

The Process for Obtaining Accreditation

February 2008

**BACCALAUREATE/GRADUATE DEGREE
SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS**



**ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE BUSINESS
SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS**

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THE PROCESS FOR OBTAINING ACCREDITATION

BACCALAUREATE/GRADUATE DEGREE SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

Revised February 2008

This booklet provides information for schools considering pursuing accreditation with the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs. It includes information about the process and the value of accreditation with ACBSP. A separate booklet available from ACBSP describes the process to retain accreditation and to seek reaffirmation of accreditation.

The accreditation process and the standards and criteria for accreditation are evolving processes. The policies and procedures described in this publication are subject to change by the governing body responsible for approval of these changes. Please contact ACBSP offices or go to the ACBSP Gateway (www.acbsp.org) to determine if this is the most recent version.

This is a special version of the accreditation manual that highlights in italics specific provisions being used for separate accreditation of accounting programs. This will make it easy for those specifically interested in this accreditation to identify the process for this accreditation. This version is available only in a PDF version for download from the ACBSP Gateway and not as a printed version.

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ACCREDITATION FOR BACCALAUREATE AND GRADUATE DEGREE GRANTING INSTITUTIONS

INTRODUCTION

This introduction provides an overview of accreditation for those seeking to understand specialized accreditation. The contents can be especially valuable for those seeking to make the case for accreditation on their campus. Readers seeking to move immediately to review the steps in the process of obtaining accreditation should go to page ten.

Distinctions Between Institutional and Specialized Accreditation

Accreditation is the process by which an institution voluntarily undergoes an independent appraisal of its education activities. There are two types of accreditation: (1) institutional and (2) specialized.

Institutional accreditation is typically provided by one of the six regional accrediting organizations for schools in the United States. Some schools, both inside the United States and out, may have their institutional accreditation from a national organization such as the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) or the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC). For schools outside the United States, the recognition for the authority for the institution to grant degrees is often granted by the national or regional government.

ACBSP is a specialized accrediting organization that reviews the quality and integrity of business degree programs. *In addition to accreditation of all business programs, ACBSP offers separate accreditation of the accounting program within the business unit. Accreditation in accounting is optional and separate and requires the business unit to establish and maintain business accreditation.* Accreditation by ACBSP is based on an independent evaluation of an institution's business school or program by a group of professionals which include faculty and academic administrators in the field of business. To pursue ACBSP accreditation, an institution must be accredited by one of the six regional accrediting organizations or institutions outside the United States may provide documentation from their country governing authority to verify their authority to grant degrees, including business degrees. ACBSP does not offer membership or specialized accreditation to institutions with national accreditation such as that offered by DETC or ACICS.

Inputs, Activities and Outcomes

The educational quality of a business school or program (hereafter referred to as "business unit") is determined by a variety of inputs into the educational process, the educational activities related to the teaching/learning process and the outcomes of this process.

Examples of inputs to the educational process include faculty, students, facilities, support services, financial resources, organizational structure and skills in management of the school or program.

Examples of educational activities related to the teaching/learning process include teaching by faculty, learning by students, student advising, improvement in quality of teaching and learning resources and institutional acquisition and development of knowledge through faculty study, consulting and research.

Examples of outcomes include employers' evaluation of graduates, specialized test scores, student projects, student placement, surveys of graduating seniors and alumni surveys. The items given as examples in this

paragraph and the two previous paragraphs are not intended to be all inclusive. There are many other types of inputs, activities and outcomes.

Over a period of years, the institutional and specialized accreditation process has shifted from an emphasis on inputs contained in a prescriptive process to a greater emphasis on activities and outcomes contained in an outcomes assessment process.

Perception of Accreditation by the Public

Often the accreditation process is not well understood by the general public. To some, it is merely a rating process that classifies institutions and programs as excellent, average or poor. This is an erroneous perception. Instead, accreditation is a means of assuring students, parents and the business community that those business schools and programs that are accredited have met rigorous criteria which indicate a high and acceptable level of educational quality.

Accreditation does not mean that every course, concentration or major in a business degree program is of comparable quality. It does mean that no concentration or major is so weak in context as to jeopardize the overall quality of the business unit.

Value of Specialized Business Accreditation

Institutional accreditation is carried out by regional or national accrediting bodies. It is considered essential by viable institutions to assure access to state and federal funding, establish credibility to the larger public and to apply for specialized accreditation. Specialized accreditation in certain health and certain professional degrees is essential since state licensure or certification generally requires graduation from an accredited school or program. Such a mandate does not exist for business schools and programs. The value is instead found in other sources.

For the business unit, the pursuit of accreditation reinforces a commitment to continuous improvement, innovation and scholarship. The process of preparing an accreditation self study enhances the focus on quality of student learning and renews a commitment to the educational mission. Both the self study and required reporting mechanisms provide the impetus for identifying strengths and weaknesses and a forum for review and analysis of the business unit. In this way, accreditation provides a structure for what the institution should already be doing. It brings discipline to the improvement process, provides access to peer institutions in carrying out this process and provides the support of staff, commissioners and regional and national conferences.

The recognition of effective business units through accreditation contributes to a more positive review by regional accreditors, as specialized accreditation is a confirmation of quality programming in specific divisions. Accreditation promotes an outcomes assessment process that is a new emphasis for regional accreditors linking goals, activities and outcomes. ACBSP encourages the process of specialized accreditation be timed to immediately precede or follow regional accreditation since data prepared as part of one process may be used in the other process.

Accreditation provides prestige and credibility when seeking funding resources from donors, foundations and governments. In some states, accredited status counts heavily in performance-based funding and state and federal governments have increased their emphasis on outcomes assessment process linking goals, activities and outcomes rather than inputs. Accreditation status is referenced when submitting budgets, grant proposals and course/program proposals.

Businesses are familiar with, and actively engage, activities related to the use of Baldrige National Quality Program – Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, continuous improvement processes, Total Quality Improvement and ISO 9000 Standards. Businesses appreciate knowing such a process exists for the destination of their charitable funding and the source of their employees.

Accreditation leads to more successful articulation of business credits. When creating articulation agreements, the presence of accreditation assures the agreement will be with a program that has an emphasis on quality and continuous improvement and discussion can move directly to details of the agreement. In pursuing advanced degrees, courses and credits are more generally accepted from accredited programs.

When national peers have validated a program, accreditation provides a sense of pride within the business faculty and staff. Faculty members at accredited institutions are provided opportunities to keep current in quality procedures through seminars such as Baldrige training. Accreditation provides professional development and leadership opportunities for faculty and administrators in development of outcome assessments and in conducting site visits to other institutions.

Accreditation creates guidelines for faculty credentials, which leads to higher standards in hiring, increased scholarly and professional activities and more focused faculty development decisions. Accreditation creates guidelines when structuring programs and provides a platform to share ideas and to question the status-quo, leading to effective change. Again, the process provides structure and assistance with activities that should be done already as part of the management of the department.

