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SITE VISIT INTERVIEW HANDBOOK

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Preface

This book was created to assist Site Visit Team members with sample questions, organized by standard, for the various individuals and groups they will meet on campus. These sections include a wide range of possible questions for you to choose from, depending on their relevancy to the academic institution you are visiting. Campus meetings are brief; there is no expectation that all questions will be either asked or needed. Instead, please see them as a catalog from which they can be drawn when circumstances warrant.

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

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

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

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

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

Interview with the Program Administrator

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

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

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and the purpose of the meeting. The team chair explains the timeframe for the accreditation process, reviews the schedule, and assures confidentiality of all meetings and materials shared with the team.

The Program Administrator is also interviewed in their role as a faculty member. Questions for faculty interviews can be found on page 7. The Program Administrator will also check in with the team from time to time during the Site Visit to address any outstanding issues and/or questions that arise from any of the scheduled meetings. A typical practice is for the Program Administrator to briefly meet with the team at the end of the day. Helping the Program see itself as others in the University see it may constitute an important dimension of the team's consultative role.

Sample questions for team members to ask the Program Administrator include:

Opening questions
1. Are there accomplishments that the Program has achieved since the SSR was submitted to PAB?
2. Have there been any significant changes since the SSR was submitted that we should be aware of? (retirements, changes in leadership, etc.)
3. Are there issues of concern that were not discussed in the SSR of which we should be aware or that you want to highlight?
4. Do you have any concerns about any specific aspects of the Site Visit?
5. Let's go over the site visit schedule together. Are there any last-minute changes?
6. Are there individuals on the schedule whose circumstances we should know about? (about to retire, not been here long, interim status, etc.)
7. We have these [list specific] concerns about the schedule, which we hope can be addressed.

Program Context
1. Beyond what was said in the SSR, can you help us understand how the Program sees itself in this university? How does the Administration see the Program? How do faculty across campus see the Program? What are you known for?
2. In what ways does your program demonstrate leadership at the university? What challenges do you encounter in promoting and advocating for your program?
3. How does this university see itself with regard to educating professionals including planning? How does this university see itself with regard to the region/nation? How does this university see itself with regard to other comparable universities?

4. Are there notable resources for students in this College/School that we should be aware of? Are these well utilized by planning students?
5. What progress do you believe the Program has made since the last Site Visit?

Standard #1 – Strategic Planning and Progress
1. Describe the process you/the Program developed to establish and revise goals and objectives within the Strategic Plan and the development of the SSR. Include who was involved, when and how.
2. What changes do you foresee in the Program during the next 3 to 5 years and how might they affect the Program's mission and goals?
3. How has information obtained from programmatic assessments been used to enhance the Program and student learning?
4. Are you concerned about the size of enrollments and the Program's sustainability? How do enrollments compare to the other programs in the department and college? Where do most of your students come from? Who is responsible for recruitment?
5. Are retention rates in line with the Program's goals? Why or why not? Where do most of your graduates go after they finish the Program?
6. How does student advising work?
7. What are the innovative, unique, or notable aspects of the Program?

Standard #3 – Faculty
1. Are any faculty retiring in the next two years? Is there a succession plan?
2. Are you currently hiring any faculty? If so, could we have a copy of the position description?
3. If faculty left and were not replaced, why? Who makes these decisions regarding faculty positions?
4. If there is a lack of diversity in your faculty, is it even among the adjuncts?

Standard #5 – Governance
1. Can you describe for us aspects/examples of program autonomy? (Especially as it relates to curriculum, teaching assignments, hiring, and promotion and tenure decisions); How are promotion and tenure decisions made, personnel decisions, curriculum decisions?
2. What are your responsibilities as Program Director? To whom do you report?
3. Which classes do you regularly teach – are all your teaching assignments located within the Program? What is a typical teaching load for you?
4. How does the Administration view the Program – from within the Department, School, College, University-wide?
5. How supportive has the Department, School, College, University administration been of you, the Program and your efforts over the last 3-5 years?

Closing questions
1. Are there any other concerns you have with respect to the Site Visit or the accreditation review?
2. Would you please tell us just a bit about your dean, provost and president so that we are prepared to meet them?
3. Do you have any questions of us? Is there anything else you think we need to know going forward and as we conduct additional interviews? Is there anything you think the Administration needs to hear or know about your program?
4. We feel we need additional data to perform our work. Please provide us with [list specific needs] in time to review while we are still here.

