Planning Accreditation Board

Accreditation:

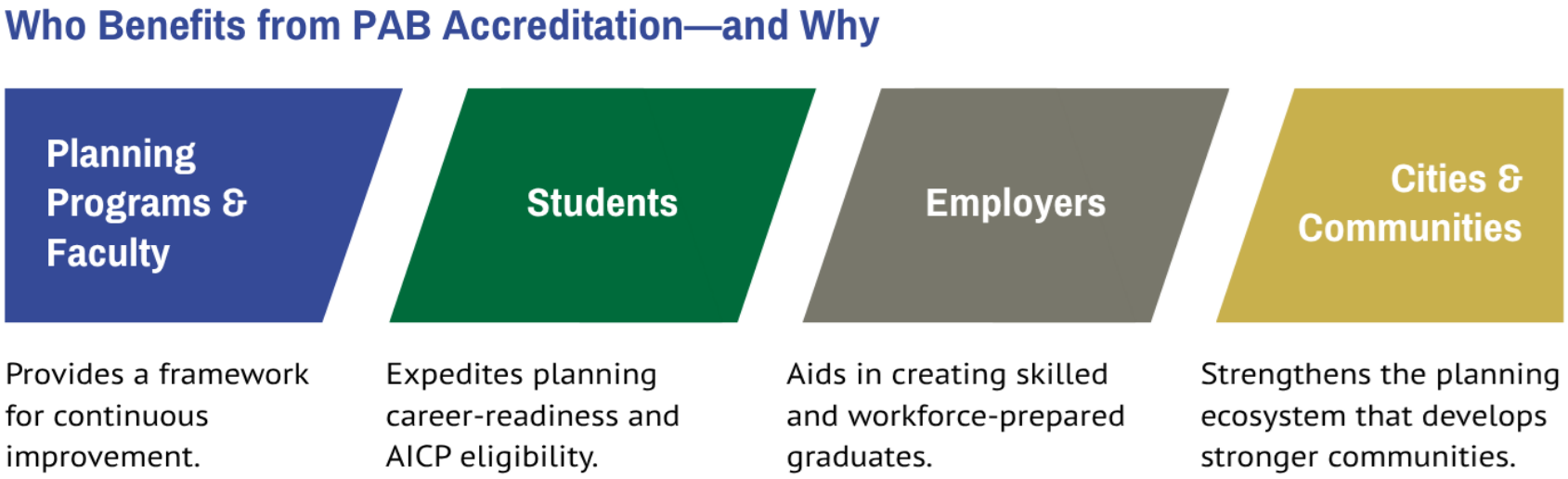
Prepare Now – Relax Later

An Orientation for Program Administrators & Faculty

www.planningaccreditationboard.org

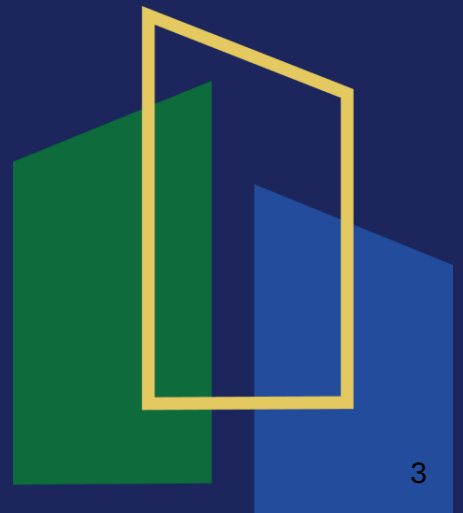
Planning Accreditation Board

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



CHEA Recognition

- Opportunity for comprehensive self-assessment and external review of accreditation processes against specific standards
- Affirmation to the public that PAB enforces standards that:
  - ✓ Advance academic quality in higher education
  - ✓ Ensure accountability through consistent, clear and coherent communication to the public and the higher education community
  - ✓ Encourage programs to plan for purposeful change and needed improvement.
  - ✓ Employ appropriate and fair procedures in decision making
  - ✓ Demonstrate ongoing review of accreditation practices
- Closely monitors federal activities in higher education



The PAB Accreditation Process

Self-Study Report

Program develops a Self-Study Report to submit June 15 or September 15

Site Visit

PAB reviews Self-Study Report and sends a Site Visit Team.

Site Visit Report

Site Visit Team develops a report of findings.

Accreditation Decision

Program and Site Visit Team Chair meet with Accreditation Board.

