

# **AAB**International

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**Form 225**

**Rev. 12-6-11**

**AVIATION ACCREDITATION BOARD** INTERNATIONAL

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## **PREAMBLE**

The Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI, formerly the Council on Aviation Accreditation, CAA) can trace its beginnings back to 1974 when collegiate faculty concerned with academic standards for aviation programs set up the Academic Standards Committee in the University Aviation Association (UAA) in 1971. This Committee was later divided into two subcommittees, one concerned with standards and articulation, and the other with accreditation. In 1974, the Accreditation Subcommittee was authorized to conduct a survey of schools with aviation programs to identify current practices and potential need for curricula accreditation. A report of that Committee was prepared in April 1975, and led to the formation of a Task Force to develop an Academic Standards Manual under grants from several aviation industry organizations. The Task Force met in Wichita, Kansas, in October 1976 and developed the "College Aviation Accreditation Guidelines," which became the first standards manual for associate, baccalaureate and graduate programs. This manual was printed and distributed to colleges and universities with aviation curricula. Several institutions volunteered for program evaluation under the new Guidelines which became adopted as a "recommended standard for aviation curricula."

Another major step forward occurred in 1981, following the strike by Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Controllers. UAA offered to assist the FAA in staffing its technical positions with college graduates. This led to the formation of a Task Force for the development of a special curriculum targeted toward five FAA occupational specialties. Once the curriculum was developed, the FAA first contracted with UAA in 1983 to evaluate proposed curricula from institutions that desired recognition under the FAA Airway Science Program. This led to further expansion of UAA services in 1985 to include on-site campus evaluations of facilities, administration, faculty and students of institutions applying for FAA Airway Science program recognition. All of this was carried out by a UAA Airway Science Curriculum Committee of professional educators who served as both a review and evaluation board for curricula and on-site evaluations. During the period 1983 to 1988, the UAA gained extensive experience in the review of curricula and the evaluation of nearly 30 aviation programs throughout the country.

In September 1987, the UAA set up an Accreditation Task Force to further evaluate the feasibility of formal aviation program accreditation. A survey of UAA institutional members in the spring of 1988 showed substantial support for the establishment of a formal accrediting organization for aviation programs. The Task Force determined from the survey that there was a general consensus on the need for specialized accreditation of non-engineering aviation programs, and that there was no existing accrediting organization with the appropriate statement of purpose and experience to carry out such accreditation. A July 1988 Task Force then expanded the "Guidelines" into an initial draft of what could serve as the foundation of an accreditation standards manual including rationale and goals for accreditation, overall philosophy, the definition of an aviation professional, and an outline of topics to be encompassed in the standards manual.

The purpose of this initial development was to provide sufficient information to the UAA Board of Trustees on the accreditation structure and process to enable them to make an intelligent decision with respect to the formation of the accreditation council. This information was furnished to the Board in two mailings during the summer of 1988 and led to the recommendations to the UAA Board of Trustees to create the Council on Aviation Accreditation (CAA) as a committee of UAA.

The CAA was established on October 18, 1988, at the UAA Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas. The CAA initially functioned as a subsidiary of UAA for administrative support; however, the UAA Board, after consultation and input from the Council on Post Secondary Accreditation, determined it was in the best interest of both organizations for CAA to be recognized as a separate organization. The new Board was appointed the following month with Dr. Paul Whelan as chair. The CAA held its first meeting in January 1989 and developed the draft of the Standards Manual. With the completion of Bylaws in 1992, CAA was chartered as a nonprofit corporation. The first Board and officers were elected in May of that year. The first 14 programs (at four institutions) were also accredited that year. In March 1992, CAA became an autonomous, legally chartered entity with directors and officers elected from within the organization. The CAA formulated and published Bylaws by which the organization is governed. These Bylaws embrace the concepts and principles acceptable to and in keeping with the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) standards. COPA was subsequently dissolved and replaced by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

In March 1994, the CAA Board of Trustees initiated action to establish accreditation standards for associate degree programs. A subcommittee of the Standards Committee was charged with developing associate degree standards for approval at the summer 1995 meeting of the CAA. That initiative was followed in 1994 by the FAA's reorientation of the Airway Science (AWS) program, and its stated intention of bestowing Airway Science recognition only on associate and baccalaureate degree programs that were accredited by CAA. In 1997, the FAA terminated the AWS program and transferred administrative responsibility for accreditation to CAA. One of the more significant changes involved the movement to a "peer-based" type of review and accreditation of aviation programs by CAA, a sign of maturation of the discipline.