Interview with the Dean

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

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

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and the purpose of the visit. The team chair explains the timeframe for the accreditation process and gives an assurance of confidentiality.

Sample questions for team members to ask the Dean include:

Opening questions
1. What are the innovative, unique, or notable aspects of the Program?
2. Are there accomplishments that the Program has achieved since the SSR was submitted to PAB?

Standard #1 – Strategic Planning and Progress
1. Describe the college/school's mission statement
2. What is your vision for the College/School and its professional programs? What plans does the College/School have for its professional programs? Summarize the College/School's strategic plan or goals and objectives for future development.
3. What are the current priorities of the College and their relationship to the planning program?
4. Describe the Program's mission statement and how it relates to that of the College/School.
5. How does the Program coordinate development of its goals and objectives with other sets of goals and objectives within the University?
6. Are the stated objectives appropriate and consistent with the Program's mission?
7. What changes do you foresee in the College during the next 3 to 5 years and how might they affect the Program's mission, or strategic plan? Future opportunities?
8. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
9. What resources (financial, personnel, physical, etc.) are needed to address the identified challenges, and other plans set forth by the institution? What is the College/School's plan for obtaining these resources?
10. How does the Program assess its overall mission and goals? How often is the assessment done? Who is involved in the process? How and when is this assessment reported to the College?
11. [Summarize the issues from the prior SV] Can you describe how these issues have been addressed?
12. What policies or programs are there in the College that support diversity within the student body and faculty?
13. How does enrollment in the Program compare to enrollment levels in other programs in the College?
14. Collaboration opportunities for planning students with other programs/students and faculty within the college? Collaboration opportunities for planning faculty (within the college and across campus)?
15. Loss of faculty within the planning program – how are personnel decisions (hiring, P&T) made within the College and/or department? Who makes the decision regarding positions if someone leaves/retires?
16. How do the expectations/workloads for faculty compare across other programs and across campus in terms of teaching, research and service?
17. What financial support is provided for students and faculty professional development?

Standard #2 – Students
1. How would you characterize students in this College/School? Are there ways in which they are unusual in the national context?
2. How do the planning students stand out among other students in this College or on this campus?

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

Standard #4 – Curriculum
1. Are there any concerns you have about the planning curriculum or about the way teaching is carried out in the planning program?
2. Does the curriculum align with the College's vision, mission, and goals?

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

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

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

Interview with the Provost

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

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and the purpose of the meeting. Be aware that this is very much an interview of you, as well as of the Provost. They will be forming opinions about how much they can rely on what you will find. Be sure to identify yourselves in terms that will be meaningful to a university administrator (what universities you are from; what your primary jobs are; the extent of your prior involvement with accreditation or other academic program reviews). It's important that the Provost understands the role of the practitioner in the accreditation process. The team chair explains the timeframe for the accreditation process and gives an assurance of confidentiality.

Outline the PAB process very briefly (the Provost probably meets 20 of these teams a year!). Distinguish certification of minimum compliance from striving for excellence and indicate PAB hopes to contribute toward both, as appropriate. Make every attempt to listen effectively and to demonstrate that you understand the messages you are given. Be open to cooperating with the Provost's needs to learn from your visit. At the same time, be careful not to position yourselves as supplicants who only want to please: you have a job to do and you intend to do it properly.

Sample questions for team members to ask the Provost include:

Opening questions
1. What is your impression of the Planning Program? Do you see it as a strong contributor to the university?

The University
1. What is the mission of the University? Has the mission changed or remained consistent over the past few years? How is this mission unique among universities? How does the planning program fit or align with this mission?
2. What are the issues facing the university currently? (enrollments, financial challenges, etc.)
3. What institutions does this university see as its peer institutions?
4. Does the University value and support aspects of diversity amongst its student body and also its faculty? What policies or programs are available that demonstrate/support this?
5. What financial support is provided for students and faculty professional development?

The Planning Program and the College/School
1. Does the College/School collaborate with other Colleges/Schools in the University on hiring/ research/classes?
2. How are these collaborative decisions made, supported, and by whom?
3. What could the Planning Program do better?

