

***ACCREDITATION PROCESS***

***BOOK*** — For Institutions

Seeking Initial or

Reaffirmation of Accreditation

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# ACCREDITATION PROCESS BOOK for ACBSP PROGRAMS

This book provides information for business, business related, and accounting programs pursuing accreditation with the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). It contains the key process information that is required to successfully accomplish ACBSP accreditation. The accreditation process and the standards and criteria for accreditation continue to evolve towards the best quality and the best fit to our members and business programs as part of ACBSP's guiding principle of continuous improvement. The policies and procedures described in this manual are subject to change by the governing body responsible for approval of these changes. Please contact ACBSP offices or go to the ACBSP website, [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org), to be certain this is the most recent version.

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# Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
FAQ.....	4
Introduction .....	6
ACBSP Program Accreditation vs. institutional Accreditation .....	6
Distinctions Between Member Institutions and Accredited Institutions .....	6
Accreditation Resources and Manuals Available .....	7
Accreditation Learning Resources: ACBSP Conferences!.....	7
Regional Meetings Resources Available.....	9
ACBSP Staff Resources Available to Members Questions .....	9
Accreditation Policies.....	10
Accreditation Governance.....	10
Compliance with Accreditation Standards.....	10
Accreditation Processes.....	11
Accrediting Baccalaureate/Graduate and Associate Degree Programs .....	11
Accrediting Associate Degree Programs at an ACBSP School with Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Programs .....	11
Privacy of Accreditation Process .....	11
Confidentiality Requirement.....	11
Conflict of Interest.....	12
Accreditation Timetable .....	12
Accreditation Evaluation Process Timetable Example.....	12
Five-Year Limit on Candidacy.....	14
Informing the Public.....	14
System-wide Accreditation.....	14
Cost of Accreditation.....	16
Cost of Reaffirmation.....	16
Accreditation Eligibility .....	17

ACBSP Membership .....	17
Other Eligibility Requirements.....	17
Submitting the Application for Candidacy .....	18
Application for Candidacy Status.....	18
Candidacy Process .....	18
Candidacy Status.....	18
Appointment of a Mentor and Mentoring Activities.....	19
Fees During Candidacy — Mentor .....	20
Reports During Candidacy .....	20
Action Plan during Candidacy .....	20
Recommendation to Proceed to Self-Study .....	21
Self-Study Report .....	21
Preparation of Self-Study .....	21
Faculty Credentials .....	22
Evaluation Site Visit Team .....	23
Evaluation Team Appointment .....	23
Preparing for the Site Visit.....	24
Consensus Call.....	24
Site Visit Schedule .....	24
Evaluation Team’s Responsibilities.....	24
Final Meeting and Exit Interview.....	25
Following the Site Team Visit and Institutional Response.....	25
Action by The Board of Commissioners .....	25
Accreditation Granted.....	26
Accreditation Granted with Notes .....	26
Accreditation Granted with Conditions.....	27
Accreditation Action Deferred .....	27
Accreditation Withheld .....	28
Final Steps.....	28
The Process for Maintaining Accreditation.....	28
Quality Assurance Report .....	29
Status Report on Notes and Conditions .....	30

Special Visits .....	30
Reporting Institutional Changes.....	30
Adding a Branch Campus .....	30
Closing a Branch Campus .....	31
Adding or Closing a Site .....	31
New Degree Programs.....	31
Program Termination .....	32
Change of Institution’s Name or Location .....	32
Change of Ownership.....	32
Closing of Institution.....	33
Voluntary Withdrawal by an ACBSP-Accredited Institution .....	33
Actions Taken While Accredited.....	34
Probation.....	34
Withdrawal.....	34
Appeal Process .....	35
Public Concerns and Complaints Process.....	37
Informal Resolution Procedure .....	37
Formal Resolution Procedure .....	37
Emergency Situations and Accreditation.....	38
Promoting Accredited Status.....	39
Publications.....	39
Guide for Students.....	40
Guide for Employers.....	40
Website .....	40
Mini Gonfalons.....	40
Lapel Pins .....	41

## FAQ

### Frequently Asked Questions On Accreditation Process

<p><b>What is the time to achieve ACBSP accreditation?</b> Usually 22-30 months, but this depends mainly on the time needed to conduct self-study. The process may be shorter, when all data are available and are efficiently reported in the accreditation portal in a short time. On the other hand, the process might take longer in case some issues need to be addressed or new processes put in place before reporting.</p>	<p><b>What is the cost of ACBSP accreditation?</b> The cost consists of \$2,500 Application fee, costs of site-visit team (travel cost, food and lodging and honorarium, all together up to \$4,500) and cost of mentor (\$500 to \$2,000). The total cost is usually approx. \$12,500. The cost may vary depending on many factors, including the size, number of campuses, readiness to achieve accreditation, the speed at which the programs wish to move through the process and other factors. ACBSP always looks to the programs to establish a timetable that suits their own needs.</p>	<p><b>How robust the assessment for the self-study has to be?</b> The reports must contain the minimum of <i>three assessment cycles</i>, with results. Grades and CGPAs cannot be used for assessment results. Evidence of <i>improvements made to educational processes, based on the results, must be reported</i>. If the institution does not have the necessary three assessment cycles or no evidence of improvements, the institution will not be authorized to move forward with the self-study, or the self-study will not be accepted.</p>
<p><b>Is there a limit to apply for the accreditation?</b> The self-study for accreditation should take place within five years of the date of the application for candidacy.</p>	<p><b>How long it usually takes to write a self-study?</b> Typically, it takes the accreditation coordinator and team about six months to prepare the self-study and enter it in the online reporting portal.</p>	<p><b>Is there a possibility to write self-study and provide references and evidence in Spanish or another language?</b> No, the self-study documents must be loaded into the online reporting portal in English. All files and materials will be reviewed by ACBSP staff, evaluators, and Board of Commissioners and all of them have to be able to discuss in the same language.</p>
<p><b>Who can I contact with questions?</b> In case a mentor was assigned, you might discuss preparation of your self-study with your mentor. In any other cases, please contact ACBSP staff. All applicants are encouraged to ask questions. The ACBSP staff is more than willing to help.</p>	<p><b>What happens if we are not sure whether the faculty has sufficient credentials (academic degrees or years of experience)?</b> In case a champion or responsible contact are unable to determine whether the business faculty has credentials (education or practice) that meet the faculty qualifications standard, a Credentials Committee is here to help with such determinations. The committee assists you in determining if a faculty member is doctoral, masters or an exception — for faculty who may have out-of-field doctorates or a unique combination of education and experience.</p>	<p><b>What needs to be arranged for the site visit?</b> Typically, the institution has to arrange the following prior to the site-visit: hotel reservations, a meeting room on campus for team meetings, announcements of the arrival of the visiting team, and arrangements for the visiting team to meet with institution's management (president/rector/CEO), program directors, key administrators, HR and financial managers, library, facilities, faculty, students, alumni, business advisers, and community groups. All those groups need to be available to meet and interview during the site-visit dates.</p>
<p><b>How to plan the schedule of our site-visit?</b> The schedule is typically as follows: first day – arrival and first informal meeting with the institutions' management; second and third day – whole day extensive meetings with all identified stakeholder groups; and fourth day – exit interview with the main findings, strengths and opportunities for improvements and departure of the site-visit team in the afternoon. It may take extra days for multi campuses or extensive off-campus sites and system-wide accreditation.</p>	<p><b>What is the site-visit team looking for?</b> The team is checking the information listed in the self-study and evaluating the accuracy of the program's mission, structure, operation, capacity, and student achievement. The team is assessing quality of programs and their constant improvements based on data analysis.</p>	<p><b>What information will we get at the end of the site-visit (at exit interview)?</b> The information presented by the site-visit team during the exit interview reflects the main strengths and recommendations for improvement identified within the self-study and will be consistent with the outputs of the site-visit interviews. The team chair will provide the institutional representatives an oral summary of the major points that will be in the team's written report, no more than ten top strengths and ten top opportunities for improvement. The final decision on accreditation lies on the Board of Commissioners.</p>

<p><b>Is there a possibility to react and add information after the evaluators' feedback report?</b></p> <p>After the report from site-visit is finalized and checked for completeness by ACBSP staff, institutional representative (CEO/President/Rector/Director) will be notified and get access to the feedback report. The institution will have time to respond to the evaluators' feedback report within ten business days to add more information, evidence, or plans. A response by the institutional representative is provided in the online reporting portal. It then becomes part of the material reviewed by the Board of Commissioners.</p>	<p><b>What happens if our programs are accredited with notes or conditions?</b></p> <p>The President/Rector and Champion or person in a similar position of the institution will get the final decision of the Board with suggestion on improvements to be implemented. Progress on improving processes to remove notes/conditions must be submitted to ACBSP every two years. In case the improvements were integrated into the institution's processes, the institution may send a request to remove notes/conditions along with their quality assurance report.</p>	<p><b>When is the 'Accredited' status effective?</b></p> <p>The effective date of the accreditation begins with the issuance of a letter notifying the institution they have achieved accredited status. At that time the institution may begin to promote its accredited status. All cohorts of students/graduates that were part of the reporting period included in the self-study are considered as studying in an accredited study program and their degrees/diplomas are covered by ACBSP accreditation.</p>
<p><b>For how long is the accreditation valid?</b></p> <p>Accreditation is granted for ten years. During this time, an institution will be required to file Quality Assurance (QA) Reports year four and year eight and to notify ACBSP of actions taken that may impact the accreditation status. If notes or conditions are part of the accreditation, these must be addressed every two years. For all institutions, the timetable for these reports is tied to the official date of accreditation and is part of the accreditation letter and is visible in the online reporting portal.</p>	<p><b>What to do in case there are institutional changes within the period between reports?</b></p> <p>Member institutions have to provide ACBSP with information concerning substantive institutional changes that impact their business school or program which have occurred since the institution received accreditation from ACBSP. Substantive changes need to be set forth in a letter to ACBSP prior to implementation. These institutional changes will also be included in a Quality Assurance report after implementation. Approval and/or acknowledgement of all substantive changes are required by ACBSP.</p>	<p><b>What are the conditions to add/get accredited new programs/degrees?</b></p> <p>The institution must complete a self-study to add the degree. New degree programs, majors or emphases must be in effect for at least two years and have graduates before accreditation will be granted.</p> <p>Any changes have to be reported and ACBSP has to be notified. For concrete steps on specific changes, please see section Reporting Institutional Changes.</p>

## Introduction

This ACBSP Process Manual serves as an overview of ACBSP accreditation and accreditation processes for institutions and their representatives seeking to understand and achieve program accreditation, related terms, and processes. The contents were prepared to be especially valuable for a Business Unit management and Accreditation Champions preparing for accreditation on their institution. This brochure will lead you step-by-step through the process and brings the most important information and milestones that lead to ACBSP program accreditation.