All of the above attests to a business unit's high level of achievement in delivering quality education and thereby provides reliable and meaningful guidance to: (1) prospective students who plan to enroll in business degree programs and (2) employers who plan to hire the graduates of ACBSP accredited business schools and programs

Value of Accounting Program Accreditation

The separate accreditation of the accounting program is a new procedure which became available in 2007. It is available only to institutions that currently have accreditation of the business unit or concurrent with seeking business accreditation.

There is a growing desire by state boards of accountancy to recognize the role of accrediting bodies in helping to verify the quality of the accounting curriculum. The exact rules have yet to be determined and it is unknown how many states will adopt the recommendations of the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy. The initial discussions support the concept that students graduating from a program that has attained separate accreditation in accounting will receive minimal scrutiny of any transcript and will have been determined to meet the recommended requirements in business ethic, communications, and research.

Nearly all of the other benefits that exist for business accreditation apply to accreditation of the accounting program. The support of this accreditation by an alumni graduate from the accounting program may be available to support the costs to achieve this accreditation. If institutions should seek this funding, ACBSP can be helpful in outlining the costs and benefits for this case statement.

Accreditation through ACBSP

ACBSP is devoted to promoting excellence in teaching/learning in business schools and programs in higher education. It accomplishes this objective in part by providing extraordinary assistance to institutions in their attempt to become accredited.

The mission statements of ACBSP member institutions are recognized a quite diverse. Accordingly, the application of the accreditation standards for baccalaureate/graduate degree granting institutions take into consideration the institution's mission and the mission of the business unit and its ability to fulfill its mission. Mission driven accreditation is widely supported and recognized by many constituents of institutions of higher education.

ACBSP is one of two accrediting bodies for business recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The other is AACSB International (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business). The major difference between these two accrediting bodies is AACSB has a greater focus on research in their accreditation requirements while the ACBSP accreditation process has a greater focus on teaching excellence.

ACBSP understands the need for faculty to support and be engaged in the accreditation process. ACBSP has created a variety of member benefits delivered to the faculty and includes all members of the faculty as individual members of ACBSP. The President and Chief Academic Officer of the institution are also individual members. ACBSP regional conferences, Teaching Excellence Award, annual meeting and services on the Web site have a focus on teaching excellence of value to faculty. ACBSP is valued as a resource to faculty as well as a source for accreditation for the business unit.

An Attitude and the Tools to Achieve Accreditation

Accreditation has been characterized as a mountain that has been climbed by other institutions and those seeking accreditation must climb this mountain to achieve this status. Attitudes regarding accreditation have changed in recent years. The new attitude is that those institutions that have achieved accreditation should help and support those pursuing accreditation.

To support institutions pursuing accreditation, ACBSP has implemented a number of mechanisms for extraordinary assistance. These include:

- Adoption of new criteria in June 2004 which replaces the former Option A and Option B criteria with measures having a greater focus on outcomes, continuous improvement, Baldrige approach, respect for the mission of diverse institutions and emerging issues such as business ethics;
- Permitting the cost of accreditation to be allocated over a multi-year period to ease the financial impact of the accreditation process;
- Appointment of a mentor at the beginning of the process and involving the business unit in this appointment process;
- Assuring the school or program is ready to move to the next step in the process before moving forward with a focus toward success in the process;
- Permitting schools in candidacy to have access to self-studies previously submitted by other institutions with institutional approval as examples for their work and;
- Creation of a private community for schools in candidacy for accreditation or those in reaffirmation of accreditation permitting them access to a variety of resources including a listserv with all other institutions.

Accreditation Governance

The governance of the accreditation process for baccalaureate/graduate degree institutions is the primary responsibility of the elected Board of Commissioners for the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Commission. The Board of Commissioners is responsible for determining eligible institutions to be accredited and for all accreditation decisions. A separate process and board of commissioners governs the process for associate degree institutions.

Accreditation standards (including changes) are initiated by the Board of Commissioners and approved by the institutional members of ACBSP (also known as the Commission). Interpretation of the standards is the sole responsibility of the Board of Commissioners.

Privacy of Accreditation Process

All reasonable efforts will be made by ACBSP to protect the confidentiality of the information gathered and reviewed during the accreditation process. It should be noted, however, that legal requests for information pertaining to an institution's particular accreditation process involving ACBSP may require certain disclosures unforeseen at the time this document was prepared. Under such circumstances, the legal counsel of ACBSP will be involved in the decision about public disclosure of accreditation process materials of an institution.

Confidentiality Requirement

Only evaluators, staff and commissioners of ACBSP ("Qualified Persons") who need to know the confidential information may review the confidential information. ACBSP shall cause all such Qualified Persons to abide by this confidentiality requirement. All evaluators sign an agreement explaining their ethical responsibility pertaining to conduct before, during and after an accreditation site visit with which they are involved. This means that matters pertaining to an accreditation visit are not to be discussed in public and are to be treated confidentially. The Board of Commissioners also requests that all ACBSP accreditation materials (e.g. Feedback Report, etc.) be maintained by the accredited institution as confidential information.

Conflict of Interest

Every reasonable effort will be made to have commissioners, staff and evaluators excluded from involvement in the accreditation process in which they have had, or might sometime have in the foreseeable future, a professional or personal conflict of interest. ACBSP policy requires that all active commissioners and board members of ACBSP remove themselves from any of the Association's discussions about their own institution's accreditation and all other institutions where they have a relationship that could involve a conflict of interest.

Other Resources Available - Publications

In addition to this book, which describes the process for obtaining accreditation, several other publications are referenced in this book and on ACBSP Gateway (This term refers to the branded name of the ACBSP Web site, www.acbsp.org).

- Application Form and Cover Letter (Word document): This document facilitates the preparation and sending of this form and letter without retyping from a printed or PDF document.
- Preliminary Site Visit Questionnaire: This questionnaire is completed by the business unit prior to the visit by the mentor and is used to help all parties assess an institution's readiness to initiate the self-study.
- Costs for Accreditation in Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Schools: This two-page document provides detailed budgeting and cost information for the accreditation process from start to finish.
- Cost Comparison Between ACBSP and Other Accrediting Bodies
- Accreditation Standards for Baccalaureate/Graduate Schools 2004: This document presents the standards and criteria for institutions to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards.
- *ACBSP Standards and Criteria for Demonstrating Excellence in Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Accounting Programs (2007)*: This document is used by schools pursuing accreditation of the accounting program within the business school or program.
- Evaluators Self-Study Review Standards and Criteria: This document is used by evaluators during the site visit to determine how well the institution meets the 2004 Standards and Criteria for accreditation. Institutions preparing their self-study can also use the document to make sure that they have adequately supplied the information needed to address all the standards.
- The Process for Maintaining Accreditation: Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Schools and Programs: This is the companion publication to this publication. It describes the process for seeking reaffirmation of accreditation, important procedures to be followed while accredited and ways to promote the accredited status.

