



## **Guidelines and Suggested Questions for ACPE On-Site Evaluations**

**Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education**  
20 North Clark Street, Suite 2500  
Chicago, IL 60602-5109  
(312) 664-3575  
[www.acpe-accredit.org](http://www.acpe-accredit.org)

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## DEFINITION

Accreditation status from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) is the public recognition that a professional program in pharmacy meets established qualifications and educational standards through initial and periodic evaluations. The essential purpose of the accreditation process is to provide a professional judgment of the quality of a program and to promote institutional improvement. Accreditation concerns itself with (a) quality assurance and (b) quality improvement. Accreditation applies to institutions or programs in contrast to certification or licensure, which applies to individuals. Accreditation in pharmacy applies to the professional degree program (PharmD) in Colleges and Schools of Pharmacy.

## VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

The ACPE accreditation process benefits all constituents:

To the **Boards of Pharmacy**, accreditation provides a reliable basis for decision-making with regard to licensure either by examination or reciprocity.

To the **public**, the values of accreditation include:

- an assurance of external evaluation of the program and a finding that there is conformity to general expectations of the profession;
- identification of programs that have undertaken explicit activities directed at improving the quality of the institution and its professional programs and that are carrying them out successfully; and
- an improvement in the professional services available to the public as accredited programs modify their requirements to reflect changes in knowledge, skills attitudes, abilities and practice.

To **students and prospective students**, accreditation provides:

- an assurance that the educational activities of an accredited program have been found to be satisfactory and, therefore, meet the needs of the students;
- assistance in the transfer of credits; and
- eligibility for entering the profession by satisfying educational requirements for licensure.

**Institutions** benefit from accreditation through:

- the stimulus provided for self-evaluation and self-directed program improvement;
- the strengthening of program self-evaluation through the knowledge of a subsequent review or audit and counsel by the evaluation team;
- the enhancement of the reputation of the program because of public regard for accreditation; and
- the use of accreditation in decision-making for the investment of public and private funds.

And finally, accreditation serves the **profession of pharmacy** by:

- providing a means for practitioners to participate in setting entry requirements for the profession; and
- giving assurances that those practitioners who follow them will be adequately prepared.

## **THE PROCESS**

While the definition of accreditation may be stated simply, the activity is more complex and involves defining requirements necessary for a quality educational experience. These are the Accreditation Standards and Guidelines that have been set by ACPE, as a result of contribution and discussions from the community of interests affected by the accreditation process. The Standards and Guidelines serve as the basis for each program evaluation. A program's self-study is followed by an on-site visit by an evaluation team and a subsequent accreditation decision by the ACPE Board of Directors.

## **THE SELF-STUDY REPORT**

The program self-study report includes qualitative and quantitative information on both faculty and student achievements and on educational outcomes, which demonstrate the program's success in attaining its objectives. The self-study process should begin at least one year prior to the on-site evaluation and should provide program description and analysis, present findings and conclusions, appraise strengths and weaknesses, and, where deficiencies exist, outline steps necessary for improvement. The self-study report should, in effect, be able to serve as a planning document for the College/School of Pharmacy.

## **EVALUATION TEAMS**

Evaluation teams are typically composed of an ACPE board member, an ACPE executive staff member, a pharmacy practitioner, an administrator, and a faculty member from an accredited College/School of Pharmacy. The ACPE executive staff member serves to coordinate the evaluation, and each evaluation team member participates in the evaluation process. Evaluation team members take turns chairing sessions outlined in the evaluation schedule and participate in the presentation of findings.

A member of the Board of Pharmacy of the state in which the institution is located is invited to observe the on-site evaluation. The presence of the Board of Pharmacy representative gives opportunity for better understanding of the ACPE accreditation process, not only as it applies to the professional program of the specific College/School being evaluated, but to all others as well. The major responsibilities of the Board of Pharmacy member are to observe the evaluation process and to provide special insights and resources to the evaluation team. The institution may also invite a member of the regional accrediting agency to participate in the work of the team. This option is exercised in about ten percent of evaluation visits. This individual serves as a generalist. The Board of Pharmacy representative and the generalist member, when assigned, observe the evaluation team during all aspects of the on-site evaluation including social and executive sessions.

