

**AAB**International

**ACCREDITATION GUIDANCE MANUAL**

**FORM 221**

**February 2008**

3410 SKYWAY DRIVE  
AUBURN, ALABAMA 36830

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

This document provides guidance for institutions seeking specialized accreditation or reaffirmation of collegiate aviation programs through the Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI, formerly CAA). This Manual may not address all possible situations, variables or questions an institution may have, but attempts to address the most often asked questions and/or problems that confront institutions during the process. AABI, through the Guidance Committee, is available to address any other needs or respond to questions as necessary.

## 1.2 RATIONALE

This Manual is an outgrowth of the “Steps to Accreditation” (Form 212), which provides structured guidelines to follow throughout the accreditation/reaffirmation process.

## 1.3 GOALS

The goals and responsibilities of the Guidance Committee may be found in Section 11.09 of the Bylaws.

## II. GETTING STARTED

### 2.1 PRELIMINARIES

An institution seeking AABI program accreditation should start the process no less than two years before accreditation status is desired. Institutions should contact AABI with its intent to seek accreditation and plan to attend the next AABI meeting. Meetings are held twice a year, typically in February and July, specific dates and helpful information are posted on the Web site: <http://www.aabi.acero/>. It is a requirement that institutions seeking accreditation be educator members of AABI. The institution should submit the membership application and specified fee.

Attendance at the meeting can be invaluable in understanding the process that leads to accreditation. Workshops and seminars are held for all attendees that will familiarize institutional representatives in methods used in the accreditation process. It is also advisable to seek guidance from other institutions (AABI Form 217) that have gone through the process and have attained accreditation status. Candidates will find the AABI membership enthusiastic to share experiences to assist in the process.

The following workshops at meetings will be of great value to representatives:

The Guidance Committee Workshop is designed for institutions seeking guidance for initial accreditation or reaffirmation. The Committee and members explain the process and answer questions during roundtable discussions so institutions will feel confident undertaking what may seem like a daunting task.

The Criteria Committee Workshop offers an opportunity to become familiar with the AABI Criteria. AABI Accreditation Criteria Manual (Form 201) is the publication specifying the requirements an institution MUST or SHOULD meet. Copies of this form are available at meetings, obtained from AABI and accessible via the Web site.

Institutional and Visiting Team Workshops provide focused training sessions for the various constituents. Institutions learn what to expect during the campus visit; and educators and industry members become qualified to serve on AABI visiting teams. Even though the site visit occurs later in the process, it is never too early to prepare for this part of the process.

### **III. APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION**

#### 3.1 APPLICATION PROCESS

After joining as an educator member, the next step is to apply for accreditation. An institution seeking initial program accreditation may do so through submission of a letter of intent or a pre-candidacy application (AABI Form 202B). When it is reasonably certain that programs submitted for review fall within its scope, AABI will furnish the institution with an application (AABI Form 202) to be returned with information pertinent to the accreditation process.

Institutions should plan two years to complete the accreditation process. Gathering data for the application alone is time consuming. Along with the application, AABI Form 202 (hard copy and in electronic format), institutions must submit application fees, three copies of the institution catalog, three copies of aviation curriculum plan format, three copies of aviation and related course descriptions, three copies of General Program Outcomes Matrix, three copies of Aviation Core Topics Matrix, three copies of curriculum review forms, and three copies of the institution's and aviation program's mission statements (Form 201, sec. 2.2) for each program submitted for candidacy.

##### 3.1.1 APPLICATION POLICIES

Each program seeking accreditation should have completed at least one full cycle and have graduated at least one class. A program is a clearly delineated major, degree or option or combination of options within a major or degree as defined by the institution.

The institution may submit a degree with several options as long as all options meet the program-specific criteria.

The institution should submit an option as a program if it wishes to have the option accredited and listed as a separate program.

#### 3.2 APPLICATION REVIEW

The executive director will review all the information provided. After the director's examination, the application is forwarded to the Accreditation Committee for review. The Accreditation Committee will determine the institution's status and will forward the determination to the executive director.

### 3.3 APPLICATION STATUS

A formal letter is sent to the institution with notification of application status.

