



CAA SITE VISITS

What to Expect
How to Prepare

2022 ASHA Convention
Session # 2120V



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Financial – I have no financial disclosures.

Non-financial – Member of the Council on Academic Accreditation, however, I do not receive any compensation for this role. I am an ASHA member.



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Site Visit Operations, ASHA

Financial – I am a paid employee of ASHA.

Non-financial – I have no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.



Session Objectives



DESCRIBE the purpose and timing of the site visit in the review process and the program's roles and responsibilities before, during, and after the visit



APPLY strategies for organizing data/materials supporting standards compliance verification during the site visit



PREPARE a site visit agenda ensuring a comprehensive and thorough site visit



Today's Agenda



Site Visit – purpose & timing in review



Agenda development & logistics



Preparing documentation



After the Site Visit

Site Visit Report

CAA's final review and decisions

Evaluations and performance feedback



Myth vs. Fact #1

- **Site visitors have the authority to recommend accreditation status for a program, including probation.**
- **No, the above statement is a MYTH.**
 - Site visitors verify *evidence*.
 - CAA makes accreditation decisions based on:
 - Application
 - Site Visit Report
 - Updates provided by the program in its response to the initial observations and to the site visit report



Roles and Responsibilities CAA vs. Site Visitors

CAA

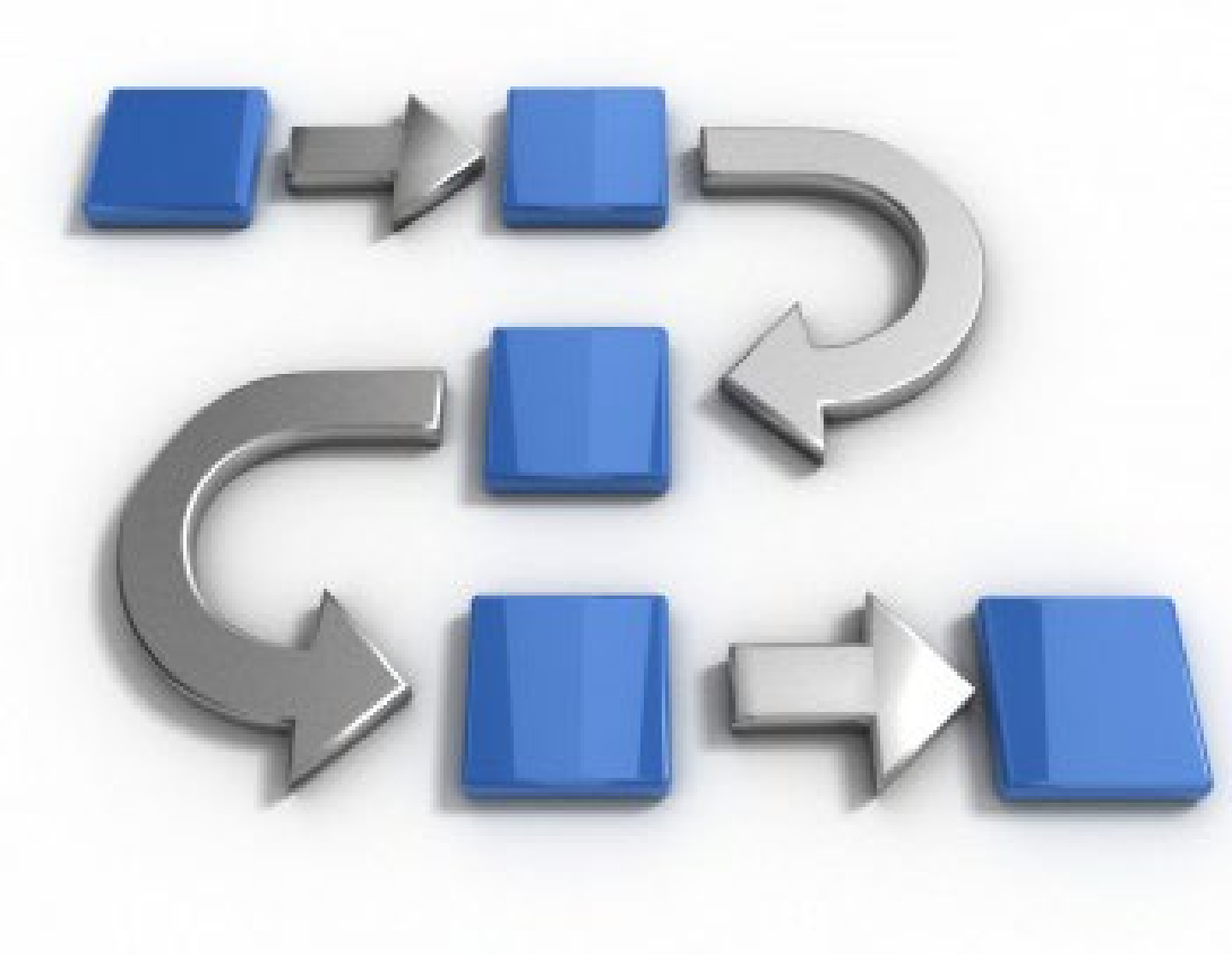
- Develop and apply accreditation standards
- Establish knowledge & skills for academic and clinical curriculum
- Establish thresholds and monitor success re. student achievement
- ***Grant accreditation to programs***

