program's parent institution shall be accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or by its successor organization.

3. **Program and Degree Titles**

Formal titles of programs and degrees shall contain the word "planning."

4. **Length of Program**

Undergraduate degree programs shall require a minimum of four academic years of full-time study or the equivalent. For students for whom the graduate degree constitutes the first professional degree in planning, a minimum of two academic years of full-time study or the equivalent in planning is required.

Guideline: Fast-tracking. Programs that combine undergraduate education with a graduate degree in planning in a total of less than six academic years or the equivalent shall meet the standards of an accredited graduate degree.

Guideline: Dual Degrees. Programs may allow a degree in planning to be earned simultaneously with a degree in another field, in less time than required to earn each degree separately. All standards of an accredited graduate degree in planning must be met and the electives allowed to meet requirements of the other degree must be appropriate as electives for a planning degree.

5. **Primary Focus**

The degree program's primary focus shall be that of preparing students to become practitioners in the planning profession.

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

1. **Strategic Planning and Progress**

The Program or the Department in which it resides shall strive for self-improvement using an intentional process of goal articulation, planning, outcomes assessment, reflection, and improvement.

A. <u>Strategic Plan</u>: The Program shall have a strategic plan for achieving its goals and objectives – either as a free-standing plan or part of a broader departmental strategic plan – and must be able to demonstrate progress towards goal attainment. Programs must document active engagement in plan development by faculty, students, alumni, practitioners and any other key stakeholders the Program deems important to the process. Practitioners and other key stakeholders may include a broad spectrum of professionals who can be resources for the Program during plan development and implementation. The strategic plan shall include the Program's definition of diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice, and goals and measurable objectives aimed at achieving them. The strategic plan must include the following elements:

*<u>**To demonstrate compliance**</u>: Briefly describe how the strategic plan provides overall guidance for program implementation by, for example, articulating what the Program is, who it serves, what it seeks to accomplish, and how that is and will be done within its context. In the case where two programs are seeking accreditation, goals and measurable outcomes specific to each degree program should appear in the strategic plan. Briefly analyze the consistency of the Program's plan with its mission including the preparation of professional planners. Provide evidence that stakeholders were involved in the development of the plan and are familiar with it. Provide evidence that the plan is being followed in addition to the rationale for the recent/ongoing changes being implemented and identify the anticipated impact of these changes to advance program outcomes.*

The Program should describe how it defines student and faculty diversity in its strategic plan and how it has developed its goals related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Diversity and the Program's goals related to diversity can be determined in a number of ways, including using the local Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) characteristics as a metric, identifying the characteristics of the population generally served by Program graduates, applying a state-level or national standard, or by other means determined by the Program.

1) *Mission Statement*: The Program or the Department in which it resides shall have a clear and concise mission statement that expresses its core values and fundamental purpose and role in training professional planners.

*<u>**To demonstrate compliance**</u>: Provide the Program's mission statement. Briefly analyze the consistency of the Program's mission with the preparation of professional planners. Describe how the mission provides clear direction.*

2) *Program Vision:* The Program or the Department in which it resides shall have a clear and aspirational long-term vision for change resulting from the Program's work.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide the Program's vision statement. Briefly describe how the Program's vision articulates clear and aspirational goals.

3) *Program Goals and Measurable Objectives*: The Program's strategic plan shall identify goals and measurable objectives that advance the Program's mission and vision. The goals shall identify the Program's future aspirations in the context of its mission and that of the University, and shall aim toward excellence beyond that which may already exist. These should include strategic issues for the next 5-7 years and goals. Goals shall reflect the Program's intent to achieve and maintain diversity, as defined by the Program, in its student body and faculty, and to incorporate into the curriculum the knowledge and skills needed to serve a diverse society.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide a listing of program goals; briefly demonstrate that program goals follow from the mission and that they provide clear direction to the Program. Program goals should be sufficiently clear and concrete to generate objectives and provide a means for assessing the success of the Program. In the case where two programs are seeking accreditation, goals and measurable outcomes specific to each degree program should appear in the strategic plan. The Program should specify the strategic issues for the coming 5-7 years identified in the strategic plan. Provide measurable objectives and briefly illustrate how they provide clear direction.

4) *Monitoring and Evaluation:* The Program, or the Department in which it resides, shall have a clearly defined approach, methodology, and indicators for measuring the Program's success in achieving the goals articulated in its strategic plan. The Program shall document how it tracks and assesses the results of the interventions and strategies.

To demonstrate compliance: Describe the Program's approach to measuring and assessing its success in achieving its strategic goals. Describe how the Program documents its assessments.

B. Programmatic Assessment: Performance indicators and their results shall be reported at each accreditation review in the areas listed below, in addition to those that are contained within the Program's strategic plan.

1) *Graduate Satisfaction*: The Program shall survey its graduates and document the percentage of respondents who, 2 to 5 years after graduation, report being satisfied or highly satisfied with how the Program prepared them for their current employment.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence of graduate satisfaction in specific areas related to their preparation for employment. Documentation should include how the data were collected and the degree to which the survey results reflect a representative sample.