#### 3.3.1 DENIAL OF APPLICATION

If the application is not accepted, Candidates Status is not granted. If not acceptance, the institution may discover the faults in their program and prepare to reapply in the future. The letter from the director will include the reason for denial.

#### 3.3.2 ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATION

If candidate status is granted, the letter of acceptance will be accompanied by AABI Form 201 (Accreditation Criteria Manual) and AABI Form 204 (Outline for a Self-Study Report). This packet will be mailed to the institution by the AABI central office.

#### 3.3.3 PRE-CANDIDACY APPLICATION

If an institution is not immediately eligible for Candidacy, the Chair of the Accreditation Committee refers the application to the Guidance Committee. A subcommittee of the Guidance Committee, the “Candidacy Partnership Program” will establish protocol with the institution. Institutions/individuals from AABI-accredited programs will serve as the point of contact for the applicants through the application and self-study phases. The fees will be applied to related costs of the Partnership Program.

“Pre-Candidacy” status signifies that the institution is demonstrating reasonable progress toward the attainment of accreditation; but does NOT indicate accredited status nor guarantee eventual accreditation.

### 3.4 REAFFIRMATION APPLICATION

If an institution has AABI-accredited program(s), it is recommended that the application (Form 202) for reaffirmation be submitted two years prior to expiration of accreditation (five-year cycle).

Once candidacy status is granted, the institution will follow the traditional accreditation process to attain reaffirmation of any or all programs.

## **IV. SELF-STUDY PHASE**

### 4.1 COMMENCEMENT

Once candidate status is granted, the institution shall commence the self-study (AABI Form 204) process. This process can easily take from six months to one year to complete. The self-study is in effect a “snapshot” of programs over an academic year period. Gathering this information may take up to a year, especially if historical data is not readily available. Upon receiving candidate status, the institution will be given a “due date” to submit the Self-Study Report (SSR). Typically, this is one year from the date candidacy is granted.

The method of self-evaluation utilized is determined by the institution/program/department. Eventually, all faculty and staff involved in the program will need to be familiar with the self-study and the accreditation process. It is recommended to engage the full faculty and staff during the self-study process to ensure an in-depth examination of all aspects of the program, which ultimately will identify strengths and weaknesses. The institution should have a central person responsible for coordinating and collecting all the data and material for the self-study. If faculty and staff are involved, it will make collection of materials easier and, upon completion, all involved will be much more knowledgeable about the program and fully prepared for the AABI visiting team. Experience has shown that the value and quality of the self-study is directly proportional to the extent of aviation faculty involvement in the self-study process. The Self-Study should be a report of the entire faculty and should reflect their input.

### 4.2. THE SELF-STUDY

A critical examination will be made of all facets of each academic program for which accreditation is sought, including: students; program objectives and outcomes; curriculum; faculty and staff; facilities, equipment and services; organization and administration; safety culture and program; and relations with industry. All the foregoing information will be compiled in a narrative Self-Study Report (SSR) with accompanying data in appropriate tables, charts and graphs. Two copies of the report will be furnished to AABI, along with an electronic copy; one copy to the Accreditation Committee chair; with additional copies furnished to the visiting team.

The Self-Study Report and all associated communications will be written in the English language.

During the self-study process the institution may want to refer to the Evidence Guide (Form 208), the Assessment Guide (Form 223) and the Glossary of Terms (Form 222). This will give the institution an insight for methods and resources for assessment, how to assemble and use evidence, understand the terminology and anticipate what the visiting team may be requesting for evaluation during the site visit.

The Self-Study Report serves three purposes:

- (1) to guide the aviation unit (and its faculty) through a critical review of its operations;
- (2) to provide information to AABI so that a fair evaluation of the program can be made; and
- (3) to serve as a historical document for the aviation unit.

These purposes should be kept in mind when preparing the report. Sufficient information should be provided without being superfluous. Extra information may be included to enhance the historical value of the document.

Adjustments must be made to the terminology to fit local conditions (i.e., semester/quarter, college/school, ACT/SAT). Use the terms and accounting procedures of the institution for student credit hours, full-time faculty, and full-time students. If the aviation unit offers a graduate program, its relationship to the undergraduate program should be discussed where appropriate. Information available in published literature may be included in the report by appropriate reference.