In January 2002, the CAA was recognized by CHEA as a specialized accreditation body for aviation education.

Establishing the Montreal Office at Concordia University in July 2001 marked the initiation of an international presence, after which the first group of International Trustees Members was elected to the Board and an Ad Hoc International Standards Subcommittee was created July 2002. In 2003, the CAA made the charge to the newly named Ad Hoc International Committee to adapt the existing standards to accommodate international accreditation. In support of this initiative, the Ad Hoc International Committee proposed to change the name from CAA to an appropriate name that incorporates the international scope of the organization and to avoid confusion with foreign civil aviation government agencies. The Committee presented its recommendations, which were approved by the Board in September 2005, leading to the change of the operating name to CAA dba Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI) at the Annual Meeting July 2006 in Duluth, Minnesota.

In July 2007 AABI published criteria that replaced the original standards and changed the accreditation focus to an outcomes vs. a process-centered model. The first accreditations under the new criteria were initiated in 2008.

## **Section 1.0 The Aviation Accreditation Board International**

1.1. Mission. The Aviation Accreditation Board International advances quality aviation education worldwide through accreditation and leadership.

1.2 Goals. The goals of AABI are to stimulate collegiate aviation program excellence and self-improvement; establish uniform minimum educational quality standards; and increase the credibility, integrity, and acceptance of collegiate aviation programs within institutions of higher education and all aspects of the aviation community, to include industry, government and the public-at-large.

1.3 Accreditation Objectives. Accreditation is a status granted to an educational institution or a program that has been found to meet or exceed stated criteria of educational quality. In the United States, accreditation is sought voluntarily by institutions and programs, and is conferred by non-governmental bodies. Accreditation, which applies to institutions and/or programs, is to be distinguished from certification and licensure, which apply to individuals and are normally government issued.

1.3.1. Accreditation has three fundamental purposes:

- (1) To ensure the quality of the institution or program;
- (2) To assist in the improvement of the institution or program; and
- (3) To maintain relevance of the educational program with the constituencies it serves.

1.3.2. National or regional bodies, such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), accredit institutions. Specialized accrediting bodies, such as AABI, accredit programs within the institutions.

1.4 Purposes. Accreditation is a time-honored process for evaluating and substantiating academic programs. An effective accrediting process ensures and promotes high quality educational programs. An aviation program that meets or exceeds stated criteria becomes more credible in the eyes of those considering enrollment in the program, those who are providing support for the program on the campus, as well as future employers of program graduates.

The purposes of AABI are to promote and improve aviation at the postsecondary level, and specifically: (1) to engage in accrediting programs of aviation at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate levels offered by colleges and universities in the U.S. and throughout the world; (2) to maintain procedures consistent with the recognition requirements of the U. S. Department of Education and other recognized accreditation sanctioning bodies; (3) to publish current information concerning the Criteria adopted by ABI for accrediting aviation programs; (4) to report the results of its activities; (5) to provide advisory services to colleges and universities offering or planning programs in aviation; (6) to maintain a list of the colleges and universities with accredited programs of study in aviation; and (7) to review at regular intervals the Criteria which AABI has adopted to evaluate programs in aviation.

## 1.5. Responsibilities.

1.5.1. Board of Trustees - There shall be a governing body of AABI known as the Board of Trustees, or the Board, as a collective body, with the individuals comprising the AABI Board of Trustees referred to as Trustees, or individually as Trustee. Trustees are elected prior to the Annual Meeting. The Board composition and term of service is defined in the Bylaws of AABI Article 7.

1.5.2. Officers – The officers of the Board of Trustees shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer and such other officers and assistant officers as the Board of Trustees consider may be helpful to AABI. The duties and terms of service are set forth in the Bylaws of AABI Article 8.

1.6. Scope. In accordance with the CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures, the Aviation Accreditation Board International is recognized for the following scope:

To accredit non-engineering aviation programs at the associate, baccalaureate and graduate levels offered by colleges and universities in the United States and throughout the world.

## **Section 2.0. The Accreditation Process.**

### 2.1 Applications.

2.1.1. AABI Program Definitions. A program is a clearly delineated major, degree or option, or combination of options within a major or degree as defined by the institution. Each program seeking accreditation should have completed at least one full cycle and have graduated at least one class.