### ACBSP Program Accreditation vs. institutional Accreditation

Accreditation is the process by which an institution voluntarily undergoes an independent quality appraisal of its education activities. Accreditation oversees and develops quality of all processes within a higher education institution. There are two types of accreditations:

- Institutional and
- Program

ACBSP accredits individual business **programs**.

ACBSP is a programmatic accrediting organization that reviews the quality and integrity of business degree programs. Accreditation by ACBSP is based on an independent evaluation of an institution's business school programs by a group of professionals which includes faculty and academic administrators in the field of business education.

**Institutional** accreditation is typically provided by one of the six institutional accrediting organizations for schools in the United States. For schools outside of the United States, the national or regional government will often recognize the institution and give the authority for that institution to grant degrees. ACBSP does not provide institutional accreditation. Institutional accreditation is an important consideration for students. Many organizations use institutional accreditation to accept degrees or credit. ACBSP program accreditation does not guarantee a degree will be accepted or recognized.

In order to pursue ACBSP accreditation, an institution must be accredited by one of the six regional accrediting organizations. Institutions outside of the United States must present, with the application for membership, a certified translation of an official document from an appropriate government organization in their country stating recognition, accreditation, and/or their right to grant degrees. This documentation and additional justification of quality, such as accreditation by national and international accrediting bodies or quality assurance organizations, may be required upon entering candidacy. ACBSP does not offer membership or business program accreditation to institutions with national accreditation such as that offered by Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) or the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC).

### Distinctions Between Member Institutions and Accredited Institutions

ACBSP maintains three categories to describe institutions that have paid dues to join ACBSP:

- All institutions enter as members of ACBSP and may refer to their business programs as a Member Only of ACBSP.
- Upon deciding to become accredited and after approval of the application the business



program may state it has entered candidacy for accreditation and can be referred to as a Candidate for Accreditation.

- Once the process for accreditation concludes, an institution may say the business programs that were identified in the self-study are accredited.

The ACBSP website ([www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org)) is updated regularly as institutions, and the business programs change from one status to another.

## Accreditation Resources and Manuals Available

In addition to this book which describes accreditation processes, several other publications are referenced in this book and on the ACBSP website, [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org).

- ***Application for Candidacy for Accreditation Form***

This document allows you to prepare and send the application form and letter without retyping from a printed or PDF document.

- ***Estimated Costs for Accreditation***

This web page provides approximate budgeting and cost information for the accreditation process.

- ***Unified Standards - Standards and Criteria for Demonstrating Excellence in Business Degree Programs***

This document describes the content of accreditation standards and criteria and provides a manual to adequately describe the implementation of each one of them at your institution to successfully achieve the ACBSP accreditation.

## Accreditation Learning Resources: ACBSP Conferences!

To get familiar with the ACBSP accreditation standards and requirements and the whole process of accreditation, it is suggested to attend ACBSP Conferences and Events as the sessions run through events are designed to provide deep insight into the application of accreditation standards and best practices to be used at an institution.

- **Conferences** – There are two conferences each year. The first conference is held in a major city in the United States during the month of June and another event such as the Dean’s Symposium usually held in November.
- **Access Accreditation Workshops**, both in-person and virtually. These intensive workshops provide an explanation of the process, standards, and best practices for each of the standards.

The **Annual June conference** offers workshops and concurrent sessions on the accreditation process and content of accreditation standards and criteria, an opportunity to meet individually with ACBSP Accreditation Staff to discuss specific issues and questions and to meet with mentors and members of the Board of Commissioners. Some features of the conference include:

- **Pre-Conference Workshops:** Offered most years just prior to the Conference, these sessions usually focus on either evaluator training or the accreditation process and standards, some of which may be offered during the conference (see the description below). This is an ideal way to learn more about accreditation processes, standards, and criteria if your schedule does not permit you to attend the conference or you want to

attend other concurrent sessions during the conference.

- **Meeting of the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Commission:** This annual meeting of all Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree institutions focuses on business that relates to the accreditation process. This includes adopting changes in the standards, election of members to the Board of Commissioners, recognition of schools entering candidacy, and other business. All Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree members may attend and vote, regardless of their accredited status.
- **Meeting of the Associate Degree Commission:** The annual meeting of all Associate Degree institutions includes business that relates to the accreditation process, i.e., adopting changes in the standards, election of members to the Board of Commissioners, recognition of schools entering candidacy, and other business. All Associate Degree members may attend and vote, regardless of their accredited status.
- **Accreditation Concurrent Sessions:** These educational tracks are offered during the conference and focus on writing a self-study, a review of the standards and criteria, best practices used by business programs in reporting on standards, achieving and maintaining accreditation, a review of the reaffirmation of accreditation processes, and training sessions for site evaluators and mentors. The specific sessions offered vary from year to year.
- **One-On-One Sessions:** Conference attendees may set appointments to meet individually with a member of the Board of Commissioners and/or staff during these 15- to 30-minute sessions. This is a time for your specific questions and discussions as you seek or maintain accredited status.
- **Recognition and Accreditation Gala:** This banquet includes the recognition of all schools that have achieved initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation during the past year.
- **Networking Opportunities:** In addition to the networking that occurs during scheduled sessions, there are ample opportunities to set appointments with specific individuals involved in accreditation processes and visit exhibitors that offer services and products to assist you along the path toward maintaining accreditation. Networking also allows meetings to initiate cooperation between schools, articulation agreements, joint degrees, double degrees, student, or professors' exchange and other forms of cooperation. As ACBSP conferences and events are visited by institutions' management, deans, champions, and other leaders, it is the right place to create strategic partnerships!

*"ACBSP Conference is not only a great learning tool with sessions on accreditation Standards and best practices on how to write self-study or reports; it is an amazing opportunity to meet leaders from other schools and establish institutional cooperation!"*

## **Regional Meetings Resources Available**

! ACBSP membership is divided into geographic regions. Every year, each region organizes an individual meeting to enhance cooperation within the region, discuss quality assurance issues that impact their institutions and programs the most, set alliances and agreements, share best practices or approaches to accreditation standards evaluation, data collection for quality assessment and a lot more! This meeting is a great opportunity to know other business institutions within your region and create partnerships, it is a learning tool and perfect networking opportunity with the closest business schools. Regional meetings usually include presentations on accreditation processes by member institutions and updates by an ACBSP staff member. Both institutions seeking accreditation/reaffirmation and those that are accredited benefit. Members are encouraged to attend also a meeting in another region. The cost to attend a regional meeting is often lower than the cost to attend the ACBSP Conferences.

Please check the Regions landing page at [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org) for dates, locations, and registration procedures for each regional meeting.

## **ACBSP Staff Resources Available to Members Questions**

The ACBSP staff are always available to assist individuals from business programs that are considering accreditation or are in the process of accreditation. The staff includes a Chief Accreditation Officer that leads the overall effort, Associate Director of Accreditation, and other accreditation staff. Other staff at the ACBSP office may be able to respond to your questions and requests for information.

## Accreditation Policies

Accreditation policies are overseen and updated by the Accreditation Governance Board and Board of Commissioners (Associate Degree Commission and the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree). All changes must be approved by the institutional members of ACBSP.

### Accreditation Governance

The Accreditation Governance Board assist each Board of Commissioners in establishing, documenting, and periodically reviewing broad accreditation policies and procedures essential to accomplishing the objectives and appropriate functioning of the Bac/Grad. and Assoc. Degree Commissions and the administration of the accreditation staff.

The governance of the accreditation process for associate degree and baccalaureate/graduate degree institutions is the primary responsibility of the elected Board of Commissioners for the Associate Degree Commission and the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Commission. The Boards of Commissioners are responsible for determining eligible institutions to be accredited and for all accreditation decisions.

Accreditation standards (including changes) are initiated by the Board of Commissioners and must be approved by the institutional members of ACBSP (also known as the Commission). Interpretation of the standards is the sole responsibility of the Board of Commissioners.

### Compliance with Accreditation Standards

Business schools and programs seeking ACBSP accreditation are expected to comply with the membership approved Accreditation Standards of ACBSP. The self-study report prepared by the business program should demonstrate that compliance does exist.

Business **programs can request a deviation from a standard.** The deviation may be prompted by the unique mission of the institution or the business programs or by other extenuating circumstances, such as government or union requirements.

When a deviation is requested, it is necessary to include the request in the self-study report and provide a written justification for the request. Deviations are not routinely granted – they must be truly an exception that is justified and one that does not dilute the quality of the business programs. For further information, contact the ACBSP accreditation staff.

*“ACBSP staff are always welcoming questions or concerns. Feel free to call or send your questions to Associate Director of Accreditation or any other ACBSP staff member to address or discuss your specific situation. All ACBSP staff is willing to help.”*

## Accreditation Processes

### Accrediting Baccalaureate/Graduate and Associate Degree Programs

! Institutions seeking accreditation must address all ACBSP Accreditation Standards and write a self-study and undergo a site visit evaluation. Details are part of a separate manual, see *Unified Standards - Standards and Criteria for Demonstrating Excellence in Business Degree Programs*.

### Accrediting Associate Degree Programs at an ACBSP School with Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Programs

Institutions seeking accreditation of associate degree programs that are integrated into baccalaureate programs must address the Curriculum Summary Table 6.3.b.:

- The professional components of criterion 6.3.a.
- Major components of criterion 6.3.a.

Table 6.3.b. - Curriculum Summary will be used for each associate degree program seeking accreditation. Place the table in an addendum to the Baccalaureate/Graduate Self-Study. A separate self-study and site visit is not required. This information will be evaluated by the Associate Degree Board of Commissioners to determine if the associate degree programs should be accredited based on the Baccalaureate/Graduate degree Board of Commissioners accreditation decision.