Accreditation **Prepare Now – Relax Later**

Planning Accreditation Board

Main SSR (Narrative)

- Program History
- Student and Faculty data/tables
- Faculty listing
- Preconditions to Accreditation
- Standards 1 – 5

SSR Appendices

- A – Faculty Summary CVs
- B – Syllabi
- C – Other Evidence

SELF-STUDY REPORT (SSR)

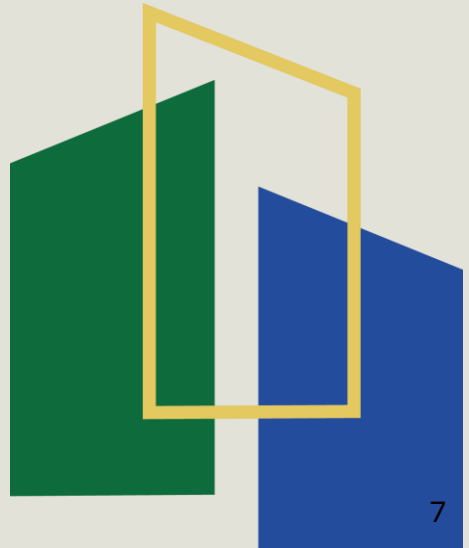
This is an evidence based process for demonstrating compliance

Helpful Tips

- Don’t aim to ace the test
- Deadlines are closer than you think
- Don’t be a lone wolf
- Put yourself in the shoes of Site Visitors and PAB members

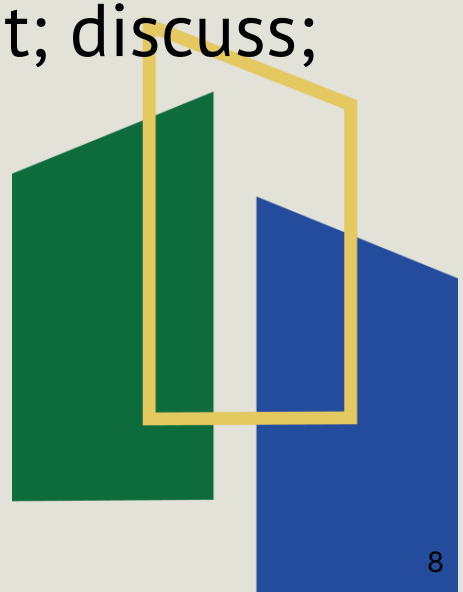
SSR Preparation Process

- Build redundancy into self-study writing process – rotate sections among team members if possible
- Edit to ensure a consistent voice and style
  - ➢ Would a technical editor help make the document more readable?
- Plan for at least a year long process



SSR Preparation Timeline

- **Y-1**: Assemble your strategic plan, curriculum map and outcomes assessment data; assess what, if anything, is missing; and set a timeline to fill the gaps; then fill them
- **M-6**: Divide sections among your faculty/staff/student leaders for discussion draft; enlist help to compile CVs and syllabi
- **M-4**: Review what you and your faculty have drafted; edit; discuss; share with faculty, students, alumni and administration (others?). Assemble other appendices
- **M-2**: Compile first full draft; discuss key points with key administrative officers



SSR Preparation Timeline

- **D-30**: Share proposed final with dean, provost, president
- **D-Day**: Submit draft SSR to PAB
  - June 15 for Fall Site Visit dates
  - September 15 for Spring Site Visit dates
- Final SSR with signatures due two weeks after PAB staff comments

Don't blindside your administration: get their agreement/tolerance of problems before you ask for their signature

SSR – Main (Part I)

Program demonstrates compliance with PAB standards and criteria. Responses or program narrative should:

- Explicitly address the extent to which standards/criteria are met
- Be clear and concise
- Be written for the benefit of readers who are not familiar with the Program

SSR – Main (Part I) – Required Data

Tables:	**Student Data**
1	Graduate Student Enrollment Data
2	Enrollment Status and Gender
2.1	Race and Ethnicity: US Citizen and Permanent Residents Only
3	Student Retention Rates
4	Graduation Rates – Full-time
4.1	Graduation Rates – Part-time
5	Number of Degrees Awarded
6	Student Employment Data
7	AICP Exam Data

Tables:	**Faculty Data**
8	Faculty Status and Gender
8.1	Race and Ethnicity: US Citizen and Permanent Residents Only
9	Faculty AICP Membership
10	Faculty Listing
10.1	Full-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/Tenure Track and Contract)
10.2	Part-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/ Tenure Track and Contract)
10.3	Adjunct
11	Teaching Faculty FTE
11.1	Full-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/Tenure Track and Contract)
11.2	Part-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/ Tenure Track and Contract)
11.3	Adjunct