2.1.1.1. The institution may submit a degree with several options so long as all options meet the AABI program specific criteria.

2.1.1.2. The institution may submit an option as a program if it wishes to have the option accredited and listed as a separate program.

### 2.1.2 Initial Application.

2.1.2.1 Letter of Intent. An institution seeking initial accreditation for one or more programs should submit a letter of intent with the following information:

- Name of program(s), the degree and the AABI option or options which relate to the program(s)
- For new programs, the date initiated and the date when the first class of graduates is expected
- Date of anticipated submittal of application AABI Form 202
- Any other information relevant to the application

2.1.2.2 Application. When an institution is reasonably certain that the program(s) for review meet AABI application criteria, the institution may submit an application (AABI Form 202) along with payment of the application fee.

2.1.2.3 Pre-Candidacy Application. If an institution has a question regarding one or more programs candidacy, it may submit a pre-candidacy application (AABI Form 202B) which is an abbreviated application. If the Accreditation Committee determines that the program(s) is/are eligible, the institution is so advised and the application Form 202 is submitted. The pre-application fee is transferrable to the application if the 202 is submitted to AABI within 60 days of notification.

If institution is not eligible for candidacy, the Chair of the Accreditation Committee refers the application to the Guidance Committee. A subcommittee of the Guidance Committee, the “Candidacy Partnership Program” will establish protocol with the institution. Institutions/individuals from AABI-accredited programs will advise/mentor the applicants through the accreditation process to bring the program into compliance with AABI criteria.

“Pre-Candidacy” status signifies that the institution/program is demonstrating reasonable progress toward the attainment of accreditation; but it does NOT indicate nor guarantee eventual accredited status.

2.1.3 Reaffirmation Application. An institution seeking reaffirmation of AABI-accredited programs will submit an application (Form 202) 30 months prior to the expiration date of their accreditation, but no later than 24 months prior. Any delay in meeting an application deadline could result in a lapse in accredited status.

2.2. Self-Study. Once the institution has been approved as a candidate, it will undertake a Self-Study in accordance with the outline presented in AABI Form 204. This will be completed and submitted within one year from the date of candidacy.

2.2.1. The Self-Study Report (SSR) serves three purposes:

- (1) To guide the aviation unit (and its faculty) through a critical review of its operations;
- (2) To provide information to AABI so that a fair evaluation of the program can be made; and
- (3) To serve as a historical document for the aviation unit.

These purposes should be kept in mind when preparing the report. Sufficient information should be provided without being superfluous. However, extra information may be included to enhance the historical value of the document. (Form 204, p.5)

A detailed manual for the preparation of the Self-Study Report has been published by AABI (Form 204).

- 2.2.2. A critical examination will be made of all facets of each academic program for which accreditation is sought, including its faculty, staff, administration, students and resources. Performance histories of students will be analyzed, as well as projected enrollments and placement opportunities for graduates. All the foregoing information will be compiled in a narrative Self-Study Report (SSR) with accompanying data in appropriate tables, charts and graphs. Two copies of the report will be furnished to AABI, along with an electronic copy; one copy to the Accreditation Committee chair; with additional copies furnished to the visiting team.
- 2.2.3. The Self-Study Report and all associated communications will be written in the English language.
- 2.2.4. Reporting Program Changes After Submission of the Self-Study Report. The Self-Study Report is intended to be a “snap shot” of the institution’s programs at the time of its submission to AABI, and program changes may occur between the completion of the SSR and the site visit. Because one purpose of the site visit is to verify the institution’s self-evaluation, the visiting team must know of changes that have occurred since its preparation and submission. To enable the visiting team to be fully prepared to conduct the visit and prepare their report effectively and efficiently, the institution will notify AABI of any substantive changes from the conditions reported in the Self-Study as soon as possible prior to the site visit. The institution will also provide a revision to any affected section(s) of the Self-Study at least sixty days prior to the scheduled date of the site visit.

