

CAAHEP Accreditation: From Beginning to End
Questions and Responses
December 6, 2016

ATTENDEE QUESTION	RESPONSE
What survey questions should we be using when sending them out to students, faculty, community members and/or supervisors?	Any required survey questions are usually determined by the Committee on Accreditation (CoA) or Joint Review Committee (JRC). Some CoA's or JRC's have a survey form that is part of the Self-Study and/or Annual Report. Typically, these are questions that deal with Fair Practices and Student/ Graduate/Employer satisfaction.
Where do we find the exact outline of what will be in the self-study?	That information would be found on the CoA or JRC website. Visit www.caahep.org , select the For Program Directors tab, and click on the Committees on Accreditation link for a full list of the CoAs. Each CoA has a webpage or website that includes contact information. Some CoAs have very robust websites, so it is advisable for program directors to become familiar with the information made available on these sites.
Which website would we refer to for the self-study?	The website for your profession's CoA or JRC.
In forming a self-study committee, how much time do we tell people they would need to commit to being involved in the self-study committee?	It would vary depending on your circumstances. Perhaps starting with monthly 1 hour meetings is a good starting point to be adapted once you determine how much progress you are making.
What information will CoA provide?	The CoA/JRC will provide you with all the forms and requirements needed for the accreditation review process. They also will have information about annual reports and thresholds that are established by each CoA. The staff and volunteers on the CoA are extremely helpful to program representatives as they move through the process. We recommend you view the CoA's/JRC's website for information and guidance.
What do you mean by fair practices?	Fair Practices is a section in all the CAAHEP Standards, specifically section V. This sections covers such topics as Publications and Disclosure, Lawful and Non-Discriminatory Practices, Safeguards, Student Records, Substantive Changes in the program, and Agreements.

<p>At what point can our program schedule a visitation? When is the CoA starting visitations and how long ahead of time should we submit for a visit?</p>	<p>The visitation (or site visit) is scheduled by and through the CoA/JRC. Once you have submitted your self-study and it has been reviewed/accepted, the CoA staff will contact the program with several date options and will work with you and the site visitors to select a commonly convenient date for the review.</p>
<p>What is the maximum time accreditation is granted to a program? Can you please give an overview of accreditation timelines...in other words, if a program receives full accreditation, for how many years?</p>	<p>The accreditation length can vary by profession. Almost all professions have a 5-year initial accreditation period. Some still have a 3-year cycle. It is up to the CoA or JRC. Other than initial, your accreditation status does not expire. There are cycles for review of a continuing accreditation. The CoAs/JRCs use 5 year, 7 year, or 10 year review cycles. Understand that the annual report is very important in continuing accreditation process. If there are problems that appear with the annual report, it will trigger some sort of a review. It may be the CoA/JRC requires a written plan on how the program will address the problem or it may require a new self-study or site visit.</p> <p>During the initial accreditation period, the program will be notified when continuing accreditation is due. Usually the program is given several months' lead time to prepare its continuing accreditation papers.</p>
<p>After receiving self-study packet what is the best way to start this process?</p>	<p>This is a team effort, so it may take the dean and program directors and others to work together to complete the self-study. You may need to reach out to your advisory committee, which you should have, and assign different parts of the self-study to different people. It is recommended that you meet regularly to go over progress in preparing the self-study meetings. Remember that there is no reason to reinvent the wheel. You may find that some information needed for the self-study has already been completed by someone else in your institution. For example, some background information needed may be the same as information that was provided to your institutional accrediting body. Talk with the administration about reviewing that material. Also, you may have other programmatic accredited programs in your institution. Meet with those program directors to find out if there is information you can share. Remember, it is not unusual for this process to take months or even a year. So it is unreasonable to think you can knock this out in a weekend or even a month.</p>

