Computing Accreditation Commission

Institutional Representative Orientation: Site Visit Preparation

August 2024

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2024-25 Computing Accreditation Commission, Chair

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Goals for Today

- We want you to …
  - Know what happens before, during and after your physical or virtual visit.
  - Know how accreditation decisions are made.
  - Know the timetable for the next twelve months.

Before We start …

- The chat feature has been disabled.

- Please use the Q&A feature to ask questions.

- The slides will posted at https://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/
  - Scroll down to Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC).

Common Terms

Term	Meaning
CAC	Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET
PEV	Program Evaluator
TC	Team Chair leading visit/review. Typically a voting CAC commissioner, sometimes a former commissioner
ED1, ED2	Editor 1 and Editor 2 assigned to each visit/review, who edit the Draft and Final Statements for consistency
Adjunct	ABET Adjunct Accreditation Director – Computing
AMS	ABET's Accreditation Management System
APPM	ABET's Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual
PAF	Program Audit Form

Term	Meaning
CS	Computer Science
CY	Cybersecurity
DS	Data Science
IS	Information Systems
IT	Information Technology

Types of Reviews

- **Single commission**
  - CAC reviews one or more programs

- **Simultaneous**
  - Multiple commissions on campus at the same time, reviewing different programs

- **Joint**
  - Multiple commissions reviewing the same program in one visit or review

- **General**
  - Comprehensive, every six years
  - All programs for a commission
    - General and Program Criteria
      - CS; CY; DS; IS; IT
    - General Criteria: only

- **Interim**
  - Result of issue(s) found during a previous review
    - Visit or report

Your review is a combination of one blue circle and one orange circle

Accreditation Timeline for 2024-2025 cycle

Year 0 – 2023

- Start writing Self Study
- Start collecting course materials
- October 1 – Readiness Review (some new programs)

We are here today

Year One – 2024

- January 31 – Submit RFE
- Jan-June – Finish Self Study
- Jan-Aug – Collect course materials
- April – TC assignment/approval
- May-June – PEV assignment/approval
- July 1 – Submit Self Study
- August – Attend Institutional Rep Orientation
- August – Interact with visit team
- Sept-Nov – Visits conducted
- Fall/Winter – Draft Statement

Year Two – 2025

- Winter – Due Process Response
- Winter/Summer – Draft Final Statement (for July commission meeting)
- Feb-May – Post-30 Day Due Process Response (if agreed with Team Chair)
- July – Accreditation decision made at July commission meeting
- August - Final Statement

ABET

Between Now and the Visit

Your Immediate Goals

- Address questions and issues that the visiting team communicates regarding your program.
  - The more you do before the visit, the easier the visit.
  - Allows more time to address issues.
- Prepare physical/virtual display materials.
- Work with Team Chair on visit schedule.
  - If part of a joint or simultaneous visit, you will have multiple schedules with which to deal.
  - Start scheduling key university personnel immediately.

Pre-visit Communication

- The CAC asks that all communication be done through the Team Chair, not the PEVs.

- Other commissions may allow communications directly with Program Evaluators (PEVs), but not the CAC.
  - Sometimes the Team Chair may make exceptions for joint or simultaneous visits to align better with other commissions.

- Important to communicate regularly with your Team Chair.

ABET HQ Directive on Electronic Recording of ABET Accreditation Meetings

- Any type of electronic recording of live ABET accreditation conversations or meetings is **prohibited**.

- This policy applies to ABET Accreditation staff, volunteers, and the institutions involved in evaluation reviews.

- For accreditation reviews, this applies to review planning meetings, ABET team meetings, exit meetings and faculty, staff and student interviews.
  - Interviews with faculty, students and key staff are confidential.

- Exceptions to this are pre-recorded laboratory tours.

- All parties involved in the pre-recorded laboratory tour must be identified by name and provide their recorded consent to be recorded.

Course & Assessment Displays

Course Displays

- All courses supporting Criterion 3 or 5.
  - Syllabus, assignments, exams, textbook.
  - Graded student work in a range of quality.
- Syllabi/texts for math.
  - For CS, CY, DS, IS, and IT, full display for appropriate math
- Program Criteria: Criterion 3 or 5
  - Examples.
    - CS: natural science coursework syllabi.
    - IS: IS Environment supporting materials.

Assessment Data

- All data to support Criterion 4
- Description of process
- Sample assessment instruments & data
- Evaluation of data (documented)
- Improvements when identified (with supporting documentation)
- Consider flowcharts to describe process when possible

This normally includes copies of relevant minutes from meetings

Comments on Displays

- Generally, online materials should be available at least 30 days prior to the visit
  - Provide detailed access and navigation instructions
- Clear (easy to understand) organization is critical for the team.
  - The team must be able to find what they need.
  - There should be a consistent organization for all courses.
  - There should be a consistent organization for all assessment and evaluation documentation.
- Have someone to provide an overview of the organization of the display materials when access is given.
  - Virtual visits: provide access one month before the start of the visit.
  - In-person visits: be ready to provide virtual access if unexpected happens.
    - Strongly encourage doing this under normal situations too as it speeds up visit..