The evaluation team members are invited guests of the University or College/School of Pharmacy. A professional demeanor is needed in all sessions, and a confrontational style should be avoided. Whenever the team is approached in a confrontational manner, the team members should do whatever possible to resolve issues in a constructive and collegial manner.

## **THE ON-SITE EVALUATION AND THE EVALUATION TEAM REPORT**

The on-site evaluation is one component of the accreditation process and results in an Evaluation Team Report that is used by the ACPE Board of Directors to make an accreditation decision. The on-site evaluation follows a pre-determined and highly structured schedule that includes interviews with the dean, faculty, students, and university administrators. A survey is made of physical and practice facilities as well as other educational resources. At the conclusion of the visit, the evaluation team orally presents its findings to the University officers and to the Dean of the College/School of Pharmacy. These findings serve as a framework for the written report that is subsequently furnished to the institution. On-site evaluations are customarily made on a six-year cycle; however, programs may be reviewed for purposes of accreditation within a shorter time period at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

The evaluation team has a responsibility to report areas of strength and areas, if any, which may be in noncompliance with standards (as the evaluation team understands and interprets them for the specific program(s) being assessed), and to provide recommendations for continuing improvement. The report generated by the evaluators is not an "accreditation" report, but an interim, albeit important, evaluative step in the accreditation process. The evaluation team, in a sense, "audits" the program self-study report by providing an external peer-review. The institution is given opportunity to respond to the report of the evaluation team prior to any decision rendered by the Board. During a subsequent meeting of the Board, decisions concerning compliance and noncompliance with standards and the overall "accredit-ability" of the program are made on the basis of all of the available information (i.e., the self-study report, the Evaluation Team Report, and any communications from the institution).

The Evaluation Team Report, it should be noted, is constructed for several audiences (e.g., the Board members, the College/School, and University administrators). In accord with its quality enhancement objectives, evaluators have latitude in formulating recommendations and suggestions for improvement. The subsequent accreditation actions of the Board, however, are more narrowly constructed along the lines of accreditation standards and guidelines in accord with quality assurance objectives. The Board may also present recommendations for improvement in accord with objectives for quality enhancement.

### **POLICY ON CONFIDENTIALITY**

ACPE maintains confidentiality with regard to its Evaluation Team Reports and the subsequent Accreditation Action and Recommendations. The Evaluation Team Reports are considered to be property of the University or College/School, and no information is released to third parties without the approval of the University president or his or her designate. *Information with respect to clarifications or interpretations of the Evaluation Team Report should be referred to ACPE for appropriate responses.*

## **GUIDELINES FOR ON-SITE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

As noted above, the on-site evaluation is used to investigate various aspects of the professional program(s), to provide the opportunity to meet with administrators, faculty, staff, and students, both individually and in various groups, and to conduct surveys of resources used to support the program(s). To facilitate the flow of the sessions involving multiple team members, the members take turns “chairing” or leading the sessions. Chairs are designated on the visit schedule or during the team’s orientation meeting. The chair for a particular session should strive to facilitate and lead discussion rather than control the session. It is important that other team members also participate in order for all necessary information to be reviewed. General duties of a session chair include:

- 1) Coordinating the logistics for the assigned session. This includes:
  - a) Room set-up – The room should be set-up so as to facilitate discussion; the team should be seated together in a fashion that permits discussion and interaction while alleviating the need to search for team members in a mixed audience.
  - b) Introductions – While introductions may have occurred as individuals assemble for the session, it is helpful to go around the room and have all participants introduce themselves and provide a brief statement of background and/or how each individual is involved in this particular group. It is helpful at this time to provide a brief statement describing the team and its purpose both in a general sense and relating to the specific session at hand.
  - c) Ground Rules – It is important to describe the ground rules for each session prior to the beginning; this consists of describing the available time frame, as well as the approach to be used. The chair should serve as timekeeper, to assure adherence to the schedule.
  
