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The Association for
Biblical Higher Education
Commission on Accreditation

ABHE Commission on Accreditation Evaluation Team Handbook

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I. Introduction

Accreditation

Accreditation is a voluntary process by which an institution evaluates its educational activities and seeks an independent judgment to confirm that it is substantially achieving its objectives and is generally equal in quality to comparable institutions.

An accredited institution, therefore, is deserving of public trust, having been judged by a recognized, authoritative third party as demonstrating characteristics indicative of quality and integrity. Moreover, it has been judged that these characteristics are present in sufficient strength to indicate that the institution can be reasonably expected to continue to exhibit quality and integrity in the future.

Institutional accreditation applies to the institution in its entirety. Not only have the credibility of its educational offerings and the quality of its faculty been affirmed, but also other characteristics such as its mission and objectives, organization and governance, administrative strength, financial condition, library resources, and student services have been approved.

The accreditation process seeks not only to document an institution's present quality and integrity, but also to foster excellence.

The Association

The Association for Biblical Higher Education is a non-profit, voluntary, organization of institutions that seeks to promote biblical higher education through accreditation of, and services for institutions and programs of biblical higher education within Canada, the United States, and related territories.

The Commission on Accreditation

The Commission on Accreditation establishes and applies *Standards* that serve as an objective reference for identifying characteristics that will engender public confidence, and as a catalyst to inspire educational excellence.

The Commission officially grants accredited status to institutions that are currently achieving and that give every indication of being able to continue to achieve the "*Standards for Accreditation*." It also periodically reaffirms the accredited status of member institutions and grants candidate status to those institutions that can be reasonably expected to achieve accredited status within four years.

In addition, the Commission assists affiliated institutions in working toward accreditation, monitors member institutions to assure that they continue to meet the "*Standards*," assists institutions in improving their effectiveness, promotes continual self-study and institutional planning among member colleges, and assures the currency of its "*Standards*," "*Policies*," and "*Procedures*."

The Commission is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and is listed by the United States Department of Education as an undergraduate institutional accrediting agency. Recently the Association acted to expand the Commission's scope of recognition to include graduate level education and programs of biblical higher education offered by institutions more complex than the Association's historic constituency. (The Commission will be seeking to expand its recognition to include the newly adopted scope changes.)

Institutional Status Possibilities

Affiliate status – The primary focus of the Association for Biblical Higher Education is accreditation, but non-member institutions may also relate to the Association through an affiliate status. This affords affiliate institutions the opportunity to take advantage of many of the

programs and services that the Association provides without becoming an accredited member.

Affiliation with the Association is not to be confused with accreditation.

Applicant status is a pre-membership status granted to those institutions that meet the Association's "Conditions of Eligibility" and provide evidence that candidacy can be achieved within four years.

Candidate status is a pre-accredited status granted to institutions that can reasonably be expected to achieve accredited status within four years.

Accredited status is granted to institutions that can demonstrate that they are achieving and can be reasonably expected to continue to achieve their own mission and meet the "*Standards for Accreditation*." These institutions must also demonstrate a commitment to ongoing institutional development. Accredited status is reaffirmed five years after initial accreditation and every ten years thereafter.

II. Understanding the Evaluation Process

Evaluation Process Overview

Every institution is to be systematically engaged in the self-study process, continually monitoring every aspect of its operation in order to analyze its effectiveness both in light of its own stated mission and objectives and in the context of the "Standards for Accreditation." An institution seeking candidate status, accredited status, or reaffirmation of accreditation will draw together its analysis in self-study materials to document that the institution is achieving its mission and objectives and that it is in substantial compliance with the Association's "Standards." The institution will produce three documents: an assessment plan, a compliance document and an institutional planning document that details assessment data and plans for improvement. In some cases of reaffirmation, the institution may seek to coordinate their review process with that of another agency & should seek consultation from the Director, Commission on Accreditation (**see Appendix X**).

A team of evaluators, appointed by the Commission, will review the self-study materials prior to visiting the campus. Once on campus the team will gather information about the institution and summarize its findings in a written team report. This report will assess the institution's compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation* and set forth criterion-related recommendations for improvement. *The report will also specifically reflect the team's review of and judgment concerning institutional compliance with all Title IV eligibility-related standards summarized in Appendix I. The team chair must complete and submit a certification inventory along with the team report.* The team will also formulate an official, confidential recommendation for Commission action. After reviewing this report, the institution president will provide a formal, written response to the team report.

The Commission on Accreditation will consider each of these documents: (1) the assessment plan, (2) the compliance document, (3) the institutional planning document, (4) the team report, and (5) the institutional response to the team report, together with the team's accreditation recommendation. Institutional representatives will appear before the Commission (optional for reaffirmation visits) in order to clarify any matters of concern, answer the Commissioners' questions, and describe any significant events that have taken place since the team visit. The Commission will then take official action regarding the institution's accredited status.

Accreditation Terminology

Evaluation team reports generate conclusions expressed as commendations, suggestions, and/or recommendations. Such conclusions may also be expressed in the communication of Commission on Accreditation actions. These terms are defined as follows:

Commendations – refer to qualities of excellence or areas of unusual progress.

Suggestions – refer to matters of advice or counsel in areas unrelated to *Standards* compliance. Suggestions may be ignored or accepted at an institution's option.

Recommendations – refer to issues of *Standards* compliance. When the Commission makes recommendations, institutions are required to take corrective action to achieve or improve ABHE *Standards* compliance within specified time frames as a condition for achieving or maintaining accredited status with the Association.

Selection of the Evaluation Team

The selection of evaluators is based upon their competence in a particular area, the recommendation of a respected reference, their participation in Association sponsored team training, and their performance on previous evaluation teams. There is to be no conflict of interest between the evaluator and the institution to be visited, e.g., same denominational

affiliation, same geographic base of constituency, previous affiliation with the institution, or previous service to the institution as an evaluator or consultant. The team should be comprised of only one person from a given institution and no more than two people from the same denomination.

In addition, the team chair should have either past service in this capacity or at least three successful evaluation experiences as a team member. Normally, the chair will be either a president, academic dean, or executive vice-president of an accredited institution who has attended a training session for team chairs.

The institution to be evaluated has the right to review the proposed team roster and to request the replacement of any proposed member that it feels would have a bias or conflict of interest in evaluating the institution.

A representative from the appropriate state or provincial higher education commission may be invited to serve as an observer for the team visit (**see Appendix IV**).

Qualifications of Team Evaluators

Administrative Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience in program or institutional leadership as a senior administrator (CEO, executive vice president, chief academic officer, division director, institutional effectiveness/assessment director, or other cabinet-level administrator) in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of ABHE evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the administrative evaluator requirements in the *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

Academic Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience as an educator engaged in academic leadership (provost, academic dean, assistant provost/dean, academic division director, program director, registrar) in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of ABHE evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the academic evaluator responsibilities in the *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

Student Services Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience in student affairs, student life, student services, or student ministry leadership in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of ABHE evaluation team training, completion of the orientation to student services evaluator responsibilities in *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

Finance/Business Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience in institutional finance or business affairs in a postsecondary institution, business degree, completion of ABHE evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the finance/business evaluator responsibilities in the *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

Library Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience in librarianship in a postsecondary institution, library science degree (MLS/MLIS), completion of ABHE evaluation team training, completion of orientation to the library/faculty evaluator responsibilities in the *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

Faculty Evaluator: Minimum of three years of teaching or research experience in a postsecondary institution, master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators), completion of ABHE evaluation

team training, completion of orientation to the library/faculty evaluator responsibilities in the *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

Distance Education Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience teaching distance education courses, developing distance education curriculum, and/or administrating a distance education program in a postsecondary institution; master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators); completion of ABHE evaluation team training; completion of ABHE distance education evaluator training; completion of orientation to the administrator, academic, or library/faculty evaluator responsibilities in the *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

Assessment/Institutional Effectiveness Evaluator: Minimum of three years of experience in assessment of student learning, institutional effectiveness, and planning in a postsecondary institution; master's degree in an appropriate academic or professional discipline (doctorate preferred, required for graduate level evaluators); completion of ABHE evaluation team training; completion of orientation to the administrator or academic evaluator responsibilities in the *ABHE Team Evaluator's Handbook*.

U.S. Department of Education Designation Categories for Evaluators

Administrator: An individual currently or recently engaged in a significant manner in program or institutional administration at the postsecondary level.

Academic: An individual currently or recently engaged in a significant manner in postsecondary teaching and/or research (including learning resource and research support, and/or curriculum development).

III. Responsibilities of the Evaluation Team

Team Chair Responsibilities

The team chair is responsible for leading all team meetings, serving as spokesman for the group, editing the final team report, assessing the contribution of evaluators (**see Appendix VI**), and forwarding all materials to the Association office preferably within two weeks after the visit. Long delays are embarrassing and may create severe difficulties for all parties concerned.

Team Chair: Communication with Institution

The Team Chair will contact the president of the host institution in order to (1) confirm the dates of the visit, (2) discuss the necessity of any preliminary visit by the Chair, (3) confirm specific arrangements for travel, ground transportation, and housing needs of each team member, (4) identify a specific room on campus that will serve as the team's official meeting and workroom, (5) confirm that this workroom will contain all materials and documents needed for individual evaluator research, and (6) confirm a specific time and place for a joint meeting between the team and the administration. The purpose of this meeting is to confirm the schedule of appointments that will take place during the visit.

In some cases, team members may wish for more information prior to the visit. Before any contact is made with campus personnel, the Team Chair should be contacted.

A preliminary visit by the Team Chair may prove beneficial if the visit is deemed to be of such complexity that a meeting of key people in advance to discuss arrangements on-site would expedite the actual visit. Such a visit, of course, adds to the expense of the institution. Therefore, the decision to conduct a preliminary visit is to be made jointly by the president and Team Chair.

Team Chair: Communication with Team

The Team Chair will contact the other team members in order to (1) obtain personal and professional data, having provided the same to them, (2) provide information on the specific arrangements for travel, ground transportation, and housing obtained from the institution, (3) obtain specific information on their travel arrangements, (4) provide a tentative schedule of activities, including the specific time and place of the initial team meeting (**See Appendix II**).

After receiving this communication from the Team Chair, each team member is responsible for making travel arrangements and notifying both the Team Chair and the President or visit coordinator, of the specific times involved. If flying, the exact means by which the institution will provide transportation from the airport to the hotel should be clarified. It is the team member's responsibility to obtain the least expensive ticket available. To do this, tickets should be purchased as early as possible (30 days in advance of departure is preferred). If significant savings can be realized by making use of a Saturday night layover, most institutions are willing to cover the additional hospitality expense; however, this must be specifically verified, with the host institution. Reimbursement for auto travel cannot exceed the lowest coach fare.

The Team Chair is expected to:

1. Assure that evaluators have a clear understanding both of the overall team role in the evaluation process and of their individual roles.
2. Assign the review of Standards and Essential Elements to designated team members. Where an institution offers distance education, there will be a distance education evaluator assigned by the Team Chair to examine Standards relevant to distance education.
3. Assure that evaluators have a clear understanding of the basic "Principle of Accreditation," i.e., that the final decision is to be based upon the institution's demonstration that it is substantially achieving both its own stated mission and objectives and the "*Standards for Accreditation*," that it

- can be reasonably expected to continue to do both in the future, and that it demonstrates a commitment to ongoing institutional development.
4. Guide the team in making valid judgments.
 5. Assure that all recommendations made by the team are *Standards* related, and not based upon individual opinion.
 6. Assure that the team review and report includes specific review and renders a judgment concerning institutional compliance with all Title IV eligibility-related standards as summarized in Appendix I.
 7. Assure that the overall team recommendation is clearly based upon the "Principle of Accreditation."

Evaluator Responsibilities

The evaluation team verifies the validity of the institution's self-study materials, assures that mechanisms for continual self-examination are functioning, and gathers information on an institution-wide basis by means of interviews and research in order to assist the team to determine whether the institution is achieving its own stated mission and objectives, whether it is complying with the "*Standards for Accreditation*," and whether it can be reasonably expected to continue to do both in the future. On the basis of its evaluation, the team makes a recommendation to the Commission regarding the granting of candidate status, accredited status, or the reaffirmation of accreditation.

An evaluator is expected to be:

Objective. The institution is to be evaluated solely in light of its stated mission and objectives and the Association's "*Standards for Accreditation*." It is not in any way to be evaluated in light of the team member's own institution. The Association is a non-denominational organization. Sectarian prejudice of any kind is totally inappropriate.

Ethical. An evaluator is dealing with confidential information. How he or she deals with it is a reflection upon his or her integrity (See Appendix III, "A Decalogue for the Accreditation Team," and Appendix XI, "Statement on Confidentiality and Public Disclosure.").

Accurate. Judgments must be based solely upon the "*Standards for Accreditation*," and ABHE policies. Recommendations must be so referenced and based upon facts.

Constructive. The Association is a service organization, not a policing agency. The goal of the accreditation process is to improve the overall quality of the institution. An evaluator must make clear that any advice given is strictly personal and not necessarily that of the Association.