Other Resources Available - Annual Conference

The Annual Conference is held in a major city in the United States every year during the month of June. Some features of the Conference include:

- Pre-Conference Workshops Focusing on Accreditation: Offered on the Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning prior to the Conference, these sessions usually focus on the accreditation process and standards, some of which may be offered during the Conference (see the description below). This is an ideal way to learn more about accreditation and reaffirmation if your schedule does not permit attending the Conference or you want to attend other concurrent sessions during the Conference.
- Meeting of the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Commission: This is the annual meeting of all Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree institutions where business related to the accreditation process is conducted. This includes adopting changes in the standards, election of members to the Board of Commissioners, recognition of schools entering candidacy and other business. All Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree members may attend and vote regardless of their accredited status.
- Accreditation Concurrent Sessions: These educational tracks are offered during the Conference and focus on a review of the standards and criteria, best practices used by business units in achieving and maintaining accreditation, a review of the process to achieve accreditation, a review of the reaffirmation of the accreditation process and training sessions for site evaluators and mentors. The specific sessions offered may vary from year to year.

- One-On-One Sessions: Conference attendees may set appointments to meet individually with a member of the Board of Commissioners and/or staff during these 15 to 30 minute sessions. This is a time for your specific questions and discussions.
- Accreditation Banquet: This banquet includes the recognition of all schools that have achieved accreditation or have achieved reaffirmation of accreditation during the past year.
- Networking opportunities: In addition to what occurs in scheduled sessions, there are ample opportunities to meet with your mentor if he/she is in attendance, set appointments with specific persons involved in your accreditation process and visit exhibitors that offer services and products to assist you along the path toward accreditation.

Other Resources Available - Regional Meetings

ACBSP membership is divided into eight geographic regions. Each region conducts a regional meeting each year, typically in the fall. Many regional meetings include a presentation on the accreditation process by a member institution or by an ACBSP staff member. Members may attend a meeting in another region if a specific accreditation activity is not offered in their home region. The cost and time to attend a regional meeting is reduced from the cost to attend the national conference.

Please check the ACBSP Gateway (www.acbsp.org) for dates, locations and registration procedures for each regional meeting.

Other Resources Available - Staff

The ACBSP staff is always available to assist individual business units that are considering accreditation or are in the process of accreditation. The staff includes a Director of Accreditation that leads the overall effort, a part-time Associate Director devoted exclusively to assisting Baccalaureate/Graduate institutions and an Accreditation Coordinator.

Staff Roster as of February 2008

Director of Accreditation:	Steve Parscale	sparscale@acbsp.org	913-339-9356
Associate Director of Accreditation:	Ron DeYoung	DEYOUNG@nwmissouri.edu	816-695-9585
Accreditation Coordinator:	Diana Hallerud	dianahallerud@acbsp.org	913-339-9356

Other staff at the ACBSP office other than these individuals may be able to respond to your questions and requests for information.

The introduction provided an overview of accreditation for those seeking to understand specialized accreditation. The remainder of this publication details the specific process for accreditation.

ACCELERATED PROCESS FOR ACHIEVING ACCREDITATION

The focus of this publication is on the traditional method required to achieve ACBSP accreditation. This assumes the institution does not currently have a specialized accreditation for the business unit or the accounting program. Out of respect for the work of other accrediting bodies for the business unit, ACBSP offers an accelerated process for institutions that currently have such an accredited status. In each case, the decision as to whether the business unit can use an accelerated process is dependent on the type of process used to achieve accredited status, the time lapse between preparation of the self-study and application for ACBSP accreditation and other factors.

With the development of a process for the accounting program, some institutions may seek ACBSP accreditation to achieve the advantages of accreditation by more than one accrediting body and to obtain accreditation of their accounting program.

Accelerated Process - AACSB International

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business also provides specialized accreditation for business schools. Business units that have AACSB accreditation for the business unit may use an accelerated process to achieve accreditation of the business unit. *Business units that have AACSB accreditation for the accounting program may be able to use an accelerated process for ACBSP accreditation of the accounting program, but a process has not yet been developed. Please contact ACBSP office for an update on this activity.* The process to achieve accelerated accreditation using AACSB accreditation is in a separate document available from the ACBSP office or ACBSP Gateway at <http://www.acbsp.org/download.php?sid=550>.

Accelerated Process - IACBE

The International Assembly for Collegiate Business Accreditation is also an accrediting body for business schools. Business units that have IACBE accreditation for the business unit may be able to use an accelerated process to achieve accreditation of the business unit. The process to achieve this accreditation is similar to the process for AACSB and is described in a separate document available from the ACBSP office or ACBSP Gateway at <http://www.acbsp.org/download.php?sid=550>. *The process for separate accreditation of the accounting program cannot be conducted concurrent with this accelerated process and must be undertaken as a non-concurrent process as described in this document. It can be done concurrent with any future reaffirmation of accreditation.*

Accelerated Process - ECBE

The European Council for Business Education is composed of institutions primarily in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the New Independent States and Russia. Business units that have ECBE accreditation for the business unit may be able to use an accelerated process to achieve ACBSP accreditation of the business unit. The process to achieve this accreditation is described in a separate document available from the ACBSP office or ACBSP Gateway at <http://www.acbsp.org/download.php?sid=549>. *The process for separate accreditation of the accounting program cannot be conducted concurrent with this accelerated process and must be undertaken as a non-concurrent process as described in this document. It can be done concurrent with any future reaffirmation of accreditation.*

The remainder of this publication assumes the institution does not currently have a specialized accreditation for the business unit or cannot use or does not wish to use one of the above noted processes.

ACCREDITATION TIMETABLE

The two questions most often asked at the start of the process are the timetable and the cost of achieving accreditation. The short answer is 18 months and \$12,500 if an outcomes assessment process is in place. A longer time will be required if an outcomes assessment process or other processes are not in place. *If the institution is pursuing accreditation of the accounting program at the same time as accreditation of all business degrees, the time answer is typically the same and the cost will increase to approximately \$15,000.* The better answer is that it will vary depending on many factors including the size of the business school or program, the readiness to achieve accreditation, the speed at which the institution wishes to move through the process and other factors. ACBSP always looks to each institution to establish a timetable that suits its own particular needs.