Other Details

Materials

- Self-Study.
  - Now available online.
- Transcripts
  - Include all possible information to help explain transcripts.
    - Degree audit checks, substitution forms, tracking forms.

Communicate

- Touch base regularly with Team Chair regarding questions the team has.
  - Answer questions before the visit (if possible).
  - Provide guidance on appropriate personnel to talk with.

Questions/Comments?

The In-Person Review

Visit Arrangements

Schedule

- Work with the Team Chair on details.
  - Will review schedule later in this session.

Logistics (US vs International)

- Identify convenient hotels near campus.
- Identify good restaurants.
- Identify best local transportation options.
- Identify parking arrangements.
- Identify wi-fi connection arrangements.

Team Requirement: Private Room During Visit

- Room needed from the time the team shows up until it leaves.
  - Typically Sunday through Tuesday (or dates of visit).
- Room requirements.
  - At least one computer connected to a printer.
  - A paper shredder.
  - Your course and assessment materials in this room (or the above computer should provide access if materials are online).
  - Internet access with WiFi for team laptops.
    - Technical support on first day (Sunday) to ensure all equipment (including team laptops) are fully functional in your environment.
  - It would be nice to have coffee/soft drinks/water easily accessible to the team.

Questions/Comments?

The Visit Schedule

- The visit schedule is developed jointly:
  - By the designated person identified by the program, such as a program chair, department chair or dean's office/
  - The Team Chair (and possibly Program Evaluators in case of joint/simultaneous visits).
- General visit framework.
  - Sunday (or Day 0) – tours & material review.
  - Monday (or Day 1) – interviews & presentations.
  - Tuesday (or Day 2) – prepare statements, debrief, exit meeting with administrators.
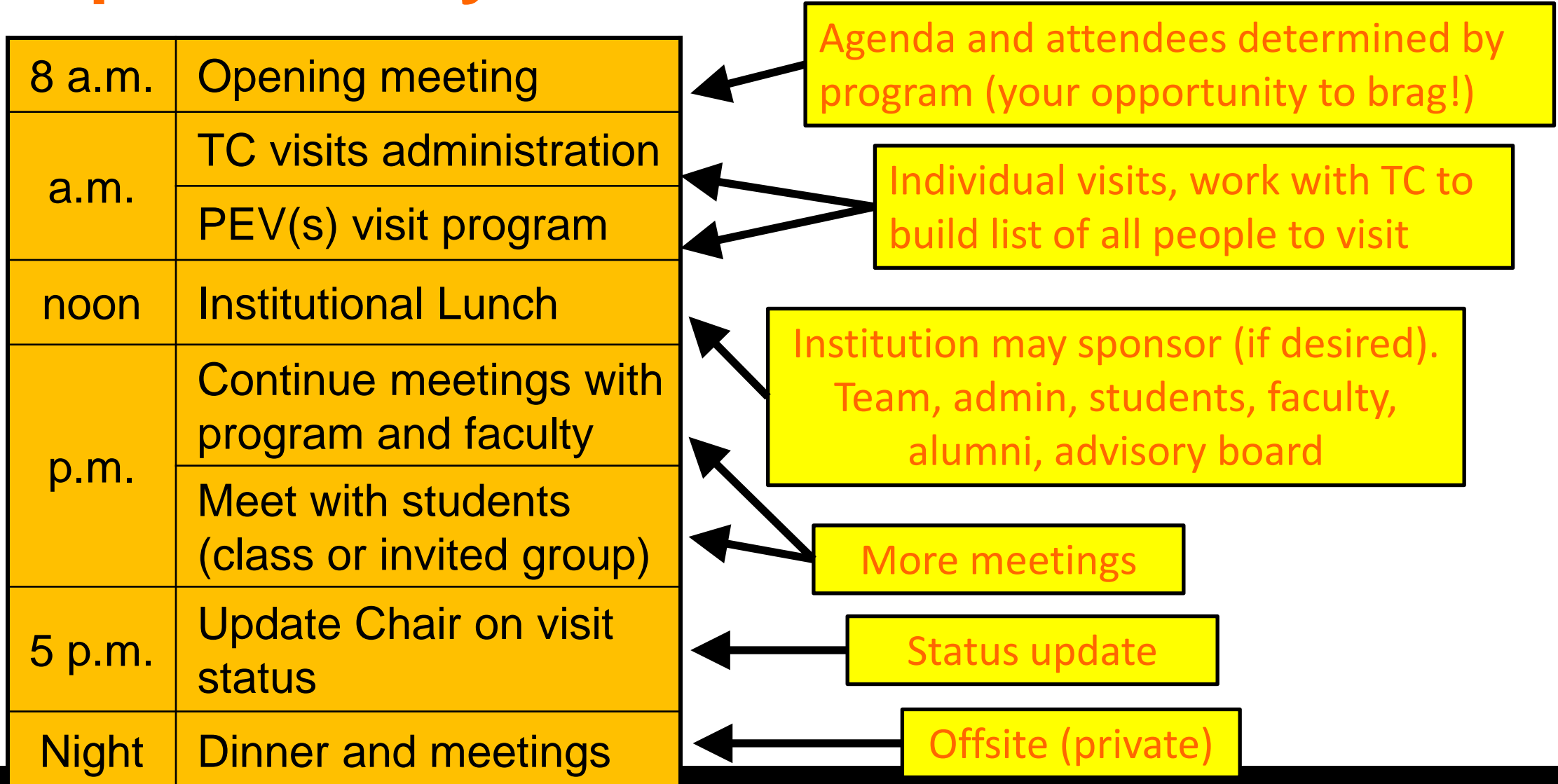
Sample Sunday Schedule (Day 0)

