PROPOSED CHANGES

Bylaws

Key to Changes: Delete, Add

Article III, Section 2. Composition

2.1. The COA will consist of not less than fourteen (14) or more than twenty-one (21) Commissioners, comprised as follows: twelve (12) to eighteen (18) elected from among COA accredited institutions, including representation among appropriately qualified administrators and appropriately qualified academicians; and two (2) to three (3) four (4) appointed public representatives, one of which may be a student representative from a COA accredited institution, and the others not associated with a COA accredited, candidate, or applicant institution, at least one of whom is an active ministry practitioner. Representatives of COA accredited institutions shall will constitute not less than 4/5 3/4 of total Commissioners. Public members shall will represent at least 1/7 of the Commission. The total number of Commissioners will be determined by Commission workload and appropriate representation.

2.2. A student representative from a COA accredited institution will be appointed to serve on a designated standing committee of the Commission to review Standards, policies, and procedures.


Policy on the Commission on Accreditation Nominating Committee

In order to assure proper balance and representative membership on the Commission on Accreditation (COA), the following procedures will be used by the Nominating Committee.

Designation Categories for Commissioners

The COA will include representation from three categories of individuals: administrators, academics, and public representatives. Representatives of accredited
member institutions will constitute no less than 4/5 3/4 of total Commissioners. Public members will represent at least 1/7 of the COA.

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).

Public Representative: An individual who is not (1) an employee, member of the governing board, owner, shareholder of, or consultant to, an ABHE accredited, candidate or applicant institution; (2) a member of any trade association or membership organization affiliated or associated with the COA; or (3) a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of a person in category (1) or (2) above. One of the public representatives must be employed or serving in a leadership role in a church, mission, Christian school, or para-church ministry organization. A student at a COA accredited institution is also considered a public representative.

Procedures

1. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will be composed of the officers of the COA (i.e., chair, vice chair, and secretary). In order to assure proper balance and representative membership on the COA, the following procedures will be used by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will develop a list of eligible candidates to be nominated for future vacancies on the COA using the following guidelines.

2. Elected offices. Eligible candidates to be nominated for election to the COA are administrators and faculty members of accredited member institutions or programs. Administrative representatives must be currently or recently engaged in a significant manner in program or institutional administration at the postsecondary level; academic representatives must be currently or recently engaged in a significant manner in postsecondary teaching and/or research (including learning resource and research support, and/or curriculum development). The Nominating Committee will survey the ABHE staff and chief executive officers of member schools for candidates to fill future vacancies. The Nominating Committee will be appointed by the COA and will submit to the annual Delegate Assembly a slate of two or more names for each COA elected position (excluding public members who are appointed by the COA). In cases
where an incumbent is eligible to serve an additional term, the Nominating Committee may choose to nominate only the incumbent. If an incumbent has been appointed to fill an unexpired term, the Nominating Committee will provide a slate of two or more names.

3. In selecting nominees to present before the Association Delegate Assembly for a vote, the Nominating Committee will consider the following:

a. The composition of COA:
   (1) Denominational balance and representation,
   (2) Geographical balance and representation,
   (3) Representation of institutions or programs based on size, level of education offered, and type of accreditation held,
   (4) Representation from Canadian institutions or programs,
   (5) Representation of women and minorities, and
   (6) Representation of both administrators and academicians.

b. The credentials of candidates:
   (1) Documentation of competence in terms of education and expertise.
   (2) Past service and activity in association affairs (e.g., COA service, annual meeting participation, evaluation team participation, consultative activity, contribution to ABHE publications).
   (3) Years of service in ABHE accredited member institutions or programs.
   (4) Contribution to institutions or programs of biblical higher education.