Where applicable, additional sheets may be inserted immediately following the pages to which they pertain. Such pages should be numbered with the number of the preceding page plus a sequence number (i.e., 36-1 for the preprinted page, then 36-2, etc.).

Major additional information should be placed in an appendix. Label appendices with the sequential letters (i.e., A, B, etc.), and number the pages of each appendix. Separate the major sections with a divider. Sections I through X should constitute Volume I, and the Appendices as Volume II. AABI prefers compiling the SSR in a three ring binder and may be the easiest way to insert information as it becomes available. Simple dividers will keep the document in order as well. This will also facilitate accessibility to various parts or sections by the institution, visiting team and Accreditation Committee.

The Outline for a Self-Study Report (Form 204) is self-explanatory. Guidance is provided for each section to assist the institution in completing

the document. If the institution has additional questions, contact AABI for additional assistance.

#### 4.2.1 SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

This section will require factual information about the institution, accreditation, and the aviation unit itself. This information is likely to be available in the university's catalog, Web site, or be common knowledge from the more senior members of the aviation unit. Give as accurate detail as possible concerning the background and historical development of the program(s) submitted for accreditation. Refer to AABI Form 202 when completing this section. Most of the information may be presented in your application.

#### 4.2.2 SECTION II – STUDENTS

This section will require a wide-ranging search for information and data to compile. Also, close coordination with the institution's systems of admissions, progress tracking (retention), and career placement will be necessary.

A thorough description of the assessment system of these institutional functions is required in the study. Some institutions may have a specific office that is responsible for assessment while other institutions may break up these responsibilities into college, department or even program levels.

Admissions standards and procedures are most likely available through the institution's catalog or other official institutional documents. Admission data will have to be compiled from historical data maintained by the institution. The office responsible for this data will have to assist in this effort and should also be helpful in supplying data on the quality of new students and enrollment data.

Grading system information is readily available from an institution's registrar. The registrar can provide data on academic success and failure. This office is most likely responsible for record keeping for the academic program up for accreditation.

Academic advisement information is typically maintained by the aviation unit and should be available for inclusion in the SSR.

Student activities information may be housed in a separate office at the institutional level. Consultation with this office will provide the information needed for the self-study.

Graduates and placement data can be obtained from historical information usually maintained by the institution. How far back this information is kept may vary from one institution to the next. Information over the last five years should be included in the self-study.

#### 4.2.3 SECTION III – PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Most of the information for this section should be found in the institutional catalog or official documents published by the aviation unit. Additional information should be available from faculty members or staff members involved in the creation of program objectives and methods used to track, measure, evaluate, and affect change from such processes.

The process by which an institution or aviation unit uses their constituents in the evaluation process is critical. Describe how the institution or aviation unit uses input from outside influences.

It is also necessary to describe the system used to assess the educational objectives of the program(s) submitted for accreditation. The system of assessment may vary from different institutions or aviation units. The basic process needs to include a historical account of data collection, evaluation, and changes made based on such data. Refer to AABI Form 223 for more guidance on program assessment methods.

#### 4.2.4 SECTION IV – PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Describe the program(s) learning outcomes as they relate to AABI Criteria stated in Form 201, Criterion 2.3 a-j.

List the program(s) outcomes and describe the process by which the outcomes were measured or assessed. Refer to AABI Form 201 Criterion 4 for option-specific criteria related to program(s).

Describe what evidence you have collected to demonstrate the program meets the criterion. The Evidence Guide (Form 208) is a useful document in determining the type of evidence the visiting team will request to examine. The evidence itself will not be submitted in

the self-study, just a description of the types of examples the aviation unit has collected and will present.

It will also be necessary to describe the system used to assess the outcomes of the program(s) submitted for accreditation. The system of assessment may vary from different institutions or aviation units. The basic process needs to include a historical account of data collection, evaluation, and changes made based on such data. Refer to AABI Form 223.

#### 4.2.5 SECTION V - CURRICULUM

The institution must complete one Section V, Curriculum, for each program submitted for accreditation or reaffirmation (Section VA. [Program] 1, Section VA.[Program] 2, etc.). Most of the information may be found in the institution's catalog and within the institution's system of program assessment.

