Institutional Accreditation Standards

Proposed changes separate the current EE 2 into EE 2 (operational effectiveness) and EE 3 (student achievement) and clarify requirements relating to operational effectiveness and stakeholder input.

STANDARD 2
INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

The institution's system of ongoing institutional planning and assessment demonstrates that it accomplishes and can continue to accomplish its mission and provides opportunities for systematic institutional and program improvement.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. A written, comprehensive assessment plan that describes the systematic and ongoing collection of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of the institution's operations and services and the fulfillment of student learning outcomes at institutional and program levels. ~~The assessment plan explains how and when data are gathered in an ongoing and structured way.~~
2. Clearly defined and measurable outcomes for ~~operational units~~ operational effectiveness~~,~~ (including support services and academic programs) ~~(including general education and Bible/theology components of undergraduate degree programs)~~ that align with institutional mission.
~~2.~~3. Clearly defined and measurable ~~S~~student learning outcomes (including for general studies and Bible/theology cores for undergraduate degree programs) ~~are~~ appropriate to the credential awarded and ~~are~~ accompanied by multiple measures that effectively assess the extent to which students are achieving the program's stated outcomes.
~~3.~~4. Implementation of the assessment plan ~~for operational units, support services and academic programs~~ evidenced by documented analysis of assessment data and use of results by appropriate constituencies for the purpose of improvement and planning.
~~4.~~5. Learning ~~O~~outcomes data~~,~~ disaggregated in missionally relevant ways~~,~~ and used to demonstrate a commitment to the success of all students in attaining intended learning outcomes.
~~5.~~6. The ongoing provision of reliable and current information to the public, including graduation and retention rates, employment rates for professional programs, and licensure pass rates for programs where licensure is expected. Required outcomes data are available via the institution's website through an easily identified link on the homepage.
~~6.~~7. Written institutional improvement plans describing future objectives ~~developed with broad representation from all sectors of the institution and its stakeholders~~;~~,~~ informed by stakeholder input, assessment results, and institutional needs~~,~~; aligned with realistic resource projections~~,~~; and accompanied by consistent reporting on plan achievement.

~~7.~~8. Evidence that assessment ~~data~~ results inform~~s ongoing~~ institutional decision-making and a sound budgeting process in alignment with institutional planning.

~~8.~~9. Leadership of planning and assessment by a director or directors with related job responsibilities.

Applicable Policies: *Policy on Academic Quality as Related to Institutional Mission; Policy on Outcomes*

Programmatic Accreditation Standards

Proposed changes separate the current EE 2 into EE 2 (operational effectiveness) and EE 3 (student achievement) and clarify requirements relating to operational effectiveness and stakeholder input.

STANDARD 2
PROGRAM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

The program's system of ongoing planning and assessment demonstrates that it accomplishes~~,~~ and can continue to accomplish its intended outcomes~~,~~ and provides opportunities for systematic program improvement.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. A written, comprehensive assessment plan that describes the systematic and ongoing collection of evidence demonstrating fulfillment of student learning outcomes at the program level. ~~The assessment plan explains how and when data are gathered in an ongoing and structured way.~~
2. Clearly defined and measurable learning outcomes for academic programs ~~(including general education and Bible/theology components of undergraduate degree programs)~~ that align with institutional mission.
3. Student learning outcomes (including for general studies and Bible/theology cores for undergraduate degree programs) ~~are~~ appropriate to the credential awarded and accompanied by multiple measures that effectively assess the extent to which students are achieving the program's stated outcomes.
4. Implementation of the assessment plan ~~for academic programs~~ evidenced by documented analysis of assessment data and use of results by appropriate constituencies for the purpose of improvement and planning.
5. Learning ~~Outcomes~~ outcomes data~~,~~ disaggregated in missionally-relevant ways~~,~~ and used to demonstrate a commitment to the success of all students in attaining intended learning outcomes.
6. The ongoing provision of reliable and current information to the public, including program retention and completion rates, employment rates for professional programs, and licensure pass rates for programs where licensure is expected. Required outcomes data are available via the institutions' website through an easily identified link on the homepage.
7. Written program improvement plans, informed by stakeholder input and assessment results, aligned with realistic resource projections, and accompanied by consistent reporting on plan achievement.