Baccalaureate institutions seeking accreditation for its associate degree programs must include at least one representative (evaluator) on the site visit team from the Associate Degree Board of Commissioners when the associate degree programs are taught as separate programs, at various locations and with faculty designated to teach only associate degree courses. The requesting institution must submit a self-study based on the “Accreditation Standards for Associate Degree Schools and Programs.”

### Privacy of Accreditation Process

All reasonable efforts will be made by ACBSP to protect the confidentiality of the information gathered and reviewed during the accreditation process. The accreditation decisions made by the Board of Commissioners and the basis for the decisions must be made public. It should be noted that legal requests for information pertaining to an institution’s accreditation process involving ACBSP may require certain disclosures unforeseen at the time this document was prepared.

### Confidentiality Requirement

Only evaluators, staff, and commissioners of ACBSP (“Qualified Persons”) who need to know the confidential information may review the confidential information. ACBSP will require all such Qualified Persons to abide by this confidentiality requirement. All evaluators sign an agreement outlining their ethical responsibility pertaining to conduct before, during and after an accreditation site visit with which they are involved. This means that matters pertaining to an accreditation visit are not to be discussed in public and are to be treated confidentially. The Board of Commissioners

also requests that all ACBSP accreditation materials (e.g. Feedback Report, etc.) be maintained by the accredited institution as confidential information.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Every reasonable effort will be made to have commissioners, staff and evaluators excluded from involvement in the accreditation process in which they have had, or might sometime have in the near future, a professional or personal conflict of interest. ACBSP policy requires that all active commissioners and board members of ACBSP remove themselves from any of the Council's discussions about their own institution's accreditation and all other institutions where they have a relationship that could involve a conflict of interest. A signed conflict of interest statement is requested annually of all active commissioners.

## **Accreditation Timetable**

The time needed to achieve Accreditation status may vary, but mainly depends on the readiness of an institution applying for accreditation. In case a business school is ready and has regular data evaluation and processes in place, it may be something over a year. The usual time period is 24-30 months. A longer time will be required if an outcomes assessment process or other processes are not in place. ACBSP always discusses possibilities and suitable options with an institution's representatives to establish a timetable that suits each institution's specific aims and needs.

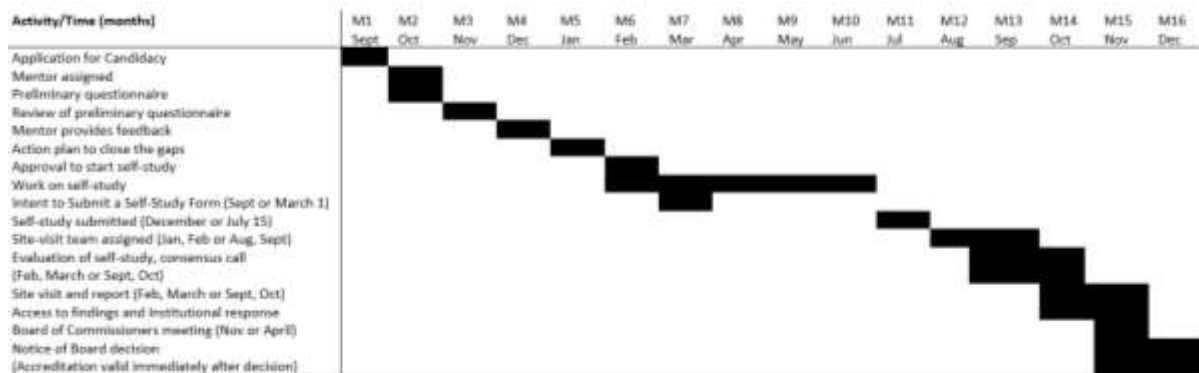
## **Accreditation Evaluation Process Timetable Example**

1. The process begins with the completion and filing of the Application for Candidacy. At this time, the programs are considered candidates for accreditation.
2. The accreditation coordinator and team begin work on the initial parts of self-study and related tables of Unified Standards.
3. The self-study must be in English.
4. A mentor is assigned when the initial parts of self-study are completed. Each school's champion in candidacy needs to reach out to ACBSP to request a mentor to review their progress.
5. The mentor provides feedback on opportunities to improve.
6. The accreditation coordinator and team develop an action plan to close the gaps.
7. The accreditation coordinator and team will decide if they want the mentor to travel to the campus for face-to-face feedback.
8. Work begins on the timetable and plan of work outlined in the action plan.
9. A school continues to work with mentor to address gaps and continue to the full self-study.
10. When the mentor gives consent that the self-study is ready for submission, it has to be shared with Chief Accreditation Officer or Director of Accreditation at ACBSP to approve readiness and set timetable for submission and site visit.
11. The mentor must recommend, and the Chief Accreditation Officer or Director of Accreditation must approve, that the school is ready to submit self-study.
12. A school will send an Intent to Submit a Self-Study Form. The form must be sent to Chief Accreditation Officer or Director of Accreditation minimum 3.5 months prior to the full self-study submission, e.g. No later than September 1 for December submission or no later than

March 1 for July submission.

13. Director of Accreditation will coordinate the time frame in which the business programs will submit the self-study, and when site visit will take place.
14. An evaluation site-visit team is assigned to an institution.
15. Visits are scheduled to permit review and action by the Board in April and November.
16. The team of evaluators receive access to the self-study four weeks prior to the site-visit.
17. A consensus call is conducted by the team to discuss strengths, opportunities for improvement, and site-visit issues one or two weeks prior to the visit.
18. The team chair shares site visit preparations with the campus accreditation coordinator.
19. The site team visits the campus and files a feedback report to ACBSP within ten business days following the visit.
20. The findings of the evaluators are first reviewed by the ACBSP staff for completeness and then access is provided to the business program accreditation coordinator for review.
21. The institutional response is provided in ten business days.
22. The Board of Commissioners review the self-study, evaluators' report, and institutional response at its meeting each April or November to consider accreditation requests and to award accreditation to those institutions that are following ACBSP standards.
23. Action by the Board of Commissioners is informally reported to the institution immediately following the meeting. The formal notice of board actions taken can take up to two months to complete. As ACBSP is a proponent of continuous improvement, most institutions receive accreditation with conditions and/or notes.
24. Accreditation is effective immediately. Accredited status can be released to the public after all expenses are paid.
25. Accredited business programs receive their accreditation certificate during the Accreditation and celebration Gala at the conference held every June. The celebration will be in June, although many programs will have held that status for several months.

I.e., a school may achieve accreditation in approximately 18 months, beginning in the fall and receiving approval by the Board the following April. In other scenario, the process requires two years or more (depends on the time needed to finalize self-study). The scheme below provides an overview of the accreditation process and estimate timetable.



## Five-Year Limit on Candidacy

The institution must complete the accreditation process within five years of beginning candidacy, be granted an extension of candidacy, or be dropped from candidacy.

## Informing the Public

In communicating with the public, business programs must accurately distinguish between programs that have achieved accredited status and those that have not. This is accomplished through brochures, catalogs, websites, or other means of effective public communications.

The business programs must routinely provide reliable information to the public on its performance, including business student achievement, such as graduation rates, retention, licensure, job placement, etc., A link should be easily accessible and identifiable within a minimal number of website pages, specifically located on the business unit website as in this example. <http://www.jcjc.edu/programs/business/> Select Graduation Retention Rates in the middle of the page.

ACBSP must inform the public of required information based on CHEA Standards for recognition such as: the basis for accreditation decisions made by the Boards of Commissioners, accommodations for international programs, program responses to any adverse accreditation decisions, etc. Accreditation decisions are posted at [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org) under a section called Accreditation Decisions after the two meetings per year, held in April and November.

## System-wide Accreditation

ACBSP offers accreditation for individual campuses and system-wide accreditation. Typically, the main campus of the system enters membership and there is no requirement for branch campuses to join into membership unless there is a desire to receive member benefits at these branch campuses. The cost of annual dues is \$2,500 for the main campus.

At the point the accreditation is sought, the branch campuses must be brought into membership as candidates for accreditation. Exceptions are created for campuses that are not prepared to undertake the accreditation process. They should not be brought into candidacy until they are prepared to undertake the process. Extraordinary efforts must be taken by these campuses and the main campus to clearly state the accreditation preparation status or lack thereof.

The definitions of what comprises campuses and sites where education programs are offered are as follows:

- **Main Campus:** Educational institutions which offer business courses or programs at several locations must declare one of these locations to be the Main Campus.
- **Branch Campuses:** A Branch Campus is defined by ACBSP as a teaching location that is:
  - Geographically located away from the main campus
  - permanent in nature
  - offers courses in business programs leading to a degree



- has its own administrative or supervisory organization
- has its own budget
- hires its own faculty, with or without the support of personnel from the main campus.
- **Educational Site:** An Educational Site is defined by ACBSP as:
  - A site other than a branch campus or other instructional site
  - geographically located away from the main campus
  - geographically located away from the branch campus
  - Is supported with faculty and administration from another campus.
- **Other Instructional Sites:** An instructional site is an off-campus site, other than a Branch Campus or an Educational Site, at which the institution offers one or more courses for credit. These sites may include, but are not limited to, high schools, corporations, community centers, and churches.

Educational sites and other institutional sites are not considered campuses as outlined in this document. Their programs and degrees are reviewed as part of the review of the campus to which they are attached. Certain policies and practices make it viable for a system to bring into membership and accreditation as many campuses as are ready for accreditation:

- The cost for annual membership for the main campus remains \$2,500 prior to accreditation or \$2,950 upon entering candidacy. The cost for branch campuses is \$1,000. Branch campus cost is capped at 50 campuses. One invoice is submitted to the main campus.
- Any online campus is considered a branch campus.
- The system may bring into accreditation as many campuses as are prepared for accreditation at one time by payment of the standard \$2,500 fee. As other campuses are added in any given year, the \$2,500 fee is required for a group or individual campuses and the accreditation process undertaken.
- Under certain circumstances, new campuses may be added to the system. They are not required to undertake the accreditation process as long as the system-wide policies that apply to all campuses at the time of accreditation are applied to these campuses.
- Recognition of accredited status is provided for all campuses on the ACBSP website, where all campuses are listed with designation as candidates and then later as accredited.
- Each campus designates a CHAMPION and CO-CHAMPION. However, the variety of all member benefits is delivered to all individuals on the campus.
- During the candidacy for accreditation process, it is advisable that a person be designated to assist with providing required information to the lead campus coordinator. This person may be a CHAMPION or a CO-CHAMPION.
- One self-study is conducted for all campuses, alleviating the need for multiple self-studies for each campus.
- One site visit is conducted with an expanded team, larger than the typical team. The visit typically begins and concludes at the main campus with visits to other campuses carried out by individual site team members during the middle of the week.
- The expense is greater than a one campus site-visit but dramatically less per campus than a typical visit. It is not mandatory for all campuses to be visited.
- Once all existing campuses are accredited, any new branch campus may be added using a process described in the section, reporting institutional changes.
- Upon granting accreditation, all campuses in attendance at the Annual Conference will be recognized with one framed certificate of accreditation for the entire system.