- 2) Serving as discussion leader/facilitator for the assigned session. Generally the chair initiates discussion and questioning for the session, with other team members joining as they have comments and/or questions. Specific sessions vary, and additional guidelines for the various types of sessions that comprise an on-site evaluation, are provided below.

As it is the task of the evaluation team to audit and validate the self-study which the College/School has prepared, *it is important and appropriate to ask the same question(s) in multiple sessions or of different individuals*. Team members are encouraged to ask questions, even if in doubt as to the question’s importance; all questions and resulting information are significant to the team’s work. Questions should not be presented so as to infer judgment. Rather, questions should seek information and evaluation from the host institution. It is also not advisable for a team member to offer examples from their home institution; the team is visiting a unique institution, and such comparisons, while offered in a positive sense, may be misconstrued. This information may, however, be provided, if requested by individuals from the host institution.

The remainder of this document contains some specific guidelines regarding the various sessions that will be conducted over the course of the visit. At the beginning of the visit, the evaluation team will meet in an orientation session to review the schedule and make the necessary assignments.

## **Introductory Session With the Dean**

Generally, the on-site evaluation begins with an introductory session with the Dean. This session may include other individuals, such as Associate and/or Assistant Deans, depending on the organizational structure and division of responsibilities.

The following approach is suggested for the chair:

- 1) Coordinate the room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Start the session with introductions, a description of the time frame for the meeting, and the approach to be used for running it.
- 3) Follow up with any housekeeping details, such as times and locations for any sessions, and a review of the schedule, including the team assignments which have been made.
- 4) Begin the discussion by asking the Dean general questions:
  - What progress has the College/School made since the last on-site evaluation?
  - What strengths and weaknesses were identified as a result of the self-study process?
  - Describe the College/School's mission statement. How does the College/School assess its outcomes? Are the stated objectives consistent with the mission and appropriate in light of the professional program offered?
  - How has information obtained from programmatic assessments been used to enhance the program?
  - What plans does the College/School have for its professional programs? Summarize the College/School's strategic plan or goals and objectives for future development.
  - What resources (financial, personnel, professional practice sites, etc.) will be needed to address the weaknesses that have been identified and to support the plans set-forth by the institution? What is the College/School's plan for obtaining these resources?
  - What is the Dean's general vision for the future of the College/School and its professional program?
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the College/School and you? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
  - Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

This introductory session with the Dean is also a good time to obtain clarification regarding information that may be unclear in the self-study and other materials provided. Frequently, this involves clarifying budgetary information, faculty numbers, and unique aspects of the curricula and/or professional program. The Dean should provide the requested information during the visit.

## **Survey of Physical Facilities**

At some point during the on-site evaluation, team members will tour and review the various physical facilities available in support of the College/School and its professional program. Team members consider the following questions during these reviews:

- 1) Pharmacy Building or Main College/School Location
  - Does the quantity of space available appear appropriate for the professional program?
  - Does the quality of space available appear appropriate for the professional program?
  - Is the space appropriately maintained and safe?
  - Does the space enable the program to fulfill the standards?
  - Can the space be used efficiently and effectively?
  - Is the allocation and configuration of space (offices, teaching/classroom space, research/laboratory space, student space, etc.) conducive to teaching and learning?
  - Does the overall space support of the professional program?
  - Is there adequate space for small group discussion sessions?
  
- 2) Library Facilities
  - Is the quantity of the collection appropriate for the professional program?
  - Is the quality of the collection appropriate for the professional program?
  - Are the materials current?
  - Are the support resources (personnel, computers, reference materials, on-line databases, etc.) adequate for the program?
  - Is the mechanism for obtaining input from the College/School regarding library resources (library committee, etc.) appropriate?
  - What is the extent of the full text journal availability via telecommunications or the Internet by students in professional practice experiences?
  - Overall, do the library resources suggest that the requirements of the professional program will be fulfilled?
  