2.3. Team Visit. Members of the accreditation visiting teams will be selected from the AABI institution and industry members. Qualifications for visiting team members and chairs are set forth in AABI Form 218. Each team will be made up of members having different areas of interest and competence so that the institution's programs will receive a thorough and rigorous review. The team will include one industry representative, at a minimum. The team visit will have four major purposes:

1. To validate the accuracy of the Self-Study Report.
2. To determine if the program is in compliance with AABI criteria.
3. To assess the intangible factors which do not lend themselves to quantitative analysis and which cannot be adequately described in the Self-Study, yet have profound effects on the overall quality of the programs. These intangible issues may include:
  - (a) Issues of faculty, staff and student morale;
  - (b) Intellectual atmosphere;
  - (c) Caliber of the faculty, staff and students; and
  - (d) The nature and quality of student work.
4. To assist the institution in identifying and assessing its strengths and weaknesses.

2.4 Visiting Team Report. Upon completion of the visit, the visiting team will prepare a report describing its findings.

- 2.4.1 The visiting team chair will send a draft of the full report to the team, the AABI office, and the chair of the Accreditation Committee who will approve the report after required changes. The team chair will then revise the report as necessary and send to the program coordinator of the visited institution. This report will include strengths and weaknesses without any suggestions or recommendations. The institution can only comment on any factual error found in the document.
- 2.4.2. When the institution's response is received, the visiting team chair will incorporate the factual corrections into a Final Visiting Team Report for transmittal to the AABI executive director and the chair of the Accreditation Committee.
- 2.4.3. The executive director will forward the Final Visiting Team Report to the CEO of the institution for review and response to the recommendations (required) and suggestions (optional) by the deadline specified.

2.5. Accreditation Committee Review and Action. As part of the accreditation process, the AABI Accreditation Committee is charged with reviewing each Visiting Team Report and recommending an accreditation action to the Board of Trustees in accordance with Form 211.

2.6. Board of Trustees Review and Action. The Board of Trustees has the authority to accept or reject the recommendations of the visiting team and the Accreditation Committee. The Board can elect to take any of the following actions:

- a. Grant accreditation as an initial action.
- b. Not to accredit.
- c. Reaffirm accreditation for existing accredited programs.
- d. Extend accreditation for accredited programs that may expire.
- e. Revoke accreditation for existing accredited programs.
- f. Defer accreditation for additional information/actions by the institutions.
- g. Suspend accreditation for a specified period of time.
- h. Reinstate accreditation for programs in suspended status.

2.7. Distribution and Disposition of the AABI Accreditation Report. The decision on accreditation recommendation and status is transmitted to the chief executive officer of the institution and the aviation program(s) administrator(s). Distribution and disposition of the AABI Accreditation Report sent to the institution are considered to be the responsibility of the officials of the institution.

2.8. Period of Accreditation. The initial and subsequent periods of accreditation will be for five years. If AABI determines that another visit is warranted at an institution in less than five years the institution will be so advised in writing with the reasons for an earlier review set forth.

A copy of the Accreditation Committee executive summary will be provided to the Board of Trustees for its next scheduled Board meeting. The institution will be notified by the executive director of the action taken by the Board within thirty (30) days following the Board meeting. . The Board may elect to require one or more interim reports and may require an additional visit to confirm the institution's compliance with AABI criteria.

2.9 Accreditation Timetable. In order to meet the required timetable for completion of the application and self-study that will lead to initial accreditation or reaffirmation, institutions will be responsible for the submission of required documents and arranging for the team visit on a timetable furnished by AABI. For institutions seeking initial program accreditation, failure to adhere to this timetable will delay initial accreditation by AABI. For institutions seeking reaffirmation, failure to adhere to this timetable may result in the termination of accreditation requiring an initial application as a new program with associated fees.

## **Section 3.0. General Policies**

3.1. Statement of Accreditation and General Policies. Accreditation of programs is accomplished under the following general policies. These Policies and Procedures are provided as a framework for the accreditation of aviation programs.

3.1.1 AABI provides assistance for institutions seeking accredited status. Documents (AABI forms) provide guidance and can be downloaded from the AABI web site (<http://www.aabi.aero/forms.html>) or can be requested from the AABI office.

3.1.2. The Aviation Accreditation Board International will:

- a. Evaluate for accreditation only those programs at institutions with regional or internationally recognized equivalent national or international accreditation, recognized by CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) or its equivalent.
- b. Evaluate for accreditation only those academic programs that lead to the associate, baccalaureate and/or graduate degrees, or internationally recognized equivalents.
- c. Accredite only those programs complying with the Accreditation Criteria as approved by the AABI Board of Trustees.
- d. Establish criteria and procedures for granting, denying, reaffirming, extending, revoking, deferring, suspending or reinstating accreditation of aviation programs.
- e. Invite institutions to voluntarily seek accreditation of their aviation programs.
- f. Accredite based on well-defined criteria; but encourage innovation and experimentation.
- g. Encourage the development of programs that advance aviation as an academic discipline.
- h. Require accredited programs to state accreditation status in an accurate and clear manner in all institutional publications, including electronic.

