



**Computing Accreditation Commission  
Institutional Representative Orientation:  
In-person/Virtual Site Visit Preparation**

**July 18, 2022**

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# Goals for Today

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

# Before We start ...

- The chat feature has been disabled.
- Please use the Q&A feature to ask questions.
- The slides are posted at <https://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/>
  - Scroll down to Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC).

# Common Terms

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

Term	Meaning
<b>CS</b>	Computer Science
<b>CY</b>	Cybersecurity
<b>DS</b>	Data Science
<b>IS</b>	Information Systems
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology

# Basic Accreditation Timeline

## Year “Zero”

- Fall
  - Readiness Review (some new programs)

## Year One – 2021-22

- Fall
  - Start writing Self Study
  - Collect course materials
- Spring
  - Submit RFE
  - Finish Self Study
  - Collect course materials
  - TC assignment/approval
- Summer
  - PEV assignment/approval
  - Submit Self Study
  - Attend Institutional Rep Orientation

## Year Two – 2022-23

- Fall
  - Interact with visit team
  - Visits conducted
- Fall/Spring
  - Draft Statement
  - Due Process Response
  - Draft Final Statement (for July commission meeting)
- Summer
  - Accreditation decision made at July commission meeting
  - Final Statement (~August)

**We are here today** →

# Types of Reviews

- Single commission

- CAC reviews one or more programs

- Simultaneous

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

- Joint

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

- General

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

- Interim

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

# COVID 19 Impact on Program Delivery

- We understand you (and institutions world-wide), beginning March 2020, may have encountered the following:
  - Faculty and staff working remotely due to the global pandemic
  - Courses transitioning to fully-online
  - Laboratories being unavailable
  - Grading system changes such as pass/fail
  - Students studying under difficult circumstances
  - Data being difficult to collect and documentation difficult to produce

# COVID-19: 2022-23 Accreditation Cycle

- Our teams are NOT going to judge your program(s) based on your response to COVID-19.
- We will look at the program and its processes over the full accreditation cycle for compliance with the criteria and the APPM, rather than using just a snapshot in time.
- We will be reasonable in our approach and decision-making ***without compromising ABET review quality and integrity.***



**Between Now  
and the  
Physical/Virtual Visit**

# Your Immediate Goals

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

# Pre-visit Communication

- The CAC asks that all communication be done through the Team Chair, not the PEVs.
- Other commissions may allow communications directly with Program Evaluators (PEVs), but not the CAC.
  - Sometimes the Team Chair may make exceptions for joint or simultaneous visits to align better with other commissions.
- Important to communicate regularly with your Team Chair.

# ABET HQ Directive on Electronic Recording of ABET Accreditation Meetings

- Any type of electronic recording of live ABET accreditation conversations or meetings is **prohibited**.
- This policy applies to ABET Accreditation staff, volunteers, and the institutions involved in evaluation reviews.
- For accreditation reviews, this applies to review planning meetings, ABET team meetings, exit meetings and faculty, staff and student interviews.
  - Interviews with faculty, students and key staff are confidential.
- Exceptions to this are pre-recorded laboratory tours.
- All parties involved in the pre-recorded laboratory tour must be identified by name and provide their recorded consent to be recorded.

# Course & Assessment Displays

## Course Displays

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

## Assessment Data

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

**This normally includes copies of minutes from meetings**

# Comments on Displays

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

# Other Details

## Materials

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

## Communicate

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

# Questions/Comments?





# The In-Person Review

# Visit Arrangements

## Schedule

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

## Logistics

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

# Team Requirement: Private Room During Visit

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

# Questions/Comments?



# The Visit Schedule

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

# Sample Sunday Schedule (Day 0)

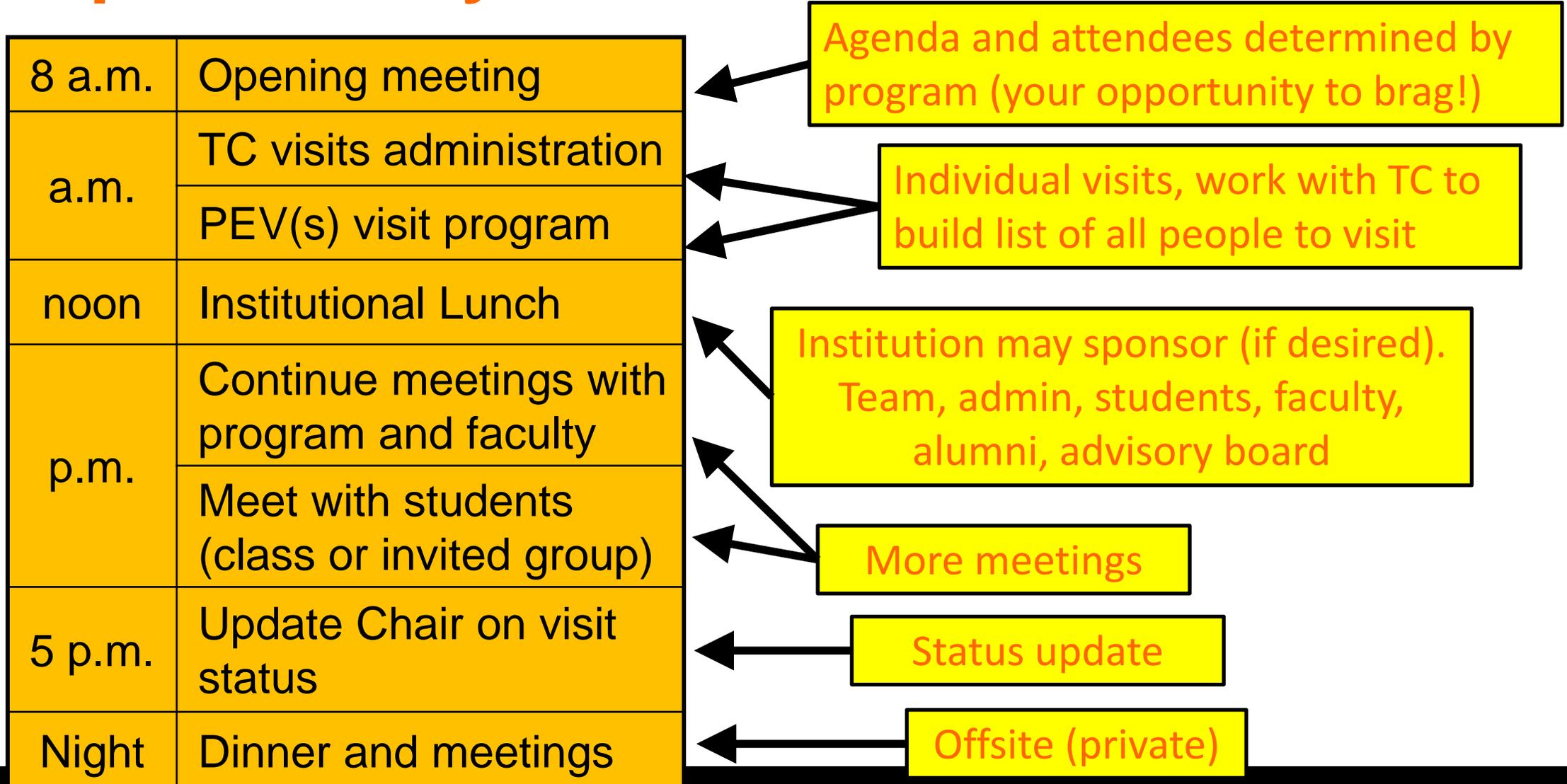
1 p.m.	Meet team Tour facilities
2 p.m.	Team reviews course and assessment displays
6 p.m.	Team dinner
8 p.m.	Team meeting