- 3) Educational and/or Learning Support Resources
  - Are students required to own a computer? What type of software and technical support is provided?
  - Are there resources, which may include computer facilities, audiovisual resources, etc., available for student and/or faculty use?
  - Overall, do the educational support resources available appear adequate for the professional degree program provided?
  
- 4) General
  - How is the adequacy of physical facilities assessed?
  - How is information obtained from programmatic assessments used to enhance physical facilities?

## **Session with the Self-Study Committee**

This session should focus on how the self-study process was conducted and how the resulting report was prepared. The following approach is suggested for the chair:

- 1) Coordinate room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Initiate session with introductions, description of the available time frame, and the approach to be used.
- 3) Begin discussion and questioning. General questions, that the committee should address include:
  - Describe the Self-Study Committee. What is the composition and representation of the committee? How was the committee established and formed?
  - Describe the College/School's mission from the committee's perspective.
  - What process was used to conduct the self-study and create the report?
  - How did ACPE's self-study process facilitate your work?
  - To what extent did the self-study process bring faculty together?
  - What are the major findings of the self-study?
  - What (if any) surprises or revelations came about as a result of doing the self-study?
  - Was the self-study report validated by a (anonymous) vote of the faculty? Did students and/or alumni participate?
  - Does the majority of faculty concur with the findings of the self-study report? Summarize any minority viewpoints.
  - How did the Self-Study Committee handle conflict resolution when determining strategic priority areas within the College/School?
  - Did faculty members receive a complete, final version of the self-study report for their review?
  - What programmatic assessments were performed? How did the Self-Study Committee use the resulting information?
  - Describe and assess how the institution systematically assures achievement of its stated goals.
  - How will the self-study report be used now and into the future to support plans and progress by the institution?
  - What would you change about the self-study process? (information of the committee, length of service, etc.)
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the College/School and committee? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
  - Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

## **Session with the Executive Committee**

Many Colleges/Schools of Pharmacy use an Executive Committee or equivalent group in collegiate governance as a means of communication and/or to provide advice and support to the Dean. These committees are often composed of the Dean, Associate and/or Assistant Dean(s), Department/Division Chairs, program director(s), or faculty representatives.

In general, this session should focus on the structure and function (including effectiveness) of this committee. Guidelines for the Chair include the following:

- 1) Coordinate room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Initiate session with introductions, description of the available time frame, and the approach to be used.
- 3) Begin discussion and questioning. General questions to be addressed by the committee include:
  - Describe the Executive Committee, including its composition/representation and how it was formed.
  - How often does the committee meet?
  - Describe the role and function of the Executive Committee. What is the role in terms of reviewing the program, strategic plan or master academic plan?
  - How effective is the committee relative to its stated role/functions?
  - What is the purpose of meetings with the Dean (e.g., information sharing, decision making, and strategic planning)?
  - Does the committee have autonomy?
  - Does the organizational chart make sense on a day-to-day basis? Do you know who to report to and how to get things done?
  - Describe how decisions are made and how information flows in the College/School. How effective is the communication between the committee and the faculty?
  - What are the areas of major emphasis of the Executive Committee?
  - How is information from programmatic assessments used by the committee to improve the program?
  - How does the committee assess the College/School's mission and goals?
  - What is the College/School's mission from the committee's perspective?
  - Describe and assess how the institution systematically assures that the stated goals are achieved.
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the School? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the College/School and committee? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
  - Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

## **Session with Curriculum Committee**

This session should provide an opportunity for detailed review of the curriculum for the professional program. The following approach is suggested for the chair:

- 1) Coordinate room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Initiate session with introductions, description of the available time frame, and the approach to be used.
- 2) Begin discussion and questioning. General questions to be addressed by the committee include:
  - Describe the composition and function of the Curriculum Committee. Is there student representation on the committee? What steps (such as scheduling) are taken to assure that students can attend?
  - Describe the College/School's mission from the committee's perspective.
  - How does the institution systemically assure the achievement of goals? How effective are these assessments?
  - Describe the College/School's curricular model and the philosophy behind it. Describe specific curricular areas and/or approaches in detail (NOTE: refer to the *Accreditation Standards* for specific areas, which are expected to be included).
  - Describe the pre-professional curriculum in detail. Include general education and basic science components, as well as the rationale for the inclusion of various materials, where appropriate.
  - What curricular changes have been made since the last evaluation? What changes are currently being contemplated?
  - What is the committee doing to examine and address inter-disciplinary education, cultural competence and professionalism in the curriculum?
  - What process is used to revise existing courses/programs? What process is used to approve new courses/programs?
  - How is the information obtained from assessments of educational achievements applied to foster enhanced student achievement?
  - How is the information obtained from programmatic assessments applied to enhance the program?
  - Are students required to own a computer? If so, how are computers integrated into the curriculum?
  - What specific activities does the College/School do to prepare students to become practitioners?
  - How much information do students get about varieties of practice to help them make career choices, including academic careers?
  - How are academic assignments designed to help students make career choices?
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the College/School and committee? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
  - Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

## **Session with Assessment Committee**

This session should provide an opportunity for detailed review of programmatic and curricular assessment for the professional program. The following approach is suggested for the chair:

- 1) Coordinate room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Initiate session with introductions, description of the available time frame, and the approach to be used.
- 3) Begin discussion and questioning. General questions to be addressed by the committee include:
  - Describe the College/School's mission from the committee's perspective. How does the institution systemically assure the achievement of goals? How effective are these assessments?
  - Describe the composition and function of the Assessment Committee. What experience in assessment and/or evaluation do members on the committee possess? What is the process to appoint members to the committee? Is there student representation on the committee? What steps such as scheduling are taken to assure that students can attend?
  - Describe the College/School's assessment plan from the committee's perspective.
  - What underlying values drive the College/School's assessment efforts?
  - Describe the specific aspects of the assessment plan in detail regarding the following types of assessment: (a) institutional/programmatic assessment; (b) curricular assessment; and (c) student learning outcomes assessment.
  - Describe both formative and summative assessments at each level.
  - Based on data from the three assessment types, are the institution, program, and courses of appropriate quality and worthy of resource support?
  - Should changes be proposed for the institution, program, or courses?
  - How are the data used from these assessments? Who uses the assessment findings? How are curriculum and/or teaching strategies modified based on these data? How does faculty intentionally build upon the courses and educational experiences to achieve learning priorities?
  - Who receives information from programmatic assessment and how is it communicated?
  - What are your student learning goals? Explain how you are using assessments to improve student learning?
  - How is the information obtained from assessments of educational achievements applied to foster enhanced student achievement?
  - How are educational achievements of students documented?
  - How is information from student assessment communicated to the Curriculum Committee?
  - How is the committee monitoring assessment activities? How will the committee evaluate assessment efforts?
  - What resources is the committee using for its assessment efforts?
  - What assessment changes have been made since the last accreditation evaluation? What changes are currently being contemplated?
  - Describe the process used to assess professional practice.
  - How is information from assessment of professional practice communicated to experiential-program coordinators or committee?
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the College/School and committee? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
  - Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

Questions to address multiple pathways and distance campuses:

- Describe any comparison of multiple/distance pathways. Were any significant differences found and if so, what are they, what is the cause, and what is being done to address them?