## Cost of Accreditation

To gain the ACBSP Accreditation, the associated costs are related mainly to administration, site-visit team, and transfers, and of course, the actual assessment and work of the evaluators and the Board of Commissioners. The table below shows estimate costs related to the accreditation process.

The costs related to obtaining accreditation by ACBSP will vary from institution to institution because of location and expenses for visits by the mentor and site visit team. Another factor in the process is the speed at which the programs wish to move through the process, and number of campuses.

It is recommended the cost of accreditation be allocated over a three-year period. ACBSP will work with each applying institution on the timetable set forth in the action plan to properly prepare invoicing and payment consistent with the budget set forth by the business programs.

Application Fee	\$ 2,500
Mentor Visits & Consultations	\$ 2,000
Site Visit Travel (three evaluators)	\$ 2,400
Site Visit Honorarium (three days)	\$ 1,950
Site Visit Food and Lodging	<u>\$ 3,000</u>
TOTAL	\$11,850

The costs shown are subject to change. They do not include the prorated or annual membership dues, nor do they include the costs for individuals to attend the regional meeting or the ACBSP Annual Conference.

A \$5,000 site-visit deposit is required prior to the site visit. ACBSP will pay each evaluator individually after they file an expense claim and attach receipts for the site visit expenses. An honorarium of \$850/visit is provided to the chair of the site visit team and \$550/visit to other members of the site visit team. The business program is responsible for reimbursing ACBSP on a timely basis for additional expenses. Any unexpended funds are returned to the business programs.

## Cost of Reaffirmation

The costs related to reaffirmation include Reaffirmation fee and cost of the site visit team. As well as in case of Initial accreditation, the final cost will vary based on the travelling expenses of the site visit team.

Reaffirmation Fee	\$ 2,500
Site Visit Travel (three evaluators)	\$ 2,400
Site Visit Honorarium (three days)	\$ 1,950
Site Visit Food and Lodging	<u>\$ 3,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ 9,850

Again, the costs shown are subject to change. They do not include the prorated or annual membership dues, nor do they include the costs for individuals to attend the regional meeting or the ACBSP Annual Conference.

A \$5,000 site-visit deposit is required prior to the site visit. ACBSP will pay each evaluator individually after they file an expense claim and attach receipts for the site visit expenses. An honorarium of \$850/visit is provided to the chair of the site visit team and \$550/visit to other members of the site visit team. The business program is responsible for reimbursing ACBSP on a timely basis for additional expenses. Any unexpended funds are returned to the business programs.

## Accreditation Eligibility

To start the accreditation process, each institution has to be eligible and meet the following criteria:

### ACBSP Membership

To be eligible for consideration to become accredited, the business programs must be a member of ACBSP. For membership to be granted, three conditions must be met:

- The institution must be accredited by an institutional accrediting body or, if the institution is located outside the United States, the institution may submit a certified translation of an official document from an appropriate government organization in its respective country stating recognition, accreditation and/or the institution's right to grant degrees.
- The business programs must pay the appropriate membership dues. The annual and prorated dues amounts are as follows:

Membership Only	
July 1 - June 30	\$2,500.00
October 1 - June 30	\$1,875.00
January 1 - June 30	\$1,250.00
- The business programs must submit a Member Enrollment Form listing a CHAMPION for the business programs, a CO-CHAMPION, important information about the institution and a listing of all those designated to receive member benefits.

### Other Eligibility Requirements

In addition to membership, prior to applying to enter candidacy for accreditation, the institution must:

- Have offered (a) degree(s) in business for at least two years and have graduates.
- Have a publicly stated purpose appropriate to a college or university that has been approved by the institution's governing body (i.e., Regents, Trustees, etc.).

*"In case you are not sure whether your institution would be accepted for candidacy, you need advice on processes, or standards, or your Institution has specific local/national requirements, reach out to Associate Director of Accreditation or any other ACBSP staff member to discuss your specific situation."*

## **Submitting the Application for Candidacy**

Once a school determines it does meet the eligibility requirements, an application for candidacy is submitted. Following acceptance into membership, the business programs must verify it has reviewed the eligibility requirements and submit:

### **Application for Candidacy Status**

The process is described as follows:

- The letter and appropriate application for accreditation must be authorized in writing by the CEO/president/rector/director of the institution.
- If the accreditation is for a multi-campus system, the letter should indicate how many campuses are included for accreditation and list them specifically. If campuses are excluded, they should be listed, and a reason provided as to why they are being excluded. This letter should include an explanation of the ways in which you will communicate to the public what is not accredited.
- Payment of the accreditation fee of \$2,500 must accompany the application materials. The fee is refundable if it is determined the institution was not eligible or cannot proceed with the accreditation process based on the content of the application and course catalog. The remaining balance of the accreditation fee may be paid at any time but must be paid before accreditation is granted.

## **Candidacy Process**

### **Candidacy Status**

Upon review and approval of the application documents, the business programs become a "Candidate for Accreditation" and is in "Candidacy status." This title may be used in communicating the business program's status to the public. A special logo is available from ACBSP for the school to use in promoting its candidacy status.

The date entered candidacy is important for students. Any student that graduates before the program is accredited but is in candidacy, is grandfathered into graduating from an ACBSP accredited program.

A word of caution is in order at this point. While ACBSP wants to actively help the business programs achieve accreditation, and while it has established this program for that purpose, ACBSP is not able to guarantee that the business programs will receive accreditation by becoming a Candidate for Accreditation. The expectations, however, are that the business programs will successfully achieve accreditation. Candidates for Accreditation are held to all the standards for accreditation.

## Appointment of a Mentor and Mentoring Activities

After receiving notice of being granted candidacy status, a school starts to work on initial parts of self-study and Unified Tables. To start with self-study, a business unit focuses on the first parts of each standard (Approach) defined as 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1 and 7.1 to provide an overview of quality-management processes in place and identify possible gaps. When the initial parts are described, ACBSP will assign a mentor for an institution applying for accreditation of its business programs, normally within ten business days. The institution and ACBSP will mutually agree upon mentors.

Contact information will be provided to the mentor and the designated person (institutional contact/champion), as specified in the application for candidacy. The mentor and the institutional contact person should communicate as soon as possible about expectations on timing to review initial parts of self-study and complete the remaining parts and discuss any support the business programs require from the mentor. The mentor and institutional contact person should communicate approximately once a month to determine the requirements needed to assist with the accreditation process and monitor the progress along the timeline suggested by the business programs.

The institutional contact person will inform the mentor as soon as their progress is ready to be reviewed. The mentor should review the information and provide feedback to the business programs in a timely manner.

The mentor and the institutional contact person should discuss the feedback and prepare a timeline and an action plan to improve any processes identified by the mentor. Communication with the mentor and the institutional contact person should occur at least once a month to determine the progress on the action plan.

When the mentor believes the action plan has progressed sufficiently to allow the business programs to conduct a self-study that can meet the ACBSP standards, the mentor or institutional contact will notify ACBSP.

**!** Please note that the site-visit team evaluators and the Boards of Commissioners expect to see a minimum of three assessment cycles, with results. Grades and CGPAs cannot be used for assessment results. Evidence of improvements made to educational processes, based on the results, must be reported. If the institution does not have the necessary three assessment cycles or no evidence of improvements, the mentor and ACBSP staff will not authorize the business programs to move forward with the self-study.

ACBSP staff will notify the institutional contact person with the timelines for submittal of the self-study after notification by the mentor that the business programs are ready to finalize their self-study. The institutional contact person will complete the Intent to Submit a Self-Study Form and send it to ACBSP.

The business programs should send the mentor each section of the self-study to review after the section is completed. Feedback will be provided to the business programs. Suggested improvements can include providing sufficient data and information to show evidence of improving educational processes and, whenever possible, including the data or data summaries in the self-study document rather than in the appendices.

## **Fees During Candidacy — Mentor**

The costs related to having the mentor include an honorarium of \$500 per year and reimbursement of travel expenses. During the first year, if a visit to the school is not required, and work is done via e-mail and phone, the mentor is paid an honorarium of \$500 for desk time upon completion and submittal of an expense report. The mentor is not paid for desk time in subsequent years, only for visits to the campus. If more than one day of honorarium per year is requested, it must be approved by the program accreditation coordinator in candidacy and ACBSP prior to the mentor visit.

The mentor must submit documentation of an expense report to ACBSP the same calendar year as the expense occurred. Late reports may not be accepted due to budgeting constraints. ACBSP takes responsibility to provide payment to the mentor and the business programs take responsibility to reimburse ACBSP in a timely manner.

## **Reports During Candidacy**

Once the candidacy letter and application have been received, the ACBSP office and mentor will ensure the institution receives, or has previously received, access to *Self-study, Unified Tables the Standards and Criteria Book*.

The first report submitted for business accreditation is the initial parts of self-study provided to mentor. ACBSP anticipates that this will be submitted within the six months following the date of granting candidacy.

An institution starts to work on self-study, focusing on the first parts of each standard (Approach) defined as 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1 and 7.1 to provide an overview of quality-management processes in place and identify possible gaps. When the initial parts of self-study are finalized, the accreditation coordinator notifies ACBSP about this fact and requests a mentor.

ACBSP will assign a mentor within ten business days. A mentor will be ready to review the initial parts of self-study and continue to work with a business unit to develop an action plan to finalize the remaining parts based on the gaps and processes identified. The mentor works continuously with a business unit based on the plan developed and provides feedback on the responses and materials and a mentor visit may be scheduled to the institution to review the materials submitted and discuss progress and plan for accreditation in detail.

The results of mentor review of initial parts of self-study should not be construed as an approval or rejection of accreditation – it is simply a test of readiness for accreditation.