Site Visitors

- Use accreditation standards to assess programs
- Verify policies & procedures are in place & consistently followed
- ***Write report*** of the teams' observations and their ability to verify evidence of documentation for all standards



Purpose and Timing of the Site Visit





Purpose of the Site Visit



Part of the peer review process



Verifies accuracy & clarifies information

Policies & procedures
Congruence with **mission and goals**
Student achievement



Collects information about every standard for CAA to consider in final decision



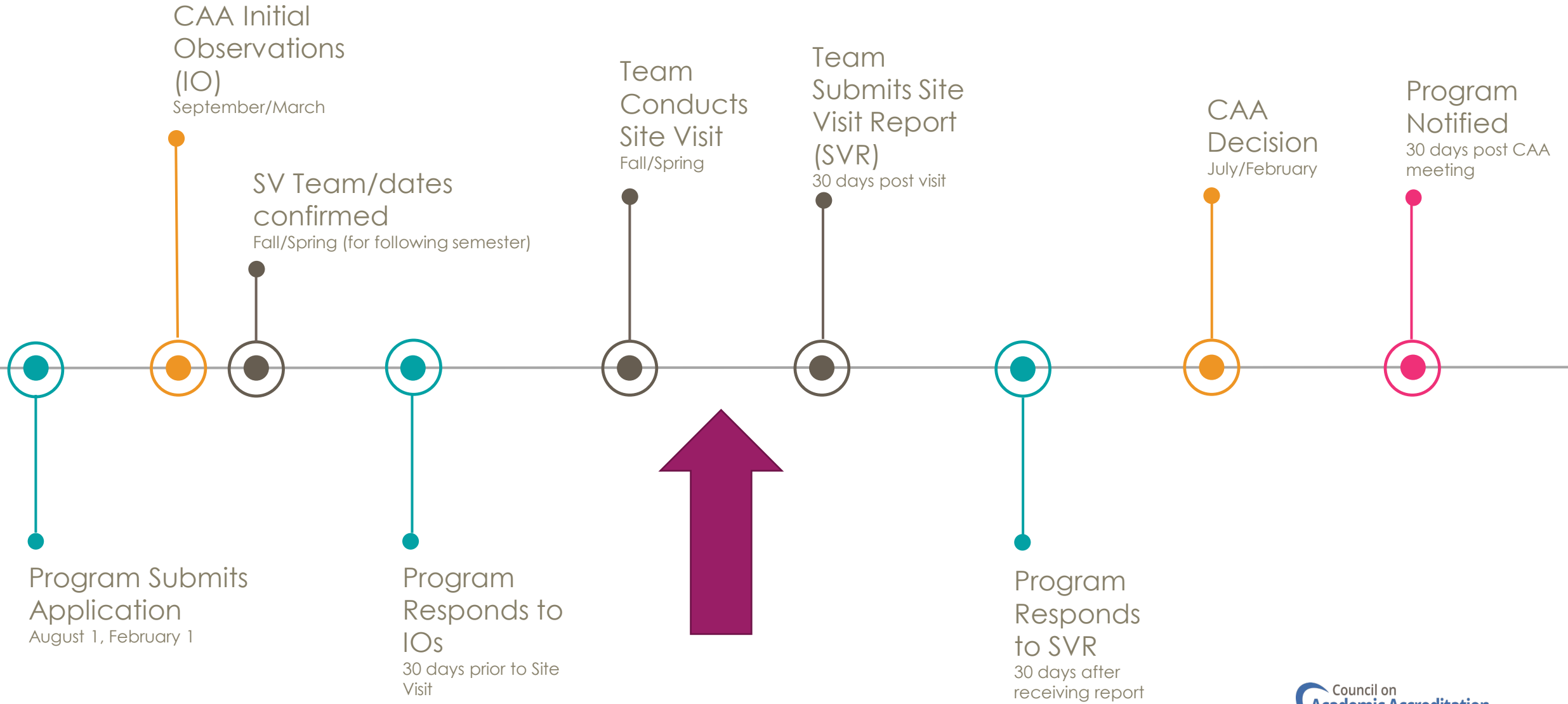
Site Visitors are NOT

- Looking for problems
- Making a recommendation or a decision on accreditation status
- Advocating for the program, e.g., carrying a message to the dean about more personnel, space