Include in the Appendices updated copies of applicable curriculum review forms from the application (Form 202).

Describe what evidence you have collected to demonstrate the program(s) meets the criterion. The AABI Form 208 is a useful document in determining the type of evidence the visiting team will request to examine. The evidence itself will not be submitted in the self-study, just a description of the types of examples the aviation unit has collected and will present.

It will also be necessary to describe the system used to assess the outcomes of the program(s) submitted for accreditation. The system of assessment may vary from different institutions or aviation units. The basic process needs to include a historical account of data collection, evaluation, and changes made based on such data. Refer to AABI Form 223.

#### 4.2.6 SECTION VI – FACULTY AND STAFF

This section will require information from the aviation unit concerning staff and faculty assignments. Information on compensation may be sensitive and require cooperation from the aviation unit administration. Policies on evaluation and promotion should be available in the faculty handbook or other documents used by the faculty and administration to provide fair and agreed upon practices. The cooperation of the faculty is imperative in providing

input to this section. Their collaboration will assist in educating faculty and staff on the requirements of AABI accreditation.

Describe what evidence you have collected to demonstrate the program meets the criterion. The AABI Form 208 is useful in determining the type of evidence AABI will be looking for on the visit. The evidence itself will not be submitted in the self-study, just a description of the types of examples the aviation unit has collected and will present.

It will also be necessary to describe the system used to assess the outcomes of the program(s) submitted for accreditation. The system of assessment may vary from different institutions or aviation units. The basic process needs to include a historical account of data collection, evaluation, and changes made based on such data. Refer to AABI Form 223.

#### 4.2.7 SECTION VII – FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

Obtaining information on classrooms, laboratories and staff offices may be time consuming but necessary. Depending on the location of airport facilities, gathering the information may take some effort. Facilities, the institution's library and services pertaining to audiovisual services and computer facilities as an example, will require coordination with other entities on campus to provide the detail needed. Placement services and instructional equipment information may be located in a myriad of places. Assistance from other offices will be helpful in completing this section of the self-study.

Describe what evidence you have collected to demonstrate the program meets the criterion. The Evidence Guide will be useful in determining the type of evidence AABI will be looking for during the visit. The evidence itself will not be submitted in the self-study, just a description of the types of examples the aviation unit has collected and will present.

It will also be necessary to describe the system used to assess the outcomes of the program(s) submitted for accreditation. The system of assessment may vary from institutions to institution or aviation unit to aviation unit. The basic process needs to include a historical account of data collection, evaluation and changes made based on such data. Refer to AABI Form 223.

#### 4.2.8 SECTION VIII - ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Information for this section is best obtained from the administration of the institution and the administration of the aviation unit. Budget information is typically held with great discretion so it may be difficult to obtain some data. It is important that the administration is aware of the accreditation process underway and is open to provide some sensitive data. Information on other programs at the institution is usually available in the catalog.

#### 4.2.9 SECTION IX – AVIATION SAFETY CULTURE AND PROGRAM

Include an accident/incident history detailing the number of occurrences, brief descriptions, number of fatalities or injuries, NTSB report number, state or federal violations (specifying agencies) and results. Describe changes in operations or procedures resulting from the accidents/incidents.

Describe the aviation safety program including the operational areas covered (such as flight, maintenance labs, airport ramp and fueling).

List the designated safety officer and describe the safety committee, if applicable.

If the program has a Safety Hazard Incident reporting system where students and instructors can routinely report incidents, occurrences or other safety hazards, describe how the information and analysis is used to support the program.

Describe what evidence you have collected to demonstrate the program meets the criterion. The Evidence Guide will be useful in determining the type of evidence AABI will be looking for during the visit. The evidence itself will not be submitted in the self-study, just a description of the types of examples the aviation unit has collected and will present to the visiting team.

#### 4.2.10 SECTION X - RELATIONS WITH INDUSTRY

This section covers a broad array of topics that will require assistance from several entities. The aviation unit should have the necessary information on advisory committees that provide feedback and interaction with the industry that supports the aviation program. A list of contributions should be available from the aviation unit or the institution's budgeting office. Some of this information may be

confidential but must be appropriately represented in this section of the Self-Study Report.