2) *Graduate Service to Community and Profession*: The Program shall provide evidence of graduates' contributions to meeting community needs and to providing service to the

planning profession. Evidence for these shall be obtained between 2 and 5 years after graduation.

To demonstrate compliance: Program graduates should be surveyed periodically to determine the extent to which they are involved in community service activities and/or professional services activities and results should be provided in the SSR. Program graduates' service to the community can take many forms, as defined by the Program. Documentation provided should include how the data were collected and the degree to which information gathered accurately and completely represents the Program.

3) *Student Retention and Graduation Rates*: The Program shall report student retention and graduation rates (including number of degrees awarded each year) relative to the program enrollment and to targets set by the program.

To demonstrate compliance: Present a brief narrative discussion regarding the student retention and graduation data contained in the SSR. Describe any special conditions or targets unique to the Program.

4) *Graduate Employment*: The Program shall document the percentage of all graduates who are employed within one year of graduation in professional planning, planning-related or other positions, and the definitions thereof.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence of graduate employment in planning, planning-related, or other fields. The employment rate includes all graduates, regardless of part-time and full-time enrollment status, in part-time and full-time planning or planning-related jobs. Documentation should include how the data were collected and the degree to which information gathered accurately and completely represents the Program.

5) *Graduate Certification Exam Pass Rate*: The Program shall document the percentage, based on the number who take the AICP exam, of master's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 3 years of graduation, and/or the percentage of bachelor's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 5 years of graduation. If the Program believes that alternative credentials are meaningful to its goals and objectives, the Program may supplement its AICP data with these metrics.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide a history of pass rates in the SSR. The narrative should supplement that information. If the Program's graduates obtain other credentials that demonstrate professional accomplishment, the Program is free to include that information as additional evidence of the Program's quality and effectiveness.

6) *Strategic Plan*: The Program shall document any other outcomes identified in its strategic plan, the degree to which the goals and measurable objectives articulated in the plan have been met, and any barriers to meeting the goals and measurable objectives, and how the Program proposes to address barriers.

To demonstrate compliance: Programs can draw from a variety of sources to establish additional outcome measures including their strategic plan and associated program goals and objectives. The primary requirement in documenting compliance is that the outcomes and their valid measures serve to

C. <u>Accreditation Review</u>: The Program shall demonstrate progress since the last accreditation review in meeting accreditation standards assessed as partially-met or unmet at the last accreditation.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide detail on the accreditation standards that were assessed as partially-met or unmet at the last accreditation, and provide evidence on the progress made towards compliance since the last accreditation.*

D. <u>Public Information</u>: The Program shall routinely provide reliable information to the public on its performance. Such information shall appear in easily accessible locations including program websites. In addition to the following information, programs are encouraged to showcase student achievement, however it may be determined.
   1) *Student Achievement:* student achievement as determined by the Program;
   2) *Cost:* the cost (tuition and fees) for a fulltime student for one academic year;
   3) *Retention and Graduation:* student retention and graduation rates, including the number of degrees awarded each year, the percentage of first-year students who return in the 2nd year for graduate students and/or the percentage of students enrolled one year after declaring their major for undergraduate students, and the percentage of master's students graduating within 4 years, and/or the percentage of bachelor's students graduating within 6 years;
   4) *AICP Pass Rate*: the percentage, based on the number who take it, of master's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 3 years of graduation, and/or the bachelor's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 5 years of graduation; and
   5) *Employment*: the employment rate of all graduates in professional planning, planning-related or other positions within 1 year of graduation.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide current evidence regarding items 1-5, listed above. The employment rate includes all graduates, regardless of part-time or full-time enrollment status, in part-time and full-time planning or planning-related jobs. Provide the URL of the Program's website where the information above is presented. Programs are required to use the <u>PAB-designed template</u> for presenting this information. PAB will monitor compliance with this criterion every year through the Program's Annual Report and as the Program progresses through an accreditation review.*

2. Students

The Program shall attract a sufficient number of well-qualified students from diverse backgrounds and shall adequately prepare, support, and advise these students to pursue and contribute successfully to the field of urban and regional planning. Accordingly, the Program shall demonstrate that its students upon graduation possess the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to secure professional employment, to perform effectively as planners, and to participate meaningfully in the planning profession. Among the foremost responsibilities of the Program are to reject discrimination – within the Program itself – and to advance diversity and a

culture of inclusion and equity among the students, particularly with regard to racial and ethnic groups historically underrepresented in the profession.

A. <u>Student quality</u>: The Program shall admit students whose educational attainment, previous academic performance, work experience, aptitude, maturity, motivation, life experiences, and/or hardships overcome indicate the potential for success in their studies and in professional practice. Toward that end, the Program shall establish admission standards, when applicable, that reflect the institution's policies and the Program's goals, and the Program, when applicable, shall apply those standards fairly and consistently. The Program shall document its admission standards and the extent to which its current students meet or exceed those standards.