## **Action Plan during Candidacy**

**!** A valued option is for the accreditation coordinator and team to develop an action plan based on mentor feedback to the initial parts of self-study. The action plan includes a description of what needs to be accomplished and a timetable for completion.

It is also an ideal opportunity to outline the anticipated costs of accreditation, a plan for budgeting expenses and for anticipating the expenses for which ACBSP will invoice and require payment.

## **Recommendation to Proceed to Self-Study**

The institution must receive a recommendation to proceed to the self-study or self-studies from the mentor or mentors, with concurrence of the Chief Accreditation Officer or Director of Accreditation before continuing to the self-study submission. It is necessary to provide self-study for review to Chief Accreditation Officer or Director of Accreditation and get their consent to proceed to self-study submission.

The Director of Accreditation, or designated staff, will coordinate the timeline for submitting the self-study. The business programs must submit an Intent to Submit a Self-Study Form to the ACBSP accreditation staff to be placed on the site-visit schedule. To move to the final self-study submission and site visit, it is necessary to submit Intent to submit self-study form, which has to be approved by your mentor and signed and stamped by your institution representative. The Form must be submitted a minimum of three months prior to the targeted due date of self-study submission (either July 15 or December 15 each year). Please note that missing the three months prior notice means shift to the next upcoming term.

The self-study for accreditation should take place within five years of the date of the application for candidacy.

## **Self-Study Report**

While still in candidacy, the accreditation process enters a key stage with the beginning of the self-study. The institution may not proceed with self-study until after it has been given permission to do so by mentor and Chief Accreditation Officer or Director of Accreditation at ACBSP. The purpose of the self-study is for the business programs to demonstrate and record that it is following the ACBSP accreditation standards or to outline activities that will lead to achievement. Typically, it takes the accreditation coordinator and team about six months to prepare the self-study.

## **Preparation of Self-Study**

The self-study documents must be provided in English. The report will be examined, and the necessary arrangements will be made for a team of trained evaluators to access the report.

The self-study includes specific responses to all ACBSP accreditation standards and criteria. It must include a candid assessment of the business program's strengths and weaknesses regarding each criterion, including concrete description on how it complies with the standards and criteria and how it was measured, analyzed and adjusted to get improvements.

Unique characteristics and specifics (i.e., national or business requirements, regulations, specific approach etc.) of the business programs not referenced in responses to individual standards, but which are significant in making the case for accreditation, should be set forth and highlighted in the overview section of the self-study document.

Each Standard makes clear distinctions between actions required of programs necessary to meet the standard for accreditation. To report on each standard, first basic requirements need to be reported.

! Straight after that follow the criteria that are designed to describe program improvement based on measurements and quality analysis. All seven standards are based on Baldrige and describe (1) Approach, (2) Deployment, (3) Results, and (4) Improvement of the given criterion.

**Applicants are encouraged to ask questions throughout the preparation of the self-study. The ACBSP staff is more than willing to help.**

## Faculty Credentials

It is essential to make sure that the faculty teaching at the ACBSP accredited business programs meet the criteria and requirements for credentials (academic degrees) and/or years in practice.

! If the business program administration is unable to determine whether the business faculty has credentials that meet the faculty qualifications standard, the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of Commissioners has established a **Credentials Committee** to make such determinations. The purpose of this committee is to assist the business programs in determining if a faculty member is doctoral, masters or an exception — for faculty who may have out-of-field doctorates or a unique combination of education and experience.

In order to proceed and get a response from the committee on that matter, please send your request for review of one to four full-time faculty members or part-time faculty (adjuncts) in an institution's business programs must be sent electronically to the ACBSP headquarters and will be processed on a timely basis. Normally it takes about 30 days for the business programs to receive a response.

A faculty review by the Credentials Committee cannot be conducted unless there is a complete portfolio on each faculty member. A portfolio consists of the following electronic documents:

- Curriculum Vitae (current)
- Transcripts of all graduate work. Graduate courses that relate to the discipline(s) in which the faculty member is teaching should be highlighted and separately identified. Transcripts of undergraduate work should also be included if needed to meet qualifications. The listing of these courses should be presented in a manner that allows the reader to evaluate the content of the course (course description)
- A statement describing the teaching experience of the faculty member, including an analysis of the quality of teaching that is performed — student learning outcome assessments, peer evaluations, student evaluations, etc. (two-page limit)
- A statement describing the faculty member's professional experience as it relates to the enhancement of teaching in the discipline(s) taught within the business programs (two-page limit)
- A statement describing the faculty member's consulting experience as it relates to the enhancement of teaching in the discipline(s) taught within the business programs (two-page limit)
- A completed Faculty Credential Review Spreadsheet provided by ACBSP. The spreadsheet is also available for download from the ACBSP website. The faculty member's name and requested level of qualification, as well as the discipline and/or course levels being sought, should be completed in the top portion of the spreadsheet.



All materials are to be submitted electronically to [reports@acbsp.org](mailto:reports@acbsp.org). There should be one portfolio submitted for each faculty member being reviewed. In compiling the portfolio, substance in the narrative is more important than length. There is a 10-page limit. All materials submitted in the portfolio will be kept by the Credentials Committee and will not be returned to the institution or individual.

## **Evaluation Site Visit Team**

After the self-study is completed, ACBSP will assign a site-visit team to assess the institution's business programs and information written in a self-study on site. ACBSP is dedicated to assembling a well-balanced team of professionally trained program evaluators with knowledge and experience with local programs and national specifics (in case of international schools) to conduct an efficient site visit. ACBSP selects visiting team members from a pool of experts in higher education quality assurance who are thoroughly qualified and have experience in the Council's evaluation process. The person designated as the chair of the team is an expert with long-term cooperation and experience with Quality assessment, ACBSP standards and site visits. The chair is responsible for ensuring that the visit is conducted objectively and according to the highest standards, ethics, and integrity.

The size of the team (usually three members) and the qualifications of its members are determined by the type of institution being evaluated and the programs offered by that institution. If the accreditation is planned for a system of campuses, the size and length of the visit may increase.

## **Evaluation Team Appointment**

To minimize potential conflicts of interest, ACBSP ensures to construct evaluation teams that do not include former employees or a close relative of a former employee, a graduate of the institution, anyone having previously expressed a personal opinion, or someone who is in the immediate competitive area of the institution. The institution is always notified of the selected committee members in advance and has an opportunity to object to anyone designated to serve on the evaluation team. In case of objection, ACBSP will exchange any member with potential conflict with the institution to be visited.

After the site visit dates are agreed upon with an institution to be visited and the team is appointed, the program accreditation coordinator and team chair, in cooperation with ACBSP staff, will be responsible for all logistical arrangements, including, but not limited to: hotel reservations, a meeting room on campus for team meetings, announcements of the arrival of the visiting team, and arrangements for the visiting team to meet with institution's management (president/rector/CEO), program directors, key administrators, HR and financial managers, library, facilities, faculty, students, alumni, business advisers, and community groups. All those groups need to be available to meet and interview during the site-visit dates. These arrangements will be coordinated with the chair of the ACBSP site visit team and ACBSP staff.

## **Preparing for the Site Visit**

Access to the self-study report will be provided to each member of the evaluation team and to a member of the Board of Commissioners assigned to the institution by ACBSP.

Team members will examine all materials received from ACBSP and the institution prior to the site visit. The chair will establish which team member will be responsible for writing specific parts of the report, usually based on the division of standards among team members.

## **Consensus Call**

About two weeks prior to the site visit, a consensus call is conducted with all team members. Contact may be made with the institution by the chair of the site-visit team following this consensus call to share site visit issues, request for additional information, or raise specific questions to be discussed during the visit.

## **Site Visit Schedule**

The precise length of the team's visit will depend on the location(s), size and number of programs offered by the institution. The schedule is typically as follows: first day – arrival and first informal meeting with the institutions' management; second and third day – whole day extensive meetings with all identified stakeholder groups; and fourth day – exit interview with the main findings, strengths and opportunities for improvements and departure of the site-visit team in the afternoon. It may take extra days for multi campuses or extensive off-campus sites and system-wide accreditation.

In conjunction with the institution's accreditation coordinator/champion, the team chair is responsible for working on logistics, agenda, gathering information, etc. The chair also keeps team members informed about how the site visit arrangements are progressing and communicates the team's arrival and departure times. Team members will usually arrive the afternoon before the first day of the official visit. The chair will notify team members of the time and place of their first team meeting. At this meeting, the chair will review specific plans for the visit and generally organize the team to ensure a successful visit.

## **Evaluation Team's Responsibilities**

During its first day on campus, the team should meet with the president of the institution, the head of the business programs and others as deemed appropriate. The team begins the process of evaluation by considering the business programs in its entirety.

As representatives of ACBSP, the evaluation team is responsible for verifying the information in the self-study report and evaluating the business programs to help determine whether the standards for accreditation are met and all information in the self-study are accurate.

The team aims to accumulate as much pertinent information as it can and use sampling techniques where appropriate to review the accumulated data. The team's findings reflect its collective professional judgment about the program's ability to deliver a quality educational experience to its

students. The main factors in the following information when making professional judgments are the following: the **program’s mission, structure, operation, capacity, and student achievement**. It is important to report to make special notes when appropriate to the program’s mission, structure, operation, capacity, and student achievement.

### **Final Meeting and Exit Interview**

A final team meeting will be held during the last day of the site visit at which the team will agree upon the main outcomes of their findings and the content of its report. At this same meeting, the team chair will finalize plans for the exit interview with the head of the business programs. The information presented by the site visit team during the exit interview will reflect the main strengths and recommendations for improvement identified within the self-study and will be consistent with the outputs of the site visit interviews. At the exit interview, the team chair will provide the institutional representatives with an oral summary of the major points that will be in the team’s written report, no more than ten top strengths and ten top opportunities for improvement. The team chair will make it clear in the exit interview that the Board of Commissioners will make the final decision on accreditation. The team is not to express any opinions as to whether the programs will be accredited — that is the sole prerogative of the Associate Degree Board of Commissioners and the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of Commissioners.

### **Following the Site Team Visit and Institutional Response**

The findings of the evaluators are first reviewed by the ACBSP staff for completeness and then access is provided to the institutional representative (CEO/President/Rector/Director and Champion) to respond to the evaluators’ feedback report. A response by the institutional representative is provided in ten business days of receipt of the feedback report. It then becomes part of the material reviewed by the Board of Commissioners.