Accreditation Evaluation Process Timetable Example

1. Completion of the application for accreditation evaluation begins the process. At this time, the school or program is considered a candidate for accreditation. For our purposes here, we assume the application is submitted in the fall and the accounting program is pursuing accreditation at the same time.
2. A mentor will be assigned, and work on the preliminary site visit document begins by the business unit. This document is shared with the mentor and Director of Accreditation and an action plan is developed. For our purpose here, we assume work begins during the academic year and an action plan is developed by the members of the business unit to close any identified gaps.
3. *If the accreditation includes concurrent business and accounting accreditation, the accounting unit will provide input to the preliminary questionnaire prepared for business accreditation. In many cases, the information from the business unit document can be inserted into this document or extracted from the business unit document. A separate mentor for the accounting accreditation is not required as it is with the business unit accreditation.*
4. Work begins on the timetable and plan of work outlined in the action plan. The mentor must recommend and the Director of Accreditation must approve that the school is ready to begin self-study. Under one scenario, the school is determined to be ready to begin the self-studies immediately. The self-studies are completed by January. Under another scenario, the school determines a year or more is required and work on the self-studies is not concluded until the next August. Either of these cases is considered fast and most institutions can anticipate more time is required to prepare for a successful self-study.
5. An evaluation site visit team is assigned to an institution as soon as ACBSP headquarters receives notification regarding the anticipated completed self-studies. Visits are scheduled each February and March and permit review and action by the Board in April. Visits in October would permit review and action by the Board in November.
6. The site team files its report with ACBSP within two weeks after their visit.
7. The findings of the evaluators are first reviewed by the ACBSP staff for completeness and then sent to the President of the institution to respond to the evaluators' feedback report and the institution's views. After the institution's response is prepared by the President, it is forwarded to ACBSP at least two weeks prior to the meeting of the Board of Commissioners.
8. Assuming all materials have been submitted at least two weeks prior, the Board of Commissioners reviews the self-study, evaluators reports and response by the President at their meeting each April (end of the month) or November (the week prior to Thanksgiving) to consider accreditation requests and to award accreditation to those institutions that are in compliance with ACBSP standards.
9. Action by the Board of Commissioners is reported to the institution immediately following the meeting. As ACBSP is a proponent of continuous improvement, most institutions receive accreditation with conditions and/or notes. Accreditation is effective immediately. More information on notes and conditions follows.

10. At the ACBSP Annual Conference each June, the accredited business unit receives their accreditation certificates during the accreditation banquet although many will have held that status for several months.

Hence, in our example, one school achieved accreditation in approximately one year beginning in the spring and receiving approval by the Board the following April. In the other scenario, the process required one year and six months. The time spent by the business unit preparing to conduct the self-study is the major factor in this process and is determined in coordination with the business unit, staff and mentor.

Timing with Regional Accreditation

It is often advantageous to begin the accreditation process immediately prior to or following the process for regional accreditation. The data used for the regional accreditation is similar to that required for ACBSP accreditation and will help the business unit in time and effort developing this data.

Five Year Limit on Candidacy

The institution must complete the accreditation process within five years of beginning candidacy or file for an extension of candidacy or be dropped from candidacy.

COST OF ACCREDITATION - BUSINESS

The costs related to obtaining accreditation by ACBSP will vary from institution to institution because of location and expenses for visits by the mentor and site visit team.

It is recommended that the cost of accreditation be allocated over a three-year period. ACBSP will work with the business unit and the timetable set forth in the action plan to properly prepare invoicing and payment consistent with the budget set forth by the business unit.

The costs below are subject to change. They do not include the prorated or annual membership dues. Nor do they include the costs for individuals to attend the annual conference.

Application Fee	\$2,500*
Maintenance Fee (\$500/yr for two years)	\$1,000
Mentor Visits & Consultations	\$2,000
Site Visit Travel (three evaluators)	\$2,400
Site Visit Honorarium (three days)	\$1,650
Site Visit Food and Lodging	\$2,000
Site Visit Shipping Expense	<u>\$100</u>
TOTAL	\$11,650

*(\$2,000 for schools outside the United States)

The annual conference offers workshops on the accreditation process and content of accreditation standards and criteria, an opportunity to meet individually with ACBSP staff to discuss specific issues and questions and to possibly meet with the mentor and members of the Board of Commissioners. At the conclusion of the process, representatives of the business unit will want to attend the accreditation banquet at the annual conference to receive the certificate of accreditation and to celebrate the achievement of accreditation.

A \$3,500 site team visit deposit is required prior to the site visit. ACBSP will pay each evaluator individually after they file an expense claim and attach receipts for the expenses of the site visit. An honorarium of \$250/day is provided to the chair of the site visit team and \$150/day to other members of the site visit team. The expenses of the site team visit include costs for ACBSP to ship to the visiting team and others the

self-study documents submitted by the business unit. The business unit is responsible for reimbursing ACBSP on a timely basis for additional expenses. Any unexpended funds are returned back to the business unit.

COST OF ACCREDITATION - ACCOUNTING

Accounting accreditation can be obtained at the same time the business unit is pursuing business accreditation or as a separate process. Both scenarios are described below. There is no reduced fee for institutions outside the United States pursuing this process, but it is considered highly unlikely institutions outside the United States will participate in the process of separate accreditation of the accounting program. The same requirements with regard to site visit fees paid in advance, expense reimbursement and other details described in the previous section will apply. The separate evaluation requires the expense of a separate site visit based on two persons for three days. If conducted concurrently, one additional evaluator is added to the site visit team, and the honorarium provided to the chair increases to \$300/day.

	<i>CONCURRENT</i>	<i>NON-CONCURRENT</i>
<i>Application Fee</i>	<i>\$1,250</i>	<i>\$1,250</i>
<i>Maintenance Fee (one year)</i>	<i>none</i>	<i>\$500</i>
<i>Mentor Visit & Consultation (recommended)</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>
<i>Site Visit Travel (one additional/two evaluators)</i>	<i>\$800</i>	<i>\$1,600</i>
<i>Site Visit Honorarium (three days)</i>	<i>\$600</i>	<i>\$1,200</i>
<i>Site Visit Food and Lodging</i>	<i><u>\$700</u></i>	<i><u>\$1,200</u></i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$4,350</i>	<i>\$6,750</i>

OBTAINING SEPARATE ACCREDITATION OF ACCOUNTING NOT CONCURRENT WITH ACCREDITATION OF BUSINESS UNIT

It is envisioned that the most typical pursuit of separate accreditation of the accounting program will be as part of the initial accreditation or reaffirmation process. However, some business units that currently have accreditation or are using an accelerated process for accreditation based on their current business unit accreditation may wish to use a process not concurrent. A separate procedure has been established and mirrors the other content in this document.

At no time is it to be inferred that the accounting program as part of the business unit does not have an accredited status when the business unit is accredited. The separate accreditation exists only to show the unit has met a set of standards separate from the business unit accreditation. If the separate accreditation is not achieved including withdrawal, there is no change in the accredited status of the business unit or the accreditation of the accounting program as part of the accreditation of the business unit.

Letter of Application for Separate Accreditation of the Accounting Program

The process begins with a letter to the Director of Accreditation. The letter content should be as follows:

This letter is to notify you that, as an accredited member in good standing with ACBSP, our institution is applying for a separate accreditation of our accounting program.

We certify:

- 1. Our institution has offered (a) degree(s) in accounting for at least two years and has the necessary approval from appropriate state, provincial, national or other governing bodies to confer the degree(s).*
- 2. Our institution is enclosing or has previously provided payment in the amount of \$625 for half of the application fee or the amount of \$1,250 for payment of the fee in full.*
- 3. We are enclosing our current course catalog outlining all accounting degrees offered.*
- 4. We have reviewed the ACBSP Standards and Criteria for Demonstrating Excellence in Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Accounting Programs and are desirous of achieving these standards.*
- 5. We understand that our institution will reimburse ACBSP for the travel expenses incurred by a mentor if appointed and in conducting the site visit necessary to complete the process. We understand this will be done with our prior approval of the budgeted amount.*
- 6. Upon submission of the completed self study, any balance of the application fee will be provided to complete the process.*

The person designated to be the contact person for this activity is (name, title, mailing address, e-mail address).