- i. Insist that its evaluations be objective and fair, but reserve the right to be the final authority on matters of accreditation.
- j. Publish a list of accredited programs and candidates for accreditation at least twice a year.

3.2. Continuous Compliance with AABI Criteria. An accredited institution is expected to continuously comply with AABI criteria during the accreditation period.

3.2.1 Reporting Requirements. If an institution has any cause for concern regarding their ability to continue to meet accreditation criteria, a report to AABI is required. If such a report is received, or other information is forthcoming that would question the institution's ability to maintain compliance with the criteria, the chairperson of the Accreditation Committee, with the advice and consent of the AABI president, will appoint two or more members to conduct a review of that program.

3.2.1.1. During the period of review *for institutions that voluntarily report compliance concerns*, the accreditation status of the program will remain unchanged. Notwithstanding this, the institution is required to provide a report to AABI on the progress of its efforts to maintain compliance, as stipulated by AABI.

3.2.2. Revocation of Accreditation. If the Board determines that the institution is not in compliance, and does not have an adequate plan to return to compliance within a reasonable period of time (as determined by the Board), the Board will send a letter of proposed revocation of accreditation. If, in the opinion of the Board, the institutional response to this letter is inadequate, accreditation will be revoked.

3.3. Accreditation Appeal Policy. The decision to not accredit, to suspend or to revoke accreditation can be appealed. If an institution wishes to appeal a decision, AABI must receive a letter of intent to appeal within 30 days of the date the AABI notification letter was postmarked. Upon receiving the letter of intent to appeal, AABI will appoint a panel of three current or past board members, which have not voted as a board member in the prior action, to hear the appeal. AABI must receive the institution's formal letter of appeal within 60 days of the date of the AABI notification letter. The panel will convene in conjunction with the next regularly scheduled meeting of AABI unless that meeting is scheduled within 60 days, in which case the institution may request a special meeting of the board. The panel will report its findings to AABI within seven days following hearing the appeal. The AABI Board of Trustees will then take final action on the appeal at its next scheduled meeting.

3.4. Public Release Policy. The institution MUST not publish or otherwise publicly state any period of accreditation. In any public release, the institution may refer only to the aviation programs that are accredited by AABI. The institution may use the term 'accredited' only for those specific programs accredited by AABI. There MUST be no implication that all of the programs are accredited if all of the programs are not. The institution may not publicly quote, in whole or in part, from AABI correspondence. If

accreditation is deferred, suspended or revoked, the institution may not use the phrase “accredited by AABI,” even if the phrase states or implies prior or future accreditation.

- 3.4.1. **Accurate Representation of Accreditation Status in Catalogues and Other Documents.** Institutions **MUST** clearly and accurately represent their current accreditation status in all institutional documents and publications, including on-line documents, in which they refer to AABI accreditation. Failure to adhere to this requirement may result in revocation of accreditation for all AABI accredited programs at the institution.
- 3.4.2 Institutions should broadly and accurately publish the objectives of each accredited program, admission requirements, program assessment measures employed and the information obtained through these assessment measures and report on actions taken as a result of this assessment, to include but not limited to: student achievement, the rate and types of employment of graduates, and any data supporting the qualitative claims made by the program.
- 3.4.3 It is AABI’s policy to respond to all public inquiries in accordance with the provisions of Section 3.5 of this document.

AABI will respond to written requests/complaints from students and parents of students enrolled in accredited programs, if appropriate, or will refer the request/complaint to the institution.

AABI will maintain a file of all inquiries and responses for review by CHEA.

**3.5. Confidentiality of Information.** Information supplied by the institution is for the confidential use of AABI and its agents, and will not be disclosed without the specific written authorization of the institution concerned.

- 3.5.1. The contents of all materials furnished for review purposes and discussion are considered privileged information. This includes all materials used by the visiting team, including the Self-Study Report. All deliberations by the Accreditation Committee and the AABI Board of Trustees regarding accreditation decisions are privileged and confidential.
- 3.5.2. The contents of all related documents, including business files, and the accreditation actions taken by the Board of Trustees may not be disclosed except under circumstances specifically approved by the AABI executive director or the Board of Trustees.