Applicable Policies: *Policy on Academic Quality as Related to Institutional Mission; Policy on Outcomes*

Institutional Accreditation Standards

Proposed changes (1) clarify what is meant by curriculum in EEs 1-4, (2) clarify Bible/theology core requirements for degree completion and transfer students, and (3) place current EE 12 in the section specifically addressing graduate education.

STANDARD 7
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

The institution's academic programs are designed with appropriate curricula, policies, and practices to impart the knowledge, skills, and practical experiences necessary for lifelong learning, vocational competence, and development of a biblical worldview regardless of location, instructional modality, or language of instruction.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. Academic programs and related curricula designed with content and rigor characteristic of higher education, and the knowledge and skills needed for lifelong learning commensurate with the level of education offered.
2. ~~Curriculum~~ Academic programs and related curricula designed to support development of a biblical worldview through Bible engagement and theological reflection.
3. ~~Curriculum~~ Academic programs and related curricula designed to prepare graduates for effective engagement in ~~diverse and multicultural~~ a variety of contexts as aligned with institutional mission.
4. ~~Curriculum~~ Academic programs and related curricula that progress~~es~~ from foundational to advanced studies appropriate to the degree and level of education offered.
5. Practical experiences and application of knowledge through practicums, internships, course-embedded experiential learning, or other appropriate means, for ministry and professional programs.
6. A cycle of regular academic program review that supports program planning and improvement.
7. An academic advising system that guides the student from the point of program selection to graduation.
8. An academic calendar that meets state, provincial, and federal regulations and considers regional higher educational patterns. Clear, published policies govern any alternative patterns utilized.
9. Published policies for awarding academic credit commensurate with normative academic and/or governmental definitions, including credit awarded based on direct assessment of intended learning outcomes, if applicable.
10. A system of grading~~,~~ and associated policies and procedures~~,~~ that reflect~~s~~ integrity, ensure~~s~~ fairness and consistency, conform~~s~~ to higher education norms, and facilitate~~s~~ transferability of students' academic credits.

11. Appropriate measures to ensure that the student receiving credit is the person completing the work, ~~and~~ with notification in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any additional charges associated with verification of student identity.
~~12. Advanced standing policies for master-level programs ensuring that a minimum of 50% of semester hours applied to degree requirements are awarded from curricula designed for and delivered at the graduate level.~~
~~13.~~12. Policies ensuring that a minimum of 25% of semester hours required for an undergraduate degree and 33% of semester hours required for a graduate degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree.
~~14.~~13. A clear and publicized statement of faculty-adopted graduation requirements consistently applied to the certification of graduates.
~~15.~~14. A system of accurate and secure student record keeping consistent with state, provincial, and/or federal regulations.

Relative to this standard, the undergraduate programs of an accredited institution are characterized by…
~~16.~~15. The equivalent of a minimum of 120 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree and 60 semester hours for an associate degree.
~~17.~~16. A Bible/theology core ~~of Bible/theology studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a ~~four- or five-year~~ baccalaureate degree, ~~24 semester hours for a Canadian three-year baccalaureate degree,~~ 18 semester hours for a non-traditional degree completion program or transfer students ~~needing fewer than 60 semester hours to complete a baccalaureate degree~~ with 60 or more transfer credits toward a declared bachelor degree, and 12 semester hours for an associate degree or ~~one- or two-year~~ a certificate or diploma program requiring the equivalent of up to 60 semester hours.
~~18.~~17. A general studies core ~~of general studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree or 15 semester hours for an associate degree, with one or more courses drawn from each of the following four disciplines: communication, humanities/fine arts, natural science/mathematics, and social/behavioral sciences.
~~19.~~18. The equivalent of a minimum of 18 semester hours of professional and/or ministry studies for a baccalaureate degree.