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

<h1 style="text-align:center">Interviews with Faculty</h1>

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

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and the purpose of the meeting. The team chair explains the timeframe for the accreditation process and gives an assurance of confidentiality. The objectives of the team include the verification of statements and impressions presented in written materials (Self-Study Report, supplemental information) or in general group sessions during the Site Visit.

Be prepared for a wide variety of reactions from faculty, ranging from quiet or withdrawn behavior (requiring more probing on the part of the team) to assertive behavior (requiring redirection or restraint by the team). Faculty and/or the Site Visit Team may request an individual meeting, if needed.

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

Sample questions for team members to ask faculty include:

Opening questions
1. Are there accomplishments that the Program has achieved since the SSR was submitted to PAB?
2. What are the innovative, unique, or notable aspects of the Program?

Standard #1 – Strategic Planning and Progress
1. Describe the process followed and the faculty's role in the development of the Program's strategic plan. Did faculty members receive a complete, final version of the strategic plan for their review? Did students and/or alumni participate or review?
2. What process was used to conduct and create the Self-Study Report? Who participated (e.g. students, alumni, faculty)? Have you read the SSR? How and when did you learn of this peer review process?
3. What are the major findings of the Self-Study Report? Do you agree with them? Were there any errors of commission or omission?
4. Does the majority of faculty concur with the findings of the Self-Study Report? Summarize any minority viewpoints.
5. Describe the process for establishing and revising program goals and objectives. Did you participate in the planning process?
6. To what extent was the Self-Study Report a collaborative process including faculty?
7. What are the Dean's and/or the Program Administrator's expectations for the Program? Have these expectations lead to faculty debate?
8. Describe the Program's mission statement and how it relates to that of the College/School.
9. What are your expectations for the Program's faculty, students, and graduates?
10. What has been the most significant development in the Program over the last five years?
11. Do you foresee any changes in the Program's parent unit in the next three to five years that will affect the Program's mission, character, or operation?
12. How is the Program regarded by other programs/departments/schools/colleges [as appropriate] within the institution?
13. How does the faculty participate in the objective-setting process?

14. Describe and assess how the institution systematically assures achievement of its stated goals. How effective are these measures?
15. What is the faculty's role in the planning for program development?
16. Is there an adequate flow of information and communication within the College/School? Are you involved in the College/School's affairs?
17. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
18. How does the Program assess its overall mission and goals? How often is the assessment done? Who is involved in the process?
19. How has information obtained from programmatic assessments been used to enhance the Program and student learning?
20. How does the Program assist in preparing graduates for employment or additional educational opportunities?
21. [Summarize the issues from the prior SV] What progress has the Program made since the last Site Visit? Describe how these issues have been addressed.
22. How will the Self-Study Report be used to support plans and progress by the institution?
23. Are the required PAB outcomes available and up to date on the Program's website?

Standard #2 - Students
1. How would you characterize the "typical" student you teach in relation to the goals of the Program?
2. What type of student is attracted to this program?
3. Describe your perceptions of the students and their professional development.
4. What percentage of graduating students find planning or planning related jobs? Are they satisfied with the types of positions they obtain? Do they feel that they were prepared for their position in terms of skills, knowledge, etc.?
5. What strategies does the Program utilize to determine its diversity goals and identify underrepresented student populations?
6. How does the Program actively attract and recruit a diverse student population in alignment with its strategic goals for achieving diversity?
7. What actions are taken to promote a culture of inclusiveness within the Program?
8. What actions are being taken to support and retain students from underrepresented groups?
9. Describe how student advising works.

Standard #3 - Faculty
1. What role does the faculty play in the planning for program development?
2. What are the prevailing standards and procedures regarding faculty selection, development, promotion, and tenure? Are these standards adequate? Are they widely disseminated?
3. Does the Dean/School/Chair or the Program Administrator help faculty members to obtain their professional goals and interests? Elaborate.
4. What are your individual goals and objectives? What do you require to address your individual needs, departmental goals, and collegiate goals?
5. For junior faculty: Do you know "what it takes" to get tenure? Have you been adequately informed about expectations for advancement? How are the Program's expectations distributed across the areas of research, teaching, and service? Are you comfortable with the Program's expectations in each area? Have you been mentored by senior faculty or administrators?
6. Do you understand the policies and procedures that lead to your next level of advancement and do you have the mentoring and support to succeed?
7. For adjunct faculty: What role do you serve within the Program? Describe the Program's efforts to integrate the profession into the curriculum. What is your involvement in assessment of student learning?
8. Describe your perceptions regarding the professional development process and your personal developmental opportunities.