### **Action by The Board of Commissioners**

The Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of Commissioners is comprised of 12 elected Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree members of ACBSP and one public member, appointed by the Board. The Chief Accreditation Officer is an ex-officio member of the Board (non-voting).

During the accreditation cycle, the Board of Commissioners reviews the self-study materials, the evaluation team’s feedback report, and the institution’s response and determines:

- If all ACBSP Standards are met.
- If the team’s report is complete and supported with factual information.
- If the team’s findings support the granting of accreditation, and if the institution’s response to the team’s report is substantially in agreement with the team’s report. If not, the commissioners will obtain clarification of conflicting information.
- An adverse action requires a second review by another commissioner.

The Associate Degree Board of Commissioners is comprised of 9 elected Associate Degree members of ACBSP and one public member, appointed by the Board. The Chief Accreditation Officer is an ex-officio member of the Board (non-voting).

The Accreditation Committee is composed of Associate Degree Commissioners. The chairperson of the Accreditation Committee may request the presence of any individual(s) that could provide information of a substantive nature to the proceedings.

The Accreditation Committee reviews the evaluation team's report and the business program's response to determine:

- If all ACBSP Standards are met.
- If the team's findings support the granting of accreditation.
- If the team's findings support the granting of accreditation, and if the institution's response to the team's report is substantially in agreement with the team's report. If not, the commissioners will obtain clarification of conflicting information.

After careful review of the visiting team's findings, the response of the business program, and other relevant materials, the Accreditation Committee makes its recommendations to the Board of Commissioners concerning action on the application for accreditation of business programs.

The Board of Commissioners decides whether the business programs meet all the accreditation standards of ACBSP. The Board of Commissioners renders one of the following actions on the program requests for accreditation:

### **Accreditation Granted**

Accreditation shall be granted to those programs that are judged by the Board of Commissioners to be in compliance with ACBSP's accreditation standards.

- Concentrations, specializations, minor, etc., that are a part of the accredited programs are automatically accredited with the program.
- Certificates that use 75% of the curriculum from accredited programs and are 12 credit hours of more are automatically accredited with the program.
- The programs must have paid its current membership dues and the site visit expenses before accreditation can be promoted.
- The program will be notified, in writing, of its accreditation status.

Business programs must accurately distinguish between programs that have achieved accredited status and those that have not in all public communication. This is accomplished through brochures, catalogs, websites, or other means of effective public communications. ACBSP will also list this information on our website, [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org).

### **Accreditation Granted with Notes**

Business programs that are compliant with ACBSP standards and criterion, but a criterion could be improved to a higher level of quality, may be accredited with "notes." Notes represent "Opportunities for Improvement" (OFI) or the opportunity for business programs to improve

processes to a higher level of academic quality. Progress on improving the process to remove the notes must be submitted to ACBSP every two years.

### **Accreditation Granted with Conditions**

Business programs that are compliant with ACBSP standards and criterion, but multiple criteria may be improved to a higher level of quality. The Board of Commissioners may grant “Conditional Accreditation.” The members of the Board of Commissioners identify the best practices from reviewing large numbers of reports. As commissioners identify and discuss key processes, they can extend that knowledge to programs in the form of conditions (opportunities for improvement). For example, if criterion regarding student learning outcome assessment can be improved, a condition could be placed on student learning outcome assessment.

The President/Rector or person in a similar position of the institution has pledged that the improvements will be implemented within a four-year time frame. Progress on improving processes to remove the conditions must be submitted to ACBSP every two years, asking for a review so the conditions can be removed.

When deemed necessary, a commissioner will visit the campus and decide whether the processes have been improved. The report on these findings is made at the April or November Board of Commissioners meeting for its final disposition. Requests for a one-year extension, with justification, may be considered. Program accreditation may be placed on probation for one year. If the processes are not improved within these times allowed, the institution will be notified that its conditional accreditation status has been rescinded and its current status is unaccredited.

### **Accreditation Action Deferred**

When an institution is found to be in noncompliance with ACBSP standards, the Board of Commissioners may defer action until a later date (usually within three years) pending remedial action and/or receipt of additional information. The reasons for the deferral will be stated in writing by the Commissioners, along with an invitation to respond. A deferral is, in effect, a ruling of no action at that time, and therefore cannot be appealed. This action differs from conditional accreditation in two main respects: first, the noncompliance areas are extensive; and/or second, adequate information concerning compliance with standards was not included in the self-study document or other related documents.

When an institution has corrected the deficiencies that caused the deferral, the institution is required to write a letter notifying ACBSP of the corrective action it has taken. A Commissioner may then be assigned to make a one-day visit to validate that the deficiencies have been eliminated.

Each April and November, the Board of Commissioners meets to review removal of deferred status, and therefore requests should be sent to ACBSP headquarters several months in advance of the Board of Commissioners Meeting in April or in November. The institution will be notified of the Commissioners action after the meeting.

## Accreditation Withheld

Accreditation withheld applies to an initial or new application for accreditation. If accreditation is withheld, the Board of Commissioners will give written reasons for the denial of the application. The applicant can present its case, including new evidence, in a fair and impartial hearing before the Board of Commissioners at its next scheduled meeting. The procedures for this type of hearing are as follows:

- The request for such a hearing must be made within 15 days of the date of notification of the denial, it must be in writing, and it must be signed by the chief executive officer of the institution. The arguments and reasons in support of the request must be limited to the points enumerated in the written statement of denial.
- The institution may present only evidence not already considered. The institution may send one or more representatives, including legal counsel, to present its argument contesting the action taken by the Board of Commissioners. ACBSP records and subsequently transcribes all proceedings of this type for its own use.
- Based on the kind of new evidence presented, the Board of Commissioners may affirm, modify, or reverse its previous decision to deny accreditation. If the previous action of denial is upheld, the denial becomes final and no further remedy is available to the institution for a period of one year, after which the institution may reapply for accreditation.

## Final Steps

Following action by the Board, the institution is notified of the final action and made aware of any remaining fees due as a result of the accreditation process. Upon payment of final fees and any membership dues, the accreditation is granted. The business programs will be notified, in writing, of their accreditation status. ACBSP will inform the public of decisions on accreditation status through the ACBSP website.

ACBSP staff will then invite the champion, co-champion, and others to join in the celebration of all member institutions that have been granted initial accreditation and reaffirmation of accreditation during the current academic year. This occurs at the ACBSP Annual Conference in June and includes attendance at the Accreditation and celebration Gala.

## The Process for Maintaining Accreditation

While the certificate of accreditation is formally presented at the Annual Conference each June, the effective date of the accreditation begins earlier with the issuance of a letter notifying the institution they have achieved accredited status. At that time the institution may begin to promote its accredited status.

**!** Accreditation is granted for ten years. During this time, the business programs will be required to file Quality Assurance (QA) Reports year four and year eight and to notify ACBSP of certain actions taken that may impact the accreditation status. If notes or conditions are part of the accreditation, these must be addressed every two years and the continued services of a mentor can be offered.

For all institutions, the timetable for these reports is tied to the official date of accreditation rather than the Annual Conference where the granting of accreditation is celebrated. The dates of QA reports are part of the accreditation letter and are visible in the online reporting portal.

After a period of ten years, each school has to submit reaffirmation self-study addressing all standards and criteria and undergo a site visit as in case of initial accreditation. Schools that fail to submit a reaffirmation by their due date will be automatically placed on probation for a period of one year after their due date. Schools who do not submit within the one-year probation will be suspended for a period of one year. Schools who do not appeal and submit within one year of suspension will permanently lose accreditation.

Schools may, at any step of the process, apply for a one-year extension that may be granted by the Associate / Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of commissioners. The Board of commissioners will consider the school's plan to achieve reaffirmation, the school's history of compliance with QA and status reports, and extenuating circumstances beyond the school's control while considering granting extensions.

## **Quality Assurance Report**

Members from the institution agree to abide by the accreditation policies and procedures of ACBSP by successfully completing the process of accreditation. The accredited business programs keep ACBSP fully informed of activities being conducted in the business programs periodically as determined by the Board of Commissioners.

The Boards of Commissioners determined the Quality Assurance Report (QAR) will be used to provide evidence of continued compliance with the seven ACBSP standards. QARs are due year four and year eight of the ten-year accreditation period and reported using the QAR template in the online reporting platform.

The QAR is one of the primary tools used to keep ACBSP informed on how the public is routinely providing reliable information on their performance, including student achievement.

In addition to requiring quality assurance reports, ACBSP reserves the right to conduct special visits to, or request specific reports from or about, accredited business programs at any time. These are rendered under conditions within a time frame to be decided by ACBSP. Refusal of the business unit to respond to, or cooperate with, such requests shall be grounds for suspension or revocation of its accreditation status or grounds for some type of conditional accreditation.

If, at any time, ACBSP has substantive evidence that an institution is in danger of having its eligibility status with a government agency that establishes requirements for educational institutions or regional accrediting body withdrawn or made conditional, ACBSP may direct a special visit to that institution's business school or program. The specified purpose of such a visit will be to ensure that the students attending the institution are not being harmed academically because of the institution's alleged noncompliance with requirements of the government agency or the regional accrediting body.

## Status Report on Notes and Conditions

If business programs have notes or conditions on accredited programs, they must provide a Status Report on Notes and Conditions year two and year six of the ten-year accreditation. The Status Report is a focused report on progress made to remove any notes or conditions. There is a Status Report on Notes and Conditions template online at [www.acbsp.org/page/accreditation-documents](http://www.acbsp.org/page/accreditation-documents).

## Special Visits

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## Reporting Institutional Changes

This section provides the details on how member institutions are to provide ACBSP with information concerning substantive institutional changes that impact their business school or program which have occurred since the institution received accreditation from ACBSP. Substantive changes need to be set forth in a letter to ACBSP prior to implementation. These institutional changes will also be included in a Quality Assurance report after implementation.



Approval and/or acknowledgement of all substantive changes are required by ACBSP. This section also explains the procedures ACBSP will follow in approving such changes.

## Adding a Branch Campus

It is the responsibility of the main campus to notify ACBSP and to undergo a preliminary visit by ACBSP before identifying a branch campus as having accredited degree programs. Failure to notify ACBSP prior to initiation of a branch campus that offers business courses and degrees may jeopardize the institution's accreditation status.