Evaluators: Standards for Review & Assignments

Evaluators will be responsible for various segments of the ABHE *Standards* as follows:

Institutional Accreditation Visits

Evaluators

Academic
Administrative
Financial
Librarian/Faculty
Student Personnel

Standards for Review

Standards #11 and #2a
Standards #1, #3, #4, and #5
Standards #2b and #6
Standards #9 and #10
Standards #7 and #8

Programmatic Accreditation Visits

Evaluators

Academic
Administrative

Standards for Review

Standards #6, #7, #8, and #9
Standards #1, #2, #3, #4, and #5

Where the institution offers distance education, one or more of the assigned team members will be qualified for review of distance education (see above for qualifications). The Team Chair will assign the designated distance education evaluator(s) to review relevant standards, and that may modify some of the assignments in the list above.

Evaluators will summarize their findings in a report that commends the institution in areas where it excels, makes criterion-related recommendations in areas needing attention, and lends counsel by making suggestions for improvement in non-Standards related areas.

With regard to suggestions for improvement, it is important that evaluators avoid thinking of themselves as "experts." While evaluators are selected partially on the basis of their competence, the primary reason they are in a position to provide valued suggestions is because of their "outside" perspective.

Near the close of the visit, each evaluator presents his or her report to the Team Chair summarizing the findings in their area of responsibility. The team has responsibility to finalize a list of commendations, Standards referenced recommendations, and suggestions, together with the overall accreditation recommendation.

Suggested Institutional Documents for Review (Related to Standards & Conditions of Eligibility)

An un-official list of institutional documents is included below and is suggested for review for insight into determining compliance with the Standards and Conditions of Eligibility. Use these suggestions as a starting point for the evaluation.

Institutional Documents to Review per Standard

1. MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Corporate charter, 501 (c) (3) letter, opinioned audits, documentation of state authorization, constitution, bylaws, catalog, public relations materials

2a. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment plan, student survey instruments, aggregate survey results, compilations of interview data, samples of student portfolios, and summaries of actions taken to improve instruction and/or learning.

2b. ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND PLANNING

Assessment plan, institutional research reports, planning documents, board minutes

3. INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

Public documents, administrative/staff, faculty and student handbooks, public relations materials, financial audit reports

4. AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE

Constitution and Bylaws, chart of organization, job descriptions, board minutes, board handbook

5. ADMINISTRATION

Constitution and Bylaws, chart of organization, job descriptions, minutes of president's cabinet, administrative/staff handbook, administrative annual reports

6. INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

6a. HUMAN RESOURCES

Personnel files, administrative/staff handbook, faculty handbook, chart of organization, job descriptions, salary schedule, work schedules, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, records of professional development activities, insurance policies (for welfare of personnel)

6b. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Audit reports, budgets, chart of accounts, records of receivables and payables, inventories, policies, procedures and forms relating to budgeting, purchasing, investing, internal controls, conflicts of interest, security of records, debt instruments, insurance policies, employment contracts, management letters (from auditors), board minutes, administrative council minutes, documents confirming tax exemptions

6c. PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Fire-resistant vault, files, maintenance schedule, insurance policies, inspection certificates, campus crime reports, equipment usage logs, budget allocations, training materials, applicable policies

7. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

7a. RECRUITMENT

Promotional materials, form letters, catalog

7b. ADMISSIONS

High school rank, SAT-ACT test scores, policy for provisional admissions, policy for dealing with “ability to benefit” students, form letters used, samples of applications received, evidence of submission of all required admissions documents, placement test results, transfer policy (publicly available?), evidence of validation for work accepted in transfer from unaccredited institutions

7c. FINANCIAL AID

Policies and procedures governing award of financial aid. Records of restrictions on award of designated scholarships, records of scholarship awards, records of the qualifications of scholarship recipients, financial aid audit reports, refund policies

7d. RETENTION

Policies and procedures governing academic advising, materials used in academic advising, evidence relating to system for identifying and assisting students experiencing academic or social difficulties, registrar’s annual report, data compiled from dropouts, policies/programs for assisting under-represented population

8. STUDENT SERVICES

Statement of student development philosophy, student handbook, catalog, annual report of chief student personnel officer, credentials of chief student personnel officer, descriptions of services provided for those studying via alternative academic patterns, policies and procedures for dealing with complaints, discipline, and dismissal actions, health, safety, and fire inspection reports, constitution/bylaws of student government, agendas/minutes of student government, food service menus, policies for personal counseling, policies governing student employment, policies governing chapels and athletics, orientation materials, employment opportunities

9. FACULTY RESOURCES

Class schedule reflecting faculty assignments and student loading, faculty handbook, grading data, faculty evaluation results, faculty files, faculty contracts, faculty meeting minutes, policies and practices for faculty development, faculty committee minutes

10. LIBRARY AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

Administrative handbook of library policies and procedures, student library orientation guide, library budget/expenditures, library committee minutes, register of periodicals and journals, register of available indices, shelf list, circulation statistics, agreements with other libraries, librarian’s annual report, analysis of collection by discipline, enrollment, age of material (based on copyright dates), and usage

11. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

11a. CURRICULUM

Catalog, course syllabi, class schedules

11b. MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM

Student ministries handbook, student ministry files, roster of ministry supervisors, faculty minutes

11c. ACADEMIC PATTERNS AND PROCEDURES

Catalog, academic calendar, organizational chart, faculty handbook, job descriptions

11d. ALTERNATIVE ACADEMIC PATTERNS

Catalog, course syllabi, course materials, enrollment data, grading/evaluation data, policies and procedures for ensuring integrity

Institutional Documents to Review per Condition of Eligibility

1. Charter or Articles of Incorporation; Certificate or current government letter indicating authorization or degree granting authority
2. Constitution – mission; Catalog; Public relations documents
3. Roster of external board members; Bylaws; Board minutes

4. Employment Contract; Job descriptions
5. Catalog; Course syllabi
6. Catalog
7. Librarian's Annual Report, any internal report(s) comparing collection strength and program offerings
8. Faculty files, class schedules with instructional assignments
9. Catalog statements regarding admissions requirements, student files
10. Reports reflecting enrollments by program
11. Catalog
12. Catalog
13. Student ministries handbook
14. Graduation rosters, files of graduates
15. Registrar's annual report, faculty files, audit reports
16. Alumni records, files of applicants, public relations materials, rosters of donors
17. Audit reports, budget, rosters of donors
18. Audit reports
19. Annual reports
20. CEO letter re: board resolution.
21. CEO letter re: board resolution.
22. CEO letter re: board resolution.

IV. Getting Ready for the Evaluation Visit

Process for Evaluation Material Distribution

ABHE informs selected evaluators up front of their team positions once they indicate availability and then the official **team roster** is developed and the chair and institution receive copies. The president and liaison should also receive the guide *Liaison's Evaluation Guide* (**See Appendix II**). The **chair forwards the roster** to the team and verifies contact information, etc. During this time period the team members and institution personnel should also review it in light of potential for conflicts of interests due to background, etc. ABHE asks that the team **members confirm their standards/areas to evaluate with the team chair** since sometimes academic experience or institutional circumstances may warrant special arrangements.

The **latest ABHE publication copies are emailed by ABHE to all evaluators** at the start of every semester (evaluation team handbook, self study guide, and COA manual). The team chair should confirm that everyone is using the most current edition (not just the one they have saved on their computer!).

Evaluator worksheets are provided to the team chair for distribution to evaluators according to their final standards of assignment. These are to be completed and then submitted to ABHE after the visit for assessment purposes.

The current travel expense voucher is provided to the team chair. It used to be that the mileage rate changed only once a year but now since the rate is adjusted by the U.S. government at least twice a year. We ask that team chairs to verify that evaluators are using the most current form from the ABHE office.

The ABHE COA **background information, historical institution material, and the PowerPoint visit template are sent to the team chair** for distribution among the team evaluators. This enables the team to have the most appropriate review of information based on academic experience, institutional circumstances, and any special arrangements. In most cases, the team chair will receive these materials six weeks prior to the visit date.

Following preliminary COA senior staff screening and certification that the self-study report addresses all Title IV eligibility-related standards summarized in Appendix I, Commission staff will electronically send to each team member the self-study documents: compliance, planning, and assessment document approximately six weeks before the visit. In most cases the evaluator will be able to access the institution's web site and find its catalog prior to coming to campus. If a document is missing, the team member should contact the team chair immediately.

Any member of the team can always feel free to just ask the ABHE Commission staff for more visit orientation or other details in addition to these resources. Further summarization is provided in the *Guidelines* for the Team Chair and Evaluators (**Appendices II and III**).

Visit Preparation

Making Travel Arrangements

- Wait for instructions as to preferred airport.
- Usually arrive by the evening prior to the first meeting.
- Depart after the exit interview on the afternoon of the third day.

Receiving the Institution's Documents

The institution will send to each team member the self-study documents: Compliance Document, Planning Document, and Assessment Document. Team members should check the documents upon receipt to confirm that all three documents have been received. If a document is missing, the team member should contact the team chair immediately.

Preparing Evaluator Worksheets

ABHE provides *Evaluator Worksheets* to assist in preparation and review during the visit (see **Appendix VII**). For each of the Association's *Standards* and its related Essential Elements, the *Worksheets* provide opportunity for the evaluator to make notes regarding their impression of the self-study materials, and their observations regarding the institution's compliance with the standard. A place is provided for the evaluator to rate the institution's degree of compliance with the essential elements using a scale of "1" (low, weak, or noncompliance) to "5" (high or strong compliance). These notes along with the ratings can be of significant assistance later in preparing the written report.

The forms are deliberately designed with space at the bottom of each sheet to use in offering comments about the experience of applying the *Standards*. Evaluators are encouraged to suggest revised language or even new standards items on the form. The goal of this section is to improve the *Standards* and to ascertain what works. In evaluating the *Standards* it is important to think of their relevancy to the needs of students and to comment specifically on this issue. **These Evaluator Worksheets are required to be completed and returned ABHE at the conclusion of the visit.**

Distance/Extension Education

Evaluation team reviews must encompass not only on-campus education but also all forms of distance/extension education offered by an institution. The ABHE staff will furnish information to the team regarding the institution's approved course work or educational programs involving alternative academic patterns. It is the Team Chair's responsibility to work with the host institution and evaluation team members to ensure that all extension and distance education offerings are reviewed within the context of the team visit in accordance with ABHE *Standards* (including Essential Elements), the "Policy on Alternative Academic Patterns," and the "Best Practices Guidelines for Online Education" (**Appendix XI**, "Standards & Policies as Related to Online Distance Education").

Within the context of an evaluation for initial status or the reaffirmation of accreditation, any additional locations (sites at which 50% or more of a program may be completed) or branch campuses must be visited by at least one member of the team prior to the campus visit. The purpose of these visits will be to validate the accuracy of the institution's claims regarding the educational quality of the off campus locations and to ensure that the location has the personnel, facilities, resources, and services that it claims to have at the location (**Appendix XI**, "Procedures for Additional Locations").

From the "Best Practices Guidelines for Online Education," it should be readily apparent that most team members will need to review some aspect of any online educational offerings in connection with the specific *Standards* assigned to them. Institutional self-study documents should reflect the institution's own review of its distance education offerings. The team must validate the institution's evaluation of these offerings just as carefully and thoroughly as its traditional offerings (**Appendix XI**, "Guidelines for Sharing Online Courses"). Should the team discover that the institution is engaged in extension or distance education activities that have not been properly approved by the Commission on Accreditation, the Chair should immediately consult the ABHE professional staff (see ABHE COA Manual, "Policy on Substantive Change").

V. During the Evaluation Visit

Evaluation visits are normally at least three (3) days in length to assess an institution's readiness to be awarded **candidate status, initial accreditation, or to examine an institution on sanction** whether it is appropriate to reaffirm their accredited status.

Sample 3 Day Visit Schedule

Day	Time	Activity
One	8:30 – 11:30 AM	Team Orientation
	11:00 – 11:30 AM	Break
	11:30 – Noon	Travel to Campus
	Noon – 1:30 PM	Lunch: Team with Institutional Administration
	1:30 – 2:00 PM	Break
	2:00 – 4:30 PM	Interviews on Campus/Classroom Visits
	4:30 – 5:00 PM	Travel to Hotel
	5:00 – 5:30 PM	Break
	5:30 – 6:45 PM	Group Dinner
	6:45 – 8:00 PM	Executive Session
	8:00 PM	Work in Room
Two	8:30 – 9:00 AM	Travel to the Campus
	9:00 – 10:00 AM	Review of Exhibit Materials
	10:00 – Noon	Interviews on Campus/Classroom Visits
	Noon – 1:30 PM	Lunch: Two Team Members with Board of Control
		Lunch: Team Member with Student Group
		Lunch: Team Members open lunch (with public?)
	1:30 – 2:00 PM	Break
	2:00 – 4:00 PM	Interviews on Campus/Classroom Visits
	4:00 – 4:30 PM	Travel to Hotel
	4:30 – 6:30 PM	Executive Session
	6:30 --	Team Dinner
		Writing
Three	8:30 – 9:30 AM	Travel to Campus
	9:30 – Noon	Interviews and writing
	Noon – 1:00 PM	Closed Lunch: Team
	1:00 – 1:30 PM	Chair Meeting with President
	1:30 – 2:00 PM	Exit Interview
	2:00 PM	Team leaves campus

Evaluation visits normally require two and a half (2.5) days to assess whether it is appropriate to reaffirm an institution's accredited status.