9. How effective are the adjunct faculty members?
10. What factors were important in your decision to join this program and institution? What would you say to a PhD graduate seeking a position as a junior faculty in this program?
11. What do you find exciting and/or rewarding about serving on this faculty?
12. Is your long-term professional growth well-served by remaining on this faculty?
13. What challenges have you encountered while serving on this faculty?
14. What are your current teaching-research-service interests? Are reduced teaching loads and/or other assistance available to pursue these interests? Are students involved/assisting in your research?
15. How does the Program actively work towards achieving diversity among its faculty?
16. What measures are in place to support and retain faculty from underrepresented groups?
17. What actions and initiatives has the Program implemented to promote a culture of inclusiveness within the Program, fostering an environment that values and embraces diversity among faculty and students?

Standard #4 – Curriculum
1. How is student learning assessed? What outcomes are measured? Who is involved? Once learning is assessed, how is the data utilized to better the Program?
2. How does the Program assess course effectiveness in meeting curriculum goals?
3. Who is responsible for assessment activities?
4. How are educational achievements of students documented?
5. How are assessment activities monitored? How are assessment efforts evaluated and utilized?
6. What assessment changes have been made since the last accreditation evaluation? What changes are currently being contemplated?
7. Describe the specific aspects of the assessment plan in detail regarding the following types of assessment: (a) institutional/programmatic assessment; (b) curricular assessment; and (c) student learning outcomes assessment.
8. How do the results of the assessments get utilized?
9. What do you think of the current curriculum? What changes would you recommend?
10. Describe any new courses you have been involved with developing in the past two years.
11. Comment on the effectiveness of the Program's current assessment/evaluation efforts. What changes should be made? Will the University provide resources to implement changes? Does the University have resources to help you in these areas?
12. Should assessment-related changes be proposed for the institution, program, or courses?
13. What are the Program's student learning goals? Explain how assessments are used to improve student learning.
14. Explain how course evaluations by students affect the Program's curriculum and/or the manner in which you teach.
15. Describe the composition and function of the Curriculum Committee. Is there student representation on the committee? What steps are taken to ensure student attendance?
16. How is the internship program (if offered) managed, including obtaining jobs in line with student interests, evaluation of students and assignment of credit?
17. Describe specific curricular areas and/or approaches in detail (NOTE: refer to the Accreditation Standards for specific areas, which are expected to be included).
18. Where is the following taught within the curriculum: General planning knowledge in global context - Planning history and theory, Planning law and institutions, Urban and regional development; Skills and tools for planning practice - Planning process and engagement, Analytical skills and tools, Professional, Communication, and Leadership skills
19. How does the curriculum address contemporary issues?
20. What is being done to examine and address inter-disciplinary education, cultural competence, and professionalism in the curriculum?
21. Which classes provide community engagement opportunities?

22. Comment on the physical facilities that house the Program. Are the facilities adequate? Are there any issues that can be corrected in the current facilities? Suggestions for improvements?
23. Are computer and software resources readily available and adequate? Do students avail themselves of these resources? Elaborate.
24. Are administrative and support resources generally adequate?

Standard #5 – Governance
1. Describe the leadership and direction of the Dean, associate and assistant Dean(s), and your [Department Chair]/Program Administrator.
2. On matters directly affecting the Program, are the Dean's or Program Administrator's decisions subject to substantial modification by any other Dean or university official outside of the Program?
3. How effective is the students' participation in the governance and development of the Program?
4. How do faculty participate in planning for program development?
5. What are the standards and processes relating to faculty selection, development, promotion, tenure, etc.?
6. What effect has long-range planning had on important policy decisions, particularly those involving faculty committee considerations? Have the Program's objectives influenced these considerations?
7. Are school-wide or program-wide faculty committees typically controlled by any one segment of the faculty?
8. How are decisions made regarding curriculum, personnel, P&T, teaching assignments, etc.?