## **Session with Students**

Sessions with students provide an opportunity for students to present their perspectives and concerns regarding the College/School and its professional program. The institution is instructed that students are to be self-selected for participation in these sessions; it is important to verify exactly how this selection was made. Specific guidelines for the chair include:

- 1) Coordinate room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Initiate session with introductions, description of the available time frame, and the approach to be used. It is helpful if students indicate their class level in the professional program, and provide an indication of their interests and goals (i.e., practice intentions, post-graduate education, etc.) as a component of their introduction.
- 3) Begin discussion and questioning. General questions to be addressed by the student(s) include:
  - In your opinion, what are the strengths and weakness of the College/School?
  - What activities and organizations are available to students? What is the system of student governance used by the College/School?
  - How do students receive advice regarding the professional program, registration, etc?
  - What forms of counseling are available, and are they accessible?
  - What forms of financial aid are available, and is the financial aid office helpful?
  - What forms of career counseling and placement are available?
  - What are your perceptions regarding the curriculum?
  - What are your perceptions regarding the faculty and staff? How accessible are the faculty? Do you feel that the faculty fosters professionalism and professional ethics? Does the faculty serve as role models? What is the level of faculty-student interactions?
  - What advice are students given prior to going on practice experiences to help you deal with potential personality conflicts with preceptors?
  - Did you receive any recruitment brochures, catalogs, etc.? Were these materials accurate and not misleading regarding resources available, academic policies, progression policies, etc.?
  - What kind of information have you received and what kind of learning activities have you done about varieties of practice to help you make a career choice?
  - How well informed were you about the reality of attending this program? Did you have any welcome or unwelcome surprises?
  - How involved are students in the affairs of the College/School? Have you noticed any results from the input that was provided?
  - Describe any changes you would suggest for the institution and/or its professional program.
  - Are you aware of the College/School's policies and procedures regarding complaints related to the ACPE standards?
  - What advice would you give to someone who is taking the program? If you were able to live your life over, would you enroll in this program again? Would you recommend this program to your brother, sister, or a friend?
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the College/School? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
  - Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

Questions to address multiple pathways and distance campuses:

- What is your relationship like with your peers at the distance/main campus?
- Describe any coursework that you do with peers at the distance/main campus.
- What is your impression of your peers at the distance/main campus?

## **Individual Faculty Interviews**

During the course of an on-site visit, team members will have multiple opportunities to visit with individual faculty at the host institution. The primary purpose of these individual interviews is to provide the opportunity for faculty to have individual and confidential input into the evaluation process. Guidelines for team members to follow include:

- 1) Begin by introducing yourself. Describe who you are and why you are there: set the ground rules; establish the available time frame; describe the purpose of the interview; and assure confidentiality. The individual faculty member should also provide an introduction and brief overview of their background and current interests and activities. Information to supplement the team member's knowledge of faculty backgrounds may be found in the self-study materials.
- 2) Team members are advised to be prepared for a wide variety of reactions from individual faculty. These include everything from very quiet or withdrawn behavior, requiring more probing on the part of the team member, to very assertive, aggressive behavior, requiring restraint or redirection by the team member. Some faculty may come to the interview with supplemental documentation or a prepared presentation. In this case, the team member should receive the information for transmittal to the rest of the team. In some cases, information is presented, that is not necessarily relevant to the work of the team. In these cases the team member is encouraged to move on to more germane issues as quickly and smoothly as possible. The objectives of the team include the verification of statements and impressions presented in written materials (self-study report, supplemental information) or in general group sessions during the on-site visit.
- 3) Specific questions for team members to ask individual faculty, include:
  - Do you agree with the self-study report? Were there any errors of commission or omission?
  - What are your individual goals and objectives? What do you require to address your individual needs, departmental goals, and collegiate goals?
  - Describe your perceptions regarding the leadership and direction of the Dean, associate and assistant Dean(s), and your department/division Chair.
  - Do you feel there is an adequate flow of information and communication within the College/School? Do you feel involved in the College/School's affairs?
  - Describe your perceptions of the students and their professional development.
  - Describe your perceptions regarding the professional development process and your personal developmental opportunities.
  - What are the biggest challenges facing you and the College/School? What has been the response to the challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
  - Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

## **Session with Student Affairs/Services Staff**

The evaluation team's visit includes a session with the individual(s) involved with the management of student affairs for the College/School of Pharmacy. This session should focus on all support services provided to students to assist them through the professional program.