1 p.m.	Meet team Tour facilities
2 p.m.	Team reviews course and assessment displays
6 p.m.	Team dinner
8 p.m.	Team meeting

Coordinate meeting location and parking, mobile numbers before the visit

Visit room (private)
Have someone available nearby for questions and provide more material if needed

Off-site (private)

Sample Monday Schedule

8 a.m.	Opening meeting
a.m.	TC visits administration
	PEV(s) visit program
noon	Institutional Lunch
p.m.	Continue meetings with program and faculty
	Meet with students (class or invited group)
5 p.m.	Update Chair on visit status
Night	Dinner and meetings

Agenda and attendees determined by program (your opportunity to brag!)

Individual visits, work with TC to build list of all people to visit

Institution may sponsor (if desired). Team, admin, students, faculty, alumni, advisory board

More meetings

Status update

Offsite (private)

Sample Tuesday Schedule

8 a.m.	Status update	
a.m.	Any final meetings	Meetings only if needed after Monday, writing done in team room (private)
	Prepare exit statement	
Late a.m.	Present findings to Dean/Chair/others	Preview of the exit meeting
noon	Working Lunch	Paid by TC, delivered to team room (private)
Early p.m.	Exit meeting	President/Provost plus any others they invite
	Depart campus	

Tuesday Exit Meeting

- Conducted by the Team Chair.
  - If simultaneous visit, you can do either a joint or individual exit meetings (institution's choice).
  - TC and PEVs will have briefed you on findings before the Exit Meeting.
- Institution may invite anyone they wish.
  - ABET typically expects President and/or Provost to be present.
- Team will identify all findings.
  - Program Audit Form (PAF) will be printed by TC from the Accreditation Management System (AMS) for each program and provide to program.
  - PAF identifies *all shortcomings identified by the ABET team during the visit.*

Flexibility

- ABET is prepared to be flexible to help you through your accreditation visit.

- If something unexpected should happen to prevent the normal operation of the visit.

  - Team Chair will help you restructure the visit to proceed in a different format or on different days, e.g., the use of hybrid events (some in-person, some virtual) or rescheduled dates.

Questions/Comments?

What Happens After the Visit?

Immediately After the Visit

- **Program**
  - Has seven (7) days to correct "errors of fact" only in the PAF(s).
  - Start to work on your own to address shortcomings identified in the PAF(s).
- **ABET**
  - Team Chair uses the PAF or PAFs to generate a Draft Statement.
  - Draft Statement is reviewed by two assigned Editors and Adjunct Accreditation Director, Computing.

After You Receive the Draft Statement

- **Program**
  - Has thirty (30) days to submit a Due Process Response – updates on any shortcomings that have been addressed.
  - May submit a Post 30-Day Due Process Response provided you submitted a Due Process Response (negotiated with TC but no later than early May).
- **ABET/CAC**
  - Draft Final Statement created by Team Chair, reviewed by two Editors and ABET Adjunct Accreditation Director, Computing.
  - Draft Final Statement is held for review and vote by the full Commission at its July Meeting for determining final action.
  - Institutions normally notified of the accreditation action decision in late August.

Questions/Comments?

Accreditation Decisions

What Do Shortcomings Mean?

- Deficiency: The criterion or policy is not met.
  - A program that does not meet a criterion or policy may not be accredited.
- Weakness: A program currently lacks the strength of compliance with a criterion or policy.
  - Remedial action is required to strengthen compliance.
  - Impacts the term of accreditation.
- Concern: A criterion is currently satisfied but the review indicates that a potential exists for non-satisfaction in the future.
  - Concerns do not impact the current accreditation action.

Two Comments on Findings

- Shortcomings can change (for better or worse) from the time the PAF is handed out until the final statement is generated.
  - Changes possible from exit statement to 7-day-response to draft statement to due-process response to final statement.
- In most cases, you will ***not*** see an increase in severity of a shortcoming after the draft statement – but it is a real possibility and occurs sometimes.

How Accreditation Decisions Are Made

- Each Criterion or Policy is evaluated to determine if it is met

Questions?

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Thank You !

- Information about ABET, the Criteria, commissions, member societies, and much more is at:
  - www.abet.org
- Institutional Representative Orientation: In-person Site Visit Preparation.
  - Slides/recordings of this webinar will be posted under the CAC area of
  - www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/
- Institutional Representative Orientation: Self-Study Preparation.
  - This was presented and recorded in April 2024
  - Slides/recording are already posted at the previous link.
- Also be aware of proposals for future Criteria changes
  - https://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/accreditation-changes/