Sincerely,

(typed name of President, Chancellor, Executive Director, Rector or equivalent)

cc: (designated individual)

Candidacy

Upon submittal of the letter, fees and approval by the ACBSP staff, the accounting program may officially use the title of “Candidate for Accreditation in Accounting”.

Appointment of a Mentor

Unlike the accreditation process for the business unit where appointment of the mentor is required, a mentor is not required for this process. However, it is recommended. The ACBSP staff will be pleased to provide more information including candidates for mentors. The cost mirrors the cost of the mentor for the business unit. We ask the reader to review the mentor section of this document for details.

Annual Progress Reports

The mentor and the representatives from the candidate school will update ACBSP with an annual status report due September 1st of each year.

Designation of a Commissioner

It has been proposed by the ACBSP Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of Commissioners that the ACBSP bylaws be amended to provide for the election of two commissioners that will closely follow the review of applications and materials related to the separate accreditation in accounting. Each institution whether following a concurrent or a non-concurrent process will be assigned a commissioner similar to the process for accreditation of the business unit. If this change is not approved during the initial year, this activity will be carried out by the Board of Commissioners as currently composed.

Preliminary Site Visit Questionnaire

A preliminary site visit is not required although the mentor or staff may seek clarification excerpts from the preliminary questionnaire prepared for the business unit when the concurrent process is used.

Self-Study

The self-study process mirrors the process of the business unit. We ask the reader to review that section of this document. Since portions of the business unit self-study are used in this self-study, the length of time between the two self-studies and applicability of this information will be contributing factors in determining the time and resources required to complete the self-study.

Site Team Visit

The site team visit for the non-concurrent process includes two persons. The cost for the team visit is described in the previous section on Costs of Accreditation – Accounting. The timetable and process for the separate accreditation in accounting site visit team is similar to that of a visit by a team for accreditation of the business unit.

Actions Taken By Board of Commissioners

Institutions using a concurrent process will have review and action of the accounting program accreditation considered immediately following action on the accreditation of the business unit. They will be two separate actions. The actions taken are identical to those described in that section of this document. Institutions using the non-concurrent process will be considered and acted upon at the meeting with the actions taken identical to those described in this document.

Effective Date of Accreditation in Accounting

Accreditation in Accounting begins with official notification from ACBSP. At the next Annual Conference following awarding of accreditation the success of achieving accreditation will be celebrated including awarding of a certificate suitable for display.

Maintenance of Accreditation

A separate publication outlines the requirements for maintaining and promoting accreditation including the separate accreditation in accounting. Institutions using the non-concurrent process will be provided accreditation for a period of less than ten years. The exact date will be linked to the next scheduled reaffirmation of the business unit. During the time period between initial accreditation and reaffirmation of accreditation, each periodic report will require submission of information on the accounting program.

ACCREDITATION ELIGIBILITY

ACBSP Membership

To be eligible for consideration to become accredited, the business unit must be a member of ACBSP. For membership to be granted three conditions must be met.

- The institution must be accredited by one of the six regional accrediting bodies or if the institution is located outside the United States, the institution may submit a certified translation of an official document from an appropriate government organization in their respective countries stating recognition, accreditation and/or their right to grant degrees. At the current time, ACBSP does not recognize accreditation from national accrediting agencies such as the Accrediting Council of Independent Career and Technical Colleges.

- The business unit must pay the appropriate membership dues. The annual and pro-rated dues amounts are as follows:

July 1 - June 30	\$1,250.00
October 1 - June 30	\$937.50
January 1 - June 30	\$625.00

- The business unit must submit a Member Enrollment Form listing a Champion for the business unit, a Co-Champion, important information about the institution and a listing of all those designated to receive member benefits.

Other Eligibility Requirements

In addition to membership, prior to submitting an application, the institution must:

- have offered (a) degree(s) in business for at least two years
- have a publicly stated purpose appropriate to a college or university which has been approved by the institution's governing body (i.e. Regents, Trustees, etc.).

The institution must state on the application and letter the intent to pursue accreditation in accounting and that it has reviewed and concurs with the eligibility requirements. The requirements are outlined in the letter (see pages 14, 24, 26).

ACCREDITING PROCESS - SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

Once the school determines it does meet the eligibility requirements, an application is submitted. For an application to be considered complete, the following must be done.

1. The application for accreditation must be authorized in writing by the chief executive officer of the institution (a copy of the application is in the back of this book).
2. Payment of the initial accreditation fee of \$1,250 (*\$1,875 if pursuing accounting accreditation concurrent with business accreditation*). The initial application fee is applied toward the \$2,500 fee (\$2,000 for schools outside the United States) for business accreditation or *\$3,750 if accounting accreditation if pursued concurrent with business accreditation*. The fee is refundable if it is determined the institution was not eligible or cannot proceed with the accreditation process based on the content of the application and course catalog. The remaining balance of the accreditation fee can be paid at any time but must be paid before accreditation is granted.
3. Documentation of current offerings by the business program published and made available to the public. This typically is the course catalog.

Candidacy Status

Upon review and approval of the application documents, the institution becomes a “Candidate for Accreditation” and is in “candidacy status.” This title may be used in holding out to the public the institution’s accreditation status. *If accounting accreditation is being pursued concurrent with or separate from accreditation of the business unit, the institution may use the title “Candidate for Accreditation in Accounting”.*

A word of caution is in order at this point. While ACBSP wants to actively help institutions achieve accreditation, and while it has established this program for that purpose, ACBSP is not in a position to guarantee that institutions will receive accreditation by becoming a Candidate for Accreditation. The expectations, however, are those institutions which will successfully achieve accreditation. Candidates for Accreditation are held to all of the standards for accreditation.

Appointment of a Mentor

After receiving notice of being granted Candidacy Status, ACBSP will assign a mentor *for the business unit and determine in cooperation with the head of the business unit the need for a mentor for the accounting program accreditation* to provide consultation in creating a plan for meeting the ACBSP accreditation standards. The business unit will be consulted in the appointment of the mentor or mentors and appointment of this mentor or mentors will be mutually agreed upon by the institution and ACBSP.

Fees During Candidacy - Mentor

The costs related to having the mentor are a consulting fee of \$400 per day and reimbursement of travel expenses. During the first year, if a visit to the school is not required and work is done via e-mail and phone, the mentor is paid an honorarium of \$400 for desk time upon completion and submittal of the required plan of action. The mentor is not paid for desk time in subsequent years, only for visits to the campus.

The mentor submits documentation of expenses to ACBSP. ACBSP takes responsibility to provide payment to the mentor and the business unit takes responsibility to reimburse ACBSP in a timely manner.

Fees During Candidacy - Maintenance Fee

There is a \$500 per year candidacy maintenance fee that will be due on each anniversary of candidacy having been granted. *If accounting accreditation is conducted in conjunction with accreditation of the business unit, no additional fee is required. If accounting accreditation is conducted separate of accreditation of the business unit, a candidacy fee is required.* The fee is included on the membership dues statement immediately following the first anniversary and continues until the business unit receives accreditation. Membership dues statements are sent in June of each year.