To demonstrate compliance*: Briefly but completely articulate program admission standards and how they are applied, within the boundaries of the academic and other standards of the university. If the Program lacks full control of admissions and admission standards, typically the case for undergraduate programs, this should be explained in the narrative. Evidence regarding the extent to which current students meet or exceed admission standards should be presented. Evidence demonstrating fair and consistent application of these standards should also be presented.*

B. <u>Student diversity</u>: Diversity is an inclusive concept which encompasses, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sex, sexual orientation, ability, educational attainment, first-generation status, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, political beliefs, and veteran status. The Program shall develop a holistic strategy that addresses the following elements:

   1) *Recruitment*: Consistent with applicable law and institutional policy, the Program shall establish strategic goals that demonstrate an active commitment to attracting a diverse student population. Programs must report how they are arriving at their program's diversity goals and determining what student populations, if any, are underrepresented in their Program. The Program shall collect and analyze data on student demographics to inform and enhance its efforts to identify effective and appropriate methodologies for achieving diversity in its student body. Furthermore, the Program shall establish assessment mechanisms for each of its strategic goals that are focused on achieving diversity. Because diversity is not a static concept, and because all planning programs should seek to improve the diversity of the graduates entering the profession, the Program shall provide evidence of activities and programs intended to assist in achieving student diversity along with specific diversity-related strategic goals that have been met.

To demonstrate compliance: *Provide evidence of a commitment to recruit diverse students, including data to support those efforts. The Program's strategic plan should contain goals and measurable objectives aimed toward improving student diversity. Provide the Program's working definition of diversity (as was done for Standard 1A above), information on strategies to achieve student diversity and how the Program is implementing those efforts, and data and information on assessing the efforts and goal achievement. Provide demographic data regarding student composition in the SSR.*

2) *Climate of inclusiveness*: The Program shall report on actions being taken to promote a culture of inclusiveness within the Program, including but not limited to support of student groups, promotion of community events, curricular elements, and faculty involvement.

***To demonstrate compliance:** Report on efforts and initiatives to create and maintain a climate of inclusiveness and to address implicit bias and microaggressions, trainings, workshops, seminars, and other activities. Dimensions of inclusion/exclusion are behavioral and psychological, for example, student interactions inside and outside the classroom and work setting; student involvement in campus activities and organizations; student feelings of safety and belonging; and student perceptions of discrimination, conflict and institutional response.*

3) *Student support*: The Program shall report on actions being taken to support and retain students from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to mentorship and internship programs, financial assistance and fellowship programs, professional development programs and career services, and initiatives to support engagement in the profession.

***To demonstrate compliance**: Report on efforts and initiatives to support and retain students from under-represented groups, including a description of the impact of these efforts.*

C. <u>Student advising, services, and support</u>: The Program shall provide students with competent academic advising, progress appraisal, and career guidance, as well as access within the institution to any personal counseling that students might need. Furthermore, the Program or its institution shall provide students with career services that assist students in securing suitable internships and jobs. The Program shall also support its students by providing them with financial aid opportunities that are sufficient in number and amount to achieve the Program's strategic goals for a well-qualified and diverse student body. The Program shall publish its criteria for the allocation of such financial aid.

***To demonstrate compliance:** Provide evidence regarding how the Program provides quality academic advising, student progress appraisal, and career guidance through the use of faculty and/or professional advisors including resources both within and outside the Program. Provide evidence regarding Program support for internship and job placement, and how students are provided such information. Evidence of the publication of financial availability and criteria for awarding financial aid should be provided. These services should reflect the Program's goals and objectives and be adapted to the characteristics of the students (e.g., part-time, international, prior professional planning experience, etc.).*

D. <u>Student engagement in the profession</u>: The Program shall provide opportunities for student engagement in the profession, including but not limited to participation in a planning student organization affiliated with the Program, in the local chapter of the American Planning Association (APA), in professional mentoring programs, in other professional societies and activities, and in work, internships, community-based planning activities, or project experiences that develop their skills as planners. The Program shall also promote socialization into the

planning profession by encouraging students to attend APA's conferences and other events in which students might interact with professional planners from a variety of backgrounds.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence that students are encouraged and involved in a range of activities that provide meaningful engagement with the profession and/or larger community. Such activities include internships, student organizations, professional organizations, community initiatives, student-organized charrettes or projects, studios with real clients, participation in/attendance at public hearings, and/or attendance at/participation in local, state and national APA and other planning-related conferences.

3. Faculty

The Program shall employ a sufficient number of qualified, productive, and engaged faculty members to permit the achievement of program goals and objectives. Among the foremost responsibilities of the Program are to reject discrimination - *within the Program itself* - and to advance diversity and a culture of inclusion among the faculty, particularly with regard to historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

A. Faculty quality: The fulltime and adjunct faculty of the Program shall have educational and professional backgrounds, a relevant mix of credentials (i.e., accredited degrees in planning, significant experience in planning, PhDs in planning, degrees and experience in related fields, and AICP membership), be qualified to serve the Program's mission and capable of executing the Program's goals and objectives, particularly as they pertain to teaching, research, and service.

To demonstrate compliance: Summarize relevant information in data included in the SSR. Tables or figures that show combined accomplishments during the most recent seven years (or a similar time frame for which data are better available) provide evidence to assess the Program's currency in the field and ongoing contributions. Distinguish credentials and accomplishments by the three faculty categories of full-time in program, part-time in program (but full-time in institution), and adjunct.