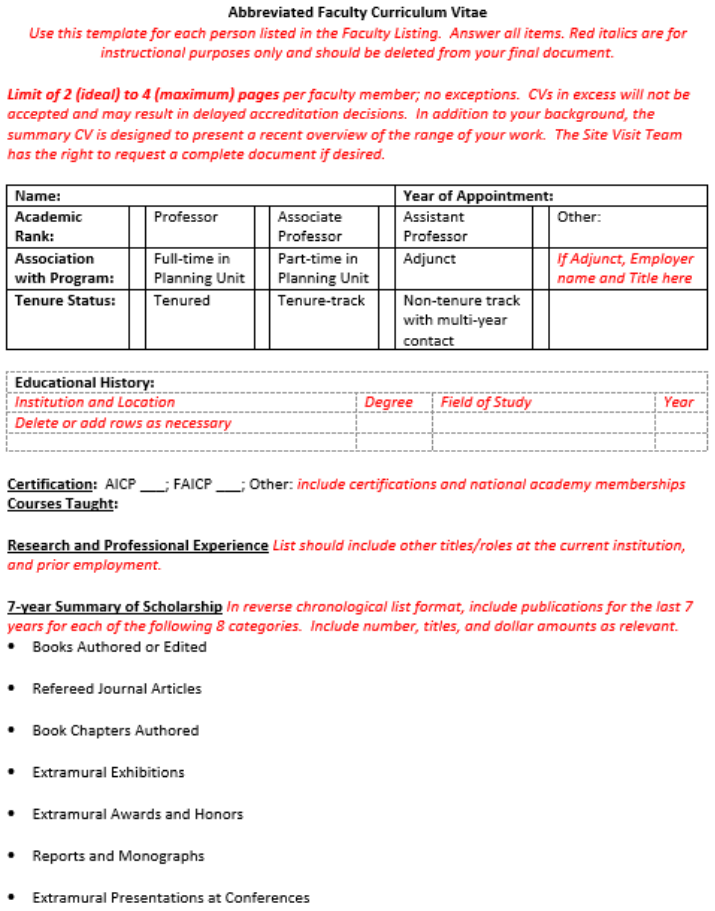
Tables:	**Curriculum Listing**
12	Curriculum Listing
12.1	Courses Required of All Students
12.2	Elective Courses

Tables:	**Standard 3: Faculty**
13	7-Year Summary of Faculty Scholarship
13.1	Full-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/Tenure Track and Contract)
13.2	Part-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/Tenure Track and Contract)
14	7-Year Summary of Professional Involvement
14.1	Full-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/Tenure Track and Contract)
14.2	Part-time in Planning Unit (Tenured/Tenure Tack and Contract)
14.3	Adjunct

Student and Faculty Race & Ethnicity Tables: Opt-out allowed for those programs in states and/or institutions that restrict sharing this data with accreditors

Supplemental data and trend analysis to be submitted in Appendix Part IIC. Other Evidence

SSR Appendix A – Faculty CVs



Abbreviated Faculty Curriculum Vitae

Use this template for each person listed in the Faculty Listing. Answer all items. Red italics are for instructional purposes only and should be deleted from your final document.

***Limit of 2 (ideal) to 4 (maximum) pages** per faculty member; no exceptions. CVs in excess will not be accepted and may result in delayed accreditation decisions. In addition to your background, the summary CV is designed to present a recent overview of the range of your work. The Site Visit Team has the right to request a complete document if desired.*

Name:					**Year of Appointment:**		
Academic Rank:		Professor		Associate Professor	Assistant Professor		Other:
Association with Program:		Full-time in Planning Unit		Part-time in Planning Unit	Adjunct		*If Adjunct, Employer name and Title here*
Tenure Status:		Tenured		Tenure-track	Non-tenure track with multi-year contact		

Educational History:			
Institution and Location	*Degree*	*Field of Study*	*Year*
Delete or add rows as necessary			

Certification: AICP ___; FAICP ___; Other: *include certifications and national academy memberships*
Courses Taught:

Research and Professional Experience *List should include other titles/roles at the current institution, and prior employment.*

7-year Summary of Scholarship *In reverse chronological list format, include publications for the last 7 years for each of the following 8 categories. Include number, titles, and dollar amounts as relevant.*

- Books Authored or Edited
- Refereed Journal Articles
- Book Chapters Authored
- Extramural Exhibitions
- Extramural Awards and Honors
- Reports and Monographs
- Extramural Presentations at Conferences

