



Comprehensive Accreditation Review
2023 ABHE Annual Meeting

THE COA REVIEW TIMELINE

- **Submission of Self-Study Documents (Eight weeks prior to Visit)**
- **Team Visit (According to scheduled dates)**
- **Response to the Evaluation Visit Report (Six weeks to three months after receipt of the Team Report in COA Office)**
- **Interim Period before Review by the COA**
- **Interview with the COA**
 - **Institutions making a status change from Applicant-to-Candidate and Candidate-to-Initial Accreditation) will have representatives present**
 - **Established institutions that have a larger number of recommendations may also have representatives requested by the COA for interview**

HOSTING A EVALUATION TEAM VISIT

- **Length of Team Visits**
 - **Institutional = 2.5 days (with Team arriving night before Visit)**
 - **Programmatic = 1.5 days (with Team arriving night before Visit)**
- **Most Team Visits occur on Tuesday-Thursday (and this is our encouragement to all institutions) UNLESS it is simply not possible**

HOSTING A EVALUATION TEAM VISIT

Tues-Thurs Visit	Activity
Monday	Team arrives, Executive session orientation (team only), Dinner with institution
Tuesday	Team arrives on campus in morning, Orientation to work room, Finalize interview schedule, Begin interviews, Review documents and files
Tuesday pm	Executive session to review initial findings, Plan adjustments for 2 nd day of visit, Team group dinner on own, Writing in rooms
Wednesday	Follow-up interviews, review of documents and files, writing in work room
Wednesday pm	Executive session to review findings, Formulate initial commendations, suggestions, recommendations, Team group dinner on own, Writing in rooms
Thursday morning	Team travels to campus, Final executive session in work room (optional), Team Chair and CSR meet with President, Team meets with administration for exit interview, Team departs for airport

HOSTING A EVALUATION TEAM VISIT

- **Areas of Evaluation (Usually one evaluator for each area of review)**
 - **Administration (Standards 4, 5)**
 - **Academic (Standards 1, 2, 11)**
 - **Resources (Standards 3, 6)**
 - **Student Services (Standards 7, 8)**
 - **Faculty and Library (Standards 9, 10)**
- **Group Meetings**
 - **Administration (usually night before Visit start), Board, Faculty, Students, Public—all interviews (group and one-on-one) are determined by the Team (and the institution sets up meetings for the Team)**
 - **These meetings will have required no-shows (ie, no President with the Board; No Dean/CAO for the faculty, etc)**

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VISIT

- **Transportation & Accommodations**
 - **Institution is responsible for arranging ground transportation, meals, and hotel stay**
 - **Ground Transportation**
 - **Rental van (normally)**
 - **Meals**
 - **Lunches = consider as working lunches (food at cafeteria or brought in); may be closed to all but Team**
 - **Evening meals (outside of meal with Administration) = Team only**
 - **Hotels**
 - **Business class hotel (or equivalent, depending on location of main campus) with billing to institution**
 - **Business Class = 3-star hotel with self-serve breakfast; onsite fitness (if possible)**
 - **Expectation/Requirement is a clean hotel room with a desk, internet, and private bath for each individual on the Team (i.e., six individual rooms)**

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VISIT

- **Meeting Room(s)**
 - **Should plan for one room at the institution and one room at the hotel**
 - **Institutional meeting room = document library (if desired), internet, printer, shredder**
 - **Amenities**
 - **A supply of snacks and beverages is usually recommended (in work room at institution and in hotel room)**
 - **Don't underestimate how much water & coffee can be consumed by a Team (remember age dynamics of the Team)**
 - **Golden Rule approach is best one to use with this issue**
- **Financial Arrangements**
 - **Travel expenses are secured by the COA Office, and the Institution will receive the invoice from the COA Office (payment due in 30 days from receipt of invoice)**
 - **Flight to the institution are secured by each individual team member**
 - **Ground transportation and hotel expenses should be paid directly by the institution to the vendor**
 - **Hospitality Gifts = \$50 maximum for whatever is given (college shirts, water bottles, mugs are most appropriate)**

RESPONDING TO TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The overall document is known as the “Response to the Evaluation Visit Report” (RVR)**
- **The Evaluation Team Report addresses each Standard and each Essential Element**
 - **Executive Summary contains Commendations, Suggestions, and Recommendations**
 - **Recommendations MUST be addressed by the Institution with a written response**
 - **Read the narrative around the Recommendation(s) for clarity in determining concern of the Team**
 - **Do NOT underestimate the importance of this document (important document for the COA in making decisions related to status with the Commission)**
- **RVR**
 - **Should address each recommendation in writing (not including documentation)**
 - **Should anticipate 1-3 pages of narrative per recommendation (excluding documentation/exhibits)**

RESPONDING TO TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **RVR Elements**
 - **Identify and correct any factual errors in the Report (titles, dates, stats, statements of fact)**
 - **Opinion of the Team is not subject to a dispute of factual accuracy**
 - **Detail steps taken by the institution to eliminate the weaknesses/deficiencies identified by the Team as it relates to the Standards and/or Essential Elements (document with evidence)**
 - **Develop a detailed action plan (with a detailed timeline) where issues that remain unresolved will be brought into addressed/brought into compliance. Consider offering the answers to the “Interview Questions” (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How) as a good place to start!**
 - **Disputes with Team Findings = Produce the evidence that already exists and include that with the institution’s RVR**

RESPONDING TO TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **RVR Process**

- **Commendations and Suggestions need not be addressed**
- **RVR deadlines**
 - **Spring Visit = Due September 15**
 - **Fall Visit = Due six weeks after the Evaluation Visit Report is received in the COA Office**
- **Evidence of completed task(s) and timelines for task(s) yet to be completed ARE major items leading to determinations by the COA**

INTERVIEW WITH THE COA

- **Who is to Interview?**
 - **Institutions seeking candidate status, initial accreditation, or when requested by the COA.**
- **Purpose**
 - **Update the Commission on progress made since the RVR submission (1-page summary update can be presented to the COA during the Interview)**
 - **Answer questions the COA may have regarding progress or action plans**
- **Specifics**
 - **CEO and two additional representatives may appear before the COA**
 - **Choose representatives that can provide clarity for the Commissioners (almost always related to the Recommendations in the Visit OR elements raised in the RVR; CFO for finance issues; CAO for faculty/assessment/curriculum issues; Board member for governance, etc.)**
 - **CEO offers brief opening statement (3-5 minutes)**
 - **Be factual; base statements in evidence provided (either in the RVR or in an update provided just before the interview)**
 - **Commissioners will ask questions specifically geared to issues of compliance/concern**

KEEPING MOMENTUM FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Interim period of time between the submission of the RVR and the COA Interview/Review (which takes place each February at the COA Meetings)**
 - **Worthy strategy to continue to make improvements (keep a journal/list of improvements with the documentation to validate that the change has occurred and is placed in the Assessment Cycle)**
 - **Develop a spreadsheet of recommendations and the “fixes” that have been applied/still need to be applied**
 - **Items of concern should be included in the Institutional Planning Document and/or Institutional Assessment Document**
 - **If assessment data is able to be collected, that data should be presented to the COA at the interview**
 - **If no assessment data is available to demonstrate the improvement has been made and worked, it should be in the next Institutional Assessment Document**
 - **If there are elements still to be addressed, the answer to the “interview questions” should drive the information for the planned improvement(s)**