Simple Application Review Process Overview

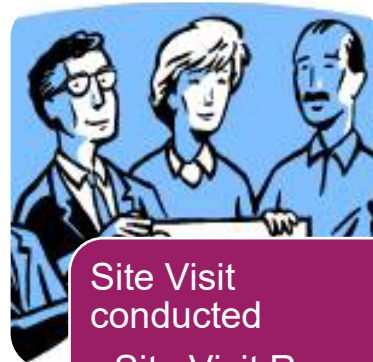


Review Sequence – Site Visit & Decision



Program provides written response to IOs

- Submit any updates, e.g. new faculty, required advance documents
- Due 30 days before site visit



Site Visit conducted

- Site Visit Report (SVR) written
- Sent to program 6-8 weeks after site visit



Program provides response to SVR

- Include updates for any standard
- Submit within 30 days of receipt of SVR

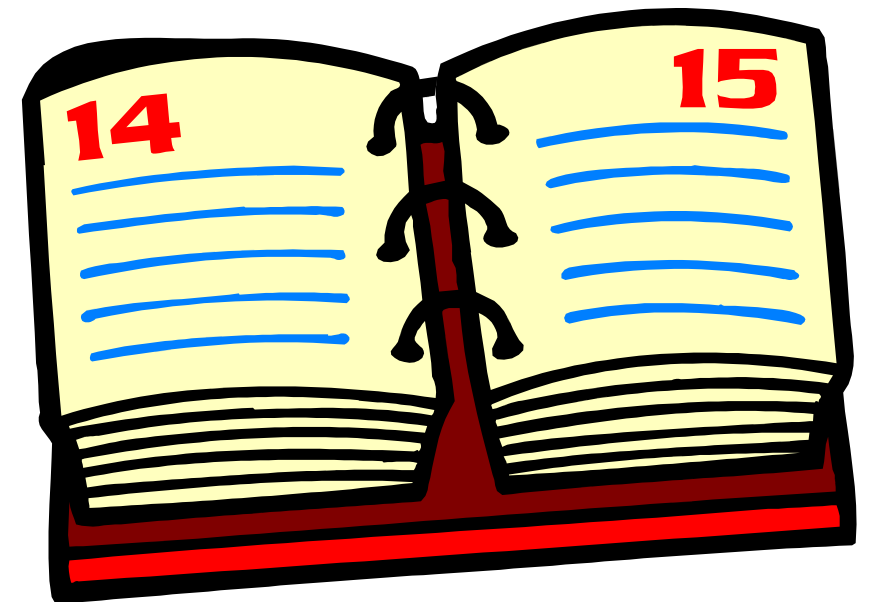


CAA makes final decision

- February meeting for prior February's submission
- July meeting for prior August's submission

How long will the team be visiting?

- Standard visit is 2 full days
 - Monday-Tuesday
 - Thursday-Friday
- Days may be added if the program
 - Has **multiple** campuses
 - Has **satellite** campus(es)
 - Is part of a **consortium**
 - If **complexity** of program warrants additional time



Team Composition

	SLP only program	AUD only program	AUD & SLP
Academic Faculty SLP*	1-2		1
Academic Faculty AUD*		1-2	1
Clinical Faculty SLP	0-1		0-1
Clinical Faculty AUD		0-1	0-1
Practitioner SLP	1		1
Practitioner AUD		1	1
<i>Total team members</i>	3	3	5

*An Academic Faculty member will chair the visit

Clinical or Academic Faculty may be assigned for the 2nd university rep. position



Observers on Site Visits

- Members of the CAA and Accreditation Staff routinely observe site visits for educational purposes
- Individual programs are not the focus of an observer's participation in the visit
- Individual site visitors are not the focus of an observer's participation in the visit



LOGISTICS: you submitted your application, now what?

- What should you expect?
- What should you do first?

Where to Start: Scheduling

- Check calendar for available date options for your site visit
 - Students should be on campus/ school in session (except candidacy programs)
 - Consider availability of upper administration (Dean, Provost, etc)
 - Check with faculty and staff
- Review site visitor pool names to identify conflicts of interest
 - Site visitors also have chance to identify if any conflicts of interest with any programs due for SV



Confirming the Visit

- Verification
 - Email to program and site visitors to confirm availability once dates are identified
- Confirmation Letter
 - Finalizes the date and team assignments
 - Bios provided
 - Checklist provided



April 27, 2022

Amy Winston
Rush University
Amy_Winston@rush.edu

CAA # 243 - CAA Site Visit Confirmation

Dear Amy Winston,

This will serve to verify that the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) site visit to your graduate education programs in audiology and speech-language pathology is scheduled for 11/4-5/2021. **Please carefully review all materials provided with this letter.**



Travel logistics: meals, transport

Site Visit Team responsibilities:

- Flight arrangements
- Transport between airport & hotel
- Hotel cost
- All meals

Program responsibilities:

- Initial hotel reservations
- Arrange meeting space on campus for team to conduct their work
- If ground transport is NOT readily available, assist team in making arrangements to get from hotel to program





Agenda Development & Logistics



- Who is responsible for what?
- And when?