Relative to this standard, graduate programs of an accredited institution are characterized by…
19. Advanced standing policies for master-level programs that ensure a minimum of 50% of semester hours applied to degree requirements are awarded from curricula designed for and delivered at the graduate level.
20. The equivalent of a minimum of 30 semester hours for a master's degree, 72 semester hours for the Master of Divinity degree, and 30 semester hours beyond the master's degree for a doctoral degree.
21. Appropriate prerequisite and/or curricular requirements to ensure that students are prepared to pursue graduate studies.
22. Cohesive curriculum designed to advance students' academic knowledge, research skills, and professional expertise substantially beyond that required of undergraduate programs.

23. Curricular requirements that ensure students demonstrate significant ability to engage in biblical integration and theological reflection in relation to their academic or professional disciplines through prerequisites, curricular requirements, or program-level learning outcomes.
24. Doctoral-level programs that build upon and advance students beyond the levels of knowledge and competence required of master-level programs~~, if applicable~~.
25. Doctoral-level programs that ensure doctoral students demonstrate comprehensive understanding and mastery of the knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study~~, if applicable~~.

Programmatic Accreditation Standards

Proposed changes (1) clarify what is meant by curriculum in EEs 1-4, (2) clarify Bible/theology core requirements for degree completion and transfer students, and (3) place current EE 12 in the section specifically addressing graduate education.

STANDARD 7
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

The program is designed with appropriate curricula, policies, and practices to impart the knowledge, skills, and practical experiences necessary for lifelong learning, vocational competence, and development of a biblical worldview regardless of location, instructional modality, or language of instruction.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. Content and rigor characteristic of higher education and the knowledge and skills needed for lifelong learning commensurate with the level of education offered.
2. ~~Curriculum~~ Program curricula designed to support development of a biblical worldview through Bible engagement and theological reflection.
3. ~~Curriculum~~ Program curricula designed to prepare graduates for effective engagement in ~~diverse and multicultural~~a variety of contexts in alignment with institutional mission.
4. ~~Curriculum~~ Program curricula that ~~progresses~~progress from foundational to advanced studies appropriate to the degree and level of education offered.
5. Practical experiences and application of knowledge through practicums, internships, course-embedded experiential learning, or other appropriate means for ministry and professional programs.
6. A cycle of regular academic program review that supports program planning and improvement.
7. An academic advising system that guides the student from the point of program selection to graduation.
8. An academic calendar that meets state, provincial, and federal regulations and considers regional higher educational patterns. Clear, published policies govern any alternative patterns utilized.
9. Published policies for awarding academic credit commensurate with normative academic and/or governmental definitions, including credit awarded based on direct assessment of intended learning outcomes, if applicable.
10. A system of grading and associated policies and procedures that reflect~~s~~ integrity, ensure~~s~~ fairness and consistency, conform~~s~~ to higher education norms, and facilitate~~s~~ transferability of students' academic credits.
11. Appropriate measures to ensure that the student receiving credit is the person completing the work, ~~and~~ with notification in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any additional charges associated with verification of student identity.

12. Policies ensuring that a minimum of 25% of semester hours required for an undergraduate degree and 33% of semester hours required for a graduate degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree.
13. A clear and publicized statement of faculty-adopted graduation requirements consistently applied to the certification of graduates.
14. A system of accurate and secure student record keeping consistent with state, provincial and/or federal regulations.

Relative to this standard, an accredited undergraduate program is characterized by…

15. The equivalent of a minimum of 120 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree and 60 semester hours for an associate degree.
16. A Bible/theology core ~~of Bible/theology studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a four- or five-year baccalaureate degree, ~~24 semester hours for a Canadian three-year baccalaureate degree,~~ 18 semester hours for a non-traditional degree completion program or transfer students ~~needing fewer than 60 semester hours to complete a baccalaureate degree~~ with 60 or more transfer credits toward a declared bachelor degree, and 12 semester hours for an associate degree or ~~one or two-year~~ a certificate or diploma program requiring the equivalent of up to 60 semester hours.
17. A general studies core ~~of general studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree or 15 semester hours for an associate degree, with one or more courses drawn from each of the following four disciplines: communication, humanities/fine arts, natural science/mathematics, and social/behavioral sciences.
18. The equivalent of a minimum of 18 semester hours of professional and/or ministry studies for a baccalaureate degree.