Sample 2.5 Day Visit Schedule

Day	Time	Activity
One	1:30 - 3:00 PM	Team Orientation
	3:00 - 3:15 PM	Break
	3:15 - 5:15 PM	Interviews on Campus
	6:30 - 8:00 PM	Team Dinner with Administration
Two	8:00 – 9:00 PM	Executive Session
	9:00	Work in Room
	8:00 - 8:30 AM	Travel to Campus
	8:30 – 9:00 AM	Review Exhibit Materials
	9:00 - 11:30 AM	Interviews on Campus/Classroom Visits
	11:30 - 1:00 PM	Lunch
		Lunch: Two Team Members with Board of Control
		Lunch: Team Member with Student Group
		Lunch: Team Members open lunch (with Public?)
	2:00 - 4:00 PM	Interviews on Campus/Classroom Visits
	4:00 - 5:00 PM	Break
	5:30 – 7:00 PM	Team Dinner/Team Executive Session
	7:00 PM	Work in Room/Writing
	8:00 – 10:00 AM	Interviews/Writing
	10:00 – 10:30 AM	Break
Three	10:30 – 11:30 AM	Team Meeting
	11:30 – 1:00 PM	Closed Team Lunch
	1:00 – 1:30 PM	Chair Meeting with President
	1:30 – 2:00 PM	Exit Interview
	2:00 PM	Team leaves campus

Orientation Session

Team members must arrange their schedules so that they arrive at the initial team meeting relaxed and refreshed. For the best use of time, it is important that this meeting take place at the hotel.

After a session of prayer, the Team Chair will conduct an orientation session to assure that team members have a clear understanding of the overall team role in the evaluation process, of their individual roles as evaluators, and of both the "Philosophy of" and "Principle for Accreditation" (see the *ABHE COA Manual*).

Team members will present their analysis of the institution's self-study materials, especially as they relate to their areas of responsibility. Particular note will be made regarding the state of planning for and the implementation of assessment activities. Preliminary impressions will be discussed in order to identify specific concerns that must be resolved during the visit. The best methods by which to obtain the necessary information will be discussed. The schedule will be reviewed and assignments confirmed. Team members will be impressed with the necessity of presenting the Team Chair with a written report of their findings by 10:30 a.m. on day three. These written reports are developed by using the corresponding *Worksheets* and guidelines found in the section of this handbook "Evaluation Visit Report" (**also Appendices VII**).

Team members will be reminded of the second team meeting that will be held immediately following the dinner meeting with administrators.

Executive Sessions

There are usually three executive sessions:

1. Meeting after the Initial Dinner. Having returned to the hotel, the Team Chair may ask the team for an executive meeting to address some or all of the following:

- a. Confirm the final schedule of activities, including the interviews, and highlight the team meeting scheduled for 4:30 p.m. on day two.
 - b. Review specific areas that surfaced during the team's first meeting as needing special examination during the visit;
2. The afternoon team meeting on day two affords the first opportunity for a general discussion of findings. The discussion will provide opportunity for:
 - a. Each team member to briefly report upon his or her findings.
 - b. A general discussion that focuses upon: the major issues previously identified by the team, issues regarding validation of self-study claims, and compliance with the "ABHE *Standards*."
 - c. The identification of problems in finding appropriate documentation, issues arising from interviews, and means for resolving issues/problems.
 - d. A review of proposed commendations, suggestions, and recommendations.
 - e. Other needed group processes as determined by the team chair or members.
3. At the final team meeting—the morning of day three: The team must finalize all commendations, suggestions, and recommendations. Recommendations must, of course, be undergirded with factual support and criterion related. Conclusions must be reached regarding the major issues
 - a. Needing attention, the degree to which the institution's mission and objectives are being achieved, and the institution's overall compliance with the "*Standards for Accreditation*."
 - b. The team will then reach a consensus regarding the accreditation recommendation that will be forwarded to the Commission on Accreditation. The Chair will review the COA's Range of Motions available to the team (**see Appendix VIII**) and then guide the discussion to a final decision.
 - c. If team members are participating verbally in the exit interview, the Chair will discuss the method and sequence of the reporting.
 - d. Each team member is required to provide the Team Chair with an *electronic copy* for his/her section of the evaluation report.
 - e. Before final adjournment, the Chair will clarify matters relating to travel vouchers, worksheets, and assessment forms to be sent to the ABHE office within two weeks.

Team Meals with Institutional Personnel

Meal with Institutional Administrators

Prior to the visit, the President or the institution's visit coordinator should arrange a luncheon or dinner meeting for the team and the institution administration. During this meal, team members will sit with their counterparts from the institution and seek to establish a cordial relationship. Following the meal, the President will give a brief welcome to the team and introduce the members of his or her administration.

The Team Chair will, in turn, introduce each team member, identifying their area of expertise and institution. The Chair will seek to:

1. Establish a positive atmosphere for the visit by emphasizing that the purpose of the evaluation visit is to validate the institution's own self-study materials. The team's goal is to provide an outside perspective to assist the institution in its efforts to determine its strengths and weaknesses in achieving its goals and objectives, as well as the expectations of its peer institutions. To do this, the team will carefully review the institution's mechanisms for collecting data, making decisions based on the evidence, and making plans to deal with identified issues. The team will assess the extent to which desirable processes have been institutionalized. The ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of the institution's overall effort;

2. Relieve the administrators' stress level by briefly reviewing what the evaluator's activities will be during the visit;

Apprise everyone of the accelerated pace at which the visit will necessarily be conducted, so that all personnel will be prepared for a period of intensive activity. Interviews will be directed and efficient, and documentation will be readily available;

1. Clarify the visit schedule, including the time and format for the meetings with faculty, board, and students. Identify the location, equipment, and contents of the workroom.
2. Field questions from administrators.
3. If necessary, create an atmosphere that permits team members to make appointments with personnel they need to interview on day two. Once appointments have been made, the President will offer any concluding remarks and adjourn the meeting.

Luncheon Meeting with the Institution's Governing Board

The luncheon meeting with members of the institutional board affords an opportunity to discuss board structure, functions, achievements, and involvement in long-range planning. It also provides a time to reemphasize the board's responsibility to support the institution.

The seating arrangement should provide for optimum interaction between the board and team members. It is preferred that administrators not participate in the meeting. Although the President may make appropriate introductions at the outset of the luncheon, he/she should leave immediately thereafter.

Following the introductions, the Team Chair should assume responsibility for brief remarks regarding the purpose of accreditation and the focus of the visit. Team members will then have opportunity to question board members. Board members can, in turn, ask questions of the team members.

Since this is a working luncheon, the interaction must occur in an efficient manner so that the afternoon's activities can proceed on schedule.

Meeting with the Public

ABHE publishes the date and nature of the team visit on its website. Further, the institution is also required to announce the ABHE review on its own site. Members of the public are invited to submit written comments regarding the institution and, if desired, to meet with team members during the visit. The team chair, working with the institution, will ensure that there is a time in the schedule for the public to meet with representatives of the visiting team. This meeting should be an open forum, but without institutional representatives present.

If members of the public have made their desire for a meeting known to the institution and/or team ahead of time, it may be possible to organize the forum as a luncheon meeting on campus. Such meetings can conserve the team's valuable time. On the other hand, there are many reasons why it may not be feasible to use institutional dining services for such an event. The team chair has the prerogative of making arrangements for a meal at an off campus site or conducting the meeting outside of a meal time.

In any case, there should be opportunity during the visit for members of the public to meet with one or more team members to express their opinions regarding the institution. When such meetings are held, the team representative(s) should give notice at the outset that they will control the nature, location, and timing of the meeting. Depending on the number of people participating, the amount of time a particular individual is given to speak will be strictly limited.

Team members should make it clear that they are meeting with members of the public to listen, not to solve an individual's or group's problem(s). While the team is conducting the visit to make judgments regarding the institution's compliance with accreditation requirements, it will not share its impressions regarding the institution with members of the public at this meeting.

Researching Institutional Documents

One desired product of an evaluator's advanced visit preparations is a listing of the documents that will be needed to verify the claims made in the self-study materials. This list should be sent to the team chair prior to the visit. Upon arrival at the workroom, the evaluator will first verify that the desired documents are present (**see Chapter III, "Suggested Documents for Review"**). In the case of missing documents, the administrator in charge of that area should be approached with a request to supply them.

Some documents may require only a random perusal; others may need to be examined in depth. Sufficient time should be allowed for this activity. Any concerns should be identified. Time should be reserved for any subsequent interviews needed in order to clarify questions generated by the review of the documents.

Interviewing Institutional Personnel

Types of Interviews

There are two general types of interviews: group interviews and individual interviews. A group interview involves one or more team members interviewing a group of people. Most interviews are individual. It is not uncommon for a single person to be interviewed by more than one team member. The strength of having a given individual interviewed by two or more team members is that it provides distinct perspectives on information that may be discussed during the executive sessions.

Group interviews are particularly beneficial when interviewing students, faculty, or board members, for example. Classroom visits have only limited value. Yet, each team member should try to briefly visit one or two classes in order to assist in forming an overall impression of the instruction offered. Faculty members have been advised beforehand that visits will be brief and are not to be acknowledged.

Determining the Interview List

It is preferable that the institution have the opportunity to schedule initial interviews prior to the team's arrival. The procedure to do this involves four steps. The Team Chair will request a list of key personnel at the institution. The Team Chair will circulate this list to the team members with a request that they indicate whom they want to interview and the desired length of the interview. Team members will submit their requests to the Chair who will compile the list and submit it to the visit coordinator at the institution. Interviews and group meetings will be scheduled prior to the team's arrival. Each team member will be given a schedule on the first day of the visit.

If it becomes evident that additional interviews or meetings are needed, these may be arranged through the designated institutional liaison. All interviews must be cleared with the master schedule determined by the Team Chair to prevent conflicts.

Suggestions for Effective Interviewing

In scheduling the interviews, allowance should be made for an examination of relevant records available on campus. Insights gained from the records are likely to suggest additional questions to be asked during the interviews.

Since time is of the essence, to the extent possible, questions should be prepared in advance, based upon the evaluator's prior research, and related to a desired end. This requires

considerable forethought. Careful notes must be taken in order to accurately record responses. It is often desirable to informally rephrase the response in order to verify its accuracy with the person being interviewed.

An evaluator should keep the following in mind when interviewing:

1. Do not ask questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no" response. Rather ask the individual to describe, illustrate, or document.
2. Refrain from asking questions that require a judgment. Rather, ask questions that will enable you, as the visitor, to make a judgment.
3. Whenever possible, ask the same question(s) of more than one person. This allows not only for a comparison of answers, but also for possible insight into varying perspectives. Of course, it is essential to maintain the confidentiality of each respondent.
4. Ask a few brief questions to verify factual data.
5. Give brief verbal indicators that you are following the respondent's line of reasoning.
6. If necessary, ask for clarification.
7. Keep the interview focused. Tactfully curtail respondents who tend to be long-winded or stray from the subject.
8. If a particular response doesn't really get to the heart of what you are looking for, follow-up with additional questions. Tactfully pursue an issue until you are satisfied.
9. When examining systems and processes, consider answers through a grid that asks "What can go wrong?" "Would the structure operate smoothly with a different set of players?"
10. Identify the mechanisms in place to foster systematic examination and ongoing improvement in a particular area.
11. Probe potential problem areas with "what if" questions.
12. Ask about dreams for the future, barriers to progress, etc. These questions often reveal insights into the current situation.

Exit Interview

The exit interview provides the team an opportunity to present its conclusions to the President and those he or she wishes to be present. It also provides opportunity to clarify any misconceptions.

The Chair may choose to present the team's conclusions with the team members available for questioning. The Chair may present the conclusions and ask team members to amplify the points made; or the Chair may designate individual team members to present the findings for his or her particular area of responsibility.

A typical exit interview agenda might be the following:

1. Opening remarks by the Team Chair that includes an:
 - a. Expression of gratitude for hospitality during the visit
 - b. Explanation of how the team will present its findings
 - i. Individual team members or the Chair will read the team's commendations, suggestions, and recommendations.
 - ii. No discussion will be offered at this time regarding suggestions and formal recommendations.
 - iii. Questions for clarification will be entertained.
2. The presentation of the commendations, suggestions, and recommendations
3. Closing remarks by the Chair that outlines the following:
 - a. Team will depart the institution immediately after the exit interview
 - b. A draft of the report will be immediately circulated to the team members. Within one week of the report's receipt, factual errors should be sent to the chair. **Within two (2) weeks the visit, the final report document will be sent to the ABHE Office for final distribution to the institution with instructions.**
4. Closing remarks by the President.