- 1) Coordinate room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Initiate session with introductions, description of the available time frame, and the approach to be used. It is helpful if students indicate their class level in the professional program, and provide an indication of their interests and goals (i.e., practice intentions, post-graduate education, etc.) as a component of their introduction.
- 3) Begin discussion and questioning. Particular questions to be discussed and documents to be reviewed during this session include:
  - Do you feel that self-study adequately assessed and described issues pertaining to student affairs?
  - Describe the College/School's policies and procedures for the following activities:
    - Application and admission, both at the pre-professional and professional levels. Describe any considerations relevant to the admission of non-traditional students.
    - Progression of students through the program
    - Advising and counseling
    - Career development and placement
    - Alumni affairs
    - Student complaints
  - Describe the administrative and/or professional support staff available for the management and provision of student affairs.
  - Describe the information provided to prospective and existing students. What information is disclosed to prospective students?
  - Describe the efforts that have been undertaken to professionalize students. How are students mentored? What is the extent of student-faculty interactions?
  - What is a typical advising load? (Note: 8 to 10 students are common.)
  - Describe the College/School's efforts to evaluate the outcomes of the professional program. How has the College/School assessed student achievement, in both a short-term and long-term sense?
  - How is the information obtained from programmatic assessments applied to enhance the student affairs?
  - Describe the College/School's policies and procedures for handling student complaints related to ACPE standards.
  - Describe the qualitative and quantitative aspects of complaints related to ACPE standards received in the previous years.
  - How are the policies and procedures for handling complaints related to ACPE standards communicated to students?
  - What are the biggest challenges?
  - What would you like the ACPE team to remember?
  - Do you have any questions?

Documents to be reviewed during the session:

- Review the policies and procedures for handling student complaints related to ACPE standards.
- Review the College/School's file of student complaints related to ACPE standards and note findings in Evaluation Team Report.

## Survey of Practice Sites/Preceptors

Team members will have opportunities to meet with experiential program coordinators and/or preceptors or to visit selected practice sites used by the College/School in support of the professional program. Team members may meet individually with a preceptor, a group of preceptors, or other experiential program faculty. The general guidelines presented below for surveying practice facilities are also applicable to individual and group meetings, because the goal is to evaluate the experiential component of the professional program. Visits to practice sites provide an opportunity to see not only the clinical facilities, but also to visit with faculty/preceptors and students who are in experiential rotations.

- 1) Coordinate room set-up, in accord with general guidelines.
- 2) Initiate session with introductions, description of the available time frame, and the approach to be used. If meeting with preceptors or volunteer faculty, begin with brief introductions and an explanation of the accreditation process.
- 3) Specific questions which preceptors or volunteer faculty may be asked to address include:
  - How were you selected for this meeting?
  - Why do you precept students?
  - Describe the length and format of introductory pharmacy practice experiences (minimum overall length should be 300 hours<sup>1</sup>).
  - Describe the length and number of advanced pharmacy practice experiences (minimum overall length should be 1,440 hours<sup>2</sup>).
  - What is your educational philosophy? What methods do you use for teaching students?
  - How are you involved in the assessment of students? Do you assign grades? If so, what criteria do you use?
  - How are you funded? What type of clinics do you have? How many hours do you spend at the site?
  - How much time do you spend with the students? What is the quality of the time that you spend with the students?
  - What is the extent of the administrative and educational support provided to the clinical affiliate by the College/School? What benefits do you receive for being a preceptor?
  - Are there additional benefits that you would like for the College/School to offer?
  - How are goals and objectives for a rotation disseminated and what help do preceptors received to interpret them? To what extent are preceptors involved in developing the goals and objectives for their rotations?
  - Are you involved in collegiate affairs (i.e., can preceptors provide curricular suggestions, do the preceptors have a role in program evaluation)?
  - How do preceptors communicate with College/School if there are issues that need to be addressed?
  - What is your approach for handling difficult students or negative issues? What does the College do to help you? What has been your experience with the level of professionalism among the students you precept?

