



Planning  
Accreditation  
Board

# DRAFT 2 OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO 2022 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

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November 8, 2024

PAB  
STANDARDS  
COMMITTEE

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# Planning Accreditation Board

Mission:

*To promote excellence among planning programs and to ensure high quality education for future urban planners.*



ACSP

- Educator
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# **RATIONALE FOR AMENDMENT**

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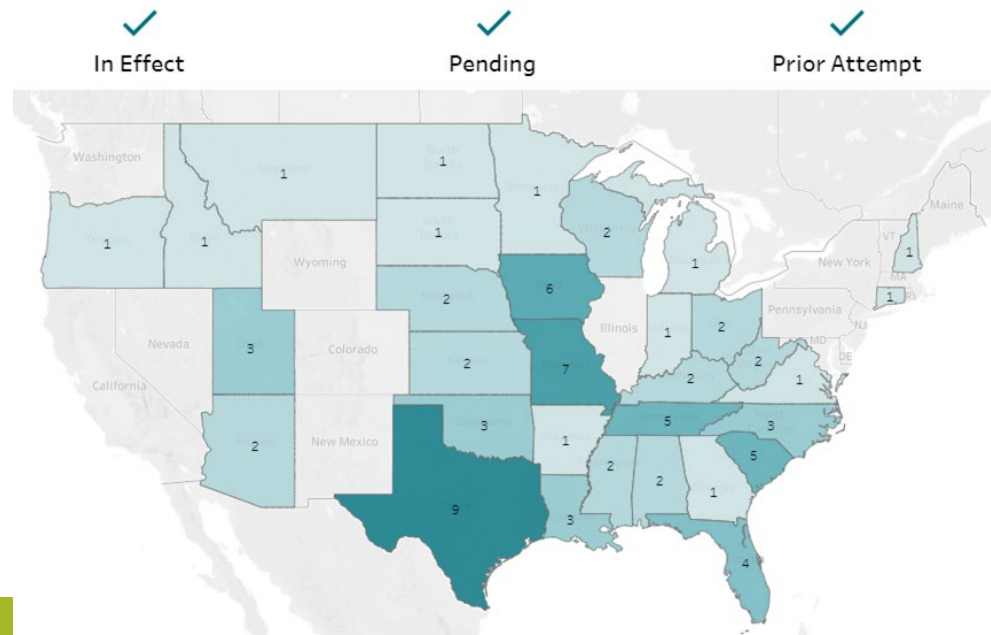
# DEI at the Federal and State Level

## U.S. Supreme Court Cases:

- *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, No-20-1199, and
- *Students for Fair Admissions Inc. v. University of North Carolina et al*, No. 21-707