IMPORTANT: *Under no circumstances is the overall team recommendation regarding the accrediting decision to be discussed with the institution's officials.*

The President should be informed that the team report should arrive in approximately three to four weeks. The President should be advised that after careful study of the report, they will be expected to formulate an official response to be submitted to the Association office by the date specified. In case of candidacy or initial accreditation, institution representatives will have opportunity to appear personally before the Commission on Accreditation to provide any additional information and to answer any questions that the Commission members may have. This privilege is optional for reaffirmation visits.

VI. Evaluation Visit Report

Team Responsibility

Each evaluator is required to provide the Team Chair with a written draft report that summarizes the findings for his or her area of responsibility. This draft report is due on day three of the visit. Although the bulk of the writing should be done during the evening of day two, it may be necessary to continue writing during the morning of day three, after any final interviews or research have been conducted. Each evaluator should use the *Evaluator Worksheet* and for their area of evaluation, since it provides both the Standard, Essential Elements, and questions for institutional engagement and report writing (**see Appendix VII**).

Organization

During the team orientation session, the Chair should explain their preference regarding writing style, voice, and presentation of the commendations, suggestions, and recommendations. While the Worksheet sets forth discrete sections for the descriptive analysis, commendations, suggestions, and recommendations, it is appropriate to incorporate the suggestions and recommendations into the descriptive analysis text. When this is done, the suggestions or recommendations are often presented in bold type.

Each evaluator will be responsible for specific *Standards* in the team report outline (**see this Handbook, Section III, "Evaluator Standards for Review & Assignments"**). A couple of *Standards* (#6, #7, and #11) include subheadings taken directly from the applicable Standards Comprehensive Integrated *Standards* or Programmatic *Standards*). Evaluators should provide written, analytical comments for each area of examination within their jurisdiction.

Each section of the evaluator's report should be brief, thorough, and written in essay form. To facilitate compilation of the final report, the presentation for each *Standard* should begin on a new page. An evaluative analysis of the institution's compliance with the criterion will be given, followed, as applicable, by any statements of commendation, recommendation, or suggestion. This information will be outlined in a Summary Narrative for quick reference (**see Appendix IX**).

Form and Style

The final evaluation visit report should be submitted electronically to coa@abhe.org in MS Word format, rarely in excess of 25 pages, following this outline:

Title page:



ABHE Evaluation Visit Report
Name of Institution
City, State
Visit Date

Structure The key features of the visit, its nature (e.g., review for candidacy, initial accreditation, or reaffirmation), and observations. Please include the names of the evaluators in the introduction.

- Title Page
- Intro/Brief History
- Standards #1-11 (Each Standard heading should be listed in the report).
- Summary of Commendations (list numerically)
- Summary of Suggestions (list numerically)
- Summary of Recommendations (list numerically& reference Standards)
- Summary Narrative (**see Appendix IX.a**)

Decisions of the Team Each team member will present to the team his or her proposed commendations, suggestions, and recommendations. These are to be discussed and approved by the team. Again, a Summary Narrative will overview this information (**see Appendix IX**).

Commendations. A commendation should denote exemplary work on the part of an individual or unit within the institution. Compliance with a Standard is not the basis for a commendation; rather it is an expectation of the Association.

Suggestions. There are two types of suggestions: 1) based on an Essential Element or 2) based on the opinion of the team. When a suggestion is based on an Essential Element, it should utilize the language of the Element.

Recommendations. Normally, no more than eleven (11) recommendations should be included in the report. One recommendation can be made for each standard where compliance is inadequate. The recommendation should address only those parts of the Standard that have not been met, and the recommendation must provide specific details as to where the institution is either weak or does not meet the Standard.

Letter of Overall Recommendation to the COA. As a group, the team will write a brief formal letter with an accreditation recommendation according to the COA Range of Motions to be forwarded to the Commission. The Team Chair will guide the team through the process of making its decision and provide specific instructions regarding wording of the statement.

Because this recommendation may not necessarily be adopted by the COA, it is imperative that it be held in confidence and not be communicated to the institution. It is possible that the institution's written response to the team report, together with corrective actions taken prior to its appearance before the Commission, will influence the ultimate decision. The Commission also needs to assure consistency or reliability in its decisions.

Special concerns to note:

1. In crafting the summaries of commendations, suggestions, and recommendations, statements should be written in parallel form. Individual team members often use different writing styles in writing their particular part of the report, including statements of commendation, suggestion or recommendation. When these statements prepared by the individual team member are collected together and placed at the end of the report, the Chair must be careful to ensure that they are edited to reflect a common (parallel) style of writing.
2. Refrain from naming individuals in the report. Refer to title or office only.
3. Offer neither praise nor blame towards individuals.
4. Avoid lavish praise or harsh criticism. Be factual. Avoid emotional overtones. Refrain from contradicting previous teams. Be diplomatic if it is necessary to modify previous recommendations.
5. Avoid taking a position on accreditation offered by other agencies.
6. Focus on the "Standards for Accreditation." Do not advocate personal theories or positions.
7. Avoid revealing the team's accreditation recommendation to the institution.

VII. Concluding the Evaluation Visit

Team Chair Tasks

See Appendix II

Prepare a Draft of the Evaluation Visit Report

The Team Chair is responsible for the final team report. While he or she should circulate a rough draft among team members for additional comment or correction, the final team report is the product of the Team Chair. The Chair may compose and edit it as he or she sees fit, yet in accordance with the guidelines set herein. The Chair will send a copy of the report to each team member requesting him or her to note any factual errors or misrepresentations of intent.

Prepare a Summary Narrative

The Team Chair is also responsible for condensing the team's major findings into a summary narrative. This summary must be in accord with the format outlined in **Appendix IX**, "Summary Narrative," and is not to exceed two single-spaced pages. This summary along with the report, summary is emailed to the Accreditation Services Coordinator at coa@abhe.org.

Complete the Title IV Eligibility Standards Review Certification

Review the team report to ensure that it fully addresses all Title IV eligibility-related standards as summarized in Appendix I, complete, sign and append the certification page to the report.

Prepare a Team Recommendation Letter

The Team Chair is also responsible to word the official letter summarizing the overall recommendation of the team to the Commission on Accreditation. **IMPORTANT:** *Under no circumstances is the overall team recommendation regarding the accrediting decision to be discussed with the institution's officials.* Along with the report, this letter is emailed to the Accreditation Services Coordinator at coa@abhe.org.

Submit the Report to the ABHE Office

It is extremely important that the final report, summary narrative, and official letter be emailed to the Accreditation Services Coordinator at coa@abhe.org within two weeks of the visit. These documents will be reviewed for adherence to the team guidelines and grammatical accuracy and then forwarded to the institution and Commission on Accreditation.

Complete an Assessment of each Evaluator

The Team Chair will provide the Association office an assessment of each evaluator on the form provided. These confidential assessments are held in strictest confidence and become an important element in the strengthening of future teams (**see Appendix VI**).

Submit the Travel Expense Voucher and Evaluator Worksheet

Within two weeks, the Team Chair must submit a *Travel Expense Voucher* (**Appendix V**), and their *Evaluator Worksheet* (**Appendix VII**) to the Association office. The self-study materials should be left at the institution.

Evaluator Tasks

See Appendix III

Review the Draft Evaluation Visit Report

When the Team Chair forwards a draft of the report for comment, **it is imperative that evaluators give this high priority so the final report can be forwarded by the Chair to the Association office within the stipulated time of two (2) weeks.**

Submit the Expense Voucher, Assessment of Team Chair, and Evaluator Worksheet

Within two weeks, the evaluator must submit a *Travel Expense Voucher* (**Appendix V**), an evaluation of the Team Chair's performance (**Appendix VI**), and their *Evaluator Worksheet*, (**Appendix VII**), if not collected by the Chair to the Association office. The self-study materials should be left at the institution.

Appendix I

U.S. Department of Education: Expectations for Evaluation Reports

The U.S. Department of Education requires that the ABHE team reports comment upon the following:

Standard #1

1. The extent to which the institution broadly and accurately publicizes its
 - a. objectives,
 - b. means of assessing educational effectiveness, and
 - c. methods for determining “ability to benefit.”

Standard #2

2. Success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution’s mission, including as appropriate, consideration of course completion, State licensing examination, and job placement rates. The adequacy and means used to document student achievement such as:
 - a. evaluation of senior theses,
 - b. review of student portfolios,
 - c. general education assessments,
 - (1) standardized test results,
 - (2) graduate or professional school test results,
 - (3) graduate or professional school placements,
 - d. job placement rates,
 - e. licensing examination results,
 - f. employer evaluations, and
 - g. other

NOTE: Documentation of achievement is to be verifiable and consistent.

3. The **team report** must include remarks regarding student achievement that provide information dealing with the following areas:
 - a. **appropriateness of the measures of student achievement chosen by the institution**
 - b. **rigor of the student achievement goals established by the institution**
 - c. *any issues related to student achievement that need improvement*
 - d. *overall student performance relative to desired learning outcomes*
 - e. *progress towards satisfaction of student achievement objectives*

Since the Commission must make a judgment regarding the appropriateness, rigor, and achievement record with respect to the institution’s student learning outcomes, the team report must provide the Commission a basis for making this judgment. The team report should document positive compliance with Standard #2a., not just non-compliance.

4. The extent to which assessment information is used in planning especially for the purpose of fostering enhanced student achievement.

Standards #1, #11

5. The clarity of institutional objectives; the consistency of institutional objectives with institutional mission; and the appropriateness of institutional objectives in light of the degrees or certificates awarded.

Standard #6, #9

6. Resources including faculty, facilities, equipment, and supplies.

Standards #9, #11

7. The extent to which graduates have satisfied all certificate/degree requirements; and the adequacy of documentation demonstrating that graduates have satisfied all graduation requirements.

Standard #6

8. Fiscal and administrative capacity as appropriate to the specified scale of operations.

Standard #7

9. The adequacy of documentation demonstrating the student's ability to benefit from instruction for those not meeting normal admissions Standards; the extent to which institutions admitting students on the basis of the ability to benefit use appropriate methods to determine that students are capable of benefiting from the education offered.

Standards #2, #11

10. The extent to which graduation is awarded only to students who have demonstrated educational achievement as assessed and documented through appropriate measures.

Standard #8

11. Student support services.

Standards #3, #7, #11

12. Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising.

Standard #11

13. Measures of program length and the objectives of the degrees or credentials offered and their conformity to ABHE Standards.

Standard #8

14. The record of student complaints against the institution and actions taken to resolve them; the inclusion of ABHE's address and telephone number in public documents, including the college catalog and student handbook.

Standard #3 (Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV)

15. For institution's participating in Title IV programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education, the record of compliance with the institution's program responsibilities under Title IV of the 1998 Higher Education Amendments. Data to be reviewed includes the institution's default rates, the results of financial or compliance audits, program reviews, or any other information provided the institution by the U.S. Department of Education. With respect to findings of noncompliance, matters to be reviewed include corrective steps being taken by the institution,

and implications of the Title IV noncompliance for the institution's compliance with ABHE *Standards*.

Standard #11

16. **Specifics on how the institution defines a "credit hour."** Particular care must be taken to determine the institution's practice with respect to distance education and adult degree completion programs. Note: A semester credit hour represents a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction per week over a 15-week period, supplemented by two hours of preparation for each hour of instruction for the average student; or the equivalent amount of time (37.5 hours) in instructor designated learning activities. A quarter credit hour represents a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction per week over a 10-week period, supplemented by two hours of preparation for each hour of instruction for the average student; or the equivalent amount of time (25 hours) in instructor designated learning activities. A quarter credit hour is equivalent to 2/3 of a semester credit hour. Time for final examinations is outside these specifications. The assignment of credit hours may be based on intended learning outcomes, verified through student achievement, that the institution determines are reasonably equivalent to a credit hour of student work. It is usually necessary to employ sampling to cover the various facets of the institution's instructional offerings.

Standards #3, #7, #11 (Various policies)

17. The adequacy and accuracy of the institution's public disclosures regarding its:
- resources,
 - admissions policies and standards,
 - credit transfer policy (must be made public),
 - academic offerings,
 - policies regarding satisfactory academic progress,
 - fees and other charges,
 - refund policies,
 - completion or graduation rates for full time certificate or degree-seeking undergraduate students,
 - graduation requirements, and
 - accreditation status.

Standards #2, #3

18. The **public nature**, adequacy, and accuracy of the institution's disclosures regarding its educational effectiveness.
19. The adequacy and accuracy of the institution's public disclosures regarding the employment of recent graduates in occupations related to the education offered.
20. The adequacy and accuracy of any data used by the institution in public disclosures to support its claims relative to the items enumerated by numbers 17, 18, and 19 above.

