

ABHE Policy Updates

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Important Resources to Track Changes

- <https://www.abhe.org/accreditation/accreditation-documents/>
- Click on COA Manual – CHANGES
- This document will include ALL CHANGES from the previous FEBRUARY up until the present time. (The current COA Manual – CHANGES document is for February 2024-last week)
- New changes that were initiated this week will be in the February 2025 edition which will be released as soon as it is feasible

Review of Changes to Accreditation Standards

FEBRUARY 2024-FEBRUARY 2025

Definition of Accreditation Standard

- A written statement of the criteria by which an institution can measure its educational effectiveness and the COA can determine an institution or program's accreditation status. (2024 COA Standards and Policies Manual, page 254)

Procedure for Standards Changes

- Recommendations for addition, deletion, or modification to the COA's accreditation policies, procedures, or Standards may originate from any source.
- Recommendations are then studied by the Committee on Criteria. If the committee agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will express the proposal in language that is consistent in style and format with existing accreditation policies, procedures, and Standards, and recommend it to the COA for approval.
- Recommendations from the Committee on Criteria are then considered by the COA. If the COA agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will recommend it to the ABHE membership.

Procedure for Standards Changes (cont'd)

- Recommendations released by the COA are then circulated by electronic means or mail to the Association's constituency. Recommendations related to Standards are also circulated to member institutions, states, provinces, other recognized accrediting bodies, and the public and published on the Association's website.
- Standards recommendations that have gained final approval from the COA are placed before the COA Delegate Assembly for a vote.
- Unless otherwise specified by the COA, institutions or programs have **two years to comply** with newly adopted Standards.

Standards Changes (Feb 2024-Feb 2025)

ALL OF THEM! WE HAVE NEW STANDARDS! THERE ARE OTHER CONFERENCE SESSIONS ABOUT THOSE.

Explanation of New or Revised Accreditation Policies

FEBRUARY 2024-FEBRUARY 2025

Definition of a Policy

- Commission on Accreditation policies provide supplemental guidance regarding implementation of the Standards for Accreditation. Institutions are expected to use the policies to understand how the Commission on Accreditation interprets various aspects of the Standards. Evaluators may use the policies as a basis for “Suggestions” to institutions, but “Recommendations” by evaluators may only be attached to Standards. (COA Standards and Policies Manual, p. 36)
- The Policies are organized into two sections:
 - 1) Policies Relating to Institutions and Programs
 - a. Policies Relating to Accreditation Standards
 - b. Policies Relating to Accreditation Procedures
 - c. Policies Relating to General Institutional Guidance
 - 2) Policies Relating to Commission on Accreditation Procedures and Practices

Procedure for Policy Changes

- Recommendations for addition, deletion, or modification to the COA's accreditation policies, procedures, or Standards may originate from any source.
- Recommendations are then studied by the Committee on Criteria. If the committee agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will express the proposal in language that is consistent in style and format with existing accreditation policies, procedures, and Standards, and recommend it to the COA for approval.
- Recommendations from the Committee on Criteria are then considered by the COA. If the COA agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will recommend it to the ABHE membership.

Procedure for Policy Changes (cont'd)

- Recommendations released by the COA are then circulated by electronic means or mail to the Association's constituency.
- Policy and procedural recommendations adopted by the COA do not require further approval by the COA Delegate Assembly.
- **EXCEPTION:** Act and inform policies based on USDE changes.
- Institutions or programs have one year to comply with newly adopted policies.

Recent Policy Change List (February 2024 – February 2025)

- Policy on Bible-Theology Core (p. 46; November 2024)
- Policy on Instructional Modalities (p. 66; February 2025)
- Policy on Outcomes (p. 71; November 2024)
- Policy on Transfer and the Award of Academic Credit (p. 81; February 2024)
- Policy and Procedures for Educational Sites Geographically Separate from the Main Campus (p. 92; June 2024)
- Policy and Procedures for Federal Prison Education Programs (PEPs) (p. 100; February 2024 and June 2024)

Recent Policy Change List (February 2024 – February 2025)

- Policy and Procedures for Institutional Accreditation (p. 104; February 2024)
- Policy on Change of Control (p. 114; June 2024 and November 2024)
- Policy on Composition of Evaluation Teams (p. 124; June 2024)
- Policy on Independent Accreditation Status (p. 132; February 2025)
- Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV (p. 134; November 2024)
- Policy and Procedures for Monitoring Annual Institutional Update (AIU) Data (p. 137; November 2024)

Recent Policy Change List (February 2024 – February 2025)

- Policy on Substantive Change and Required Notifications (p. 146; June 2024 and February 2025)
- Policy on Teach-Out Plans and Teach-Out Agreements (p. 155; February 2025)
- Policy on Closing an Institution (p. 168; February 2025)
- Procedures for Arbitration of Adverse Actions Following Appeal (p. 175; June 2024 and November 2024)
- Policy on the Commission on Accreditation Composition (p. 189; June 2024)
- Policy on Complaints Against an Institution or Accredited Program (p. 196; June 2024)

Recent Policy Change List (February 2024 – February 2025)

- Policy on Graduate Education (NEW) *replaces Guidelines for Doctoral Education*
- Policy on Distance Education (NEW) *replaces Guidelines for Ensuring Integrity in Distance Education and Correspondence Studies and Guidelines for Sharing Online Courses*

A Look Ahead

Examining the Climate and Currents in the World of Accreditation



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Q&A