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

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

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

Meeting with the Students

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

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and the purpose of the meeting. The team chair explains the timeframe for the accreditation process and gives an assurance of confidentiality. Initiate the session with introductions, the objective of the meeting, and the format to be used. It is helpful if students indicate their class level and provide an indication of their interests and goals (i.e., career aspirations, post-graduate education, etc.) as a component of their introduction. Names of attendees are asked to be made available to the team in advance of the meeting, if possible.

Sample questions to ask the students include:

Opening questions
1. Why did you select this program? Would you make the same decision again? Would you recommend this program to others? Elaborate.
2. Is the Program preparing you for what you think you will be doing as a planner?
3. What are the innovative, unique, or notable aspects of the Program?

Standard #1 – Strategic Planning and Progress
1. How were you involved in the development of the Program's strategic plan?
2. How were you involved in the development of the Self-Study Report?
3. How were you involved in the preparation of the Self-Study Report? Have you read the SSR?
4. Are there accomplishments that the Program has achieved since the SSR was submitted to PAB?
5. What is the mission of the Program?
6. What do you perceive are the goals and objectives of the Program?
7. Has the Program made any major changes in its outlook during your time here?
8. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weakness of the Program?
9. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
10. Describe the efforts the Program uses to make sure you are learning and to make sure the curriculum is of high quality.
11. Have the results of course evaluations by students resulted in changes to courses and/or faculty behavior? Explain.
12. Describe any suggestions to improve the institution and/or the Program. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?

Standard #2 – Students
1. Describe how successfully the Program has met your expectations. Include specifics about satisfying and disappointing aspects.
2. Will this program succeed in meeting your professional objectives?
3. Do the recruitment brochures, catalogs, the website, etc., accurately reflect the Program's available resources, academic policies, rate of progression, etc.?
4. How is the Program website used internally as a resource for faculty and students?
5. What kinds of financial assistance are available to students?
6. What activities and organizations are available to students?
7. Do academic support services (e.g. advising, computer center, library facilities, etc.) meet your needs? Explain.

8. What was your experience with services provided to support students?
9. Describe the Program's diversity recruitment efforts for both faculty and students.
10. How does the Program recruit students? What would you suggest the Program add to be more effective?
11. Describe the involvement/activities of the students in the APA Chapter.
12. Describe the relationship between the APA Chapter and the Program. Does the Program encourage student participation in the chapter (events, governance, etc.)?
13. Has the APA Chapter made specific efforts to involve students? Have these efforts been successful?
14. Is there a chapter-sponsored mentoring program for the planning students? Explain.
15. Have students ever reached out to the chapter to get involved? If so, have they been successful? How?
16. Does the APA Chapter have a student member on its board of directors?
17. Are there special student rates for chapter events?
18. [For graduate students] Are professional staff and faculty members available as research advisors?

Standard #3 – Faculty

1.
2. How accessible are the faculty outside of class? How do the faculty and students interact outside the classroom?
3. Do the faculty foster professionalism and professional ethics? Do the faculty serve as role models?
4. How would you characterize the "typical" professor in this Program? Do you know if this profile has changed?
5. How effective are the adjunct faculty members? Are they adequately prepared for class? Are they accessible?
6. How does the Program emphasize good teaching? Are faculty concerned about their teaching performance?
7. Describe how faculty relate their research and service activities to class lectures.
8. Do faculty prepare students adequately for professional practice in planning? Do they teach the planning skills to become professional planners?
9. Do you have any involvement in the hiring process for new faculty?
10. Do faculty participate and encourage participation in professional societies' activities? (APA, ULI, ACSP, WTS, COMTO, etc.)
11. Do the faculty encourage future involvement with professional certifications (AICP, LEED, etc.)?
12. Describe faculty interaction with the local APA Chapter. Do faculty encourage student membership and participation in Chapter activities? Are they involved in national APA and if so, how? Do they discuss their involvement in local and national APA with students?

Standard #4 – Curriculum

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

12. Which classes provide community engagement opportunities?

Standard #5 – Governance
1. To what extent are students involved in the policy-making decisions of the school? Have good ideas advanced from such student involvement been implemented? Give an example.
2. Describe how students participate in the governance and development of the Program.
3. What is the system of student governance used by the Program?
4. Does the Program effectively communicate about the Program's goals and objectives and its progress toward achieving them? What methods does the Program primarily use to communicate?
5. If you have an issue or a concern about the planning program – who do you contact? How do you learn about internship opportunities, jobs, planning events? What is the main mode of contact – email? Newsletter? Word of mouth?