**3.6. Conflict of Interest.** The Board shall, from time to time, adopt rules and regulations governing the conduct of officers, trustees, members or employees, with respect to matters in which they have an interest in conflict with the interests of the AABI. Such rules and regulations shall forbid officers, trustees, members or employees from personally participating in AABI action with respect to any contract, transaction, accreditation or other matter in which any such officer, trustee, member or employee, has any interest, financial or

otherwise, unless said officer, trustee, member or employee makes full disclosure of the circumstances to the AABI Board and said Board determines that (a) the interest is not so substantial as to affect the integrity of AABI and the services being rendered by said officer, trustee, member or employee; or (b) on the basis of Criteria to be established in such rules and regulations, the interest of said officer, trustee, member or employee is too remote or too inconsequential to affect the integrity of AABI and the services being rendered. This proscription against personal participation, set forth immediately above, shall be deemed to require any such affected officer, trustee, member or employee to recuse himself or herself (leave the room) during deliberations by the Board or any Committee of the Board concerning any such contract, transaction, accreditation or other matter giving rise to the appearance of a conflict of interest. The removal of any such person for such reason shall not defeat an otherwise valid quorum.

3.6.1 If service as an AABI Board member or alternate, as a committee chair, member or observer, leads to conflicts of interest, or questions regarding the objectivity and credibility of the accreditation process, then such a member should recuse himself or herself from the process. The AABI Board of Trustees expects members to disclose real or perceived conflicts of interest, and to recuse themselves from discussion or decisions so related. The intent of this policy is:

- a. To maintain credibility in the accreditation process and confidence in the work and recommendations of the visiting team as well as in the deliberation and recommendations of the Accreditation Committee, and in the deliberation and ruling of the Board of Trustees;
- b. To assure fairness and impartiality in the decision making process; and
- c. To act impartially and avoid the appearance of impropriety.

3.6.2. Individuals representing AABI must not participate on a team visit or in any decision-making capacity if they have or have had a close, active association with a program or institution that is being considered for accreditation by AABI. Close association includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Current or past employment as faculty, staff or consultant at the institution or program;
- b. Current or past discussion or negotiation of employment with the institution or program;
- c. Attendance as student at the institution;
- d. Receipt of an honorary degree from the institution;
- e. An institution or program where a close, family relative is a student or employee;
- f. An unpaid official relationship with an institution, e.g., membership on the institution's board of trustees or industry advisory board; or
- g. A current or pending business relationship with the institution.

### 3.6.3. Records of Perceived Conflicts of Interest:

- 3.6.3.1. Individuals will provide the central office a copy of this record for the purpose of reporting any real or perceived conflicts of interest. Copies of these records will be provided to the individuals responsible for selection of team chairs and members.
- 3.6.3.2. All individuals representing AABI must sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality statement indicating that they have read and understand these policies.
- 3.6.3.3. Individuals must absent themselves from any portion of a AABI meeting in which discussions or decisions occur for which they have a real or perceived conflict of interest. Real or perceived conflicts may occur if there is:
  - a. A close, active association with a program or institution;
  - b. A financial, business or personal interest; or
  - c. Any reason that the individual cannot render an unbiased decision.
- 3.6.3.4. The names of individuals who have recused themselves during a meeting for conflicts of interest will be recorded.

## **Section 4.0. Policies Related to Programs.**

### 4.1. AABI accredits programs, not institutions.

4.1.1. Accreditation is a status granted to a program that has been found to meet or exceed stated criteria of educational quality. Accreditation is to be distinguished from certification and licensure, which apply to individuals.

4.2. Educational programs leading to degrees, rather than departments, are accredited. In order for a program to be accredited, all routes to completion of the program must satisfy the appropriate criteria.

4.2.1. A program is an organized educational experience that consists of a cohesive set of courses or other educational modules sequenced so that reasonable depth is obtained in the upper-level courses. The program should develop the ability to apply pertinent knowledge to the practice of the defined area of the program. A program must also involve the broadening educational objectives expected in modern post-secondary education. Program criteria that define specific program requirements within the general disciplinary realm are developed by the Criteria Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. AABI Form 201.

Programs to be considered for accreditation by AABI are collegiate programs that embrace aviation and aviation-related disciplines.