Information on seminars and short courses may be gathered from the faculty in the aviation unit or through the aviation unit's office. The data concerning research being done within the aviation unit's program area or at the institution may have a specific office that deals with research for the entire institution.

Institutions typically have a career services office that will be beneficial in assisting with information on work experience programs, placement assistance, and student-industry interaction. Most aviation units have co-ops and internships with a variety of companies. These companies may also be great sources of information for this section.

#### 4.2.11 SECTION XI - APPENDICES

The appendices section may be used to include additional documents or information that is useful and relevant to the self-study. Sometimes it is easier to include such documents rather than describe them in other sections of the self-study. The appendices section also includes the following:

##### 4.2.11.1 APPENDIX A – FACULTY RÉSUMÉS

Appendix A includes résumés of all the faculty members of the aviation unit. These résumés should be as current as possible. There is no specific format; however, similar formats make the review easier for the accreditation committee and the visiting team. (Separate CVs and résumés with blank pages.)

##### 4.2.11.2 APPENDIX B – COURSE OUTLINES

The aviation unit should have on file a collection of course outlines for all courses taught by the unit. No specific format is required but all the outlines should be in a clean and similar format. This again will make the review easier.

##### 4.2.11.3 APPENDIX C – PRINCIPLE FORMS

This appendix should include all forms referenced throughout the self-study. Also include forms and surveys used in the assessment process for students, educational objectives, program outcomes, curriculum, faculty and staff, facilities, equipment and services, and aviation safety culture and program. These are just the sample forms, not the completed

information. The completed forms and or surveys will make up evidence that the visiting team will review.

#### 4.2.10.4 APPENDIX D, E, F, etc. – OTHERS AS APPROPRIATE

Include any other material the institution wishes to provide in additional appendices. However, do not compile a great deal of evidence in the appendices, as the visiting team will do that review during the actual visit. Segregate as necessary the material in the different appendices that have common value or topic.

Examples of these appendices may include: academic program documents, strategic planning documents, assessment planning documents, worksheets, survey documents, published guides, etc.

### 4.3 COMPLETION

Upon completion of the Self-Study Report (SSR), the institution will submit two copies to the AABI office, along with an electronic version, and one copy to the chair of the Accreditation Committee. If there has been a program (catalog) change since the submission of the application the institution will submit three copies of the new catalog with the SSRs.

If the SSR is approved, the planning process begins for the on-site visit. Once the team is assembled, the institution will provide additional copies for the visiting team members. The exact number will depend upon the size of the team, which is determined by the number of programs under review. Typical teams have three to five members.

### 4.4 SELF-STUDY REVIEW

The Executive Director and the Accreditation Committee review the Self-Study Report for completeness. If additional information is required or clarification is needed, the aviation unit will be contacted by the central office. A preliminary evaluation, based on AABI criteria, will be supplied to the institution upon completion of this review. The Committee chair advises the director, by letter, if the self-study is complete.

## V. AFTER THE SELF-STUDY

### 5.1 ACCEPTED SELF-STUDY REPORT

If the SSR is accepted, the Executive Director notifies the institution and provides three possible dates for the team visit. Be sure there are no other major activities scheduled at the same time that would interfere with the visit. Ensure all staff and faculty are aware of the visit and available. The president and other administrators must also be available during the visit. Coordinate with the institution's officials for an appropriate visit time. The best time is usually during a regular semester when classes are held and everyone is in the working mode. Summer sessions and break periods do not provide the visiting team with an appropriate image of the program in action.