B. Faculty diversity: Diversity is an inclusive concept which encompasses, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sex, sexual orientation, ability, educational attainment, first-generation status, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, political beliefs, and veteran status. The Program shall develop a holistic strategy that addresses the following elements:

   1) *Recruitment*: Consistent with applicable law and institutional policy, the Program shall establish strategic goals that demonstrate an active commitment to attracting a diverse faculty. The Program shall collect and analyze data on faculty demographics in order to inform and enhance its efforts to identify effective and appropriate methodologies for achieving diversity among its faculty. Furthermore, the Program shall establish assessment mechanisms for each of its strategic goals that are focused on achieving diversity. Because diversity is not a static concept, and because all faculty representation within each planning program should seek to contribute to the

diversity of the learning environment and improve the diversity of graduates entering the profession, the Program shall provide evidence of activities and programs intended to assist in achieving faculty diversity along with specific diversity-related strategic goals that have been met.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence of a commitment to recruit diverse faculty, including data to support those efforts. The Program's strategic plan should contain goals and measurable objectives aimed toward improving faculty diversity. Provide the Program's working definition of diversity (as done for Standard 1A above), information on strategies to achieve faculty diversity and how the Program is implementing those efforts, and data and information on assessing the efforts and goal achievement. Provide demographic data regarding faculty composition in the SSR.

2) *Climate of inclusiveness*: The Program shall report on actions being taken to promote a culture of inclusiveness within the Program.

To demonstrate compliance: Report on efforts and initiatives to create and maintain a climate of inclusiveness and to address implicit bias and microaggressions through trainings, workshops, seminars, and other activities. Dimensions of inclusion/exclusion are behavioral and psychological, for example, faculty interactions in the work setting; faculty involvement in Program activities and events; faculty feelings of safety and belonging; and faculty perceptions of discrimination, conflict and institutional response.

3) *Faculty support:* The Program shall report on actions being taken to support and retain faculty from underrepresented groups. This includes, but is not limited to mentorship programs, support for research and teaching initiatives, and professional development opportunities. The Program should report data on promotion, and initiatives to support engagement in the profession.

To demonstrate compliance: Report on efforts and initiatives to support and retain faculty from under-represented groups, including a description of the impact of these efforts. Efforts to support and retain faculty from under-represented groups can include but are not limited to formal mentoring programs, attention to salary equity, addressing the issue of bias in teaching evaluations, and support for professional development and promotion and tenure case preparation (detailed more fully under Standards 3G and 5E below).

C. Faculty size: The faculty shall be of a sufficient size to accomplish the Program's mission and goals, administer the Program, and teach the curriculum. The Program shall have no greater than a 15/1 ratio of undergraduate student FTE to instructional faculty FTE, and a 10/1 ratio of graduate student FTE to instructional faculty FTE.

To demonstrate compliance: While sufficient faculty size can be met by a combination of full- and part-time and/or adjunct faculty, the presumption is that the foundation of the core curriculum will be taught primarily by full-time faculty (See criterion 4E). Programs should summarize and reference relevant information from the data included to the SSR. If the Program relies heavily on part-time and adjunct faculty, demonstrate how such faculty are engaged with the Program beyond teaching and demonstrate the continued commitment of such faculty to the Program. If a program exceeds the

student/faculty ratio, address the extent to which adequate instructional quality and student support are provided. Other evidence of adequate faculty size such as contact hours, course coverage, and advising effectiveness can also be provided.

D. <u>Engagement with students</u>: The faculty shall be engaged with students beyond the classroom as mentors, advisors, and/or committee members or committee chairs on thesis, reports and dissertations. Faculty shall provide career advice and assist in job placement in ways that coordinate with the efforts of staff and academic professionals.

To demonstrate compliance: *Document the customary expectations of faculty with respect to advising, committee activities, and mentoring and engaging students in non-classroom activities. Where there are differential workloads among individual faculty with respect to student engagement (for example, specific faculty have more advising responsibility), specify the nature of these assignments. Provide evidence that such engagement is adequate to meet the needs of students.*

E. <u>Research, Scholarship, and Other Creative Activity</u>: Faculty teaching and administrative assignments provide for engagement in research, scholarship, and/or outreach reflective of the stage of their careers, the mission of the Program, and expectations of the University. Faculty creative activities should undergo peer review appropriate to the scholarly or practice orientation of the work, including, but not limited to, appropriate journals or other publication outlets, conferences, or other venues allowing dissemination of the work.

To demonstrate compliance: *Summary curricula vitae are provided in the SSR, in addition to a table summarizing faculty productivity in the most recent 7 years. Supplement the chart in a narrative to capture the range and/or depth of accomplishments. Detail the Program's approach to assessing research/scholarship/outreach productivity of faculty. Explain any differential expectations among faculty that exist and note when the Program's expectations differ from the institution's.*

F. <u>Professional involvement Community Outreach, and Civic Engagement</u>: Faculty demonstrate involvement in the profession through participation in national organizations and/or participation in local, state, regional, and national professional conferences, workshops and other sponsored activities including activities of professional planning organizations. They shall demonstrate community outreach through continuous engagement in activities leading to the advancement of the profession, the University, and progress toward meeting the needs of the broader society.