Standard #11 (Various policies)

21. The adequacy of the institution's self evaluation of distance education offerings, branch campus offerings, and offerings at additional locations. (The standards used for traditional education should also be applied to distance education.) See the ABHE "Policy on Alternative Academic Patterns" (*Manual*, pp. 59-64).
22. The adequacy of the institution's control of and support for distance education, branch campuses, and "additional locations."
23. **The adequacy of the institution's efforts to ensure that the student getting credit for distance education or correspondence work is the student who is doing the work. (c.f. Guidelines for Ensuring Integrity in Distance Education & Correspondence Studies)**

(Policy on Substantive Change)

24. The adequacy of the institution's compliance with ABHE's "Policy on Substantive Change"
- change in mission/objectives,
 - change in legal status or control,
 - change in programs/courses that represent a significant departure from the content of past offerings,
 - change in method of or location for delivery of educational offerings (for branch campuses or additional locations, teams should be provided information regarding the programs to be offered, anticipated revenues/expenses and cash flows, control and management mechanisms, and physical resources) ,
 - change in level of offerings,
 - change in clock vs. credit hours, and
 - substantial change in length of program or credit hours awarded.

Note: If an institution is found to be in compliance with the *Standards* for Accreditation, a decision to grant or reaffirm accreditation is appropriate if it is reasonable to assume that the institution has the capacity to maintain its compliance with the Standards throughout the period of accreditation granted (i.e. five years in the case of initial accreditation and ten years for reaffirmation of accreditation). If an institution fails to be in substantial compliance with a criterion, the Association is required to take immediate adverse action against the institution or require the institution to come into satisfactory compliance with the criterion within two years. If the institution does not come into compliance within two years, the Association is required to take adverse action immediately unless the Commission determines, for good cause, that the period for achieving compliance should be extended. For purposes of this requirement, sanctions are not considered adverse actions. It may be necessary to justify good cause extensions of the time for compliance to the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Team Chair Certification

I have inventoried the team report and hereby certify that the report addresses all of the USDE Title IV eligibility-related standards summarized above sufficiently to allow the Commission to fulfill its obligation to render a judgment regarding compliance.

Signature _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

COA Staff Certification

I have inventoried the team report and hereby certify that the report addresses all of the USDE Title IV eligibility-related standards summarized above sufficiently to allow the Commission to fulfill its obligation to render a judgment regarding compliance.

Signature _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Appendix II.a

Evaluation Team Chair Guidelines

Please be familiar with the specific institution data enclosed with these guidelines. Emphasize to the team evaluators the need to be thoroughly familiar with all documents. Before and during the visit, please refer to and use the resources made available through the ABHE office, especially the current *Evaluation Team Handbook* and the *ABHE Manual*. Confirm team evaluator assignments prior to the visit or upon arrival during the team orientation session. *You may modify their specific assignments due to the nature of the visit or according to their expertise.*

Please initiate contact with the institution president to finalize visit details such as lodging and ground transportation. As you make travel arrangements, we ask that your team arrive at the hotel no later than 1:00pm on the first day and plan to leave no earlier than 4:00pm on the last day. Please contact the team evaluators to coordinate travel plans.

The institution will send to each evaluator the self-study materials and catalog. If you do not promptly receive these items, please notify our office. *Please leave all self-study materials with the institution at the conclusion of the visit.*

The following materials should be promptly submitted to the ABHE at coa@abhe.org

TEAM REPORT DUE

- **Submit within two (2) weeks of the conclusion of the evaluation.**
- Send via email attachments to coa@abhe.org.

TEAM REPORT FORMAT

- Documents compatible with Microsoft Word or .PDF (Adobe Reader).
- 1" Margins.
- Title Page: Institution Name, City, State, Visit Date.

REPORT PROCEDURES

- In preparing the team report, summary narrative, and recommendation letter you should thoroughly consult and follow the instructions and procedures outlined in the *ABHE Evaluation Team Handbook* and the *Standards* and policies outlined in the *ABHE Manual*.
- All team recommendations must directly reference the *Standards*
- If you have questions or need guidance in interpreting and following procedures, please contact the ABHE professional staff for assistance in advance of deadlines.
- Ensure that team member names & area of evaluation appear on the report, summary, and recommendation letter.
- **Append the signed certificate of Title IV eligibility standards inventory (see Appendix I).**

EVALUATOR WORKSHEETS

- **Submit each team evaluator's completed ABHE Evaluator Worksheet** as an instrument that applies the ABHE *Standards* to specific institutional situations.
- This worksheet is part of a procedure that maintains ongoing compliance with agencies that evaluate our validity and reliability of accreditation *Standards*.
- This worksheet is designed to organize the evaluation and give an opportunity to suggest improvements of our accreditation *Standards*.

CONFIDENTIAL ASSESSMENTS

- **Submit your completed ABHE confidential evaluator assessment forms** as an instrument that enables us to assess the overall performance of the team in the institutional setting.
- **Please have each team member submit** their confidential team chair assessment forms directly to ABHE via email to coa@abhe.org or mail to 5850 T.G. Lee Blvd., Ste. 130, Orlando, FL 32822.

TRAVEL EXPENSE VOUCHER

- Submit your completed *Travel Expense Voucher* directly to ABHE **within two weeks**.

Appendix II.b

Sample Team Chair Letter/Email to Evaluators

Date:

To: Evaluator

From: Team Chair

Subject: Upcoming Evaluation Visit

It is a privilege to serve with you in the Association for Biblical Higher Education accreditation visit to (institution) on (date). I would like for us to share a little about ourselves before we meet. Please fill out the Personal Data Form and return it to me as soon as possible so I can pass it on to other team members.

Please read through the current *Evaluation Team Handbook* thoroughly. Also, please examine the specific sections of the *Standards* and *Essential Elements* that pertain to your areas of responsibility. These are outlined for you in the Handbook, the *Evaluator Worksheet*; and policy and procedures in the current *ABHE COA Manual*.

Plan to arrive at (hotel) by (time, date). Reservations (have/have not) been made for you by the institution. If you are traveling by air, please contact (name of institution's visit coordinator) concerning your transportation needs. Provide information to both the institution and me regarding your arrival/departure times, airline, and flight numbers. Our initial team meeting will begin at (time) at the hotel.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

My phone number is ____ - ____ - ____ and email is _____.

Thank you for participating on this team. Please join me in praying for travel safety and that the evaluation visit will be truly beneficial to the institution.

Sincerely,

Team Chair

Appendix II.c

Sample Evaluator Data Form

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Family Profile: _____

Education: _____

Institution: _____

Degree _____ Discipline _____ Date: _____

Current Position: _____

Institution: _____

Professional Experience: (Administration, Teaching, Research, Writing, Consulting, etc.)

Prior Evaluation Team Experience: _____

Number of Teams: _____

Area of Responsibility: _____

Service as a Chair? _____

Appendix II.d

Liaison Evaluation Guide



Liaison Evaluation Guide

www.abhe.org

The institution should appoint a liaison to coordinate arrangements between the president and team chair once the visit date and evaluators have been assigned. Please provide the ABHE Accreditation Services Coordinator with the liaison's contact information at coa@abhe.org. It is our hope that your careful attention to the following areas will help make the evaluation most enjoyable and beneficial. Thank you!

Reports

A copy of the final evaluation team report will be emailed from ABHE to the institution president and liaison. ABHE requests that a copy of this report be shared with the institution's board of control. ***The institution will submit a written response to the evaluation report and submit it to the ABHE Commission on Accreditation according to the guidelines for review by the Commission at its February meeting.***

Representatives

For institutions being considered for initial candidacy or initial accreditation, the president and normally no more than two additional representatives, one of which may be a member of the board of control, will be expected to appear before the ABHE Commission at its February meeting to provide additional information and to answer any questions.

Billing

An invoice from ABHE will be sent to the institution following the visit for the current evaluation fee plus expenses for travel to the institution. ***These travel expenses are in addition to the lodging, meal, and local transportation costs directly assumed by the institution throughout the evaluation.***

Lodging

The institution is expected to provide the evaluators with convenient lodging. The liaison should consult with the team chair concerning the evaluators' arrival and departure times and the contact information for the place of lodging. Quiet, separate rooms should be provided in proximity to each other. ***All bills for hotel expenses should be directly assumed by the institution unless otherwise specified.***

Meals

The institution is expected to provide meals for the evaluators. Some meals should be scheduled in the institution's dining room and some at the place of lodging or local venues. Light refreshments available in or near the work room are always appreciated. ***All bills for meal expenses should be directly assumed by the institution unless otherwise specified.***

Transportation

The institution is expected to provide the evaluators with local transportation. The liaison should consult with the team chair concerning arrival and departure times to make appropriate arrangements for local transportation. The liaison should give the team chair a regional/campus map with lodging, dining, and

meeting locations clearly marked. ***All bills for local transportation expenses should be directly assumed by the institution unless otherwise specified.***

Work Room

A work room should be available for the evaluators' exclusive use (preferably in the administration building). This room should have internet access and sufficient table or desk space to spread out material and prepare reports. Confirm with the team chair if computer, printer, or projector access is needed. Light refreshments available in or near the work room are always appreciated.

Materials

The institution should make available for evaluators any and all official records, minutes, and documents. A calculator and dictionary should be provided in addition to a supply of paper, pencils, and pens. The liaison should discuss with the team chair about which materials are needed in the work room and administrator's offices. The liaison can then provide evaluators with a directory of materials to indicate document locations.

Typical Work Room Material:

- a. Class schedules for the current year and previous two years; outlines for curriculum including course title, description, objectives, content, materials, learning experiences, requirements, and bibliography;
- b. Sample institution catalogs, publicity periodicals, brochures, and policy manuals, such as handbooks for faculty, staff, students, library, student ministries, student council and alumni constitutions;
- c. Financial documents, such as the three most recent annual audited statements, the three most recent annual budgets, and the three most recent annual revenue profiles;
- d. Registrar reports for the previous three years;
- e. Faculty/staff roster reports for the past three years;
- f. Self-study materials: compliance document, assessment plan, and planning document.

Schedule

The evaluation normally encompasses a 48 hour period.

- a. The liaison should work with the team chair to schedule group meetings in advance.
- b. A recommendation for the first meeting between evaluators and key institution administrators is to share dinner the first night. After an orientation, finalize plans and confirm appointments for individual and group meetings to be held the next day. Class schedules, campus maps, and name tags should be available at this dinner meeting.
- c. At his/her discretion, the team chair may request administrators and full-time faculty to wear name tags during the evaluation.
- d. The team chair may request short, separate meetings with the student council, faculty, representatives of the board of control, and the public during the first full day.

Campus Orientation

An orientation should be provided for the institution's students, staff, administrators, and board as to the nature and purpose of the evaluation. This orientation should address the following information:

- a. Campus life, atmosphere, and activity ought to be as normal as possible during the evaluation;
- b. Evaluators will meet separately and privately with the student council, faculty, and a representative group of the board of control;
- c. Evaluators will interview all administrators and some full-time faculty, staff, students, and board;
- d. Evaluators appreciate consideration to complete their intensive tasks without interruption or distraction;
- e. Evaluators will visit a few classes and appreciate that:
 - 1) No tests be scheduled during the visit,
 - 2) An empty chair be available near the door,
 - 3) No special reference be made to evaluators.

Appendix III.a

Evaluator Guidelines

Please be familiar with the specific institution data enclosed with these guidelines and be thoroughly familiar with all institution documents. Before and during the visit, please refer to resources available through ABHE, especially the current *Evaluation Team Handbook* and the *ABHE COA Manual*. These resources review the nature and purpose for evaluation visits and discuss how they fit into the overall process of accreditation. Please confirm your specific assignment with your team chair prior to the visit or upon arrival during the team orientation session. Note that your team chair may modify your assignment due to the nature of the visit or according to your expertise.

Please initiate contact with the team chair to finalize details regarding lodging, transportation, arrival and departure times. As you make travel arrangements, we ask that you arrive at the hotel no later than 1:00pm on the first day and plan to leave no earlier than 4:00pm on the last day unless your team chair otherwise instructs.

The institution will send to each evaluator the self-study materials and catalog. If you do not promptly receive these items, please notify your team chair. Please leave all self-study materials with the institution at the conclusion of the visit.

The following materials should be promptly submitted to the ABHE at coa@abhe.org

TEAM REPORT DUE

- Team chair will submit the entire report within two (2) weeks of the conclusion of the evaluation. Please be prompt in your responses to the chair in the final stages of editing the report.

REPORT PROCEDURES

- In preparing your area of the team report, you should thoroughly consult and follow the instructions and procedures outlined in the *ABHE Evaluation Team Handbook* and the *Standards* and policies outlined in the *ABHE Manual*.
- All team recommendations must directly reference the *Standards*.
- If you have questions or need guidance in interpreting and following procedures, please contact your team chair for assistance.

EVALUATOR WORKSHEET

- **Submit your completed ABHE Evaluator Worksheet** via email to coa@abhe.org or by mail to 5850 T.G. Lee Blvd., Ste. 130, Orlando, FL 32822.
- This worksheet is part of a procedure that maintains ongoing compliance with agencies that evaluate our validity and reliability of accreditation *Standards*, and demonstrates how the *Standards* are applied to specific institutional situations.
- This worksheet is designed to organize the evaluation and give an opportunity to suggest improvements of our accreditation *Standards*.