A list of prospective visiting team members is sent to the institution, which has the option of striking up to five members. Former employees and business partners are logical candidates to be disqualified. It is important that there are no real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Members of the accreditation visiting teams will be selected from the membership of institutions that make up AABI and the aviation community at large. Each team will be made up of members having different areas of interest and competence so that the institution's programs will receive a thorough and rigorous review. The team will include one industry representative at a minimum. The team visit will have four major purposes:

1. To validate the accuracy of the Self-Study Report
2. To determine if the program is in compliance with AABI criteria
3. To assess the intangible factors which do not lend themselves to quantitative analysis and which cannot be adequately described in the Self-Study, yet have profound effects on the overall quality and conduct of the programs. These intangible issues may include:
  - (a) institutional support for program(s)
  - (b) intellectual atmosphere
  - (c) caliber of the faculty, staff and students
  - (d) the nature and quality of student work
  - (e) issues of faculty, staff and student morale
4. To assist the institution in identifying and assessing its strengths and weaknesses

## 5.2 DENIED SELF-STUDY REPORT

If the SSR submitted by the institution is unsatisfactory, it will be returned with a letter of explanation. The institution has the option of correcting any deficiencies or withdrawing their application for accreditation or reaffirmation.

If the institution chooses to make corrections, the due date for completion of the Self-Study Report originally assigned at the beginning of the self-study phase does not change. Requests for extensions are not generally granted under these circumstances.

## VI. THE CAMPUS VISIT

### 6.1 PLANNING THE VISIT

When the institution confirms the visit dates and submits the list of disqualified visiting team members, the Executive Director and the Accreditation Committee chair select a team chairperson. This chairperson and the Executive Director determine the size and makeup of the visiting team. The Executive Director notifies the institution of the team members selected and sends copies of:

- AABI Form 206 (Information and Procedures for the Visiting Team)
- AABI Form 207 (Typical Schedule for a Visiting Team)
- AABI Form 209 (Guide to Preparation for the Visiting Team report)
- AABI Form 220 (Team Visit Checklist for Institutions)

The institution will be responsible for sending copies of the SSR and catalogs to members of the visiting team. The AABI central office will send one of its two copies, previously provided, to the team chair. The institution is responsible for making accommodation and transportation arrangements for the team while at the institution. A workroom (boardroom style) should be reserved at the hotel for the visiting team's use. A workroom should also be available at the institution. The visiting team will use this during the visit to meet and regroup as they progress through the visit schedule. A computer should be available in this workroom as well.

AABI Form 206 (Information and Procedures for the Visiting Team) informs the institution of the procedures and protocol for the purpose of the visiting team. (Section V page 12 of this document, Protocol during the Visit and Responsibilities Following the Visit, is especially valuable to the institution in preparing for the visit.)

AABI Form 207 (Typical Schedule for a Visiting Team) is used to develop a schedule for the visiting team. This proposed schedule is then communicated to the team chairperson for possible revisions. The aviation program's appointed visit coordinator will work closely with the team chairperson to establish a schedule that is appropriate for all concerned.

The Executive Director of AABI will arrange a pre-visit conference call between the institution, the team chair, and team members so a concise communiqué can occur prior to the visit. Many details of the visit process will be discussed and any concerns addressed prior to the visiting team departing for the actual visit.

The visit normally takes three days (typically Sunday to Tuesday). The specifics of what the visiting team expects during the visit are outlined in detail in AABI Form 207. This guide will make the visit a smooth and efficient one.

AABI Form 209 (Guide to Preparation for the Visiting Team report) may be useful to the institution to gain insight as to what the visiting team will be looking for to include in their report. The key here is to have the hardware, software and or people available to the visiting team so they may enter the appropriate data into the report. Extensive evidence must be available to the visiting team members to determine the outcomes assessment capability of the institution.

AABI Form 220 (Team Visit Checklist for Institutions) is of critical value to the institution. This checklist provides concise, detailed guidance for preparation for the team's visit. All personnel involved in organizing the visit at the institution should use this checklist as a guide.

The visiting team chairperson and the institution will work out the details of the schedule, accommodations, transportation, working spaces, etc. The form entitled "Accreditation Visit Timetable Worksheet" is a valuable tool during this phase. The timetable worksheet will be sent to all team members and the institution by the central office prior to the visit. All expenses for the visit are paid by the institution through a deposit paid prior to the visit and subsequent billing after the visit.

## 6.2 CONDUCTING THE VISIT

The next step is the visit itself. With proper preparation and planning the visit should go smoothly. The visit should not interrupt any normal operations at the institution. The visiting team may need guidance and transportation around the campus during the visit. The institution should be as helpful as possible to keep the visiting team on schedule.