The main campus shall provide:

- Rationale for initiation of the branch campus and other information about business programs
- degrees awarded
- faculty qualifications



- learning resources
- physical and financial resources
- admission and graduation requirements
- compliance with state law evidencing authority to operate
- number of students
- administrative arrangements and
- other information ACBSP may request

Permanent accreditation of degree programs at a branch of an institution can come only after an evaluation visit, which must take place within six months of the opening of the branch. Only the Board of Commissioners in a regular session may designate permanent inclusion of degree programs at a branch campus as a part of the institution's accreditation. Under certain circumstances, new campuses may be added to the system. They are not required to undertake the accreditation process as long as the system-wide policies that apply to all campuses at the time of accreditation are applied to these campuses.

Upon granting accreditation to a branch campus, the ACBSP website is updated, and respective entities are notified of the accredited status of the campus. A certificate suitable for framing and placement in a prominent location on the campus will be provided upon request. During the next dues billing cycle, the appropriate dues amount for the campus will be added to the dues billing statement given to the main campus. The amount will not exceed 50% of the annual dues.

### **Closing a Branch Campus**

It is the responsibility of the main campus to notify ACBSP of the closure of any branch campus. ACBSP staff will act to remove the campus name from the ACBSP website and adjust all future dues billing. The Board of Commissioners will be notified at their next scheduled meeting. On a rare occasion, the main campus will be asked for the rationale by staff or by Board action.

### **Adding or Closing a Site**

It is the responsibility of the main campus or any branch campus to notify ACBSP of the opening of an educational site or instructional site that plans to offer business courses. Because it is a site, no further action is required. It is not necessary for ACBSP to provide an update to the website or adjust dues billing. The institution should update its various printed materials and website to show the site offers accredited programs. It is the responsibility of the main campus or any branch campus to notify ACBSP of the closing of an educational site or instructional site.

### **New Degree Programs**

If a business school or program expands or plans to expand its curriculum by offering new degrees, new majors or concentrations, or a new emphasis after it has been accredited, then ACBSP must be notified during the early stages of the program planning and expansion, if possible. If the new degree is at a level currently accredited by ACBSP, then report information on the following information:

- student enrollment
- program objectives
- instructional resources
- facilities and equipment
- faculty qualifications
- admissions requirements
- graduation statistics
- core professional components (CPCs) and
- outcomes assessment processes and results

If the new degree is at a higher level, than what is currently accredited, the school must complete a self-study to add the degree. New degree programs, majors or emphases must be in effect for at least two years and have graduates before accreditation will be granted.

If the new program is determined to be substantially different from other programs offered by the institution, ACBSP, at its discretion, may direct a new visit to be conducted. If, as a result of a new program visit, ACBSP determines that the overall quality of an institution is being diminished, the institution may be scheduled for a complete reevaluation.

### **Program Termination**

A decision by an accredited business school or program to voluntarily terminate a part of the business program should be communicated to all interested parties which include, but are not limited to, students, governmental agencies, the local community, and ACBSP.

New students should not be allowed to enroll in any program that is scheduled to be terminated if they cannot complete their work prior to the closing date for which public notice has been given. The institution is obligated to continue to offer appropriate courses, including prerequisites, so that the currently enrolled students will be able to complete the program. For this purpose, the period of time need not extend beyond sufficient time for students already enrolled, and maintaining normal academic progress, to complete the program.

### **Change of Institution's Name or Location**

ACBSP should be notified immediately if an institution is contemplating changing its name and/or physical location.

### **Change of Ownership**

The transfer of ownership or a major change in the controlling mechanism of an institution is considered to be a substantive change. ACBSP will handle changes of this nature as follows:

- **Automatic Discontinuation.** Any change in ownership or control of an institution automatically results in immediate discontinuation of accreditation by ACBSP.

Reinstatement of accreditation may be regained only upon application to and reconsideration by ACBSP. Because this discontinuation decision occurs without action or prior approval by ACBSP, this change of status does not constitute withdrawal of accreditation and is not a negative action.

- **Reinstatement.** When automatic discontinuation occurs, the accreditation may be reinstated at the discretion of ACBSP. The reinstatement will occur according to terms and conditions that it has established or may have been established at that time. The burden of application for reinstatement is entirely upon the institution. The Chief Accreditation Officer of ACBSP has the authority to grant a temporary reinstatement of accreditation for a period of time sufficient to allow for the consideration of all appropriate documentation. The temporary reinstatement period is not to exceed 12 months.
- **Effect.** Until the application for reinstatement (either permanent or temporary) has been granted, the accreditation of the institution is in abeyance. If the reinstatement is withheld, the matter shall be treated as a deferral or a denial.

### **Closing of Institution**

When ACBSP receives information, from whatever source, that an institution has ceased to operate, it shall immediately take steps to verify the information. If an institution has ceased to function, the grant of accreditation is summarily suspended. Such an action is authorized without prior notice or hearing and with immediate public notice.

The institution shall be notified in writing of the suspension at its last known address. If no petition to lift the suspension is received within 60 days of this notification, the suspension automatically becomes a revocation.

### **Voluntary Withdrawal by an ACBSP-Accredited Institution**

There may be reasons for an ACBSP-accredited institution to withdraw from ACBSP membership and thereby lose its accredited status. The most typical reason is failure to pay the required due amount. ACBSP requests that the institution places this type of action in writing and forward it to ACBSP headquarters. As an accredited member, you must agree to inform students of Voluntary withdrawal from ACBSP program accreditation.

The institution is then required to make a public statement of its withdrawal and to strike any reference to ACBSP accreditation from its catalog and other public documents.

## **Actions Taken While Accredited**

### **Probation**

When an accredited institution is found to be in noncompliance with the ACBSP standards, the Board of Commissioners may declare the accreditation of that institution to be probationary. Probation is a serious status that places the institution's accreditation in jeopardy and may be preliminary to the consideration of withdrawal. The Board of Commissioners will inform the institution in a written statement of the reasons for probation, along with an invitation to respond. A commissioner on the Board of Commissioners will be assigned to work with the institution to satisfy the conditions for the removal of probation. Probationary status requires a decision regarding continued accreditation by the Board of Commissioners within one year of the Board's action.

It is a principle of the Board of Commissioners that accreditation brings with it the good faith understanding by the accredited institution that continued accreditation requires that the institution remain in compliance with the standards and concurs with ACBSP's Principles of Accreditation. Consequently, probationary action may occur when an institution is determined by the Board of Commissioners to be out of compliance with the standards or with the policies and procedures of ACBSP. This may include, but is not limited to, situations where an accredited institution:

- Demonstrates a consistent pattern of non-compliance with the standards.
- Fails to remove conditions of accreditation within the allotted time frame.
- Fails to respond to directives or information requested by the Board.
- Fails to comply with ACBSP directives regarding promotional materials, and/or public perception of accreditation.
- Demonstrates other significant inconsistencies with ACBSP accreditation policies and procedures.
- Meets any of the conditions listed as reasons for suspension. During the probationary period the institution maintains its accreditation status.

### **Withdrawal**

Withdrawal of accreditation differs significantly from withholding of accreditation; withholding denies an institution something it is seeking, while withdrawal takes away something the institution already has, i.e., accreditation. Accreditation may be withdrawn by ACBSP through two types of actions: (1) suspension of accreditation and (2) revocation of accreditation.

Suspension of accreditation may occur when, in the judgment of ACBSP, an institution no longer substantially complies with the Standards of ACBSP. A judgment of suspension will always specify the time, the conditions, and terms by which an institution may regain accreditation through correction of the conditions that led to the suspension.

Listed below are several, but not all, of the reasons for suspension:

- When any component of an accredited business school or program is thoroughly examined and found not to be in compliance with current ACBSP standards.
- When Quality Assurance reports filed by the accredited school or program fail to conform to ACBSP reporting requirements.
- When any substantial or significant changes in the operation, structure, governance, ownership, control, location, facilities, or programs of the institution are made without notification to ACBSP.
- When the institution fails to respond to inquiries or to cooperate in completing arrangements for a scheduled evaluation.
- When the institution has deviated from standards or directives of ACBSP.
- When the institution fails to file a Quality Assurance report on a timely basis as required by ACBSP.
- When the institution has failed to pay its annual membership dues or accreditation fees.

Outright revocation of accreditation rarely occurs except in cases where the institution fails to pay the appropriate dues and fees amount required to maintain accreditation. Other than nonpayment of dues and fees, revocation most often follows suspension by ACBSP, and thereafter, the failure of the institution to correct deficiencies noted by ACBSP. A judgment of revocation by ACBSP requires that the institution begin anew the process of accreditation in order to regain it.

In all cases where accreditation is subject to withdrawal, either by suspension or revocation, the institution is afforded the following procedural guarantees:

- Opportunity for a hearing before the Board of Commissioners on all material issues in controversy.
- Written prior notice of the proceedings, the charges levied, and the standards by which the institution is ultimately judged.
- A right of appeal as set forth in the section titled "Appeal Process."

## **Appeal Process**

Certain appeal procedures have been established for institutions whose accreditation is subject to withdrawal. These procedures are intended to provide due process to institutions claiming to be aggrieved by the withdrawal actions but do not apply to decisions by ACBSP to withhold accreditation by means of denial of application.

An institution must file an appeal with ACBSP, signed by the chief executive officer of the institution, making the appeal within 15 days after withdrawal notification by ACBSP. An appeal for withdrawal of accreditation by ACBSP must be on the grounds that such a decision was:

- Arbitrary, capricious, or otherwise in substantial disregard of the standards or procedures of ACBSP, or
- Not supported by substantial evidence in the record upon which the Commissioners based the withdrawal action.

The Board of Appeal has no jurisdiction or authority concerning whether or not the accreditation standards and procedures are reasonable. Nor will the Board of Appeal consider any evidence that was not in the record for review by the Board of Commissioners.

The Board of Appeal is a separate, independent appeals body established by ACBSP for the purpose of hearing appeals by institutions whose accreditation has been withdrawn. The Board of Appeal serves as another level of due process for institutions whose accreditation has been withdrawn.

The Board of Appeal is comprised of five individuals, each of whom must be a business faculty member or academic administrator of an ACBSP member institution in good standing. The appointment is made by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of ACBSP which will also appoint the chair of the Board of Appeal. Terms of appointment are also set by the Executive Committee. The qualifications of each member appointed to the Board of Appeal must include knowledge of, and experience with, the accreditation process. An appointee may not be currently serving as a Commissioner.