<p>During the onsite visits, do they sit in class or labs or so the students need to be present in class?</p>	<p>Students need to be on campus and available for interviews with site visitors (or available via electronic means--however, this may vary by CoA or JRC, if they allow electronic presence). The point is that they are available to be interviewed by the site team, if the team requests or is required to conduct student meetings. Some of that may have been established prior to visit when you set up the agenda.</p>
<p>If we are a new program and will be submitting the self-study once students are admitted. What do we do about the information's (outcomes, pass rates, etc.) since we will not have that information at the time of submission.</p>	<p>Some CoAs/JRCs will cite a program on lack of outcomes if you do not have a graduating class when first accredited. You will need to report outcomes after your first class graduates. If you fall below thresholds, there will be information provided to you from the CoA and documentation required on how you will address meeting the outcomes. You should contact the CoA with specific questions regarding seeking accreditation prior to your first graduating class.</p>
<p>Is it advisable to have mock site visits by third parties?</p>	<p>Rehearsal for anything never hurts. Internal mock site visits or a trusted colleague going through the Standards is not a bad idea, but is certainly not required. It is whatever you are comfortable with. Site visit teams vary, so even with a practice visit, it could be very different when the real team gets there. You can always take the Standards and go through them one by one and ask "Can I say yes to all of these?" If there's a "No" or "Maybe," or an "I don't know," there's your opportunity to go through and find the answer or correct a process before your site visit team gets on campus.</p>
<p>How does one become a site visitor?! What are the criteria?</p>	<p>Contact your CoA or JRC. You may need to meet certain criteria and complete training before be accepted.</p>
<p>What topics do you prefer to see the advisory committees talking about?</p>	<p>We suggest going through the major items in the Standards and take Sponsorship, Program Goals, Resource, Student and Graduate Evaluations, and Fair Practices and ask the Advisory Committee if the program has issues related to these topics. Keep the Standards topics as a running agenda items. You want involvement from the Advisory Committee in curriculum as well. It's important to have employer input, but it is getting more difficult to have employers respond to graduate surveys. Having an employer on your advisory committee will assist in having input into changes in curriculum.</p>

<p>We are a new program and the site visit requires students to be in clinicals. Should we wait to fill out the request for accreditation until our students are in clinical, or can this be filled out months prior to their entry into clinical?</p>	<p>It is not possible to predict how your profession's CoA or JRC will want this situation handled. Ultimately, your self-study should reflect that you meet the Standards. It may not be possible to do that, if you have not yet had students participate in clinical rotations. Most CoAs and JRCs will require student rosters with clinical affiliation agreements and clinical site placement to assure that there are sufficient resources that offer equitable experiences. Thus, the risk is taken by you, the program, if you submit before you have that information. It is for that reason, most CoA's JRC's will request that you not submit until students are participating and that information can be documented.</p>
<p>Who usually sits on advisory committees?</p>	<p>The make-up of the Advisory Committee is listed in all CAAHEP Standards: An advisory committee, which is representative of at least each of the communities of interest named in these Standards, must be designated and charged with the responsibility of meeting at least annually, to assist program and sponsor personnel in formulating and periodically revising appropriate goals and learning domains, monitoring needs and expectations, and ensuring program responsiveness to change. The communities of interest that are served by the program must include, but are not limited to, students, graduates, faculty, sponsor administration, employers, physicians, and the public.</p>
<p>After successful accreditation, how often does a program have to undergo another full accreditation process, if at all?</p>	<p>Initial accreditation is for 3 to 5 years. While continuing accreditation does not expire, there is an annual report due and a full review every 3, 5 or 10 year, depending on the profession. Your final accreditation letter will indicate when your next comprehensive review will be.</p>
<p>Where is the self-study information located?</p>	<p>The self-study information will be available through the Committee on Accreditation or the Joint Review Committee. You should start with the CoA website (go to www.caahep.org and select For Program Directors).</p>
<p>I received a 3-year initial accreditation. I have not received notice of a self-study yet. When should I expect that.</p>	<p>Notification will come for your CoA or JRC. You should contact them for that information.</p>
<p>Can I get an extension of my deadline after getting my letter of findings since it requires CEO signature and he is on vacation?</p>	<p>That would be up to your CoA or JRC. You should contact them to make that request.</p>