The institution should be prepared to show the visiting team members all facilities that were previously agreed upon. All staff and faculty should be available to the visiting team for discussion. Classrooms (with classes ongoing) should be open to visiting team members. Students that are currently in the program should be available to the visiting team for open and honest dialogue.

Keep in mind that the visiting team is at the institution to verify information presented in the Self-Study Report or to find information that was perhaps

omitted from the self-study. Be prepared to assist the visiting team in any way possible.

At the conclusion of the visit, the team will present an exit briefing to the institution. It is important that the program's and the institution's administrators be present for this briefing. Be aware that the visiting team has no authority to grant or deny accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation. The Accreditation Committee makes recommendations to the Board; however, the Board of Trustees is the decision-making body. The exit briefing will include what the team found or did not find during the visit. Only Strengths and Weaknesses will be presented to the institution at this point in the process. The findings are not open to debate. The visiting team is simply reporting to the institution their perspective of the program(s) under review. The visiting team will prepare a report for submission to the AABI central office and Accreditation Committee.

### 6.3 POST VISIT

After the visit, the team chairperson submits the visiting team's first draft report to the team members, AABI office, and the chair of the Accreditation Committee. This copy includes Suggestions and Recommendations. After consultation and feedback from the parties mentioned, the chairperson prepares a second draft. This draft will be sent to the institution's program coordinator for review and corrections of factual errors. This draft will not contain any Suggestions or Recommendations made by the visiting team. The factual corrections are sent to the chairperson of the visiting team, who then prepares the final report.

### 6.4 FINAL REPORT

When the institution's response is received, the visiting team chair will incorporate the factual corrections into a final Visiting Team Report for transmittal to the AABI Executive Director and the chair of the Accreditation Committee.

The final report will be sent by the Executive Director to the CEO of the institution for response to recommendations and, if desired, suggestions. The institution MUST respond to recommendations and may respond to suggestions. The institution will submit its response concerning the final report to the Executive Director by the deadline provided, usually 30 days from mailing. All information in the report is considered confidential and will not become public information. All team members are sworn to this oath of confidentiality.

## VII. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

### 7.1 ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

The Accreditation Committee takes into consideration the self-study submitted by the institution, the visiting team final report, and the institutional response to any items in the report as they deliberate on the accreditation recommendation for the specific program. The Accreditation Committee only recommends accreditation action. They do not have the authority to grant accreditation. Only the Board of Trustees has the authority to grant accreditation.

The Accreditation Committee votes on a recommendation as to whether to support accreditation or not as stated below in Section 7.2, support an interim period of accreditation, or deny accreditation. This recommendation goes to the Board of Trustees.

After due deliberations, the Accreditation Committee reports to the Board of Trustees at the next regular (winter or summer) meeting of the Aviation Accreditation Board International. A copy of the Accreditation Committee executive summary will be provided to the Board of Trustees as part of the official Minutes of the meeting.

As deemed appropriate by the Accreditation Committee chair, the Committee can be convened electronically to discuss and make accrediting recommendations. Under special circumstances, the chair would request that the AABI president electronically convene the Board of Trustees to consider such recommendations.

### 7.2 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees acts on the recommendations from the Accreditation Committee concerning the accreditation of an institution's program(s). The Board of Trustees has the authority to accept or reject the recommendations of the Accreditation Committee and visiting team. The Board can elect to take any of the following actions:

- a. Grant accreditation as an initial action.
- b. Not to accredit.
- c. Reaffirm accreditation for existing accredited programs.
- d. Extend accreditation for accredited programs that may expire.
- e. Revoke accreditation for existing accredited programs.
- f. Defer accreditation for additional information/actions by the institutions.

- g. Suspend accreditation for a specified period of time.
- h. Reinstate accreditation for programs in suspended status.

Accreditation granted by the Board of Trustees may require an interim report from the institution.

### 7.3 LETTER OF NOTIFICATION (AABI Accreditation Report)

The Executive Director will notify the institution of the action taken by the Board of Trustees within thirty (30) days following the Board meeting.

The Board of Trustees' decision on accreditation status will be sent to the chief executive officer of the institution and the aviation program(s) administrator(s). Distribution and disposition of the notification sent to the institution are considered to be the responsibility of the officials of the institution. This communiqué will include the period of accreditation, if applicable, including any requirements for interim reports. The communication will also reiterate the public release policy (3.4 AABI Form 225) as required by AABI. The official letter of notification will also explain the appeals process if applicable.