- <https://caa.asha.org/site-visits/program-preparation/>



Who's responsible for developing the agenda?

- Program Director
 - takes the lead to prepare a draft
 - consults with the Site Visit Team Chair at least 30 days in advance and shares draft agenda
- Site Visit Team Chair
 - recommends order of events, logistics, people, or time
 - has final authority for agenda

Site Visit Agenda

	Chair's Name	Academic Member's Name	Practitioner's Name	Trainee's Name
Day One (Monday)				
8:00-8:15	<i>Travel to campus</i>	<i>Travel to campus</i>	<i>Travel to campus</i>	<i>Travel to campus</i>
8:15-8:45	Brief intro to all faculty <i>Location</i>	Brief intro to all faculty <i>Location</i>	Brief intro to all faculty <i>Location</i>	Brief intro to all faculty <i>Location</i>
8:45-9:30	Meeting with Program Director <i>Location</i>	Meeting with Program Director <i>Location</i>	Meeting with Program Director <i>Location</i>	Meeting with Program Director <i>Location</i>
9:30-10:00	File Review <i>Location</i>	Meeting with <i>Faculty Member's Name, Location</i>	Meeting with Clinic Coordinator <i>Faculty Member's Name, Location</i>	Meeting with <i>Faculty Member's Name, Location</i>
10:00-10:45	Tour Clinic, Classrooms, & Labs	Tour Clinic, Classrooms, & Labs	Tour Clinic, Classrooms, & Labs	Tour Clinic, Classrooms, & Labs
10:45 – 11:00	Break	Break	Break	Break
11:00-11:30	Meeting with <i>Faculty Member's Name, Location</i>	Meeting with Department Support Staff; <i>Name (s) & Location</i>	Meeting with <i>Clinical Faculty Member's Name, Location</i>	Meeting with Department Support Staff; <i>Name (s) & Location</i>
11:30-12:00	Calling (off campus supervisors &	Calling (off campus supervisors &	Calling (off campus supervisors &	Calling (off campus supervisors &



Who participates in the visit?

- Graduate Program
 - Program Director, Clinic Director, Dept. Chair (if different than program director)
 - Full- and part-time academic faculty
 - On-campus clinical educators & supervisors
 - Students
 - Support staff
- Central Administration
 - dean, provost, or president
- External Contacts
 - Off-campus supervisors/preceptors
 - Alumni
 - Employers
 - Clients & their families
 - Members of the campus or local communities...



External Contacts



- Organize a sampling of individuals for site visitors to contact:
 - Externship site clinical supervisors/preceptors
 - Employers
 - Alumni
- Establish time in the agenda for calls



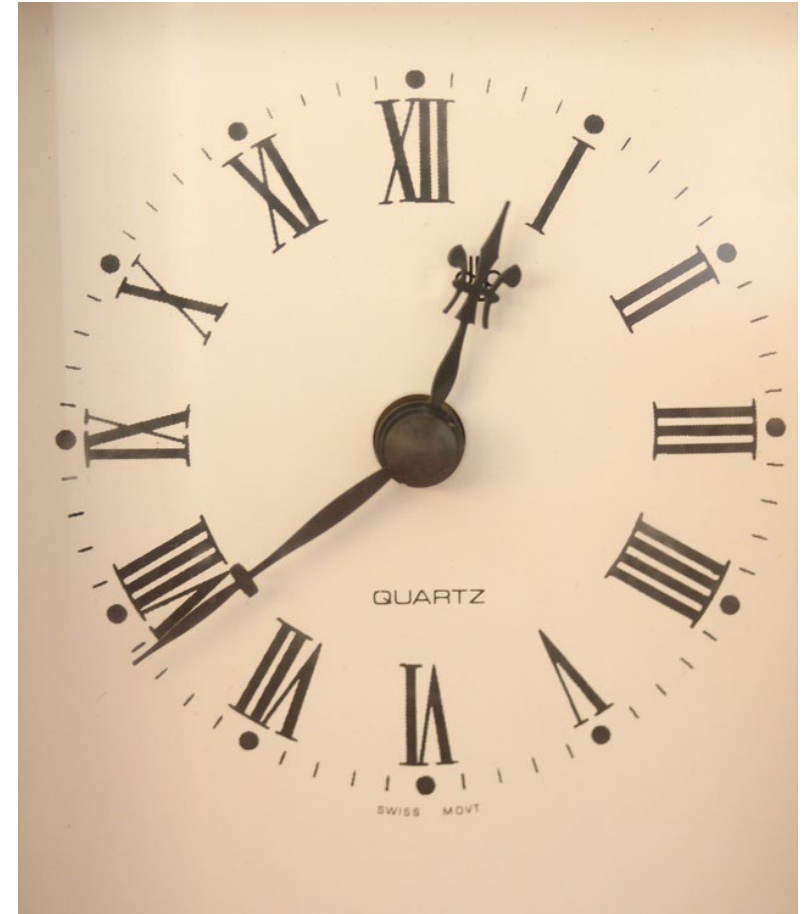
Separate or Together?