The Board of Appeal is empowered to review, upon notice of appeal by an institution, the withdrawal of accreditation of that institution. The Board of Appeal has the authority to:

- Affirm the decision of the Board of Commissioners.
- Remand the case to the Board of Commissioners with recommendations for further consideration if it finds the appeal to have been well-founded or justified.

When a case is remanded to the Board of Commissioners, the recommendation of the Board of Appeal shall not bind or limit the Board of Commissioners in any way.

When the decision of the Board of Commissioners is affirmed by the Board of Appeal, the appeal shall be deemed to be finally disposed of upon issuance of the Board of Appeal's decision. An appeal remanded to the Board of Commissioners by the Board of Appeal shall be deemed to be finally disposed of when the Board of Commissioners takes final action on the remand.

Briefs may be submitted prior to the hearing by the institution and the Board of Commissioners in a manner prescribed by the Board of Appeal. The Chair, or the member of the Board of Appeal designated in the Chair's absence, will preside at the hearing. The Chair will rule on all procedural matters.

The hearing shall be as informal as possible and appropriate under the circumstances. The institution may waive personal appearance, in which case the matter will be handled solely based on the submitted briefs.

Every decision must have the concurrence of a majority of the Board of Appeal. Within a reasonable time following the conclusion of the hearing, the Board of Appeal shall issue a written statement of the decision along with its reasons for the decision and recommendation, if any, to the Board of Commissioners. Dissenting opinions may be filed. The majority opinion, with any dissenting opinions, will be furnished to the institution and the Board of Commissioners.

Publication of the decision is the responsibility of ACBSP; however, it has no authority to withhold

publication. The appealing institution shall bear the following expenses in connection with the appeal:

- Travel, housing, and subsistence for the members of the Board of Appeal participating in the review, and
- Cost of the hearing room.

An appeals deposit of \$2,000 must be made with ACBSP at the time the described appeals notice is filed. This deposit shall be applied to the expenses to be paid by the institution, as described above. Prior to the hearing, ACBSP may increase the amount of the deposit required to meet a realistic estimate of expenses involved should they be likely to exceed \$2,000.

### **Public Concerns and Complaints Process**

This policy provides two avenues in which to pursue a complaint—an informal resolution procedure and a formal resolution procedure. An individual may utilize this policy to process a complaint about ACBSP, or any business program accredited by ACBSP. The assistant director of administration has established a mechanism for tracking all formal complaints. Individuals seeking information regarding the process of complaint resolution may consult with any of the following individuals for advice and assistance. Contact information for these individuals is available on the ACBSP website under the tab “About ACBSP” using the link for “Contact Us.”

- Director of Finance
- Chief Accreditation Officer/CAO
- President/Chief Executive Officer
- Director of Accreditation

### **Informal Resolution Procedure**

Complainants are required first to seek informal resolution of their grievances or concerns with the person or entity that is the subject of the complaint. This informal procedure is intended to encourage communication between the parties involved, either directly or through an intermediary, to facilitate a mutual understanding of what may be different perspectives regarding the act or directive prompting the complaint.

If the informal process does not result in the resolution of the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant may utilize the formal complaint procedure.

### **Formal Resolution Procedure**

The formal complaint shall be in writing and shall set forth a statement of the facts, the ACBSP policy or procedure allegedly violated, and the specific remedy sought. It must document that informal resolution has been attempted but failed. If possible, include documentation exchanged between the two parties.

The written complaint will be acknowledged within five business days. If an acknowledgement is not

received, it is incumbent on the person submitting the complaint to immediately contact the ACBSP office to verify receipt or to determine the process for re-submittal.

The formal complaint normally shall be filed as follows:

All formal complaints shall be filed with the Director of Finance. The complaint will be logged in and given a control number. If the complaint concerns an accreditation issue, the complaint will be forwarded to the Chief Accreditation Officer. If the complaint concerns a Council issue, the complaint will be forwarded to the Executive Director. Each Director may select a representative, other than the one designated in this paragraph, to handle these complaints.

These individuals or their offices shall also continue to monitor and coordinate the complaint resolution process.

Absent extraordinary circumstances, the Director to whom the complaint was referred to shall, within ten (10) business days, forward a copy of the written complaint to the respondent. One extraordinary circumstance would be to consider the complaint beyond the scope of the ability for ACBSP to resolve, such as a grade dispute between a professor and a student. Another circumstance that will cause the complaint process to stop at any time will be upon discovery that there is pending litigation in a court of law or action underway that may cause such litigation to be filed. Under these circumstances the Director will confer with the complainant and document why ACBSP cannot be of further assistance.

Within ten (10) business days after forwarding the written complaint to the respondent, the Director will communicate with the complainant, requesting additional information, securing additional information in response to questions. The Director shall also communicate with the respondent and conduct such additional investigation as he/she deems necessary.

Absent extraordinary circumstances, a written recommendation shall be rendered via email within ten (10) business days of the communications unless an extension is mutually agreed upon by the parties. The recommendation shall be sent to the complainant and respondent. The written recommendation shall state the background information, the rationale for the recommendation, and the recommended remedy (if any). For monitoring purposes, a copy of the report shall be sent to the Vice President of Operations who received the initial complaint.

## **Emergency Situations and Accreditation**

Every emergency cannot be covered in this section (e.g., fires, floods, tornados, hurricanes, pandemics, etc.). Emergencies require different levels of intervention and empathic teamwork to recover.

During an emergency:

1. The ACBSP staff can help with the approval of issues such as: extensions on status reports, quality assurance reports, self-studies, expanded reliance on distance learning for instruction, etc.
2. Virtual meetings may be necessary for the Associate Degree Board of Commissioners, Baccalaureate/Graduate degree Board of Commissioners, and the Accreditation Governance Board.



3. Accrediting institutions that are in a country or region that is currently experiencing war, social unrest, or are too dangerous to for volunteer site visit evaluators to enter can be accredited with a surrogate city virtual site visit. These countries or regions need higher education to help improve their situation. Access to tools such as accreditation to assist in improving academic quality is an important service to the world and requires creativity in accreditation processes.
4. Virtual accreditation visits may be followed up with an on-site visit in a timeframe that is reasonably practicable and may be performed by staff or a trained site visitor and need not repeat the full review. A focused site-visit to confirm the presence of facilities viewed during the virtual site visit and, if required by the accrediting agency, the opportunity to randomly select students to interview as part of the normal site visit process, is sufficient to meet the Department's requirements for an on-site visit following a full virtual site visit.

## Promoting Accredited Status

### Use of Logo

After the great achievement that you went through, your institution and staff are justifiably proud of obtaining this status and celebrate the success and amount of work you devoted to the accreditation. We encourage you to display the ACBSP logo on your stationery, in brochures and on your business school website. The logo may also be used on transcripts for accredited programs. The logos shown below are one-color; the logos are also available in two-color and are offered in a variety of formats from the ACBSP office or from the ACBSP website. Please call 913-339-9356 or send a message with your specific request to [info@acbsp.org](mailto:info@acbsp.org). Electronic files are provided in the press kits sent shortly after the institution receives notification from the Board of Commissioners and can be used to promote your accredited status.

### Publications

ACBSP permits a wide range of wording to promote your accredited status. ACBSP staff provides assistance in developing proper wording or approval of information or brochures you develop, but it is not required. Some wording suggestions are as follows:

*The [School of Business at Our University] is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) based on standards that required our school to demonstrate teaching and program excellence.*

*The [School of Business] was accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) in [year] and had to regularly demonstrate that it maintains the ACBSP high standards of excellence in leadership, strategic planning, student achievements and assessment, stakeholder focus, faculty and staff, curriculum, and process management and performance.*

*The [School of Business at Our University] has achieved voluntary accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), demonstrating it has met quality standards of business education that promote teaching excellence.*

It is necessary to accurately distinguish between programs that have achieved accredited status and those that have not. This is accomplished through brochures, catalogs, websites, or other means of effective public communications.

Two brochures are available to help you communicate the value of ACBSP accreditation. These brochures are print-quality and available for your campus print shop to download and produce the needed quantity. The brochures can also be ordered directly from ACBSP. A third option allows you to customize the back panel of either brochure with your content and logo. Visit the “Promote Your Accredited Status” link under the Accreditation Tab at [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org) to order.

### **Guide for Students**

This brochure is written specifically for students considering which college or university is the best fit. It addresses the student, as well as anyone who might be advising the student on the benefits of choosing an ACBSP-accredited business program.

### **Guide for Employers**

This brochure outlines the benefits of hiring graduates from ACBSP-accredited business programs. It details how a core business curriculum is required for ACBSP accreditation produces graduates who are ready to meet the challenges of a global marketplace.

### **Website**

All accredited institutions or members, candidates for accreditation are encouraged to display their status and ACBSP logo on their home page and other websites that are related to accreditation and high quality of program assessment. Members and accredited institutions use section devoted to “accreditation” where all the accreditations of the institution are noted. Members and accredited institutions are encouraged to display the ACBSP logo and wording that notes which programs are ACBSP accredited or going through candidacy and which programs are not.

At any web pages or materials, feel free to use logo or wording “Accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs”. It may be helpful to place a link to the ACBSP website for stakeholders in case they would like to know more information. We recommend using the link: [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org), which opens the home page.

### **Mini Gonfalons**

Mini versions of the gonfalons used at the Accreditation and celebration Gala during the ACBSP Annual Conference each year are available for purchase. There are four versions of the mini gonfalons. Each measure 22” w x 32” h. The cost is \$35 per gonfalon. This includes shipping and handling. Visit the “Promote Your Accredited Status” link under the Accreditation Tab at [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org) to order.

- Initial Accreditation - Associate Degree
- Initial Accreditation - Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree

- Reaffirmation of Accreditation - Associate Degree
- Reaffirmation of Accreditation - Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree

## **Lapel Pins**

ACBSP offers lapel pins to proudly display your accredited status. The pins are a gold-tone metal featuring the two-color “ACBSP Accredited” logo. The front of the pin is coated in enamel. Visit the “Promote Your Accredited Status” link under the Accreditation Tab at [www.acbsp.org](http://www.acbsp.org) to order.



# ACCREDITATION COUNCIL FOR BUSINESS SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS

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