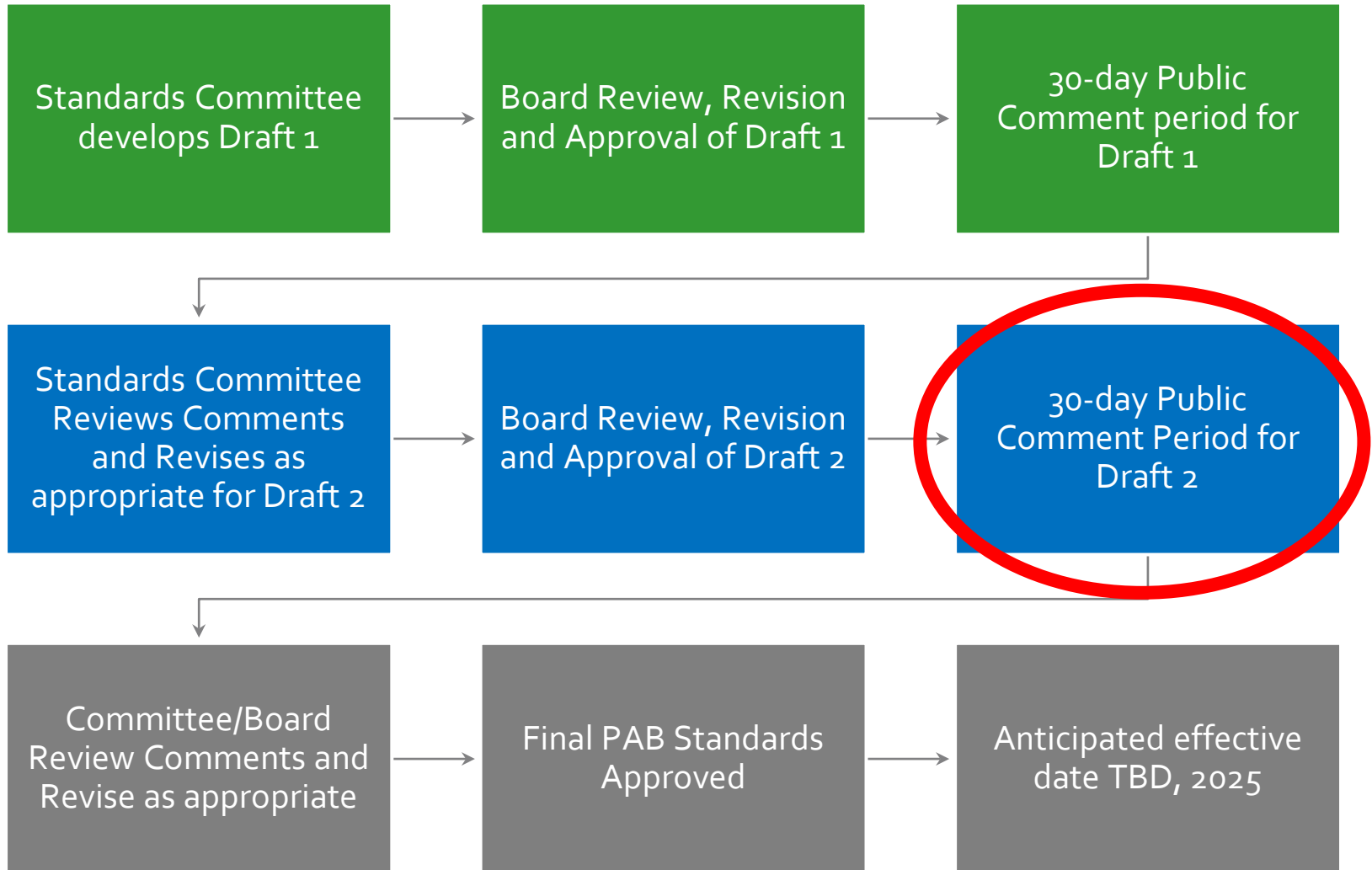
## U.S. Supreme Court Decision:

- Race-conscious admissions programs used by Harvard and UNC violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment



# Standards Amendment Process

Process and Timeline available on PAB website: <https://www.planningaccreditationboard.org/standards-review/>



# DRAFT 2 OF THE STANDARDS

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*Note: Minor language revisions for clarity and consistency are not presented in the slide deck. The complete standards can be viewed here: <https://www.planningaccreditationboard.org/standards-review/>*

## PRECONDITIONS TO ACCREDITATION

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: Residency.** A Program, whether undergraduate or graduate, shall require students' in-person presence at the accredited program institution for a minimum of two academic years or the equivalent. The intentions of this guideline are to ensure significant interaction with other students and with faculty, collaborative work, socialization into the norms and aspirations of the profession, and observations by faculty of students' interpersonal and communication skills. Programs departing from campus-centered education by offering distance learning, international exchanges, or other delivery modes must demonstrate that the intentions of this guideline are being achieved, and that such delivery modes are under the supervision of fully qualified faculty. Such determination may include, but is not limited to, evidence of faculty of record, and interactions between faculty and students.



# STANDARD 1. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROGRESS

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

A. Strategic Plan: The Program shall have a strategic plan for achieving its goals and objectives – either as a free-standing plan or part of a broader ~~unit's departmental~~ strategic plan – and must be able to demonstrate progress towards goal attainment. ~~The~~ Program 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~~ **and shall highlight the Program's proposed efforts to advance and support this definition.** The strategic plan must include the following elements:

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

## **(Criterion 1A Continued)**

- 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~~ **what** 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.~~ **The Program should incorporate into the curriculum the values, knowledge and skills needed to serve a diverse society.**
- 4) *Monitoring and Evaluation*: The Program, or the **unit** ~~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 **actions** ~~interventions~~ and strategies.

## STANDARD 2. STUDENTS

The Program shall **demonstrate a commitment to** attracting 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.

## CRITERION 2B. STUDENT 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/or 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~~ **efforts** to attracting a diverse student population **that progresses the strategic plan,** ~~Programs must~~ **shall** report how they are arriving at **the rationale for determining** 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~~ **strategies** ~~programs~~ intended to assist in achieving student diversity **goals.** ~~along with specific diversity-related strategic goals that have been met.~~

## **(Criterion 2B continued)**

- 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.
- ~~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.—~~

## CRITERION 2C. STUDENT ADVISING, SERVICES, AND SUPPORT

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, **including but not limited to mentorship and internship programs, fellowship programs, professional development programs and career services, and initiatives to support engagement in the profession.** The Program shall publish its criteria for the allocation of such financial aid.