Relative to this standard, an accredited graduate program is characterized by…

19. Advanced standing policies for master-level programs that ensure a minimum of 50% of semester hours applied to degree requirements are awarded from curricula designed for and delivered at the graduate level.
~~19.~~20. The equivalent of a minimum of 30 semester hours for a master's degree, 72 semester hours for the Master of Divinity degree, and 30 semester hours beyond the master's degree for a doctoral degree.
~~20.~~21. Appropriate prerequisite and/or curricular requirements to ensure that students are prepared to pursue graduate studies.
~~21.~~22. Cohesive curriculum designed to advance students' academic knowledge, research skills, and professional expertise substantially beyond that required of undergraduate programs.
~~22.~~23. Curricular requirements that ensure students demonstrate significant ability to engage in biblical integration and theological reflection in relation to their academic or professional disciplines through prerequisites, curricular requirements, or program-level learning outcomes.
~~23.~~24. Doctoral-level programs that build upon and advance students beyond the levels of knowledge and competence required of master-level programs~~, if applicable~~.

~~24.~~25. Doctoral-level programs that ensure doctoral students demonstrate comprehensive understanding and mastery of the knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study~~, if applicable~~.

Applicable Policies: *Policy on Adult Degree Completion Programs; Policy on Bible-Theology Core; Policy on Canadian Institution Degree Programs; Policy on Certificate, Diploma, and Two-Year Degree Programs; Policy on Competency-Based Education and Direct Assessment; Policy on Distance Education; Policy on General Studies; Policy on Graduate Education; Policy on Instructional Modalities; Policy on International Education Programs; Policy on Transfer and the Award of Academic Credit; Policy on Validating Credits Earned at Unaccredited Institutions*

Institutional Accreditation Standards

Proposed changes clarify the distinctions between EE 1 (policies and procedures) and EE 2 (physical and/or digital environments) and align the language in EE 6 with other Standards relating to employee qualifications, none of which require a specific degree for any position. Please note: The change to EE 6 does not indicate a change in what the COA views as the appropriate qualification for a library director.

STANDARD 8
LEARNING RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The institution secures, maintains, and ensures access to a collection of learning resources and services necessary to support the research and information needs of the learning community regardless of location, instructional modality, or language of instruction.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. Published policies and procedures ~~relating to the management,~~ governing access, management, and security of learning resources ~~and services~~.
2. Physical and/or digital ~~resources~~ environments that effectively support access to and security of learning resources and services.
3. A collection of learning resources appropriate to the institution's curriculum, co-curriculum, and course offerings with regard to content, format, usage, and currency.
4. Availability of reference, technical, circulation services, and other means of support to meet the research and information needs of the learning community.
5. Appropriate documentation of participation in , ~~,~~ and regular review of~~,~~ resource sharing networks or other cooperative agreements ~~that involve the use of~~ for learning resources and services, if applicable.
6. Adequate library staffing, including effective leadership by a qualified and credentialed library director ~~-~~with ~~a graduate degree in library sciences or a related field and~~ faculty status.
7. Meaningful collaboration of library personnel and faculty in curriculum planning and learning resource development.
8. Curricular requirements, instruction, and reference services supporting development of information literacy skills.

Programmatic Accreditation Standards

Proposed change clarifies that the appropriateness of the learning resource collection relates to the accredited program(s) not the institution as a whole.

STANDARD 8
LEARNING RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The program ensures the availability of and access to a collection of learning resources and services necessary to support the research and information needs of the learning community regardless of location, instructional modality, or language of instruction.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. A collection of learning resources appropriate to the ~~institution's~~ program curriculum, co-curriculum, and course offerings with regard to content, format, usage, and currency.
2. Availability of reference, technical, circulation services, and other means of support to meet the research and information needs of the learning community.
3. Meaningful collaboration of library personnel and faculty in curriculum planning and learning resource development.
4. Curricular requirements, instruction, and reference services supporting development of information literacy skills.