Reports During Candidacy - Preliminary Site Visit Questionnaire

Upon receipt and completion of the application process, the ACBSP office and mentor will assure the institution receives or has previously received a copy of the Preliminary Site Visit Questionnaire and the Standards and Criteria. *If accounting accreditation is being pursued, the required document is ACBSP Standards and Criteria for Demonstrating Excellence in Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Accounting Programs.*

The first report submitted for business accreditation is the Preliminary Site visit Questionnaire developed by the business unit. This is anticipated to be submitted within six months after appointment of the mentor.

Upon its completion and return to both ACBSP and the mentor, a visit to the institution by the mentor or mentors typically is scheduled to review the materials in the questionnaire or questionnaires with the Dean or Chair of the academic unit. The cost of travel and honorarium is described previously.

The results of the preliminary review should not be construed as an approval or rejection of accreditation – it is simply a test of readiness for accreditation and nothing more.

Reports During Candidacy - Action Plan

A valued option is for the institution to develop an action plan based on the Preliminary Site Visit Questionnaire and mentor feedback. The action report includes a description of what needs to be accomplished and a timetable for completion. It is also an ideal opportunity to outline the anticipated costs of accreditation, a plan for budgeting for these expenses and for invoicing by ACBSP for expenses required to be paid to ACBSP. *If accounting accreditation is being pursued concurrent with business accreditation, the action plan should address both proposed accreditations.*

Reports During Candidacy - Annual Report

The business unit in candidacy is required to submit by September 1 of each year an annual report to the ACBSP office. *If accounting accreditation is being pursued concurrent with business accreditation, the annual report should address both proposed accreditations.* The annual report will address progress in meeting the accreditation standards and set forth a timetable for meeting program deficiencies. The business unit will determine with the mentor whether said mentor should make a campus visit.

The mentor or mentors will file an annual mentoring report to the ACBSP office by September 1 regarding progress and will inform the ACBSP of anticipated readiness for proceeding to self-study.

Recommendation to Proceed to Self-Study

The institution must receive a recommendation to proceed to self-study *or self-studies* from the mentor or mentors, with concurrence of the Director of Accreditation before starting the self-study process. The self-study for accreditation must take place within five years of the date on the application for candidacy.

ACCREDITING PROCESS - SELF STUDY

While still in candidacy, the accreditation process enters a key stage with the beginning of the self-study. The purpose of the self-study is for the business unit *and the accounting program* to demonstrate and record that it is in compliance with the ACBSP accreditation standards or to outline activities that will lead to achievement. Typically, it takes an institution about six months to prepare the self-study document. The institution may not proceed with a self-study until after it has been given permission to proceed with the self-study.

Preparation of Self-Study

The self-study document for the business unit must be typed and placed in two volumes. Volume I represents the text of the report and Volume II has the appendices for bulky items like the vitae for faculty and syllabi for required ones. *The self-study for the accounting program is anticipated to be composed of one volume and may reference reports in the self-study for the business unit. If the accounting program is pursuing accreditation separate from the business unit, a two volume set may be required.*

Upon completion of the self-study for the business unit, five hard copies and one electronic copy are sent to ACBSP where the report will be examined and the necessary arrangements will be made for a team of trained evaluators to conduct a site visit. Accompanying the self-study reports should be five copies of the institution's catalog covering the self-study year. *If accounting accreditation is being pursued, three copies of this self-study report must be submitted.*

The self-study includes specific responses to each ACBSP accreditation criteria and a candid assessment of the business school's or program's strengths and weaknesses regarding each criteria including whether it has achieved the standards and criteria or how it will achieve the standards and criteria with a timetable. Unique characteristics of the business unit not referenced in responses to individual standards, but which are significant in making the case for accreditation, should be set forth in the overview section of the self-study document.

Applicants are encouraged to ask questions throughout the preparation of the self-study. The staff of ACBSP is more than willing to help.

Faculty Credentials Committee

If the administration is unable to determine whether the business faculty has credentials that meet the faculty qualifications standard, the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of Commissioners has established a "Credentials Committee" to make such determinations. The committee is formed to assist institutions in determining if a faculty member is doctorally, professionally or minimally qualified.

Requests for review of one to four full-time faculty members or part-time faculty (adjuncts) in an institution's business unit may be sent to the ACBSP headquarters and processed on a timely basis. Normally it takes about 30 days for the institution to receive a response.

A faculty review by the Credentials Committee cannot be conducted unless there is a complete portfolio on each faculty member. A portfolio consists of:

1. Vitae (current).
2. Transcripts of graduate work. Graduate courses that relate to the discipline(s) in which the faculty member is teaching should be highlighted and separately identified. The listing of these courses should be presented in a manner that the reader can evaluate the content of the course (e.g. course description).
3. A descriptive statement of the teaching experience of the faculty member including an analysis of the quality of teaching that is performed (e.g., peer evaluations, student evaluations, etc.).
4. A descriptive statement of the professional experience a faculty member has performed as it relates to the enhancement of teaching in the discipline(s) taught within the business unit.
5. A descriptive statement of the consulting experience a faculty member has performed as it relates to the enhancement of teaching in the discipline(s) taught within the business unit.
6. Scholarly and professional activities in which a faculty member has been involved as listed on the current vitae and recorded in Figure 2 on the following page. A succinct, descriptive narrative statement should be developed for each of the four categories of Scholarly and Professional Activities and included in the statements should be a reference to the codes used in Figure 2. In other words, Figure 2 summarizes the activities of each faculty member and the descriptive

statements should be included in each faculty member's vita describing the activities in more detail (e.g. title of paper presented and where or who the consulting was for and what was the assignment).

There should be one portfolio submitted for each faculty member being reviewed. In compiling the portfolio, substance in the narrative is more important than length. All materials submitted in the portfolio will be kept by the Credentials Committee and not returned to the institution or individual.

ACCREDITING PROCESS - EVALUATION SITE TEAM VISIT

After receiving the self-study report, ACBSP will put together a well-balanced team of trained program evaluators to conduct a site visit. ACBSP selects visiting team members from a pool of well qualified persons who have experience in the Association's evaluation process. The person designated as the chair of the team will be responsible for assuring that the visit is conducted objectively. The size of the team (usually three members) and the qualifications of its members are determined by the type of institution being evaluated and the programs offered by that institution. *If accounting accreditation is being pursued concurrent with business accreditation, one additional team member will be added to participate in review of the business unit accreditation and to focus on the accounting self-study report. This person has a background in requirements for accreditation of accounting programs. If accounting accreditation is being pursued separate of the business unit, the site team is composed of two persons.*

Evaluation Team Appointment

To minimize potential conflicts of interest, ACBSP will construct evaluation teams that do not include former employees or a close relative of a former employee, a graduate of the institution, someone having previously expressed a personal opinion or someone who is in the immediate competitive area of the institution. The institution will be aware of proposed appointees and be provided an opportunity to object to anyone designated to serve on the evaluation team.