## STANDARD 3. FACULTY

The Program shall employ a sufficient number of qualified, productive, and engaged faculty members to ~~permit the achievement of~~ **effectively pursue** program goals and **achieve the** objectives **adopted in its strategic plan**. Among the foremost responsibilities of the Program are to reject discrimination—~~particularly 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~~.

## CRITERION 3A. FACULTY QUALITY

A. Faculty Quality: The full-time and adjunct faculty of the Program shall have educational and professional backgrounds, a relevant mix of credentials (i.e., **planning degrees from accredited programs** ~~accredited degrees in planning~~, significant experience in planning, PhDs in planning, degrees and experience in related fields, and **/or** 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.



## CRITERION 3B. 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/or 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 ~~efforts~~ to attracting a diverse faculty ~~that progresses the strategic plan,~~ The Program shall ~~report the rationale for determining diversity goals, and~~ 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, ~~initiatives,~~ and ~~strategies~~ programs intended to ~~accomplish those goals.~~ assist in achieving faculty diversity along with specific diversity-related strategic goals that have been met.

## (Criterion 3B continued)

- 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 faculty groups, mentoring of non-tenured faculty, promotion of faculty events, curricular elements, and involvement with students, professional societies, and communities.
- 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.~~

## CRITERION 3G. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development: 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, **teaching and communications skills**, student needs, **and** the use of appropriate instructional technology, ~~and topics such as implicit bias~~. Faculty, ~~especially those from underrepresented groups, should~~ **shall** also be provided with opportunities to be mentored throughout their career.

## STANDARD 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~~ **have an awareness and are respectful of** 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.

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An accredited degree program must ensure that each graduate demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for competent professional planning in diverse occupational and institutional settings. The criteria below provide a framework **to demonstrate** ~~for judging~~ the scope and quality of minimum educational outcomes, **and the guiding values, required knowledge, and skills that shall be included in the core required curriculum.**

## 4A. 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, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice, and Inclusion~~: Diversity, equity, ~~diversity~~, inclusion and social justice factors that reduce inequities and promote opportunity for all; including planners' role in expanding choice and opportunity for all persons; planning for the needs of all, including historically underserved and under-resourced communities and populations disadvantaged groups; and reducing inequities through ~~critical~~ examination of past and current systems and practices. ~~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, resilient, and climate-adapted futures.
- 3) *Professional Ethics and Responsibility*: Key issues of planning ethics and any 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).

## CRITERION 4B1. 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 **the history of** planning has advanced and hindered **opportunities for particular peoples, places and communities** ~~the attainment of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and social justice as defined by the Program~~; 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*: (no changes)
- 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; **how the movement of people, products, and ideas has affected cities and regions** ~~interactions — flows of people, materials, ideas, and cultures — across world regions.~~

## CRITERION 4B2. 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*: (no changes)
- 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; **basic understanding of** data analytics and urban technology.
- c) *Professional, Communication, and Leadership Skills*: (no changes)

## CRITERION 4D. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

The Program, or the ~~unit Department~~ in which it resides, shall have a clearly defined approach, methodology, and ~~rubrics indicators~~ for measuring student learning outcomes and competencies for the expected knowledge, skills, and guiding values that students are expected to acquire. ~~The Program shall use direct measures, which shall include rubrics for assessment of the degree to which students have acquired knowledge, skills, and values in Criteria 4A and 4B. The assessment may be implemented by faculty or external evaluators (e.g., review boards or juries). The results from the assessment may include quantitative analysis and qualitative narrative elements.~~ Indirect measures, such as student surveys or student job placement, may be used to supplement the direct measures, but indirect measures are not required for this criterion. The direct measures of student learning outcomes, at a minimum, shall directly link to criteria 4A and 4B. Programs are expected to demonstrate how results from student learning outcomes assessment are used to inform curriculum change to improve student learning. ~~Evidence should connect materials covered in the core curriculum to the learning outcomes sought and achieved for students.~~



## CRITERION 5E. PROMOTION AND TENURE:

The Program **or its hosting unit** 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 that all faculty, including diverse faculty, are supported through** ~~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**ed to advance professionally.

# NEXT STEPS



Public Comment Period: **November 1 – December 1, 2024**



Submit comments via:  
<https://www.planningaccreditationboard.org/standards-review/>

# Standards Amendment Process

Process and Timeline available on PAB website: <https://www.planningaccreditationboard.org/standards-review/>