The Profession and Practice Applications
1. Describe your understanding of the profession as gleaned from the faculty.
2. What kind of learning activities have you done with varieties of practice to help you make a career choice?
3. Will your education prepare you for entry into and/or advancement in the field of planning?
4. How does the Program prepare you for your career in planning?
5. Do you think that you will be prepared to handle the work expectations upon graduation? 5 years? Now?
6. How do you characterize the faculty's knowledge of and involvement with the profession?

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

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

Meeting with Alumni

Sessions with alumni provide an opportunity for former students to present their perspectives about the value of their educational experience, quality of learning, and their preparedness to enter the workforce and contribute to the profession. Programs seeking accreditation of two degrees should arrange separate meetings for alumni from each of the degree programs.

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and the purpose of the meeting. The team chair explains the timeframe for the accreditation process and gives an assurance of confidentiality. It is helpful if alums indicate their year of graduation and provide an indication of their interests in the Program relative to their current employment situation. Names and titles of attendees, and employers' names are to be made available to the team in advance of the meeting.

Sample questions to ask the alumni include:

Opening questions
1. What are the innovative and unique aspects of the Program?
2. Did the Program prepare you for what you are doing as a planner?
3. Describe your interaction with the Program. What sorts of contact do you have with the Program?
4. Why did you enter this program? Would you make the same decision again? Elaborate.
5. Did the Program succeed in meeting your professional objectives?
6. Describe how successfully the Program met your expectations. Include specifics about satisfying and disappointing aspects.
7. Would you recommend this program to others? Explain.
8. Now that you have experience in professional practice, how would you change the Program and/or the curriculum?
9. Which single educational experience did you most enjoy?

Standard #1 – Strategic Planning and Progress
1. What is the reputation of the Program in the broader community?
2. What are the strengths and weakness of the Program?
3. Describe your participation in the Program's strategic planning efforts.
4. What is the mission of the Program?
5. How do the Program's current goals and objectives compare with those when you were enrolled?
6. How were you involved in the development of the strategic plan and preparation of the Self-Study Report? Have you read the SSR?
7. Are there accomplishments that the Program has achieved since the SSR was submitted to PAB?
8. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
9. Describe the Program's interface with other departments, schools, programs, and other components of the University.
10. During your time as a student, did the results of course evaluations by students result in changes to courses and/or faculty behavior? Explain.
11. Describe any suggestions to improve the institution and/or the Program. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?
12. Does the Program recognize "distinguished alumni?"
13. Have you hired any program graduates recently? If so, were they well prepared in terms of knowledge and skills? Would you recommend hiring a graduate?

Standard #2 – Students
1. How did the Program recruit students? What would you suggest the Program add to be more effective?

2. What was your experience with student support services? Did academic support services (e.g. advising, computer center, library facilities, etc.) meet your needs? Explain.
3. What kinds of financial assistance were available to students?
4. What activities and organizations were available to students?
5. Describe the involvement/activities of the students in the APA Chapter.
6. What is the relationship between the APA Chapter and the Program? Has the Chapter made specific efforts to involve students? Have these efforts been successful?

Standard #3 – Faculty
1. How did you regard the faculty and staff?
2. Did the faculty foster professionalism and professional ethics? Did the faculty serve as role models?
3. How would you characterize the "typical" professor in this Program? Do you know if this profile has changed?
4. Did faculty prepare students adequately for professional practice in planning?
5. Did the faculty encourage future involvement with professional certifications (AICP, LEED, etc.)?
6. Are faculty engaged with alumni, either individually or with an Alumni group?
7. Do faculty consult you for guest lectures, internships, or jobs?
8. Comment on the faculty interaction with the local APA Chapter. Do faculty encourage student membership and participation in Chapter activities?
9. Are faculty interested and competent in areas of planning that are relevant to the community?