Provide abbreviated faculty CVs using PAB template for faculty:

- Full-Time in Planning Unit
- Part-Time in Planning Unit
- Adjunct Faculty

SSR Appendix B - Syllabi

PART IIB: COURSE SYLLABI

Use this page as the Table of Contents for a separate PDF Document

Course Syllabi should be attached in increasing prefix course numerical order. Include the course number, course name, and page number where the syllabi can be found. For programs submitting the SSR for Dual Program Reviews, rename this document to Part IIB: Bachelor Degree Course Syllabi and provide a separate document renamed for Part IIC: Master Degree Course Syllabi.

Course Number	Course Name	Page Number
Courses Required of All Students		
Example PLAN 500	Intro to Planning Theory	1
Other Courses		

SSR Appendix C – Other Evidence

PART IIC: OTHER EVIDENCE

Use this page as the Table of Contents for a separate PDF Document. For programs submitting the SSR for Dual Program Reviews, rename this document to Part IID.

Other Evidence should contain documentation or data that provides evidence of compliance with the Standards. Please refer to the SSR Manual for guidance and examples of evidence to support the narrative.

Each document provided should have a unique Standard/Criterion ID (example: 1A.1), document name and page number. When referencing the document within Part I of the SSR, be sure to include, at a minimum, the appendix location and page number.

Unique Standard/ Criterion ID	File Name	Page Number
	Add rows or remove rows as necessary	
Standard 1: Strategic Planning and Progress		
1A	Current Strategic Plan	
Standard 2: Students		
Standard 3: Faculty		
Standard 4: Curriculum		
Standard 5: Governance		

Curriculum Map Courses Required of All Students	Course Number and Title									
A. Guiding Values										
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).										
B. Required Knowledge and Skills of the Profession										
B1. General Planning Knowledge in Global Context										
a) *Planning History:* 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;										

Examples of evidence by PAB standard are found in the 2025 Edition of the Self-Study Report Manual (Section VI)

Helpful Tips on Other Evidence

To demonstrate compliance with PAB Standards, evidence should:

- Support the program's narrative and substantive facts submitted in Part I of SSR
- Clarify any nuances specific to the institution and/or program
- Affirm the program's overall academic quality, integrity and sustainability

Each piece of evidence should be explicitly tied to the narrative, with its relevance explained

When a single document is used to demonstrate compliance with multiple criteria, it should be included once, with appropriate cross-references to its relevant section

PART II SIGNATURES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

These signatures attest to the validity of the application and to the institution's support for the accreditation of the planning Program.

Institution Name: _____

Degree Name: _____

1. PLANNING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Email: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

2. PERSON PERPARING APPLICATION (if different from above)

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Email: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

3. DEAN OR OTHER HIGHER ADMINISTRATOR

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Email: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

4. INSTITUTION'S CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Email: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

5. INSTITUTION'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Email: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

SIGNATURE PAGE

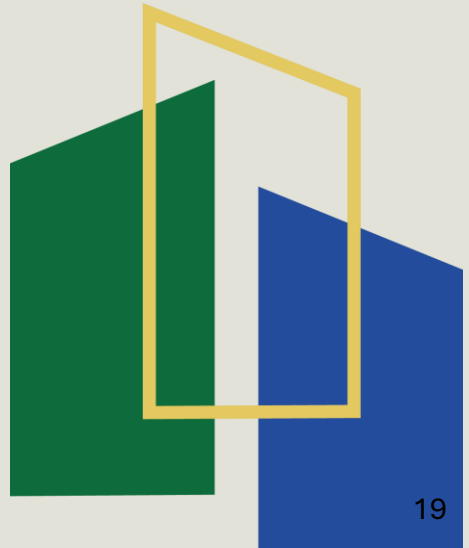
Relax for a while!

SITE VISIT (SV)

Site Visit Dates are set approximately 1.5 years in advance

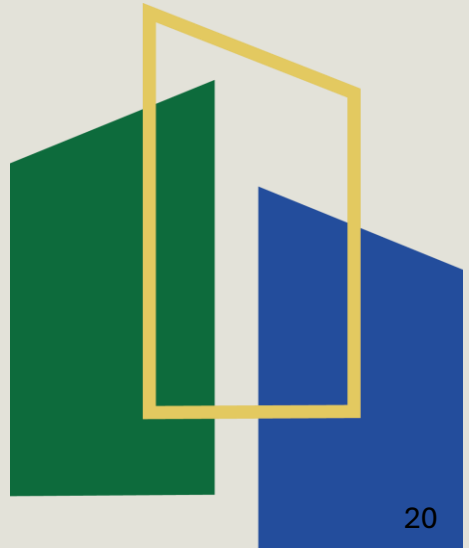
Site Visit: Why?