To demonstrate compliance: *Summary curricula vitae are provided in the SSR, in addition to a table summarizing key professional involvement/outreach and outputs. Summarize and supplement these materials in the narrative. Detail the Program's approach to assessing the professional involvement and outreach productivity of faculty. Explain any differential expectations among faculty that exist and note when the Program's expectations differ from the institution's.*

G. <u>Professional development</u>: Faculty shall be provided opportunities to continue to develop themselves professionally. Work assignments and other development opportunities shall be such that skills in teaching, research, leadership, professional practice and other creative activities are sufficiently maintained and developed. Adequate resources shall be available to

support faculty professional development, including training with respect to institution policies, student needs, the use of appropriate instructional technology, and topics such as implicit bias. Faculty, especially those from underrepresented groups, should also be provided with opportunities to be mentored throughout their career.

To demonstrate compliance: Demonstrate how faculty professional development needs are addressed and supported, especially incentives and support for acquiring the AICP credential. Policies should be cited, the related incidence of use of policies should be explained, and specific examples should be presented. Professional development support includes, but is not limited to, the funding of training and programs for new faculty members; supporting service and engagement opportunities with ACSP, APA, and AICP; and support for training on new and emerging research methods and tools. The extent to which professional development activities are supported by institutional versus by individually developed resources should be made clear. When special policies apply to junior faculty, or other sub-groups, these should be identified.

4. Curriculum and Instruction

Planners are committed to serve the public interest, infusing the values of equity and sustainability into their knowledge and skills as they envision the future and lead in decision-making that affects people and places. They understand the dynamics of cities, suburbs, regions, and the theory and practice of planning. They attend to the diversity of individual and community values. They develop and implement ethical plans, policies and processes. The minimum curriculum criteria below reflect these educational goals. Programs are expected to be innovative and to experiment in developing curricular approaches that achieve the objectives of this standard.

The curriculum should demonstrate consistency and coherence in meeting the Program's mission, goals, and objectives. While an accredited degree program must meet basic minimal performance criteria, PAB recognizes that programs may have different profiles with varying emphases. The Program being reviewed must demonstrate how its curricular content matches the profile emphasized in its overall mission.

Consistent with the Program's mission and strategic plan, course content and co-curricular activities should seek to broaden understanding of historical and contemporary factors across the full range of practice settings from local to global in which planners work, including demographic, environmental, institutional and political variation, and to promote awareness of and respect for differing beliefs, values and expectations of populations served by the profession.

The Program shall provide a curriculum and offer instruction to assure achievement of the knowledge, skills, and values that qualify graduates of accredited degree programs to enter diverse planning practice settings. Programs may do so using such established and familiar learning activities as courses and internships, and other program innovations that prove effective in meeting the criteria.

An accredited degree program must ensure that each graduate demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for competent professional planning in diverse occupational and institutional

settings. The criteria below provide a framework for judging the scope and quality of minimum educational outcomes.

A. Guiding Values: The Program shall address in its strategic plan its commitment to fundamental ethical and normative principles and ensure that these principles are embedded in a range of required courses, specifically:

1) *Equity, Diversity, Social Justice, and Inclusion*: Key issues of equity, diversity, and social justice, including planners' role in expanding choice and opportunity for all persons; planning for the needs of disadvantaged groups; reducing inequities through critical examination of past and current systems; and promoting racial and economic equity.

2) *Sustainability, Resilience, and Climate Justice*: Environmental, economic, and social/political factors that contribute to sustainable communities, reducing impacts of climate change, and creating equitable and climate-adapted futures.

3) *Professional Ethics and Responsibility*: Key issues of planning ethics and related questions of the ethics of public decision-making, research, and client representation (including the provisions of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, and APA's Ethical Principles in Planning).

To demonstrate compliance*: Describe the ways in which the Guiding Values appear in the curriculum with reference to specific courses. The narrative should make clear how the Program interprets and operationalizes the Guiding Values requirements. While it is possible for these Guiding Values to be the focus of particular courses in the required curriculum, the Program should demonstrate how these values significantly appear throughout the required curriculum, summarizing the evidence that they are delivered and mastered. Evidence will include information on inputs, outputs and outcomes; when the outcomes measurement system is well developed, such evidence will take precedence. Input evidence will include references to course syllabi compiled in the appendix of the SSR. Output evidence will include a representative sample of student work made available during the Site Visit.*

When the curriculum includes courses required of all students, the course prefixes and numbers of those courses should appear in boldface font in the narrative so that it is not necessary to repeatedly state that these courses are required.