After the site visit dates are agreed upon and the team is appointed, the institution, in cooperation with ACBSP staff, shall be responsible for all logistical arrangements including, but not limited to: hotel reservations, a meeting room on campus for team meetings, announcements of the arrival of the visiting team and arrangements for the visiting team to meet with key administrators, faculty, students, alumni and community groups. These arrangements will be coordinated with the chair of the ACBSP site visit team and ACBSP staff, typically the Associate Director of Accreditation.

Preparing for the Site Visit

Copies of the self-study report will be distributed to each member of the evaluation team by ACBSP and to a member of the Board of Commissioners assigned to the institution. Team members are expected to examine carefully, prior to the site visit, all materials received from ACBSP and the institution. The chair will establish which team member will be responsible for writing specific portions of the report.

About two weeks prior to the site visit, a consensus call is conducted with all team members and the assigned member of the Board of Commissioners. Contact may be made with the institution only by the site team chair or commissioner following this conference call to request information or to raise specific issues to be discussed during the visit.

The precise length of the visiting team’s visit will depend on the location(s), size and number of programs offered by the institution. The schedule is typically as follows: arrival on the first day, extensive meetings on second and third day and departure on the afternoon of the fourth day. It may take an extra day for extensive off-campus sites.

In conjunction with the institution’s self-study coordinator, the team chair is responsible for working on logistics, gathering information, etc. The team chair also keeps team members informed about how the site visit arrangements are progressing and of the team arrival and departure times.

Team members will usually arrive the afternoon before the first day of the official visit. The team chair will notify the other members of the team of the time and place of their first team meeting. At the team meeting, the team chair will review the specific plans for the visit and generally organize the team so a successful visit is ensured.

Evaluation Team’s Responsibilities

During its first day on campus, the team should meet with the president of the institution, the head of the business unit and others as deemed appropriate. The team begins the process of evaluation by considering the business unit in its entirety. As representatives of ACBSP, the evaluation team is responsible for verifying the information in the self-study report and evaluating the business unit to help determine whether the standards for accreditation are met.

The team should try to accumulate as much pertinent information as it can and use sampling techniques where appropriate to review the accumulated data. The team’s findings should reflect their collective judgment about the clarity of mission of the business unit and the ability of the business unit to deliver a quality educational experience to its students.

A final team meeting will be held during the last day of the site visit at which time the team will seek to reach agreement on the proposed content of its report. At this same meeting, the team chair should finalize plans for an exit interview with the head of the business unit *and the head of the accounting program, if separate accreditation in accounting is being evaluated*. At the exit interview, the team chair will provide the institutional representatives with an oral summary of the major points that will be in the team’s written report. The team chair will make clear in the exit interview that the Board of Commissioners will make the final decision on accreditation and the team is not to express any opinions as to whether the unit will be accredited – that is the sole prerogative of the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Board of Commissioners.

Following the Site Team Visit

The findings of the evaluators are first reviewed by the ACBSP staff for completeness and then sent to the institutional representative (CEO/President/Rector) to respond to the evaluators’ comments in the report and the institution’s views. A written response by the institution is requested within two weeks of receipt of the report. It then becomes part of the material reviewed by the Board of Commissioners.

ACCREDITING PROCESS - ACTION BY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Commissioners is composed of nine elected Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree members of ACBSP. The Director for the Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Commission is an ex officio member of the Board (non-voting).

During the accreditation cycle, the Board of Commissioners reviews the self-study materials, the evaluation

team's report, and the institution's response and determines:

1. if the team's report is complete and supported with factual information, and
2. if the team's findings support the granting of accreditation, and
3. if the institution's response to the team's report is substantially in agreement with team's report. If not, the Commissioners will obtain clarification of conflicting information.

After careful review of the self-study report, the visiting team's findings, the response by the institution, and other relevant materials, the Board of Commissioners makes a determination of whether the business school or program meets the accreditation standards of ACBSP.

The Board of Commissioners as a whole takes one of the following actions on the institutional requests for accreditation:

Accreditation Granted

Accreditation shall be granted to those institutions judged by the Board of Commissioners to be substantially in compliance with the ACBSP accreditation standards. If an institution is accredited "with notes," the institution should address the notes in a report to ACBSP. Notes represent concerns of the Board of Commissioners and until those concerns are dealt with by the institution and accepted by ACBSP, the notes should be mentioned in the report to ACBSP.

The institution must have paid its current membership dues and the site visit expenses before accreditation is granted. The institution will be notified, in writing, of its accreditation status.

Opportunities for Improvement

The Commission may suggest Opportunities for Improvement (OFI) for an institution. These suggestions are not requirements for maintaining current accreditation, but are offered as feedback that might enable the institution to move to higher levels of excellence through continuous improvement, an ACBSP core value. Because the Commission has the opportunity to review progress, levels of achievement, and best practices of all accredited and accreditation-seeking institutions, the Commission is well-positioned to provide information and feedback that could serve as "stretch goals" for a school. As individual schools continuously raise the bar, so will it be for the aggregate of accredited schools.

Accreditation Granted with Conditions

There are occasions when the Board of Commissioners may grant "Conditional Accreditation" which means that most standards are met, but there are some deficiencies in meeting the ACBSP standards, and the President of the institution has pledged that the deficiencies will be remedied within a three year time frame. When the deficiencies are ameliorated, the institution will write a letter to ACBSP asking for a review so the conditions can be removed. When deemed necessary, a Commissioner will visit the campus and make a determination of whether the deficiencies have been corrected. The report of these findings is made at the April or October Board of Commissioners meeting for their final disposition. Requests for a one-year extension, with justification, may be considered by the Board. If the deficiencies are not corrected within the time allowed, the institution will be notified that its conditional accreditation status has been rescinded and its current status is unaccredited.

Accreditation Action Deferred

When an institution is found to be in noncompliance with several of the ACBSP standards, the Board of Commissioners may defer action until a later date (usually within three years) pending remedial action and/or receipt of additional information. The reasons for the deferral will be stated in writing by the Commissioners, along with an invitation to respond. A deferral is, in effect, a ruling of no action at that time, and therefore cannot be appealed. This action differs from conditional accreditation in two main respects: first, the noncompliance areas are extensive; and/or second, adequate information concerning compliance with standards was not included in the self-study document or other related documents.

When an institution has corrected the deficiencies that caused the deferral, the institution is required to write a separate letter notifying ACBSP of the corrective action it has taken. A Commissioner will then be assigned to make a one day visit to validate that the deficiencies have been eliminated. Each April and October, the Board of Commissioners meets to review removal of conditions, and therefore, requests should be sent to ACBSP headquarters several months in advance of the Board of Commissioners Meeting in April or in October. The institution will be notified of the Commissioners action after the meeting.