- Demonstrate accuracy of SSR
- Fill in gaps that may remain from the SSR
- Build bridges and cement relationships with constituencies (showcase your program to broader community)
- Capture attention of your faculty to issues
- Build awareness among your administration
- Build agreement on the way forward



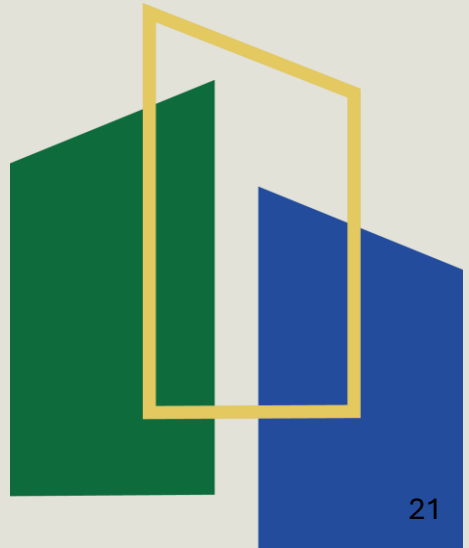
Site Visit Preparation

- Y-1.5: Set dates with PAB and your administration
  - **Schedule entrance and exit meetings with upper administration and dean**
  - Notify Program faculty to hold dates
- M-6: Hold date notices to employers, alumni, APA Chapter reps, key campus participants
- M-4: **Invite and confirm key participants**
  - Provide access to SSR as appropriate
  - Discuss SV with student leadership and/or student body, faculty, staff
  - Book SV hotel and other travel accommodations



During Site Visit

- Site Visitors need functional and comfortable work space, including at hotel
- A knowledgeable staff member should be available to the site visitors at all times
- You should keep your calendar clear and make time for the site visitors whenever they need you
  - Anticipate that they will ask you for new data
  - Correct errors but do not argue about judgments
  - Engage conversations about furthering excellence

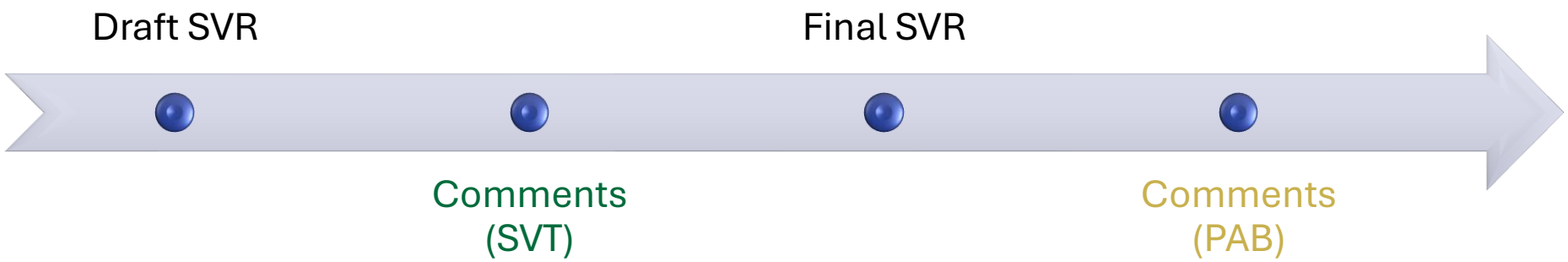


SITE VISIT REPORT (SVR)

Sections:

- Program Overview and Progress
- Assessment and Recommendations
- Program Strengths
- Furthering Excellence

Site Visit Report



- Comments to the SVT only
- Seek input and direction from faculty and administration
- Correct errors, inaccuracies or misinterpretations
- No new information

- These comments go to the Board and SVT
- Limited to inaccuracies regarding assessment
- Focus on the evidence available at the time of the Site Visit

Post Site Visit Report

- Optional Report
- Opportunity to submit additional, updated evidence of compliance that was not part of SSR
- Typically, due approximately 3 weeks before the meeting with PAB

ACCREDITATION DECISION – PAB MEETING

Accreditation Review Meeting

Meeting with the Board

Fall Site Visit → Spring Review @ APA Conference

Spring Site Visit → Fall Review @ ACSP Conference

Two Board Members assigned to Review

- Read: SSR, Prior SVR; Current SVR; Accreditation History; Correspondence since last review; Comments to final SVR; and Post Site Visit Report