B. Required Knowledge and Skills of the Profession: The Program shall offer a curriculum that teaches students the essential knowledge and skills central to the planning profession. These required components will be taught in such a manner that it is possible to demonstrate that every graduate has studied them. Ordinarily, this means that they are included in courses required of all students, although other approaches are possible. Programs are encouraged to keep their curriculum in tune with emerging trends in the profession and engaged with contemporary issues. Specifically:

1) *General Planning Knowledge in Global Context***: The comprehension, representation, and use of ideas and information in the planning field, in the U.S. (or Canada) and internationally including appropriate perspectives from history, social sciences, design, and other allied fields.

a) *Planning History and Theory*: The evolution and current practice of planning in communities, cities, regions, and nations; how planning has advanced and hindered the attainment of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; expectations

about planning outcomes in different local and national contexts; conceptual models about what planning is and how it works; past and present conceptions of the future, including the relationship between planning and the future; the role of planning in responding to the global climate crisis.

    b) *Planning Law and Institutions*: Behaviors and structures available to bring about sound planning outcomes; mechanisms and practices for ensuring equitable and inclusive decision-making; legal and institutional contexts within which planning occurs in the U.S. and/or internationally.

    c) *Urban and Regional Development*: Political, economic, social, and environmental explanations of and insights on historical, present, and future development; relationships between the built and natural environments and individual and community health and well-being; planning responses to mitigate climate change, reduce risks, and recover from climate-exacerbated impacts; interactions – flows of people, materials, ideas, and cultures – across world regions.

    2) *Skills and Tools for Planning Practice*: The use and application of knowledge to perform tasks required in the practice of planning.

    a) *Planning Process and Engagement:* Planning process and community and stakeholder engagement; plan creation and implementation; methods of design and intervention to understand and influence the future.

    b) *Analytical Skills and Tools*: Research and critical analysis skills for preparing and conducting research; quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, analysis, and forecasting; methods of geo-spatial analysis, mapping and data visualization; data analytics and urban technology.

    c) *Professional, Communication, and Leadership Skills*: Ability to work in teams and with professionals in allied fields; professional leadership in the planning context; written, oral, and graphic communication.

__To demonstrate compliance__: Provide evidence, in a narrative, for how the Program ensures coverage of the elements identified under "General Planning Knowledge in a Global Context" and "Skills and Tools for Planning Practice." The narrative should make clear how the Program interprets and operationalizes the General Planning Knowledge and the Skills and Tools requirements and summarize the evidence that they are delivered and mastered. The narrative should specifically itemize how the italicized elements of the curriculum outlined in 4B1 (a through c) and 4B2 (a through c) are delivered and mastered, and that the curriculum is in substantial alignment with the full description of each italicized element. Evidence will include information on inputs, outputs and outcomes; when the outcomes measurement system is well developed, such evidence will take precedence. Input evidence will include references to course syllabi compiled in the appendix of the SSR. Output evidence will include a representative sample of student work made available during the Site Visit.

When the curriculum includes courses required of all students, the course prefixes and numbers of those courses should appear in boldface font in the narrative so that it is not necessary to repeatedly state that these courses are required.

    C. <u>Electives</u>: Beyond the required courses in the curriculum Programs shall offer additional courses to provide both greater depth and breadth of material. The curriculum shall contain elective

opportunities for students to gain exposure to a range of planning domains, other professions, and emerging trends and issues. Programs have the option of grouping elective courses together to create areas of specialization that provide students with a concentrated mastery of a specific planning domain.

To demonstrate compliance: Drawing on syllabi, summarize in a narrative the range and content of electives available and provide the context necessary to understand the approximate frequency with which the electives are offered and subscribed by planning students, whether the teaching faculty are familiar with planning, and the extent of planning content in the electives.

Demonstrate that the Program has sufficient faculty, curricular offerings, and other resources to offer an adequate set of electives to provide valuable application of general planning knowledge and skills, and/or expand students' horizons through multi-disciplinary content. Where applicable, the connection of elective classes to the Guiding Values of the planning curriculum should also be described.

D. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: The Program, or the Department in which it resides shall have a clearly defined approach, methodology, and indicators for measuring student learning outcomes and competencies for the expected knowledge, skills, and guiding values that students are expected to acquire. Evidence should connect materials covered in the core curriculum to the learning outcomes sought and achieved for students.

To demonstrate compliance: Identify student learning outcomes associated with the required elements under "Guiding Values," "General Planning Knowledge," and "Skills and Tools," and develop valid measures, including direct measures, of student attainment of these learning outcomes. Provide concrete results from these measures and analysis regarding the extent to which students have attained each learning outcome. Explain, as appropriate, how learning outcomes assessment informs continued teaching of the core curriculum.

E. Instructional delivery and scheduling: Courses shall be taught by qualified faculty. In general, most required courses will be taught by fulltime planning faculty. Courses shall be offered in formats and times to assure appropriate student access to them and timely completion of program requirements.

To demonstrate compliance: Summarize the information found in the table listing of courses taught in the past 2 years and provide any relevant information to demonstrate the incidence of timely graduation. Demonstrate in the narrative how faculty are qualified, either through academic training or professional experience, for the instruction roles to which they are assigned, and how course scheduling is such that students are able to graduate on the expected schedule without compromising the integrity of the degree studies.

F. Facilities: Students, faculty and staff shall have access to sufficient physical resources and facilities to achieve the Program's mission and objectives. This includes facilities for instruction, student work, and offices.

To demonstrate compliance: Summarize the nature of facilities used and briefly assess their adequacy to the Program's needs.

G. Information and technology: Students, faculty and staff shall have access to sufficient information systems and technology, and technical support, technical equipment and training thereon to achieve the Program's mission and objectives. Information and technology include, but are not limited to, maintained computer hardware, software and access, and library resources and collections.

To demonstrate compliance: Summarize information and technology resources available to the Program's students and faculty and briefly assess their adequacy to the Program's needs.