4.2.2 Program Criteria. Some program titles imply a specialization within a broader educational area. Program criteria have been developed for many such areas of specialization. If a program title implies a specialization for which program criteria have been developed, in addition to the general criteria, the program must satisfy the AABI criteria for that specialization.

#### 4.2.3. AABI Program Criteria

- a. Aviation Management
- b. Aviation Maintenance
- c. Aviation Electronics
- d. Aviation Studies
- e. Flight Education
- f. Safety Science
- g. Air Traffic Control

4.2.4 Program Differentiation. The general criteria for accrediting programs address:

- a. Students
- b. Program Educational Objectives
- c. Program Outcomes
- d. Curriculum
- e. Faculty and Staff
- f. Facilities, Equipment and Services
- g. Organization and Administration
- h. Aviation Safety Culture and Program
- i. Relations with Industry

Programs may be differentiated and separately accredited if there are differences in any of the above categories so that the configuration of one program offering is subject to judgments different from other patterns. Not only do different curricula and disciplines require separate accreditation, but the use of two or more substantially different faculties, facilities, student characteristics or administrations within the same discipline implies that there are two or more programs, each of which may require separate accreditation.

4.2.5 Options. Alternative curricula within a program (commonly called options) leading to a degree in a sub-field of the major discipline should be accredited and listed as separate programs, if such programs are submitted as such in the application (Form 202) and approved as a candidate. In such cases, the option must have been formally designated by the institution prior to the request for evaluation. It must conform to the general criteria and to any program-level criteria applicable to independent programs in the same curricular area as the option. The accreditation status of the option must be clearly identified and

distinguished from any non-accredited options within the same major program and from any other program in all institution literature (see 3.4.1).

4.2.6 Program Breadth. Broad programs that will prepare a student to take advantage of as many different career opportunities as possible are encouraged. Further, programs that omit instruction in a significant portion of a subject in which a professional in a particular field may reasonably be expected to have competence, will not be eligible for accreditation.

4.2.7. Evening, Online and Off-Campus Programs. This section to be developed.

4.2.9. Experimental or Innovative Programs. Recognizing the value of innovation and experimentation in educational programs and the possibility that such programs may have difficulty meeting specific quantitative criteria, innovative or experimental programs will be evaluated, on request, on the basis of their demonstrated ability to satisfy the intent of the appropriate criteria and to produce graduates fully qualified to enter the practice of the appropriate discipline. Programs are encouraged to adopt innovative procedures and approaches that meet the criteria and that improve the program.

4.3 Multi-Campus Programs. AABI offers system-wide accreditation for institutions which deliver their programs at multiple sites.

4.3.1 Definitions. The following definitions are offered to assist in clarifying the policies associated with multi-campus accreditation.

- Administrative Central Location: All institutions which offer aviation programs at more than one campus, must designate an administrative location in which all AABI correspondence will originate.
- Branch Campus: Is a standalone teaching location that is geographically separated from the administrative central location, is permanent in nature, offers courses leading to an aviation degree, has its own administrative staff, and has its own budget.
- Educational Site: Is a location away from the main or branch campuses that offers teaching, however is supported by either the main campus or branch campus.
- Large Multi-Campus: Institutions that have 10 or more campuses that offer the aviation program.
- Small Multi-Campus: Institutions that have less than 10 campuses that offer the aviation program

4.3.2 Accreditation Process.

4.3.2.1 Application. Institutions with multi-campus programs may complete one application. This application will include information on all campuses.

4.3.2.2 Self Study. Institutions with multi-campus programs will complete one self-study that will include information on all campuses.

4.3.2.3 Site Visit. The site visit will be conducted with a team slightly larger than a traditional AABI visiting team. The site visit will conclude at the Administrative Central Location with all visiting team members. The team will split up to visit additional campuses as determined by AABI.

4.3.2.4 Campus Selection.

- Each campus included for a small multi-campus accreditation visit will be visited by at least one visiting team member.
- A set number of campuses will be designated for visitation for large multi-campus programs based on a review from AABI. This will represent at least 15 percent of the campuses or as determined by the Accreditation Committee. Each of the campuses selected will be visited by at least one member of the visiting team. All campuses not selected for a visit may be evaluated by other means as determined by the visiting team
- All campuses which offer programs in Flight Education, Aviation Maintenance and Aviation Electronics will require an individual site visit to ensure that proper safety, equipment and oversight protocols are in place.