1. Vacancies. Commissioners serving three years of an unexpired term will be deemed to have served a full term. If a Commissioner is unable to serve a full term as assigned, the COA will appoint a substitute as follows.

   a. In the case of a permanent vacancy identified prior to the publication of the agenda for the next COA meeting, a runner up from the last election will be selected by the COA Nominating Committee to finish out the term for the position that has been vacated. To retain the balance of the Commission’s membership, the runner up that most closely matches the characteristics of the vacating COA member will be chosen to fill the vacancy. If a runner up from the last election is not available to serve, the Nominating Committee may nominate a qualified alternate to finish out the remaining term. Appointment must be ratified by the COA.
b. On the occasion of a temporary vacancy where a health or other emergency has rendered a person unable to serve, the COA Director, in concert with the COA Chair, will seek to fill any vacancies from among the ranks of former Commissioners who are known to have the expertise needed for the position that will be open during the forthcoming meeting. Following the meeting, the Commissioner who was unable to serve for the occasion will resume COA duties. At the outset of a meeting where a former Commissioner has been temporarily assigned to serve in place of a sitting Commissioner, the COA will take formal action to officially appoint the individual to the open position for the duration of the COA meeting and any follow up activities directly related to the meeting.

5. Appointed representatives

a. Public representatives. The Nominating Committee will appoint public representatives in accord with the Policy on Public Representatives.

b. Student representative. The Nominating Committee will customarily appoint a student from an ABHE COA accredited institution on the Committee on Criteria for a one-year term, which may be repeated for a second year to serve as a public representative. Appointment will be for a two-year term and may be repeated for a second term at the pleasure of the COA Officers. The student individual should be at least a junior a graduate student and endorsed by a faculty member or administrator at their institution. A student representative may serve one year beyond graduation from a COA accredited institution. A student representative that enrolls in a second program at a COA accredited institution may serve on the COA up to two 2-year terms. The student representative will attend the February meeting of the Committee on Criteria, participate in committee conference calls, and advise the Committee on Criteria on student perspectives with regard to ABHE standards, policies, and procedures. Nominations will be solicited from the ABHE membership via the fall a call for nominations when there is a vacancy. The appointment will begin with the February COA meeting.

Adopted February 2010; Revised April 2012, June 2016, PROPOSED February 2020
Policy on Public Representatives

One of ABHE’s major purposes is to assure the general public that its institutions and programs are educationally effective. To realize this purpose, ABHE seeks to be sensitive to the need for having representation from the public at the meetings of an accrediting agency’s decision makers. Accordingly, ABHE seeks to have public representatives on both the Board of Directors and the Commission on Accreditation (COA).

Relationship to the COA

Public representatives are related to the COA as follows:

1. They are appointed to their office by the relevant decision-making body upon the recommendation of the professional staff.

2. They are appointed to their office for one four-year term and may succeed themselves for a second term after which they may not be re-appointed for four years. A student representative serving as a public member may be appointed to a two-year term, which may be repeated for a second two-year term at the pleasure of the COA Officers.

3. They can terminate their office by written resignation to the COA officers.

4. Their appointment can be terminated by the unanimous vote of the COA officers.

5. They will serve as voting members of the COA.

6. They have the right to enter comments into the official minutes of the COA.

7. They will constitute at least one seventh (1/7) and not more than one fifth one fourth (1/4) of the COA membership.

Qualifications

Public representatives will have the following qualifications:

1. They will not be related to an ABHE applicant, candidate, or accredited institution or program by employment or board membership.
2. They will not serve as a consultant to an ABHE applicant, candidate, or accredited institution or program.

3. They will not be a member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with the COA.

4. They will not be a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in paragraphs one through three above.

5. They will be sympathetic to biblical higher education and its philosophy of education.

6. They will be individuals who are known for their integrity, common sense, and professional accomplishments.

7. They will be individuals who have an awareness of needs and interests of the general public as related to higher education.

Public representatives will have the following duties:

1. They will acquaint themselves with the purposes of biblical higher education.

2. They will acquaint themselves with ABHE Standards for Accreditation.

3. They will acquaint themselves with ABHE procedures for accreditation.

4. They will complete the required online evaluator training and COA orientation training.

5. They will familiarize themselves with materials made available to them prior to a meeting of the decision-making body to which they are appointed.

6. They will attend a major portion of all meetings of the decision-making body.

7. They will seek to ensure that the decision-making body follows established ABHE policies and procedures.

8. They will alert the decision-making body to issues they perceive to be pertinent to the public interests and that relate to the issue requiring a decision.
8 9. They will honor ABHE’s policies concerning the confidentiality of materials. Within these constraints, they will have the privilege of reporting to the public such items and through such media as they deem desirable.

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