### 7.4 PERIOD OF ACCREDITATION

The initial and subsequent periods of accreditation will be for five years unless it is determined by the AABI Board of Trustees that another visit is warranted at an institution in less than five years. In this case, the institution will be so advised in writing with the reasons for an earlier review set forth. The Board may elect to require one or more interim reports in less than five years and may require an additional visit to confirm the institution's compliance.

## **VIII. INTERIM REPORTS**

### 8.1 PURPOSE

If appropriate, the institution may be accredited but required to submit interim reports. The institution will be given the specific content of the interim report and deadline or due date for submittal. The interim report(s) will be submitted to the AABI central office. (AABI Form 213)

### 8.2 REPORT REVIEW

The Executive Director reviews the interim report(s) and submits a copy to the Accreditation Committee chair. The chair, along with the Accreditation Committee, reviews the report and prepares a report for the Board of Trustees with the Committee's recommendations.

## **IX. APPEALS PROCESS**

### 9.1 NOTIFICATION

If not accredited, the Executive Director sends a letter to the institution, also within 30 days of the Board of Trustees meeting, notifying the institution of non-accreditation action and basis for denial of accreditation.

### 9.2 APPEAL

The institution has the right to appeal any adverse accreditation status, and procedures have been established by AABI to hear such appeals. The chair and/or members of the visiting team may be required to be present and to contribute to such hearings. Pending outcome of the appeal, there will be no change in accreditation status.

The President, with approval from the Executive Committee, will establish special panels to hear appeals from educational institutions on the status of their accreditation. These panels shall serve for the term of the appeal. There shall be at least three (3) members, including one (1) Educator Trustee who will serve as Chair and two or more members selected from the Corporate, Trade or International Board membership. No member of the Accreditation Committee may serve on these special panels and no member of any Special Panel may be on the staff of, or have direct affiliation with, the institution initiating the appeal on the status of accreditation of the aviation program in that institution. If possible, the Trustees appointed will not have voted on any committee or Board action related to the institution.

### 9.3 SUCCESSFUL APPEAL

If accredited by appeal, the Executive Director sends an official Letter of Notification of the accreditation action to the institution within 30 days of said action.

## **X. INSTITUTION'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **10.1 PUBLIC RELEASE POLICY**

The institution **MUST** not publish or otherwise publicly state any period of accreditation. In any public release, the institution may refer only to the aviation programs that are accredited by AABI. The institution may use the term 'accredited' only for those specific programs accredited by AABI. There **MUST** be no implication that all of the programs are accredited if the programs are not. The institution may not publicly quote, in whole or in part, from AABI correspondence. If accreditation is withheld, withdrawn or revoked, the institution may not use the phrase "accredited by AABI," even if the phrase states or implies prior accreditation. (3.4 AABI Form 225)

Accurate representation of accreditation status in catalogues and other documents is imperative. Institutions will clearly and accurately represent their current accreditation status in all institutional documents and publications, including on-line documents, in which they refer to AABI accreditation. Failure to adhere to this requirement may result in revocation of accreditation for all AABI-accredited programs at the institution. (3.4.1 AABI Form 225)

## **XI. PUBLICATIONS LIST**

The following AABI Forms are referenced in this publication and should be referenced throughout the accreditation process:

- FORM 201 Accreditation Criteria
- FORM 202 Application
- FORM 203 Dues & Fees Schedule
- FORM 204 Outline for a Self-Study Report
- FORM 206 Visiting Team Procedures
- FORM 207 Visiting Team Schedule
- FORM 208 Evidence Guide
- FORM 209 Guide to Preparation of the Visiting Team Report
- FORM 212 Steps to Accreditation
- FORM 213 Interim Reports Guidelines
- FORM 217 Member Institutions Accredited Status
- FORM 218 Policies for Visiting Team Members
- FORM 220 Team Visit Checklist
- FORM 222 Glossary of Terms
- FORM 223 Assessment Guide
- FORM 225 Policies & Procedures Manual