CONFIDENTIAL ASSESSMENT

- **Submit your completed ABHE Confidential Assessment** of the team chair directly to ABHE within two (2) weeks via email to coa@abhe.org or by mail to the address above.

TRAVEL EXPENSE VOUCHER

- **Submit your completed Travel Expense Voucher** directly to ABHE within two (2) weeks via email to coa@abhe.org or by mail to the address above.

Appendix III.b

Decalogue for the Accreditation Team

By Hector Lee

Professor Emeritus, Sonoma State University

1. **Don't Snitch.** A team member often learns private matters about an institution that an outsider has no business knowing; he is privy to "classified" information. Don't "tell tales" or talk about the weaknesses of an institution after the visit.
2. **Don't Steal Apples.** A team member often discovers promising personnel that he would like to recruit for his own institution. Don't take advantage of the opportunity afforded by your position on the team to lure good teachers away from the institution you are visiting.
3. **Don't Be on the Take.** A team member is often tempted to accept small favors, services, or gifts from the institution being visited. Don't accept, or even suggest, that you would like to have a sample of wares of an institution's book it published, a product produced, or a service performed by the institution visited.
4. **Don't Be a Candidate.** A team member might see an opportunity to suggest himself for a consultancyship, a temporary job, or a permanent position with the institution he is visiting. Don't apply or suggest your availability until after your report has been filed.
5. **Don't Be a Nit-Picker.** A team member often sees small problems that can be solved by attention to minor details. Don't use the accreditation report as a means for affecting minor reforms.
6. **Don't Shoot Small Game with a Big Gun.** A team member often finds that a small, weak, or marginal institution is completely at his mercy. Don't be sadistic or use the power of accreditation to deal heavily with or injure an institution that may need help more than punishment.
7. **Don't Be a Bleeding Heart.** A team member with "do-good" impulses may be blinded by good intentions and try to play the role of savior for an institution that may not deserve to be saved. Don't compound weakness by sentimental generosity in the hope that a school's problems will go away if ignored or treated with unwarranted optimism.
8. **Don't Push Dope.** A team member often sees an opportunity to recommend his own personal theories, philosophies, or techniques as the solution to an institution's problems. Don't force an institution to adopt measures that are likely to be altered or reversed by a subsequent team.
9. **Don't Shoot Poison Darts.** A team member may be tempted to "tip off" the administration to suspected treachery or to warn one faction on a campus of hidden enemies. Don't poison the minds of the staff or reveal suspicions to the administration; there are more wholesome ways to alert an administration to hidden tensions.
10. **Don't Worship Sacred Cows.** A team member in awe of a large and powerful institution may be reluctant to criticize an obvious problem in some department. Don't overlook weakness because the institution has a great reputation.

Appendix IV-Observer Guidelines

ABHE has not adopted an official policy regarding evaluation visit observers. Occasionally, observers from provincial or state agencies, recognizing bodies, denominational organizations, sister accrediting bodies, or member colleges accompany teams.

PURPOSE

Evaluation visit observers are permitted under appropriate circumstances for the following purposes:

- To provide opportunity to become acquainted with ABHE's accrediting process (often for the purpose of determining the usefulness of ABHE's accreditation for purposes of the observer's agency);
- To evaluate the effectiveness of ABHE's team visit process for a recognizing body;
- To enhance the effectiveness and profitability of evaluation team visits by enriching the training and experience level of prospective evaluators;
- To promote excellence throughout the Association through the exchange of ideas for institutional self-study and team visit preparation.

CONDITIONS-Permission for observers may be granted at the discretion of the Director, Commission on Accreditation subject to the following conditions:

- Approval of the ABHE professional staff, host institution, and the team chair
- Expenses in connection with the observation visit will be borne entirely by the observer or his/her institution.

GUIDELINES- Observer participation will conform to the following guidelines:

- Participants will be permitted to participate in all evaluation team meetings, except where the team chair declares an executive session;
- Participants must agree to conduct themselves as observers of – not participants in – evaluation team reviews and deliberations;
- ordinarily, no more than one observer may accompany an evaluation team;
- The observer will be granted the same access as evaluation team members to evaluation team training and orientation materials, institutional self-study materials, and other relevant institutional documents;
- Participants must agree not to interfere in any way with evaluation team members in conducting their reviews and exercising their assessment responsibilities;
- Participants must agree to observe strict confidentiality concerning all written materials, interviews of institutional personnel, and review of institutional records and self-study documents according to the provisions of ABHE's *Statement on Confidentiality and Public Disclosure*; during the visit, the observer will be granted interviews with the team chair, institutional self-study director, and/or institutional president, subject to availability, and provided such interviews do not interfere with the overriding priorities of the evaluation visit.

PROCEDURE- To observe an evaluation visit, the following procedures should be followed:

- The individual should submit a written request to the Director, Commission on Accreditation indicating his or her desire to serve as an observer, and affirming his or her commitment to abide by the provisions and limitations of the above conditions, including the responsibility to bear all observer expenses. Representatives of recognizing bodies must present evidence confirming their status with the recognizing agency.
- Upon receipt of a satisfactory request, the Director, Commission on Accreditation will secure agreement from the president of the institution(s) to be evaluated.
- The Director, Commission on Accreditation will secure agreement from the evaluation team chair to accommodate an observer on the evaluation team visit.
- The Director, Commission on Accreditation will notify the president of the host institution, and the evaluation team chair of the agreement of all parties to include an evaluation team visit observer.
- The team chair and host institution will include the observer in all pre-visit communication and arrangements.
- The team chair, host institution president, and the evaluation visit observer will each provide written feedback to the Director, Commission on Accreditation concerning the experience.

Appendix V Travel Expense Voucher

Complete and return with receipts to ABHE at 5850 TG LEE BLVD. STE 130, Orlando, FL 32822.

Telephone: 407.207.0808 FAX: 407.207.0840

PLEASE PRINT & ATTACH RECEIPTS

Name: _____ **SAMPLE** __ **PLEASE OBTAIN CURRENT FORM FROM ABHE** _____

Date: _____

Institution where you work: _____

Institution you evaluated: _____

Plane Fare:\$ _____

Auto Travel – Mileage: _____ miles @ .xx cents\$ _____

Lodging:\$ _____

Meals:\$ _____

Taxi:\$ _____

Other Expenses: _____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

All amounts must be in U.S. Funds.

TOTAL: \$ _____

Please make check payable to:

Signature: X _____ **SAMPLE** _____

Address: _____

For ABHE Office Record

Account No. _____

Date of Payment _____

Check No. _____

Amount Paid _____

Appendix VI.a

Team Chair Assessment CONFIDENTIAL

Team Chair being assessed _____

Institution Visited _____ ETV Date _____

*This is a COPY. **Please do not print this.** An electronic survey along with instructions will be e-mailed to you at the end of your visit. All information received will remain confidential:*

	Weak			Strong	
1. Pre-visit communication	1	2	3	4	5
2. Team orientation session	1	2	3	4	5
3. Resource regarding <i>Standards</i> for Accreditation	1	2	3	4	5
4. Guidance toward accreditation decision	1	2	3	4	5
5. Emphasis on Standard referenced recommendations	1	2	3	4	5
6. Professional conduct	1	2	3	4	5
7. Personal qualities	1	2	3	4	5
8. Overall rating of the Team Chair	1	2	3	4	5
9. Would you recommend that this person serve again as a Team Chair?					

_____Yes

_____No

Please elaborate:

Appendix VI.b

Evaluator Assessment CONFIDENTIAL

Team Member being assessed _____

Institution Visited _____ ETV Date _____

*This is a COPY. **Please do not print this.** An electronic survey along with instructions will be e-mailed to you at the end of your visit. All information received will remain confidential: Submit separate forms for each Team Member.*

	Weak			Strong	
I. Preparation					
A. Knowledge of Self-Study Report	1	2	3	4	5
B. Knowledge of Institutional Planning Document	1	2	3	4	5
C. Knowledge of ABHE <i>Standards</i> for Accreditation	1	2	3	4	5
II. Campus Visitation					
A. Made effective use of time	1	2	3	4	5
B. Actively pursued data for analysis	1	2	3	4	5
C. Actively pursued interview sources	1	2	3	4	5
D. Related well to institutional personnel	1	2	3	4	5
E. Positive contribution to discussions	1	2	3	4	5
III. Written Report					
A. Submitted to Team Chair at close of visit	1	2	3	4	5
B. Evaluative rather than descriptive	1	2	3	4	5
C. Objective and documented	1	2	3	4	5
D. Standards-related recommendations	1	2	3	4	5
E. Identifies institutional strengths	1	2	3	4	5
F. Concentrates on major recommendations	1	2	3	4	5

IV. Additional Comments

Appendix VI.c

Survey of the Accreditation Process

-Confidential-

The Association is constantly seeking to improve the accreditation process. Once institutions complete an evaluation cycle, we forward them an online electronic survey to provide input on the process. Here is a sample of the questions we request:

Assessment Survey of the Accreditation Process

Created: April 05 2010, 7:45 AM
Last Modified: June 26 2010, 11:45 PM
Hosted by Zoomerang™

Assessment Survey of the Accreditation Process

We strongly solicit your candid and confidential feedback regarding the ABHE Accreditation Process. Your input will help us to assess the quality and effectiveness of self-study development, evaluation visits, COA Standards, and the Commission on Accreditation.

Self-Study Development

Question 1 - Rating Scale - One Answer		[Mandatory]
Adequate lead time for self-study development.		
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral
	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Question 2 - Rating Scale - One Answer		[Mandatory]
Clear guidance from ABHE publications and the Commission correspondence related to the self-study process.		
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral
	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Question 3 - Rating Scale - One Answer		[Mandatory]
Consultation from ABHE staff or consultants was helpful related to the self-study development.		
Too Intense	Too Leisurely	Adequate
	Excellent	
Question 4 - Rating Scale - One Answer		[Mandatory]
Ongoing mechanisms for institutional analysis through self-study development are in place.		
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral
	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Appendix VII Evaluator Worksheet Sample



2010 ETV WORKSHEETS

STANDARDS #11

(ACADEMIC EVALUATOR)

INSTITUTION EVALUATED

DIRECTIONS— USE THE APPROPRIATE COLUMNS and QUESTIONS TO:

- **Review** the self-study and **note strengths, weaknesses, and potential suggestions.**
- **Prepare** writing for the evaluation visit report and **note any on-site observations.**
- **Develop** answers to **questions for institutional engagement.**

- **Score** the institution's strength on **Essential Elements by circling a number 1 -5** (low to high).
- **Rate** the institution's overall compliance with **Standards by circling a number 1-5** (low to high).

- **Indicate validity** of Standards by **circling "A"** -Appropriate **or "B"**-Inappropriate.
- **Indicate reliability** of Standards by **circling "Y"**-Clear **or "Z"**-Ambiguous.
- **Comment** regarding suggestions or additions to improve ABHE's evaluation quality.

RETURN FORM TO THE ABHE OFFICE FOR COA ASSESSMENT RECORDS: coa@abhe.org or

5850 TG Lee Blvd., Suite 130, Orlando, FL 32822

(Sample ETV Worksheet continued) **Standard #11 – Academic Programs****11a. Curriculum**

1 2 3 4 5 Essential Element # 1 Evidence that academic programs exhibit the content and rigor characteristic of higher education, and a level of analytical research and communication skills needed for life-long learning commensurate with the level of education. A B Y Z <i>Comments:</i>	Self-Study Notes	Visit Notes
1 2 3 4 5 Essential Element # 2 A written statement of expected student outcomes for each academic program and a coherent program of study to achieve these objectives. A B Y Z <i>Comments:</i>	Self-Study Notes	Visit Notes

(Sample ETV Worksheet Continued)

QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND REPORT WRITING:

STANDARD 11a

General

1. What is the relationship of the curriculum to the institutional mission?
2. What research has been undertaken to compare curriculum content with norms in the higher education community?
3. In what ways does the curriculum require students to engage in higher level cognitive activities such as research and critical analysis?
4. To what extent is curricular content consistent with program objectives?
5. To what extent is there evidence that direct study of the Bible is required and that this study results in the mastery of skills necessary for lifetime study of the Scriptures?
6. What evidence is there that students graduate with a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible and a biblical world-view?
7. What evidence is there that curriculum content addresses the students' cultural setting?
8. What evidence is there that the curriculum of each program reflects a coherent pattern that requires students to progress from foundational to advanced studies?
9. What evidence is there that the curriculum is reviewed regularly by the total faculty and that this review process results in improved curricular offerings?

Undergraduate

1. What evidence is there of effective integration of biblical, professional, and general studies?
2. Do all academic programs meet the minimum hours required in Bible/Theology? If not, has the institution demonstrated a satisfactory alternative?
3. Does the general education core meet the credit requirements and include courses in the humanities, the social, behavioral and natural sciences, and mathematics?
4. What evidence is there that the curriculum of professional programs includes supervised experience and leads to competency in the area of specialization?