Standard #4 – Curriculum and Instruction
1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum?
2. Did you have access to the courses you needed to graduate within the prescribed time (e.g. two or four years)?
3. Has the Program made any major changes in the curriculum since you were here?
4. How would you characterize the physical facilities? If you could change one thing, what would that be?
5. Did faculty provide a good balance between theory and practice?
6. Is the Program well-supported academically and financially by the Department or school in which it is located, and by the University?

Standard #5 – Governance
1. To what extent were students involved in the policy-making decisions of the school? Have good ideas advanced from such student involvement been implemented? Give an example.
2. Describe how students participated in the governance and development of the Program.
3. Did the Program effectively communicate about the Program's goals and objectives and its progress toward achieving them? What methods does the Program primarily use to communicate?

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

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

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

Meeting with Employers and APA Chapter Representatives

Sessions with representatives of the local APA Chapter and with employers are sometimes separate meetings. They are often combined, however, due to time constraints and potential geographic/travel-related challenges getting people to a college campus they may be separate. Additionally, the meeting may be conducted in a hybrid format to accommodate those unable to get to campus. A joint meeting is to contain both APA Chapter members who are not employers or alumni, and employers who are not APA members or alums.

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

Begin with introductions: describe who you are and the purpose of the meeting. The team chair explains the timeframe for the accreditation process and gives an assurance of confidentiality. Initiate the session with introductions, the objective of the meeting, and the format to be used. Names of attendees, organizations represented, and titles are to be made available to the team in advance of the meeting.

Sample questions to ask the local APA Chapter and employers include:

Opening questions
1. What is the reputation of the Program in the broader community?
2. What is the relationship between the APA Chapter and the Program?

Standard #1 – Strategic Planning and Progress
1. Describe your participation in the Program's strategic planning efforts.
2. How were you involved in the development of the strategic plan and preparation of the Self-Study Report? Have you read the SSR?
3. Are there accomplishments that the Program has achieved since the SSR was submitted to PAB?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Program?
5. What are the biggest challenges facing the Program? What has been the response to the challenges?
6. What sorts of contact or interaction do you have with the Program?
7. Describe any suggestions to improve the institution and/or the Program. What is a short-term improvement that would enhance the Program? A long-term improvement?
8. Have you hired any program graduates recently? Would you recommend hiring a graduate?
9. What is the quality of the Program's students, faculty, and leadership?
10. How is the future of this program perceived in the community?

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

Standard #3 – Faculty
1. How accessible are the faculty to hearing from practitioners/employers/the APA Chapter?
2. How would you characterize the "typical" professor in this Program? Do you know if this profile has changed?
3. Describe the faculty interaction and involvement with the local APA Chapter. Do faculty participate and encourage student participation in APA Chapter activities?
4. Does the faculty encourage future involvement with professional certifications (AICP, LEED, etc.)?
5. Do faculty consult you for guest lectures, internships, or jobs?
6. Are faculty interested and competent in areas of planning that are relevant to the community?
7. Do you have any involvement in the hiring process for new faculty?

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

The Profession and Practice Applications
1. How would you characterize the faculty's knowledge of and involvement with the profession?
2. Does the Program contribute to the profession at large? Locally? Regionally? Nationally? Internationally?
3. Does the Program contribute to the field of planning beyond placing its graduates, e.g., does it produce worthwhile research, consulting and similar services?
4. In what ways have faculty been responsive to requests for speaking, lecturing, advising or other professional practice issues?

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

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

Dual Program Review

Specific questions to ask during a Site Visit reviewing two accredited programs at one institution:

Standard #1 – Strategic Planning and Progress
1. Do the Programs have separate strategic plans, goals, measurable objectives, etc.?
2. How do you differentiate the professional practice goals between undergraduate and graduate students?
3. How is it determined which faculty teach graduate and undergraduate courses?
4. When do you allow adjunct faculty to teach graduate courses?
5. Are there differences in how the college/school recruit undergraduate and graduate students?
6. If there is a Fast Track program, how is that structured and managed?

Standard #3 – Faculty
1. Please describe the teaching load of faculty who teach in both programs. Are there faculty who teach solely in the graduate/undergraduate program?

Standard #4 – Curriculum
1. What courses are shared between graduate and undergraduate students? What course requirements differentiate the graduate level from the undergraduate one?
2. When both undergraduate and graduate students take the same course, are there any differences in assignments, grading, or extra-curricular work?