- Team members may be separated
 - interview individual faculty and supervisors
 - public and student meetings, as appropriate
- Team members are together
 - initial meeting with program director
 - meetings with Dean, Provost, etc.
 - facilities tours (virtual discussion)
 - exit report



Agenda Considerations

- Build-in time for:
 - Breaks!
 - Transition/walking time between interviews and appointments
- It is not necessary to schedule observations in the clinic.





What do I need to do about organizing a “public meeting”?

- “Widely” publish an announcement no later than 15 days prior to the site visit
 - program determines vehicle (website, campus/local newspaper, clinic or campus flyers, emails, etc.)
 - indicate date & time
 - RSVP instructions for Zoom meeting
 - location if holding meeting on campus (ensure accessible locations)
- Indicate how CAA Standards and/or Policy on Public Comment may be obtained



Public Comments

- **Can programs solicit public comments for submission to CAA before the visit?**
- Yes. Programs may contact students, alumni, clients, community members, etc. to inform them about the options to provide comments before or during the site visit. **CAA's Policy on Public Comment** outlines the process for submitting information to the CAA.
- Written comments must be signed and include contact information to allow for verification and be submitted 15 days in advance of the visit to the CAA office.
- Comments are not shared directly with programs; rather they are considered as part of the aggregate data.

Handling Emergencies

- Decision made jointly by program director & Site Visit Chair
 - Is university open?
 - Is there electricity or cell service?
- Include Accreditation Office staff in decision to ensure available resources





Conflicts of Interest

- In accordance with the CAA's conflict of interest policies, examples of conflicts for site visitors would be:
 - Asking for or accepting gifts
 - Accepting or requesting a sample of wares
 - Accepting payment for meals
 - Recruiting instructional staff
 - Recruiting students
 - Accepting employment positions

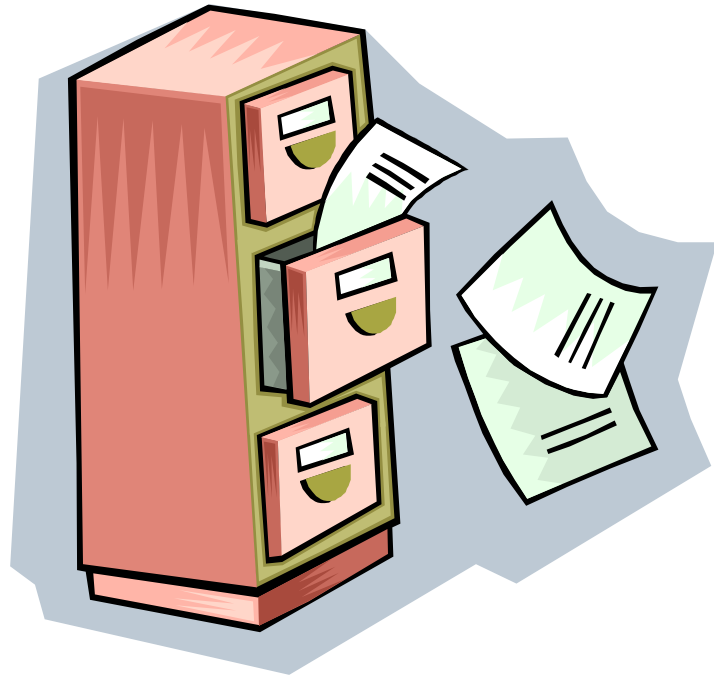


Documentation

- What will site visitors be looking for?



Documentation is used by site visitors to:



- verify information in your application
- ensure policies are in practice – and practices are in policies
- confirm student achievement/progress tracking

Team's Review

- Based wholly in Standards for Accreditation
- Guided by Requirements for Review
- Based on evidence presented

Standard 1.0 Administrative Structure and Governance

1.1 The sponsoring institution of higher education holds current regional accreditation.

Requirement for Review:

- The institution of higher education within which the audiology and/or speech-language pathology program is housed must hold regional accreditation from one of the following regional accrediting bodies:
 - o Middle States Commission on Higher Education;
 - o New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education;
 - o North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, The Higher Learning Commission;
 - o Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities;
 - o Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges;
 - o Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities.