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<sup>1</sup> Minimum Introductory Practice Hours based on 5% of a 4 year program: 4 year program x (36 weeks/year) x (40 hours/weeks) x 5% = 288 hours, rounded up to 300 hours

<sup>2</sup> Minimum Advanced Practice Hours based on 25% of a 4 year program: 4 year program x (36 weeks/year) x (40 hours/weeks) x 25% = 1440 hours

- How are changes made to the curriculum when preceptors have concerns about students' knowledge, skills or values? (for example, if students have problems with communication skills, what is the process to improve those skills in the curriculum)?
- Describe the type of feedback that the College/School gives preceptors about their rotations. Do preceptors receive mid-rotation feedback?
- What type of access do you have to College/School's library resources for pharmacy?
- What advice are students given prior to going on practice experiences to help them deal with potential personality conflicts with preceptors?
- Do you have any suggestions for improving the experiential program?
- What are the biggest challenges facing preceptors? What has been the response to the challenges?
- What would you like the ACPE team to remember from this meeting?
- Do you have any questions for the evaluation team?

4) Additional questions to consider when visiting a practice site include:

- What are the goals and objectives of the experiential rotation(s) offered at the site?
- How does the College/School assure standardization of experiences and subsequent evaluations for both student and site/preceptor performance?
- What is the student/faculty ratio at the site? Are there enough preceptors to give all students adequate attention?
- What percent of the rotation is devoted to dispensing versus patient care? What kinds of opportunities are available for students to care for patients? What opportunities are students given to adjust therapy? To what degree or under what conditions are students timid about working with patients (e.g., early rotations)?
- What opportunities exist for students to participate on interdisciplinary teams?
- Are students on site for the entire rotation? When do students debrief or reflect on their experiences or return to campus for in-depth case discussions? What type of contact do students have with the campus during rotations?
- What is being done to assure the quality of the site? Are there any factors affecting the quality of the sites? How is information obtained from programmatic assessments applied to enhance the program? What complaints to you have about the site?
- What does the School do to foster a sense of inclusiveness among preceptors?
- What is the administrative relationship between the site and the College/School? What is the nature of the faculty/preceptors at the site (i.e., College/School funded, shared position, volunteer faculty, etc.)?
- Overall, does the site meet the experiential needs of the professional program?

## **Exit Reports**

The evaluation team's on-site visit ends with an exit report with the Dean of the College/School, followed by an exit report with University administration (typically the president and/or the vice president for academic affairs/provost). The exit reports present the opportunity for the evaluation team to relate its findings prior to departure. The ACPE staff member leads the exit reports, with the support of the remainder of the evaluation team. The details of the presentation are determined during the session that precedes the exit reports. The general format for the exit reports is as follows:

- 1) Summarize the gains made since the last on-site evaluation;
- 2) Summarize the strengths and weakness of the program as identified by the self-study report and by the evaluation team; and
- 3) Summarize the major findings of the evaluation team. This should be organized in the following manner:
  - a) A synopsis of the strengths of the program in the view of the evaluation team.
  - b) Review of the team's findings concerning needed improvements, organized in accord with the *Accreditation Standards*.

The exit report should include all the major issues noted by the evaluation team during the visit. Every issue addressed in the Evaluation Team Report should be at least mentioned by the team during the exit reports.

Following the exit reports and the team's departure, ACPE staff will prepare the complete Evaluation Team Report. This report will be transmitted to team members for comment, and then it will be transmitted to the Dean for comment. Once the report is finalized, the finished version will be transmitted to the Dean, University administration and the board for action at the designated Board meeting.