5. Governance

The Program shall make administrative decisions through a governance process that exhibits a high degree of transparency, inclusiveness, and autonomy. The Program shall be located within an identifiable and distinct academic unit, such as a department or school of planning, and the Program's faculty shall be clearly identifiable as such. The Program shall involve faculty and students, as appropriate, in administrative decisions that affect them and shall demonstrate that those decisions serve to implement the Program's strategic plan.

A. Program autonomy: In accordance with customary university procedures, the planning program will normally be headed by its own administrator, who will report directly to a dean or an equivalent academic official. The Program shall have control over the design of its curriculum and shall have an independent voice in the appointment, promotion, tenure, and evaluation of its faculty, and the admission and evaluation of its students. The planning faculty and students shall be involved in the development of the Program's Self-Study Report and shall be made aware of the content of all submissions by the Program to PAB as well as reports and decisions by PAB concerning the Program.

To demonstrate compliance: Clearly outline the Program's organizational placement and governance structure within its larger organization. This discussion should clearly demonstrate that the Program has sufficient authority, resources, and institutional support to achieve its educational objectives, including control over program curriculum, faculty recruitment and retention, promotion, tenure, and evaluation of faculty, and student admissions and evaluation. Clearly indicate which of these or any other resources are fully dedicated to the Program and which are shared with other units. Identify the limits in program authority in these areas.

B. Program leadership: The administrator of the degree Program shall be a faculty member whose leadership and management skills, combined with education and experience in planning, enables the Program to achieve its goals and objectives. Typically, this administrator will be a tenured faculty member with an academic rank of associate professor or higher.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence of the administrator's qualifications to effectively lead the Program and document effectiveness. In cases where the administrator is not on the tenure track or not a full-time faculty member, provide a rationale. It is expected that the Program administrator will not be an assistant professor.

C. Communication: The Program shall use a variety of media to provide effective two-way communication with current and prospective students, faculty, alumni, employers, professional associations, practitioners, and other stakeholders about the Program's goals and objectives and about its progress toward achieving them. The administrator of the Program shall be regularly accessible to these stakeholders, providing them with suitable opportunities for interaction.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence of regular communication, including social media and more traditional mechanisms, employed to maintain communications with all stakeholders.

D. Faculty and student participation: The Program shall provide fulltime and adjunct faculty, individual students and student organizations with opportunities to participate fully and meaningfully in administrative decisions that affect them.

To demonstrate compliance: Briefly describe how the Program provides opportunities for faculty and student involvement in programmatic decisions that affect them. Provide specific examples of how such opportunities are provided and how information regarding the outcome is disseminated. Evidence should cover a range of time and types of decisions that have been made.

E. Promotion and tenure: The Program shall publish policies and procedures for making decisions about the promotion and tenure of faculty. The Program shall provide support, including mentorship opportunities, for all faculty at the Assistant and Associate Professor (or equivalent) levels. The Program shall demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that women, racial and ethnic minorities, and members of underrepresented groups in academia have access to the mentoring, tools, and other support they need to advance professionally.

To demonstrate compliance: Present evidence of a clear promotion and tenure process, in addition to evidence that it has been consistently applied. Provide a description of resources and mentoring available to faculty and concrete evidence that the Program is attending to the development of faculty. Support for the development of faculty includes but is not limited to formal mentorship, yearly reviews, release time and reduced service levels, start-up support for new hires, faculty grants, travel funding, stipends for Open Access publishing, and support for professional development (see criterion 3G above).

F. Grievance procedures: In accordance with relevant university guidelines, the Program shall publish policies and procedures for resolving student and faculty grievances, and shall appropriately disseminate such policies and procedures to students and faculty. The Program shall maintain records to document the number and kinds of grievances it has received and the manner in which it has resolved those grievances.

To demonstrate compliance: Describe the policies and procedures in place to address grievances and how these policies are disseminated. This includes procedures related to harassment and discrimination. Records of grievances should be maintained along with their resolution, including review within the administrative unit, and other procedures for resolution and mediation within the university. These records should be available for examination by Site Visitors.

G. <u>Online Integrity</u>: In accordance with relevant university guidelines, the Program shall have in place effective procedures through which to ensure that the student who registers in an online course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The Program makes clear in writing that these processes protect student privacy and notifies students at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional costs associated with the verification procedures.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide evidence of policies and procedures to ensure online integrity. Also, provide evidence that students are notified of processes to protect privacy and that any additional costs are communicated to students.*

Appendix B: Practitioner's Guide to Academia

As a professional planner, you are familiar with writing and evaluating RFPs, long and short-term plans, and administering projects and supervising staff. Outside of your experience as a university student, you may not be familiar with the structure and organization of the academic world. This guide is designed to provide a brief overview of that world.

Typical University Organizational Structure

President / Chancellor

University's Chief Executive Officer. Maintains full authority and responsibility over the university's administration, operations, and sets future goals and direction for the university.

Provost

University's Chief Academic Officer. Duties and responsibilities vary from institution, but usually include supervision and oversight of curricular, instructional, and research affairs.

