

## UAA POLICY: SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION & OTHER EXTERNAL RECOGNITIONS

### RESPONSIBILITY

- **Board of Regents:** Board of Regents Policy *P10.02.070. Accreditation* requires the UA System president, in coordination with the UAA, UAF, and UAS chancellors, to provide annually a report on the status of institutional and specialized accreditation.
- **University of Alaska Anchorage:** Over 60 programs at UAA hold specialized accreditation or other external recognitions. This speaks to the quality of UAA's programs and faculty. The institution, therefore, has an interest in maintaining these external recognitions and in monitoring their progress. The below outlines UAA policy as it relates to specialized accreditation.
- **College Management and Review:** The dean is responsible for managing and overseeing all specialized accreditation & external recognition activities for the programs academically housed in their college. It is their responsibility to oversee and ensure compliance with the guidelines below.

### COMMUNICATION

- **Outgoing Formal Communication:** After review and approval by the dean, the dean will submit to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness for review all outgoing formal communications with and reporting to accreditors, state boards, or other external agencies, including regular annual reporting or presentations. These should be final versions with all data and statements fully supported and verified by the college.

#### Timeline:

- Regular annual specialized accreditation reports are reviewed and approved by the deans.
- Interim and *ad hoc* specialized accreditation reports, and presentations to external boards, e.g., the Board of Nursing (BON) or the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), are due to OAA for review at least *two weeks prior* to the submission deadline or presentation to the organization or board.
- Self-study reports are due to OAA for review in editable format at least *one month prior* to the accreditor or external agency's submission deadline. The self-study report should be in its final version, such that the dean would be willing to submit it as is to the accreditor. Questions about basic approaches and appropriate framing should have been addressed prior to this point. The final OAA review, in particular, is to ensure UAA is described in a consistent way relative to its mission, governance structure, faculty and student supports, financial and physical resources, policies, and procedures.
- Drafts of interim, *ad hoc*, and self-study reports should be sent to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness. Only final versions should be sent to the [uaa.oaa@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa.oaa@alaska.edu) account.
- Deans will ensure that OAA receives the final submitted version of the above, as well as any formal outgoing communication with the accreditors. Final versions of all report types are sent to OAA at [uaa.oaa@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa.oaa@alaska.edu) for archiving at the same time they are submitted to the accreditor.

- **Incoming Formal Communication:** Programs should forward to the dean any accreditation-related communication. Deans will ensure that OAA receives the final version of all formal incoming communications from accreditors, state boards, and other external agencies, e.g., official notice of reaffirmation. These should be emailed to [uaa.oaa@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa.oaa@alaska.edu).

## DATA AND DATA REQUESTS

UAA is positioning Institutional Research to support the institutional-level data needs for specialized accreditation. While some data will always be program-specific and the programs will need to collect the data, many accreditors require data such as enrollment, retention, and completion rates. Unless otherwise required by the accreditor, IR will provide these data using approved institutional definitions.

- Institutional data for annual, interim, ad hoc, and self-study reports must be requested from IR;
- Submit an IR Data Request Form at the start of the process, or, at the very latest, no later than one month prior to needing the data.

## ARCHIVING

- Deans will ensure that OAA receives all formal incoming and outgoing communications with accreditors, e.g., site visit itinerary and notice of teams, official notice of reaffirmation. These should be sent to [uaa.oaa@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa.oaa@alaska.edu).
- Deans will ensure that OAA receives all final, submitted versions of self-studies and other reports to specialized accreditors.

## SELF-STUDY AND SITE VISIT PREPARATION

- **Status Update Meetings:** OAA will schedule status update meetings with the dean and/or program lead(s) starting approximately two years prior to a self-study deadline.
- **Site Visit Scheduling:** Deans will work with OAA to schedule the provost, vice provost, and/or chancellor for site visit meetings with the evaluators.
- **Site Visit Leadership Preparation Meeting:** OAA will schedule a site visit preparation meeting with leadership, the dean(s), and the program lead(s) at least one week prior to the site visit.
  - At least one week prior to the leadership preparation meeting deans will submit to [uaa.oaa@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa.oaa@alaska.edu) 1) the site visit itinerary; 2) the site visit team roster & brief bios of the team members; 3) a bulleted list of program highlights as well as any challenges or particular questions the evaluators might have for the administration. Deans should have already submitted the self-study report to OAA at the time the report was submitted to the agency.
  - OAA will provide the above documents, along with a program fact sheet and the self-study report to leadership prior to the preparation meeting.
- **Site Visit Itinerary Changes:** The deans are responsible for keeping OAA apprised of any last-minute changes to the site visit itinerary, particularly as any changes affect leadership meeting dates and times.

## CHANGES IN SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION STATUS

The dean must submit a memo to the provost requesting any changes in specialized accreditation status. This includes requesting approval to seek specialized accreditation, adding a program to an existing accreditation, requesting approval to voluntarily withdraw from a specialized accreditation, etc.

Deans can provide drafts for review, prior to finalizing the memo.

### A. Memo requesting to seek accreditation or to add a program to an existing accreditation:

1. **The agency** - identify and include a brief description of the agency, its associations, status within a discipline or industry, and its recognition by government agencies;
2. **Eligibility** - describe the kinds of organizations the agency accredits and on what level (college, department, program, etc.);
3. **Programs** - list the degrees/certificates/programs that will be covered by the specialized accreditation;
4. **Benefits** - to students; to the program; to the university;
5. **Standards** - provide a brief outline of the agency's standards with commentary as to how the program already meets or is planning to meet the standards and identify any gaps;
6. **Accreditation process** - outline the process for seeking initial accreditation, as well as the ongoing reporting requirements and the cycle of reaffirmation;
7. **Costs/expenses** - indicate the initial and ongoing costs payable to the agency, including for site visits; describe the faculty and staff work required to implement and support the accreditation; identify the data and IT needs; identify the program-level lead(s) who will ensure ongoing compliance with the standards and how the work will be incorporated into individuals' workloads; and
8. **Standards:** Attach a copy of the standards.
9. Submit to [uaa.oaa@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa.oaa@alaska.edu).

### B. Memo to provost through the dean requesting to voluntarily withdraw from a specialized accreditation:

1. The agency;
2. The program;
3. The rationale for the voluntary withdrawal and requirements of the agency to do so;
4. The impact on students and how students will be accommodated;
5. Possible negative impacts and strategies for mitigation; and
6. Attach a communication plan, including a list of the stakeholder groups, the timeline, the draft messages, and the means of distribution (email, website, etc.).
7. Submit to [uaa.oaa@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa.oaa@alaska.edu).