1.2 The sponsoring institution of higher education must be authorized to provide the program of study in audiology and/or speech-language pathology.

Requirement for Review:

- The sponsoring institution of higher education must be authorized under applicable laws or other acceptable authority to provide the program of post-secondary education.
- The sponsoring institution of higher education must have appropriate graduate degree-granting authority.



What will they expect to see?

- Two key resources that help identify materials can be found on the CAA's website
 - Site Visit Review Materials
 - <https://caa.asha.org/site-visits/program-preparation/>
 - Documentation Guidance (for 2017 Standards, rev2023)
 - <https://caa.asha.org/reporting/standards/>
- Documentation must be prepared and **available in English.**

What will they expect to see?

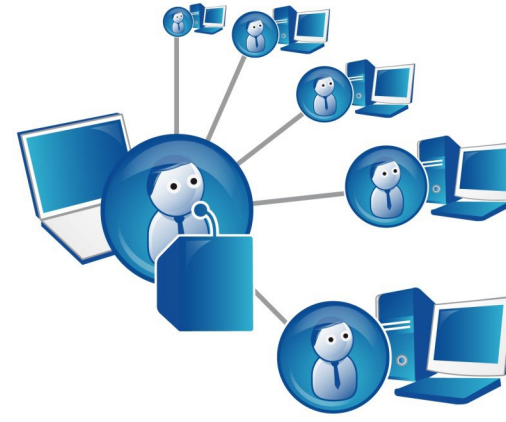
- Examples of documentation include:
 - Handbooks
(University/Department/Program)
 - All course syllabi
 - Assessment instruments and data
 - Lists of student files, current & past 3 yrs
 - Faculty meeting minutes
 - University's promotion and tenure guidelines
 - Copies of course evaluation forms, practicum evaluation forms (student and supervisor/site)
 - Copies of employer, alumni, and exit surveys



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Documentation Prep/Access

- Key documentation must be made available to the Site Visit team **at least 1 month** in advance of the visit.
 - Virtual Workroom/library
 - Website
- Add dates to documents to ensure most current version available to team





Access to files & confidentiality

- FERPA - students
 - Allows site visitors access to student files for purposes of accreditation
 - Site visitors will not record or report any identifying information
- HIPAA - clinic “covered entity”
 - May need site visitors to sign a form acknowledging confidentiality, consistent with your institution’s protocols
 - Client files are typically not reviewed; but clinic schedule could be
 - CAA/ASHA does not need to sign Business Associate Agreements



Technology Considerations

- What software is used to support (distance) education?
- What resources support satellite campus(es)?
- What resources are required of students, faculty, staff?
- What training is provided?
- What support is provided and by which entity (university, program)?



Required web content

- Student outcome data
 - 2013 Standards change (required publication online)
 - 2017 Standards – required labeling
 - 2017 Standards revised for 2023 remove employment data as required outcome measure
- Accreditation statement (July 2013 policy; January 2017 policy; February 2022 policy)



Student Outcome Data

- Programs in audiology and/or speech-language pathology that are **accredited** by the CAA:

The [master's degree title + abbreviation education program in speech-language pathology {residential, distance education, satellite location, contractual arrangement} and/or the doctoral degree title + abbreviation education program in audiology {residential, distance education, satellite location, contractual arrangement}] at [name of parent institution of higher education] is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard, #310, Rockville, MD 20850, 800-498-2071 or 301-296-5700.



Myth vs. Fact #2

- **CAA requires programs to use a specific form or software to track student progress.**
- **No, the above statement is a myth.**
 - Programs should develop forms/mechanisms to track a student's progress consistent with program's stated goals.
 - Site Visitors will look to ensure these mechanisms and processes consistently track:
 - acquisition of knowledge and skills
 - supervised clinical practicum hours
 - progress toward graduation
 - progress toward state and national credentials



Myth vs. Fact #3

- **Site visitors' in-depth knowledge of the program is limited to the current accreditation application and related resources, e.g., program's website.**
- **Yes, the above statement is a FACT.**
 - The site visit team is **not** provided past applications or annual reports for their review for the visit. Nor is a history of the program's citations or follow-ups provided.
 - Site visitors are expected to review the webpages of the program and university to verify data and its currency.



Site Visit Report

- The site visit team is required to generate a report of the site visit.