Graduate

1. How do graduate programs offered fit within the mission and purposes of the institution?
2. How are graduate programs more focused in content and academically advanced than undergraduate programs?
3. How do the graduate programs foster effective ministry competencies?
4. What evidence is there that the curricula challenge students to engage in research and to think independently?
5. Do all academic programs have a pre-requisite and/or curricular requirement in biblical/theological studies? If not, has the institution demonstrated a satisfactory alternative?
6. What evidence is there that the academic community is cultivates critical thinking, theological reflection, effective leadership, and ministry practice?
7. What type of practicum or internship experience is required for each academic program?
8. What evidence is there that graduate education is not negatively impacting the quality of the undergraduate programs?

COMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS (if any):

Appendix VIII

Range of COA Motions

The Commission on Accreditation has adopted the following standardized range of motions for the consistent and effective conduct of its business. The range of motions is designed to apply the ABHE standards and policies consistently and equitably; it anticipates most of the normal alternative courses of action open to the visiting team. Deviations from the range of motions should be undertaken only where circumstances clearly do not correspond to the alternatives anticipated by the standard range of motions and should, in all cases, reflect careful adherence to applicable policies. Teams are encouraged to consult with the Association professional staff when contemplating proposed actions which lie outside the provisions of the range of motions.

As a part of preparing motions, please be sure that the report comments specifically regarding:

- **The institution's performance in measuring student achievement and**
- **Its compliance with the federal definition of a credit hour**
- **The institution's public portrayal of its performance relative to student learning, financial reporting, etc.**
- **Reports for institutions with distance education should comment on the effectiveness of the institution's system for ensuring that the student getting the credit is the student doing the coursework.**

1. Evaluation visit re: candidate status

- a. *Grant candidate status*
- b. *Grant candidate status with concern for...*
- c. *Deny candidate status in light of...*
- d. *Defer action pending...**

2. Evaluation visit re: initial accreditation

- a. *Grant accredited status*
- b. *Deny accredited status in light of...*
- c. *Defer action pending...**

3. Evaluation visit re: reaffirmation of accreditation

- a. *Reaffirm accredited status*
- b. *Reaffirm accredited status and request a special progress report in light of...*
- c. *Continue the accreditation of the institution, place it on **warning status**, and request a special progress report in light of...*
- d. *Continue the accreditation of the institution, place it on **probation** and request a special progress report in light of...*
- e. *Order the college to **show cause** why its accredited status should be continued in light of...*
- f. ***Withdraw** accredited status in light of...*

4. Recommendations to place on warning status, probation, issue show cause order, or withdraw accreditation

- a. *Continue the accreditation of the institution and place it on **warning status**, requesting a special progress report in light of*
- b. *Continue the accreditation of the institution and place it on **probation**, requesting a special progress report in light of...*
- c. *Order the institution to **show cause** why its accredited status should be continued in light of...*
- d. ***Withdraw** accredited status in light of...*

5. Special evaluation visit re: financial exigency

- a. *Approve* the progress observed
- b. *Approve* the progress observed and *request* a special progress report, including a detailed recovery plan, *in light of...*
- c. *Disapprove* the progress observed and *request* a special progress report, including a detailed recovery plan, *in light of...*
- d. Continue the accreditation of the institution, place it on **warning status**, and *request* a special progress report *in light of...*
- e. Continue the accreditation of the institution, place it on **probation**, and *request* a special progress report *in light of...*
- f. *Order* the institution to **show cause** why its accredited status should be continued *in light of...*
- g. **Withdraw** accredited status *in light of...*

6. Special evaluation visit re: Major substantive change

- a. *Approve* the progress observed
- b. *Approve* the progress observed and *request* a special progress report *in light of...*
- c. *Disapprove* the progress observed and *request* a special progress report *in light of...*
- d. Continue the accreditation of the institution, place it on **warning status**, and *request* a special progress report *in light of...*
- e. Continue the accreditation, place it on **probation**, and *request* a special progress report *in light of...*
- f. *Order the institution* to **show cause** why its accredited status should be continued *in light of...*
- g. **Withdraw** accredited status *in light of...*

* Available only if the time frame included in deferral is five years or less from the attainment of the institution's current status.

Appendix IX

Summary Narrative

Summary Narrative

Name of Institution

City, State/Province

Date

Granted accreditation in _____.

Reaffirmation of Accreditation Evaluation Visit

1. Mission, goals, and objectives

The institution has a rich history and story that significantly predates its incorporation in _____. Established in that year as a merger of schools beginning in ____ and _____. The institution cherishes its historic Bible college roots, valuing the ethos of a school built on a strong Bible core, emphasizing spiritual formation, ministry preparation, and now human services. "The College is a learning community of Christians committed to developing students who will be effective change agents of spiritual, moral and social transformation everywhere for the glory of God." The institution is achieving its mission but lacks sufficient evidence to show that it can continue to do so into the future.

2. Student Learning, Institutional Effectiveness & Planning

While there are ample signs of an introduction to assessment, it is premature to assess the implementation of outcomes assessment as an organized program. There is a plan in place that is being worked to help build a culture of assessment.

The institution has demonstrated a pattern of strategic planning and environmental assessment. The new academic dean has a strong background in outcomes assessment and has quickly introduced the College to the frameworks and practices of assessment.

3. Institutional integrity

The institution has done considerable work in defining and positively presenting its brand/institutional image. A culture of denominational diversity is valued and reflected in many aspects of the College which is significant in light of its denominational roots.

4. Authority and Governance

The institution operates under the appropriate act of provincial legislation within the State/Province of _____. The board has significant strength and experience in policy governance.

5. Administration

The systems and structures that operate the institution are clearly outlined in policy and procedure. The administrative cabinet has extensive experience in operating a college.

6. Institutional Resources

The institution shows signs of stress typical of a college in the midst of a recession. Auditing of workloads and morale will be important in the next months.

The institution has a cumulative operating deficit that has grown over the past three years to \$ _____. In the wider context of challenge being faced by the College, this trend is a concern that needs to be monitored.

The College has a strategically located facility that has been used with creativity and efficiency. The physical facilities are in good repair and are stewarded well. The College is situated in a prime location in the city.

Considerable investment has occurred in information technology with the recent acquisition of a new management information system and library information system. The institution has incurred consecutive operation deficits and a plan is needed to reduce its cumulative debt.

7. Enrollment Management

The College has enjoyed a remarkable pattern of growth and momentum over the past ten years. This makes the current year and situation quite an exception as the college has needed to re-orient to a context where it has stopped growing for the first time and has no sense of a re-bounce in the near future. The marketing materials to promote the school are high quality.

8. Student Services

The College has experienced a recent change of leadership and structure in this department leaving a reduced staff that does not seem positioned to provide proactive services. There is a strong athletic program that has been developed over the past years, but here too the director of this program has just resigned and so there is question of sustaining this momentum in to the future.

9. Faculty Resources

The institution has a dedicated faculty with adequate professional preparation. The faculty is not adequate for the range of programs currently being offered. In the current context of enrollment decline, there will be a need to adjust the range of programs being offered. The role of the faculty and the academic committee needs clarification in the functioning of the College.

10. Library and Learning Resources

The library stands in need of development to support the current curriculum. The librarian has just resigned and at the time of the visit there had not been time to start a search.

11. Academic Programs

The School has been aggressively adding new programs and is now in a precarious position as it grapples with a sudden change in enrollment and revenue (one faculty member was terminated at Christmas and it seem likely that further adjustments will be required). The development of a mechanism to assess the support for each program has been recommended. While the College has built a solid pattern of strategic planning and institutional development, there is a level of uncertainty about the future that leaves the College in an awkward position.

In 200_, the institution extended its educational scope to include a Master of _____ degree. The institution is strongly advised to re-consider the future of this program and its connection with the undergraduate college. There is a clear case presented to suggest that program has operated without subsidy from the undergraduate college. That said, the constituency has invested \$_____ into this program in a season where the undergraduate college would have been strengthened considerably with a comparable investment.

Submitted by:

Name, institution, (Chair, Academics);
 Name, institution, (Administration);
 Name, institution, Columbia Bible College (Library);
 Name, institution, (Finance);
 Name, institution, (Student Development).

Appendix X.a

For Coordinated/Joint Visit Only

Team Visit Instructions

ABHE member institutions wishing to coordinate self-study processes, documentation, and evaluation visits with other recognized agencies must submit a written proposal to Commission staff requesting permission and seeking guidance regarding coordinated self-study.

ABHE's accreditation scope is primarily institutional in nature. Accordingly, for those institutions that voluntarily submit themselves to the Association's accrediting process, ABHE assumes responsibility for the entire institution. Many member colleges hold accreditation with both ABHE and their respective regional accrediting body. A few institutions hold accreditation with both ABHE and TRACS (The Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools). Where dual accreditation is held, ABHE is committed to working with its members to reduce burdensome and costly redundancy while at the same time working to ensure that its institutions meet its *Standards* and self-study expectations.

Self-Study Documents

Generally, as indicated above, self-study compliance documents prepared for regional bodies may be used for the ABHE evaluation process provided that data is current and that the report is indexed to ABHE *Standards* and supplemented to address discrete ABHE *Standards*. Tables are available in the ABHE Evaluation Visit Manual that provides more detailed guidance for this process. Regardless of whether required by the coordinating agency, ABHE requires submission not only of a compliance document but also a separate assessment plan document and planning document, in accordance with specifications outlined in the policy on "Accreditation Procedures (Manual, pp 84ff) and Appendices B & C (pp. 44-58) of this Guide to Conducting a Self-Study.

Joint Evaluation Visits

Joint visits normally feature a unified team with representatives of both agencies who write a common team report. When acceptable to the regional accrediting body, ABHE will cooperate by participating on a joint visitation team. The institution must take the initiative to request a joint visit and, of course, the regional agency must agree to cooperate with ABHE. Permission for joint visits may be granted under the following conditions:

- the coordinating agency pledges to ensure that its staff and the team chair will provide opportunity for the evaluators to be trained in ABHE accreditation *Standards*;
- a Joint Accreditation Visit Agreement must be signed by representatives of the institution under review as well as both accrediting agencies involved in the joint visit, stipulating that the lead agency will ensure that evaluators of both agencies will be adequately trained in the *Standards* of both agencies;
- a member of ABHE's Commission on Accreditation or Commission professional staff will accompany joint visits in order to conduct adequate training and provide guidance regarding interpretation of ABHE *Standards*.

One agency will be designated as the lead or coordinating agency and the other as the cooperating agency. Duties are typically divided between the agencies as illustrated by Figure 1 below. For visits with regional agencies, it is typical that the regional accrediting body serves as the coordinating agency, and ABHE as the cooperating body. Experience has taught that ABHE will typically provide at least three members on such a team. One of the three normally serves as chair of the ABHE component of the team. In most cases, there is a unified team report that represents the conclusions of both components of the team. Occasionally, there may be a disagreement between the regional evaluators and the ABHE component. In such cases, it is appropriate for the chair of the ABHE component to lead the ABHE evaluators in writing a minority report. As of this writing, the submission of an ABHE minority report in connection with a joint visit has occurred only once. When ABHE cooperates with a regional

team, evaluators are expected to work with the regional body to establish the time schedules for the visit. The chair of the joint team will carry primary responsibility for working out an acceptable arrangement. Special efforts must be made to communicate effectively with all parties. Good communications are essential to minimize misunderstandings or confusion.

Coordinated Evaluation Visits

Some regional agencies do not agree to joint visits. Most will, however, participate in coordinated visits, wherein regional and ABHE teams are on campus simultaneously or at times spaced very close together. To enjoy the benefits of a coordinated visit, an institution must be willing to share its regional team report with ABHE. Normally, the institution will automatically have ABHE's permission to share its ABHE report with the regional agency.

Coordinated visits benefit institutions in two ways. First, ABHE will make use of the regional self-study materials as long as they have been supplemented to address concerns unique to ABHE. The issues unique to ABHE may be interwoven into the text of the regional report, or may be included as a separate supplementary document. If the institution chooses to provide its regional self-study materials for the ABHE team, it must prepare an index keyed to the ABHE Standards showing where the appropriate material dealing with each Standard and its associated Essential Elements can be found in the regional report. As previously stated, regardless of whether required by the coordinating agency, ABHE requires submission not only of a compliance document but also a separate assessment plan document and planning document, in accordance with specifications outlined in the policy on "Accreditation Procedures (Manual, pp 84ff) and Appendices B & C (pp. 44-58) of this Guide to Conducting a Self-Study.

Although the focus of a coordinated team visit is normally on ABHE's unique requirements, it is sometimes the case that items of concern are discovered that affect general compliance with ABHE *Standards* and perhaps the other agency's *Standards*. ABHE teams are at liberty to explore such items as fully as needed to ascertain the institution's true state of compliance with the Association's policies and "*Standards* for accreditation."

ABHE will send a reduced team, since it will rely primarily on the regional team report for the evaluation of compliance with common *Standards*. Rather than the normal five-member team, the ABHE team for a coordinated visit will usually consist of three persons: an administrator, an academician, and a faculty member. While members of the "reduced team" may feel free to investigate any facet of an institution they deem necessary, there are typical assignments of evaluative responsibilities for the team members outlined in the *Assignment of Duties* below.