Accreditation Withheld

Accreditation withheld applies to an initial or new application for accreditation. If accreditation is withheld, the Board of Commissioners will give written reasons for the denial of the application. The applicant has the opportunity to present its case, including new evidence, in a fair and impartial hearing before the Board of Commissioners at their next scheduled meeting. The procedures for this type of hearing are as follows:

- a. The request for such a hearing must be made within fifteen days of the date of notification of the denial, it must be in writing, and it must be signed by the chief executive officer of the institution. The arguments and reasons in support of the request must be limited to the points enumerated in the written statement of denial.
- b. The institution may present only evidence not already considered. The institution may send one or more representatives, including legal counsel, to present its argument contesting the action taken by the Board of Commissioners. ACBSP records and subsequently transcribes all proceedings of this type for its own use.
- c. Based on the kind of new evidence presented, the Board of Commissioners may affirm, modify, or reverse its previous decision to deny accreditation. If the previous action of denial is upheld, the denial becomes final and no further remedy is available to the institution for the period of one year, after which the institution may reapply for accreditation.

ACCREDITING PROCESS - FINAL STEPS

Following action by the Board, the institution is notified of the final action and if any remaining fees are due as a result of the accreditation process. Upon payment of final fees the accreditation is granted.

ACBSP staff will begin to prepare the institution for the celebration of the granting of accreditation that will occur at the annual conference in June. This includes attendance at the Accreditation Banquet and a special breakfast during the Conference.

THE PROCESS FOR MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION

While the certificate of accreditation is formally presented at the Annual Conference each June, the effective date of the accreditation begins earlier with the issuance of a letter notifying the institution they have achieved accredited status. *If accounting accreditation has been achieved, two certificates are issued. At no time is it to*

be inferred that the accounting program as part of the business unit does not have an accredited status when the business unit is accredited. The separate accreditation exists only to show the unit has met a set of standards separate from the business unit accreditation. At that time the institution may begin to promote its accredited status.

Accreditation is granted for ten years. During this time the business unit and the accounting program will be required to file certain reports and to notify ACBSP of certain actions taken that may impact the accreditation status. If conditions are part of the accreditation, these will be addressed and the continued services of a mentor will be offered. For all institutions the timetable for these reports is tied not to the official date of accreditation but to the month and year of the Annual Conference where the granting of accreditation is celebrated. This is done for administrative purposes.

**Example Letter of Application for Candidacy Status of Only the Business Unit
Must be submitted on Letterhead of Institution**

(date)

Mr. Steve Parscale
Director of Accreditation
Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs
7007 College Boulevard, Suite 420
Overland Park, KS 66211

Dear Mr. Parscale,

This letter is to notify you that, as a member in good standing with ACBSP, our institution is applying for Candidacy Status with ACBSP. The suggested Application for Accredited Status is enclosed.

We certify:

1. Our institution is accredited by one of the six regional accrediting bodies and it is currently in good standing with that body or, if located outside the United States, we are providing documentation issued by a government authority that our institution has met the requirements necessary to offer degrees.
2. Our institution has offered (a) degree(s) in business for at least two years and has the necessary approval from the appropriate state, provincial, national or other governing bodies to confer the degree(s).
3. Our institution has a publicly stated mission appropriate to a college or university and the mission has been approved by the institution's governing body (e.g. Regents, Trustees, etc.).
4. Our institution has reviewed ACBSP's accreditation standards and criteria and is desirous of meeting those standards.
5. Our institution is enclosing or has previously provided payment in the amount of \$1,250 which represents one-half of the application fee. (NOTE: For schools outside the United States, this will be \$1,000.)
6. We are enclosing our current course catalog outlining all degrees offered.
7. Upon receiving Candidacy Status, we understand that our institution will reimburse ACBSP for the travel expenses incurred by the mentor in conducting the site visit necessary to complete this process. We understand this will be done with our prior approval of the budgeted amount.
8. Upon submission of the completed self-study, the \$1,250 remaining balance of the application fee will be provided to complete the process and move from Candidacy status to full accreditation. (NOTE: For schools outside the United States, this will be \$1,000.)

It is understood that our institution will comply with the information contained in "The Process for Obtaining Accreditation: Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Schools and Programs" book.

Sincerely,

(typed name of President, Chancellor, Executive Director, Rector or Equivalent)
(title)

cc: (designated individual)

Enclosures



APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY STATUS

NAME OF INSTITUTION: _____

INSTITUTION TYPE: Public Private

AFFILIATIONS: Faith Based Military Historically Black College University _____

Business School Enrollment: _____

Business Programs Offered:

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

PRIMARY CONTACT FOR ACCREDITATION

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

ALTERNATE CONTACT FOR ACCREDITATION

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

**Example Letter of Application for Candidacy Status
of the Business Unit and Separate Accreditation of the Accounting Program
Must be submitted on Letterhead of Institution**

(date)

Mr. Steve Parscale
Director of Accreditation
Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs
7007 College Boulevard, Suite 420
Overland Park, KS 66211

Dear Mr. Parscale,

This letter is to notify you that, as a member in good standing with ACBSP, our institution is applying for Candidacy Status with ACBSP for accreditation of the business unit and separate accreditation of the accounting program. The suggested Application for Accredited Status is enclosed.

We certify:

1. Our institution is accredited by one of the six regional accrediting bodies and it is currently in good standing with that body or, if located outside the United States, we are providing documentation issued by a government authority that our institution has met the requirements necessary to offer degrees.
2. Our institution has offered (a) degree(s) in business and accounting for at least two years and has the necessary approval from the appropriate state, provincial, national or other governing bodies to confer the degree(s).
3. Our institution has a publicly stated mission appropriate to a college or university and the mission has been approved by the institution's governing body (e.g. Regents, Trustees, etc.).
4. Our institution has reviewed ACBSP's accreditation standards and criteria and is desirous of meeting those standards.
5. Our institution is enclosing or has previously provided payment in the amount of \$1,875 for half of the application fee. (NOTE: For schools outside the United States, this will be \$1,625.)
6. We are enclosing our current course catalog outlining all degrees offered.
7. Upon receiving Candidacy Status, we understand that our institution will reimburse ACBSP for the travel expenses incurred by the mentor or mentors in conducting the site visit necessary to complete this process. We understand this will be done with our prior approval of the budgeted amount.
8. Upon submission of the completed self-study, an additional \$1,875 application fee will be provided to complete the process and move from Candidacy status to full accreditation. (NOTE: For schools outside the United States, this will be \$1,625.)

It is understood that our institution will comply with the information contained in "The Process for Obtaining Accreditation: Baccalaureate/Graduate Degree Schools and Programs" book.

Sincerely,

(typed name of President, Chancellor, Executive Director, Rector or Equivalent)
(title)

cc: (designated individual)

Enclosures



**APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY STATUS
ACCREDITATION OF THE BUSINESS UNIT AND SEPARATE
ACCREDITATION OF THE ACCOUNTING PROGRAM**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: _____

INSTITUTION TYPE: Public Private

AFFILIATIONS: Faith Based Military Historically Black College University _____

Business School Enrollment: _____
(includes accounting program enrollment)

Accounting Program Enrollment: _____

Business Programs Offered:

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

_____ undergraduate graduate both

PRIMARY CONTACT FOR ACCREDITATION

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

ALTERNATE CONTACT FOR ACCREDITATION

Name: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