Site Visit Report

- Becomes official record of team's observations
- Considered a critical element by the CAA to make fair, impartial, and informed decisions on program's accreditation

Site Visit Report

- Results of the team's observations are presented twice to the program:
 - orally at end of visit (Exit Report) as a summary
 - written report (Site Visit Report) with details > 8 weeks post visit





Exit Report

- Oral report of SV team's observations to the program
 - Standards for Accreditation = source for verification
 - Know what will be included in written report
- Attendees include Program Director
 - Others determined by program, e.g. faculty, clinic director, administrators, students, department chair
- Opportunity to receive information, ask questions

Site Visit Report

- **Written** site visit report is sent to:
 - Program Director
 - President or designee
 - Usually the provost or dean - whoever signed the application authorization
- 8 weeks after the visit





Site Visit Report - Response

- Program director and the president/designee have opportunity to provide written response within 30 days to:
 - clarify accuracy of the site visitors' observations
 - provide updates on progress made on issues noted by site visit team
 - provide updates about standards that were not necessarily identified as issues by the site visit team
- **Program's response is considered by the CAA when making its final accreditation decision.**

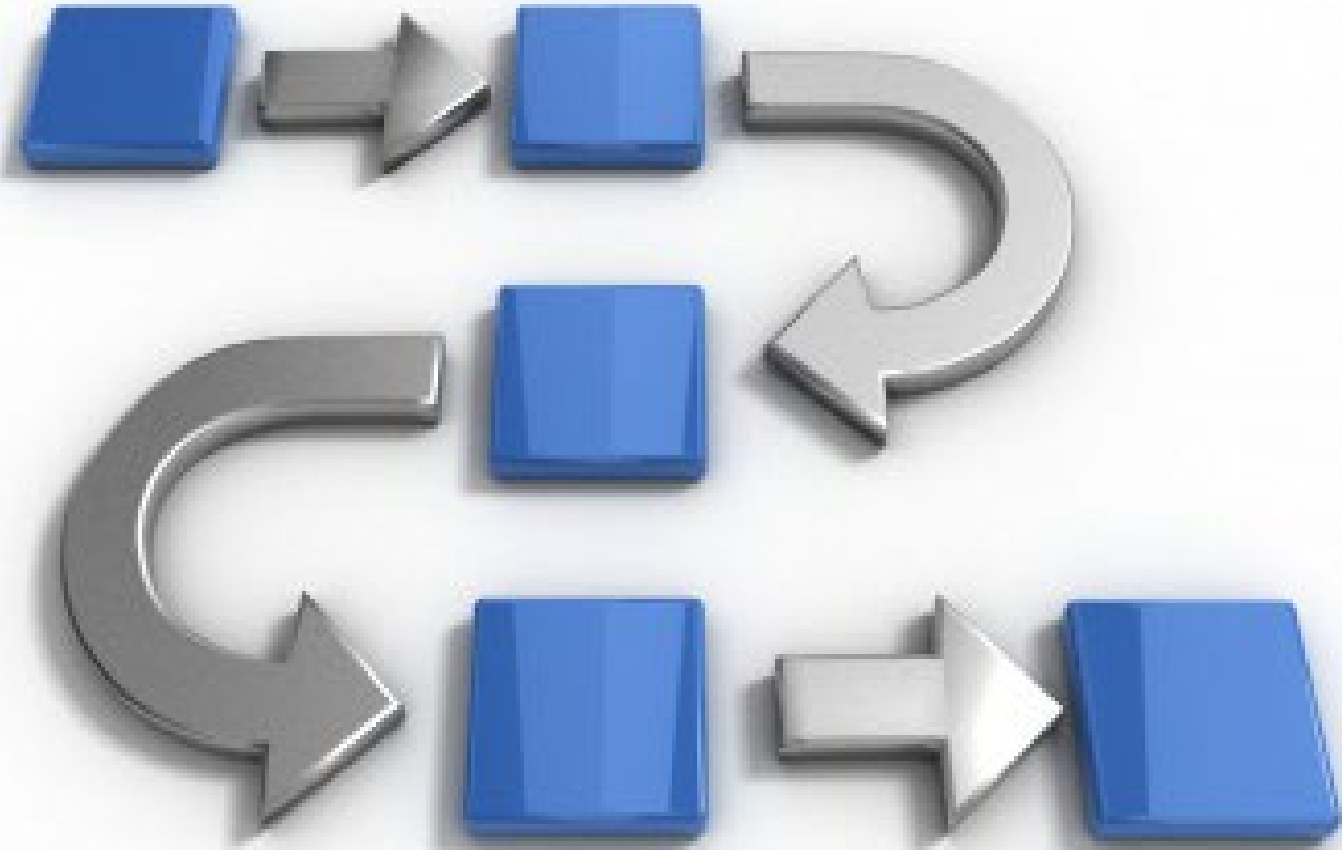


Myth vs. Fact #4

- **Observations reported by the team may be different than those identified by the CAA in its initial review of the application.**
- **Yes, the above statement is a FACT.**
 - The Site Visit team has access to documentation on-site that the CAA does not have while conducting its initial review of the application. As a result, the site visitors may offer a different perspective on your program's ability to demonstrate compliance.