Dean

Administrator of an Academic College or School. In some instances, the college may itself be located within a larger school (or vice versa), in which case the Dean reports to the Head of the school. Duties and responsibilities of the Dean include coordinating assessment and development of academic programs, faculty hiring, overseeing the budget, fundraising, setting academic policies, and other administration.

Department Chair

Department Chair

Some planning programs are structured in a standalone unit, e.g., the Department of Urban Planning. In that instance the **Department Chair** will be the Program Administrator. Some planning programs are housed in a Department with multiple-degree granting units, e.g., the Department of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy. In that instance, there will typically be a separate Program Administrator who reports to the Department Chair.

Program Administrator

The **Program Administrator** serves as the leader of the program and maintains authority, along with program faculty, over program resources, curriculum development, faculty recruitment, and retention and program effectiveness.

Program Faculty

Faculty

Faculty are responsible for teaching, research and delivering the degree program such that it meets the Program's goals and objectives. There are several types of faculty:

- Tenured: Professor and Associate Professor
- Tenure Track: Assistant or Associate Professor
- Non-tenured /contract: Adjunct, Lecturer, and Instructor

An appointment of **Professor** or **Associate Professor** requires a doctorate or terminal degree or equivalent, demonstrated sustained high-quality teaching, recognition for scholarly and creative activities, and service to the university and community. An appointment at the rank of Professor is usually made only after extended service as an Associate Professor.

An appointment of **Assistant Professor** requires a doctorate or terminal degree or equivalent and potential for excellence in teaching and research. This is typically an entry-level position.

Non-tenured or contract faculty typically consist of **Adjuncts, Lecturers and Instructors**. These faculty members require at least a master's degree or equivalent professional qualifications. They generally are involved in the Program on a part-time basis – teaching one or more courses, although some programs have full-time lecturers. Programs generally hire professional planners as adjuncts, so they can share their real-world experience with students and infuse the program with the current trends in the practice of planning. Contract faculty may also be full-time in the Program for multiple years and/or with a continuing appointment that is a status similar to tenured faculty. Examples of this type of contract faculty could be Professor of Practice, Assistant Professor of Teaching, Lecturer, etc.

Tenure

Tenure, generally associated with the titles of Professor and Associate Professor, is a form of job security that is granted to faculty who have demonstrated a strong record of published research, teaching, and service to the university and community. Academic tenure is intended to guarantee faculty the right to academic freedom. The process and requirements of obtaining tenure differ from university to university. Generally, an Assistant Professor must meet the goals of the university and the program through publications, research, teaching etc. Emphases vary across universities. If the assistant professor satisfies the requirements for promotion and tenure (known as P&T) as specified by the university's policy, then a P&T committee reviews the dossier and votes to promote and grant tenure, whose decision will need to be endorsed by upper-level committee(s) and administration.

The program faculty have collective responsibility for planning and delivering the curriculum to the students. All members of the faculty are expected to have reasonable teaching loads based on responsibilities in other areas such as research, service and advising. All should be accessible by the students and all should take appropriate steps to remain current in their fields. An adjunct faculty member is not necessarily less qualified than a tenured faculty member by virtue of his/her rank. They generally have both technical or content specific knowledge as well as practical experience.

Given the inter-disciplinary nature of planning education, the planning program may draw on faculty from other degree-granting units (e.g., urban design, geography) to assist in delivering the curriculum.

Types of Universities

Research universities and teaching universities typically have different missions. A research university sets high expectations of the faculty for research productivity. The research focus enables the faculty to stay current in the field and engage students in scholarly work. A teaching university is primarily focused on teaching; however,

there are some research expectations associated with tenure. Teaching universities expect faculty to stay current in their field through other means, such as membership and activity with their member professional organizations (i.e. American Planning Association, American Institute of Certified Planners), involvement with the profession in the local community, and attendance at academic and content related conferences, such as the national conferences of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning and the American Planning Association.

University Classifications

During a Site Visit, you may hear the terms "Tier I" or "Research I" Institution. This is in reference to the university's Carnegie Classification. The Carnegie Classification, created by the Carnegie Foundation, is the most recognized classification system designed to "recognize and describe institutional diversity in U.S. higher education" (http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/).

The classification system was created primarily for universities engaged in research but has evolved to include other areas of classification. The classification system has been revised at least 6 times since its creation in 1973. The 1994 edition, which used the classification system of Tier I and Tier II, was discontinued to avoid the inference that the categories signify quality differences. The current classification categories, created in 2010, include the following terms (http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/):

For doctorate granting universities:
RU/VH: Research Universities (very high research activity)
RU/H: Research Universities (high research activity)
DRU: Doctoral/ Research universities

For master's colleges and universities:
Master's/L: Master's College and Universities (larger programs)
Master's/M: Master's Colleges and Universities (medium programs)
Master's/S: Master's Colleges and Universities (smaller programs)

It is important to note that there are shortcoming and biases associated with any classification system. Institutions may use Carnegie Classifications as a means of identifying peers for benchmarking. Site Visitors should not rely solely on classification systems, as they tend to be retrospective and static data.

Source:

McCormick, A. and Zhao, C. (2005). Rethinking and Reframing the Carnegie Classification. *Change.* Retrieved February 21, 2013, from https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/