These assignments should be viewed as guidelines only since the team chair may exercise flexibility in making these assignments depending on the gifts and experiences of the team members, the nature of the institution, the adequacy of the self-study supplement for ABHE, and information available from the regional team evaluation report (if available at the time of the ABHE visit) or the history of ABHE's interaction with the institution. In some cases it may be necessary to add areas not listed, while in others it may be possible to delete some of the items above.

Questions about coordinated visits should be referred to the ABHE staff.

Appendix X.b

Coordinated/Joint Visit Only –Standards Assignments

ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATOR: Coordinated-Joint Visit Only

1. MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

The institution has a clearly defined mission that is appropriate to higher education as well as its own specific educational role. The mission statement serves as the foundation for institutional operations, programs, and activities. Statements of the goals and program objectives specify how the institution will fulfill its mission.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

1. A clearly defined mission statement, *appropriate to biblical higher education*, developed and periodically reviewed by broad representation from all sectors of the institution and ratified by the governing board.

3. INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The institution is a model of *Christian ethical behavior*, both internally and externally. The institution demonstrates integrity in all of its practices and relationships, with strict adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

4. An institutional culture that fosters respect for diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
5. Equitable and consistent treatment of constituencies in all areas including student discipline, student evaluation, grievances, faculty promotion, administrative review, compensation, and human resource management.
6. Honest and open communication regarding compliance with agencies such as accrediting, licensing, and governing bodies.
7. Fulfillment of all applicable *Standards* and requirements of the ABHE Commission on Accreditation.

4. AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE

The institution is legally constituted as a nonprofit organization authorized by its state or province to operate as an educational institution and grant all degrees and/or offer credentials. The institution has a governing board with legal and fiduciary responsibility to exercise appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, resource development, and ongoing operations.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

8. A governing board appropriate in size to operate efficiently and sufficiently diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender (*where theologically appropriate*), and professional competencies to represent the constituency.

6. INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

The institution has the human, financial, physical, and technological resources needed to achieve its mission and has implemented policies and procedures to manage these resources effectively.

Coordinated/Joint Visit Only –Standards Assignments
CONTINUED

6a. HUMAN RESOURCES

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

2. Written policies and procedures for hiring, promoting, and dismissal of institutional personnel based on principles of fairness and regard for individual rights.
3. Demonstrated commitment to provide adequate resources for employee welfare including professional growth and development.
4. Policies and practices that support employee diversity appropriate to the cultural context.
5. An organizational climate that encourages job satisfaction, collegiality, and respect among personnel.

6b. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

3. The cultivation of multiple revenue streams sufficient to enable the realization of institutional goals.
4. Adequate resources to ensure achievement of educational goals.
5. Risk management policies and procedures sufficient to safeguard assets.
6. Appropriate board oversight of financial management to meet public accountability obligations.
7. Sufficient financial reserves to enable an effective response to unforeseen crises.
8. Adequate internal controls to safeguard assets and protect personnel from accusations of wrongdoing.

6d. TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

4. Clearly stated policies and procedures regarding technological resources, services, and security.

FACULTY EVALUATOR>Coordinated-Joint Visit Only

7. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

The institution has developed and implemented an enrollment management plan that is consistent with its mission and addresses issues of recruitment, admissions, financial aid and retention.

7a. RECRUITMENT

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

1. Recruitment strategies that are directed toward students whose *spiritual commitment, goals and interests* are consistent with the institutional mission.
2. Accurate and comprehensive recruitment literature that enables prospective students to make informed decisions.
4. Recruitment that reflects ethnic, cultural, and gender patterns and commitments relevant to the institution's constituency.

7b. ADMISSIONS

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Coordinated/Joint Visit Only –Standards Assignments
CONTINUED

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

1. Admissions requirements and procedures that are clearly communicated to prospective students and applied consistently in the admissions process.

8. STUDENT SERVICES

The institution provides services that contribute to the holistic development and care of students and that are appropriate to the level of education and delivery system.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

1. A commitment to the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of students that is consistent with biblical higher education.
2. Services that meet the needs of students, regardless of location or instructional delivery system.
3. Services that respond to diverse student needs, abilities, and cultures.
4. The organization and delivery of student services that are integrated into academic programs and appropriately aligned with the institution's culture and educational objectives.
6. Leadership development facilitated by curricular and/or co-curricular programs that are integrated with the educational objectives.
7. A regular system of assessing needs, experiences, and levels of student satisfaction in order to improve services.

9. FACULTY RESOURCES

The institution maintains a faculty committed to its mission and qualified academically and spiritually to facilitate student learning within their disciplines and to contribute to the development of a biblical worldview. The institution fosters an academic climate that stimulates the exchange of ideas, encourages professional development, and promotes the well-being of faculty.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

9.a

1. A spiritually mature faculty who engage in modeling and mentoring relationships with students.
8. Evidence of faculty contribution in the areas of student learning, scholarship, institutional development, *ministry*, and community service.
9. Adequate support for the professional advancement and development of its faculty including the pursuit of terminal degrees.
10. A published statement of academic freedom and adherence to its principles within the context of the institutional mission.
11. A faculty that is representative of the diversity of the constituency.

9.b

1. A core faculty of sufficient size and expertise, committed to the fulfillment of its mission and responsible for the quality of its academic functions.
3. A process of faculty appointment that includes appropriate involvement of related academic and administrative personnel.
6. A faculty that is appropriately involved in academic-related decision-making processes *especially related to admissions Standards, curriculum, student life, and graduation requirements.*

Coordinated/Joint Visit Only –Standards Assignments
CONTINUED

ACADEMIC EVALUATOR>Coordinated-Joint Visit Only

2. STUDENT LEARNING, INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS & PLANNING

The institution demonstrates that it is accomplishing and can continue to accomplish its mission, goals, and program objectives and improve performance through a regular and comprehensive system of assessment and planning. Central to this plan is the systematic and specific assessment of student learning and development through a strategy that measures the student's knowledge, skills and competencies against institutional and programmatic goals.

2a. Assessment of Student Learning

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

1. The identification of appropriate inter-related student outcomes in the context of institutional goals, program objectives and course objectives.

11. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The institution's academic programs are appropriate to the achievement of its mission and to the level of educational programs offered, with some programs oriented specifically to full-time vocational ministry but all programs enabling students to achieve a biblical worldview.

11a. CURRICULUM

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

3. Evidence that the integration of curricular components enable students *to achieve a biblical worldview*.
4. A curriculum *taught with sensitivity to the cultural context in which the students minister*.
6. Evidence that course sequence progresses from foundational to advanced studies appropriate to the degree.
7. A curriculum content and level of education appropriate to the degree and nomenclature being offered.
8. Appropriate distinctions between levels of study in terms of students, faculty, and learning methods.

Relative to this standard, the undergraduate programs of an accredited institution are characterized by...

9. A Bible/theology component equivalent to 30 semester hours, 9 of which may be in interdisciplinary Bible related courses for a non-church related baccalaureate, 18 semester hours of Bible/theology for a non-traditional degree completion program and 12 semester hours of Bible/theology for a one- or two-year program.
 10. A core of general education studies representative of the breadth of general studies and equivalent to 36 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree or 18 semester hours for an associate degree.
 11. A core of professional studies equivalent to a minimum of 18 semester hours and selected to equip students for professional positions.
 12. Professional programs requiring significant practicum experiences in the area of specialization.
- Relative to this standard, graduate programs of an accredited institution are characterized by...
13. Curricula and resources to support programs that foster progressively more advanced student educational achievement and *more effective ministry/leadership* than undergraduate education.

Coordinated/Joint Visit Only –Standards Assignments
CONTINUED

14. Curricula providing for the development of research and independent thinking at an advanced level and/or appropriate high level professional practice.
15. Pre-requisite or curricular biblical/theological studies to ensure that students develop and demonstrate significant ability to think biblically in relation to their academic or professional disciplines.
16. Appropriate pre-requisite and/or curricular requirements to ensure that students are capable of pursuing advanced studies in the discipline.
17. A learning environment that cultivates critical thinking, theological reflection, spiritual formation, and effective leadership/ministry practice.
18. Appropriate practicum or internship experiences in the area of specialization for all professional programs.

11b. MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution offering undergraduate curricula (and graduate curricula that feature field education) is characterized by . . .

1. A culture and programs that promote development of effective witnesses and servants in the church and the world at large.
2. An educational philosophy in which ministry formation is viewed as an integral part of the student's education.
3. A program of supervision that provides an adequate basis for evaluating and guiding students in the pursuit of their professional goals.
4. A ministry formation program coordinated by a director normally with faculty status and implemented under the supervision of faculty.
5. Evidence that the program is adequately staffed and financially supported.
6. A system of regular program review and assessment of outcomes that results in program improvement.
7. Evidence that academic credit given for ministry is warranted.

11c. ACADEMIC PATTERNS AND PROCEDURES

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by. . .

1. A clear and publicized statement of faculty-adopted requirements for graduation.
2. A process that involves faculty approval of candidates for graduation.
3. An academic structure organized in departments, divisions, or alternate approaches appropriate to the size and complexity of the institution.

Appendix X.c

For Coordinated/Joint Visit Only- TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Abbreviations: Co-ord. – Coordinating or lead agency
 Co-op – Cooperating Agency
 Inst. – Institution
 Chair –Team Chair
 Evaluator –Other Team Member

<u>Task</u>	<u>Coord.</u>	<u>Co-op.</u>	<u>Inst.</u>	<u>Chair</u>	<u>Evaluator</u>
Agree to joint visit	X	X	X		
Set date for joint visit	X	X	X		
Determine format for self-study	X	X	X		
Determine <i>Standards</i> for evaluation	X	X			
Select team chair	X				
Determine format of team report	X	X		X	
Determine time for pre-visit conference			X	X	
Conduct pre-visit conference				X	
Determine # of team members needed	X	X			
Select/appoint team members	X	X			
Supply self-study to team			X		
Establish arrival time for team members				X	
Make travel arrangements					X
Inform institution of travel plans					X
Supply team with evaluations materials					X
Cooperating agency		X			
Coordination agency	X				
Write/edit 1 st draft of team report				X	
Write/edit abstract of team report				X	
Circulate 1 st draft of team report to team members & institution				X	
Comment on 1 st draft of team report					X
Prepare final copy of team report				X	
Distribute team report to: Institution Coordinating agency Cooperating agency				X X X	
Submit travel expense voucher to coordinating agency					X
Pay travel expenses of team members	X				
Invoice institution for evaluation fee	X	X			
Invoice institution for travel expenses	X				
Prepare overall team recommendation on action regarding purpose of visit				X	
Distribute overall team recommendation to coordinating & cooperating agencies				X	
Notify cooperating agency regarding Accrediting Commission's decision with respect to the institution	X				
Notify coordinating agency of Accrediting Commission's decision with respect to institution		X			
Notify Institution of Accrediting Commission's decision	X	X			
<u>Task</u>	<u>Co-ord.</u>	<u>Co-op.</u>	<u>Inst.</u>	<u>Chair</u>	<u>Evaluator</u>

Appendix X.d

Coordinated/Joint Visit ONLY – Memorandum of Agreement

- ABHE is committed to working with its members to reduce burdensome and costly redundancy while at the same time ensuring that its institutions meet its standards and self-study expectations. In the interest of professional courtesy, collegiality, and peer review, the entities noted below hereby agree to participate in a joint accreditation visit, according to the following terms and provisions:
- Each participating agency is recognized by USDE and/or CHEA;
- A recognized institutional accrediting agency whose scope encompasses the entire institution (normally the regional agency) will serve as the coordinating agency for the joint visit;
- The coordinating agency will designate a qualified team chair, subject to agreement of the other parties;
- Each participating agency may designate a chair for its delegation, but all members of participating agencies agree to subject themselves to the visit team chair;
- Each cooperating agency will furnish qualified team evaluators whose number and assignments will be mutually determined;
- The evaluation team visit will encompass standards of all participating agencies;
- Participating institutional accrediting agencies will issue a single team report and recommendation relative to accreditation status with each agency;
- The institution accepts responsibility for evaluation visit fees and associated expenses levied by each agency;
- Each participating agency will furnish to each member of the joint visit team copies of its accreditation *Standards*, team evaluation documents, and other materials;
- The coordinating agency pledges to ensure that the team chair will provide opportunity for evaluator training in the accreditation *Standards* of each participating institutional accrediting agency;
- A member of ABHE's Commission on Accreditation or Commission professional staff will accompany the joint visit in order to conduct, in cooperation with the team chair, adequate training and provide guidance regarding interpretation of ABHE *Standards*.
- In the unlikely event of an irresolvable disagreement between delegations from participating agencies, the delegates of any agency may issue a minority report.

The chair of the joint team will assume primary responsibility for visit logistics and communication among representatives of each participating agency.

Institution Name: _____ Visit Purpose: _____

CEO Signature: _____ Date: _____

Primary Coordinating Agency: _____

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____

Cooperating Agency: _____

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____