Accreditation Review Meeting

- Brief your dean and seek his/her/their counsel
  - also campus accreditation officer; others?
- Prepare, prepare, prepare!
  - You have only 15 minutes: speak efficiently
  - Those you speak with will have 10 SVRs in their short-term memory, not only yours
  - Your opportunity for open comments will be very short; most of the time will be Q&A
  - Rehearse answers for each of the PM and UM criteria
  - Rehearse what has changed since the SV for each concern and each suggestion

Decision

- Share outcome with all stakeholders and others, as appropriate
- Use as a moment for publicity and to thank members of your community
- Follow up immediately with faculty, staff and administration to set course for effective future changes

History of Accreditation Terms Granted and public disclosure available on the PAB website

Beginning the Next Round

- Activate your internal work plan to address items that need changes
- Follow up with campus offices for items that require their action
- Set course to modify your strategic plan
- Review your process of learning outcomes assessment

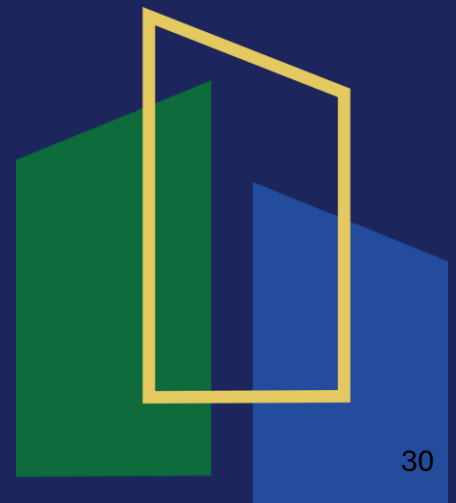
PAB RESOURCES

PAB Website - www.planningaccreditationboard.org

- Noteworthy Practices
- Self-Study Report Manual
- Accreditation Standards Training Modules
- History of Accreditation Decisions and Site Visit Team Assessments
- SSR and Site Visit Preparation Checklists

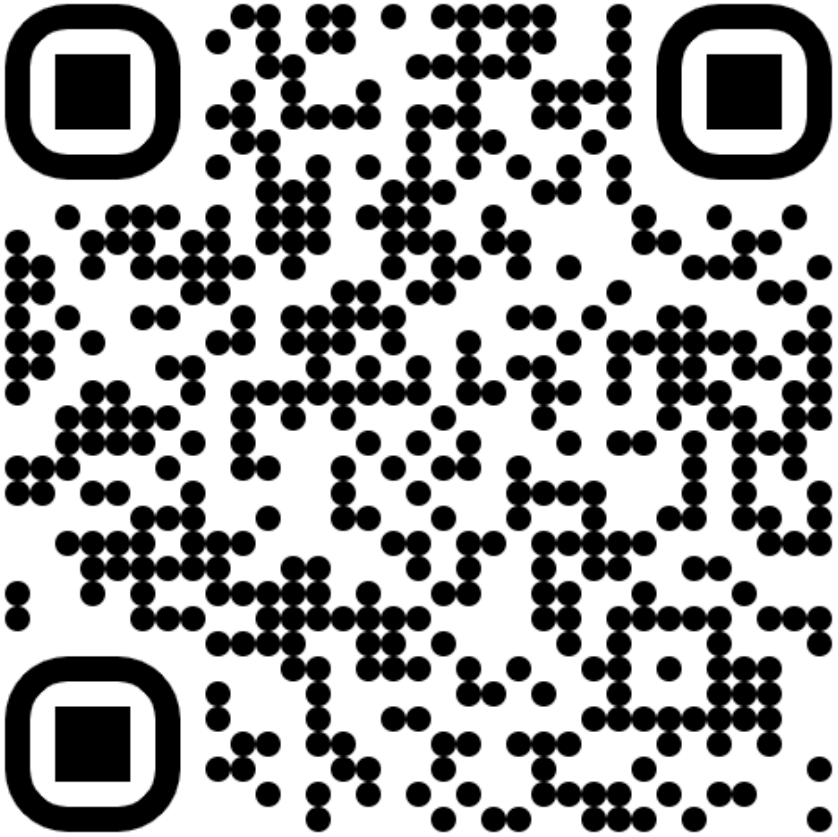
PAB Staff

- SSR Share List
- Questions / Concerns



Questions

Session Evaluation Form



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