CAA Decisions





CAA Decisions

- CAA makes most final accreditation decisions at face-to-face meetings 2x/year
 - Fall site visits = February meeting (accreditation, candidacy)
 - Spring site visits = July meeting (accreditation) or specially designated meetings (May – candidacy)
- Programs can typically expect decisions 3-5 months after site visit; 12 months after application submission
 - ... and no later than 30 days after the CAA meeting

Enforcement of Standards & CAA Decisions

§602.20 Enforcement of standards.

- (a) If the agency's review of an institution or program under any standard indicates that the institution or program is not in compliance with that standard, the agency must—
 - (1) Follow its written policy for notifying the institution or program of the finding of noncompliance;
 - (2) Provide the institution or program with a written timeline for coming into compliance that is reasonable, as determined by the agency's decision-making body, based on the nature of the finding, the stated mission, and educational objectives of the institution or program. The timeline may include intermediate checkpoints on the way to full compliance and must not exceed the lesser of four years or 150 percent of the—
 - (i) Length of the program in the case of a programmatic accrediting agency; or
 - (ii) Length of the longest program at the institution in the case of an institutional accrediting agency; ...



Myth vs. Fact #5

- **The site visit team's findings are the only data used by CAA for final accreditation decision and citations.**
- ***No, the above statement is a MYTH.***
 - The CAA considers all information, from the accreditation application through the program's response to the site visit report and any program updates, to determine a program's compliance with each standard and the resulting accreditation decision. The CAA also takes into consideration whether any unresolved issues remain from previous reviews.
 - The CAA's final decision and citations may differ from SV team observations, as the CAA has access to updated information from the program after the site visit.



Site Visitor Performance Feedback/ Evaluations

Site Visitor Performance Feedback



Complete online survey immediately following the site visit, but no later than end of the semester



Provide feedback on **each** member of site visit team; helpful to include input from entire faculty/staff



Evaluation form:

Uses numeric rating system

Reflect knowledge, skills, responsibilities, & expected behaviors of site visitors

Opportunity for written comments



Myth vs. Fact #6

- **Completing site visitor evaluations before the final decision is rendered will affect the results of the accreditation decision.**
- **No, the above statement is a MYTH!**
 - The evaluations are used to improve the site visit process and performance of site visitors. Evaluation materials are not considered when the CAA renders accreditation decisions and are kept entirely separate.



Next Steps & Reminders



Checklist for Program Directors

Complete the availability survey if you have not yet done so and have a Spring 2023 site visit

Review Site Visit Confirmation Letter/Reach out to SV Chair/Make hotel reservations

Develop draft agenda

Make key documents electronically available to team (30 days in advance)

Review website for accuracy and currency

Submit response to CAA's initial observations & provide updated faculty list/CV (30 days in advance)

Publish public meeting announcement (no later than 15 days in advance)

Arrange logistical considerations for public and student meetings

Arrange hotel reservations and ground transportation for team

Provide a response to the site visit report (30 days after receipt)

Complete feedback survey on the site visit process and site visitors



Follow-Up Site Visits

- USDE requires accreditors to visit campuses
- Abbreviated visit
 - 1 day (longer if multiple campuses, consortium)
 - 1 site visitor/ professional area
 - Tour
 - Public Meeting
 - Any issues cited by the CAA in their decision/AAR
- Candidacy vs. Accredited program meetings/activities may differ

	CANDIDATE PROGRAM	ACCREDITED PROGRAM
Tour (6.3)	X	X
Meet with program director	X	X
Meet with students	X	X
Meet with public	X	X
Meet with dean or other central administrators	X	X
Review student/alumni files	X	If needed
Interview new hires (2.0)	X	
Review clinical agreements/ interview supervisors	X	
Other areas/standards identified by the CAA in its decision	X	X

Site Visit Resources



CAA WEBSITE -
[CAA.ASHA.ORG](https://caa.asha.org)



ACCREDITATION
HANDBOOK – LINK
FROM ANY PAGE
ON CAA WEBSITE



DOCUMENTATION
GUIDANCE -
[CAA.ASHA.ORG/REP
ORTING/STANDARDS](https://caa.asha.org/reporting/standards/)
!



SUGGESTED
QUESTIONS FOR
INTERVIEWS (IN
HANDBOOK)

<https://caa.asha.org/site-visits/program-preparation/>

Accreditation Staff Resources

(1-800-498-2071)



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