Coordinate meeting location  
and parking, mobile  
numbers before the visit

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

Off-site (private)

# Sample Monday Schedule



# Sample Tuesday Schedule

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

# Tuesday Exit Meeting

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

# Flexibility

- ABET is prepared to be flexible to help you through your accreditation visit.
- If something unexpected should happen to prevent the normal operation of the visit.
  - Team Chair will help you restructure the visit to proceed in a different format or on different days, e.g., the use of hybrid events (some in-person, some virtual) or rescheduled dates.

# Questions/Comments?





# The Virtual Review

# Scope and Expectations

- Planning
  - There will be **NO** team travel to any on-site location.
  - Teams will handle all planning and organization virtually.
- Materials
  - Programs provide all materials electronically (e.g., institutional system, Dropbox, email, etc.).
  - No printed, USB, or physical formats will be requested or accepted.

# Scope and Expectations

- Facility Tours
  - Programs should set up virtual tours of the facilities and labs.
  - In some cases, the team may ask for a real-time virtual lab tour.
- Interviews
  - Teams will conduct all interviews of faculty, students and staff virtually.
  - These meetings are confidential and may require ABET's Zoom accounts.

# Scope and Expectations

- Exit Meeting
  - The Exit Meeting will occur virtually.
- Technical Platform
  - Zoom will be the default videoconferencing platform supplied and supported by ABET.
  - Institutional requirements may drive videoconferencing platform.
  - To ensure interview confidentiality, ABET may require Zoom for one-on-one interviews with staff/faculty and with students.

# Virtual Visit Dates and Duration

- ABET has returned to the usual timeline for visits this year between September and December 2022.
- Virtual visits may be extended beyond 3 days, but no longer than 1 week.
  - Team members and institutions may be in multiple time zones (you and the team should be flexible with the workday).
  - Some activities may need additional time to complete in the virtual modality.

# Planning/Transition Timeline

- Around 2 months needed to plan for your virtual review.
- Planning timeline involving the TC, PEVs, institution and its programs includes:
  - Setting the schedule to include virtual interviews, meetings, and facility tours.
  - Providing electronic support materials and access for team review.
  - Establishing technical hardware and testing.

# Support/Display Materials

## Guided by APPM I.E.5.b. (2) – (8)

- Requirements are not different for virtual visits; however, the timing and methods of submission, organization, and presentation may be different.
- The program must make materials available at least one month prior to the start date of the virtual visit.
- Work with the Team Chair (and PEVs) to determine what materials they will need and where materials will be located.
- Although the actual textbooks are no longer needed, the team will still need to know the title, authors, edition, publisher, and year of publication of each textbook!

# Support/Display Materials

- If an institutional system is used to provide access to evidence and documentation, team members must be given access to your network and the software.
- Guidance or training material on the institutional system must be provided so the team members can efficiently find evidence and documentation.
- Timeliness and testing are critical for the team to be able to conduct its work.
- Translation will be needed where the language of instruction is not English (follows **APPM I.D.1.g.**).

# Facility Tours

- Review the equipment against the equipment list from the Self-Study Report.
  - Allow the team to view the various instruments/equipment used.
- Provide narrated, recorded videos.
  - Cover labs, classrooms, library, and computing services.
  - Short videos (~5 minutes per lab, one video/lab or other location).
  - Smartphone quality will suffice – need audio and video.
  - Include name, location, signage, general layout, safety, courses supported, instructional equipment, etc.
  - Early testing using a sample video to verify usability by team.

# Interviews

- Provide a private, well-connected, and suitably equipped location for one-on-one interviews.
  - Each faculty member must be interviewed in their own office.
- For group interviews, establish participant location, IT requirements, and A/V hardware needed to have a productive meeting.
  - Ensure visiting team can see/hear each person clearly.
- Pre-testing is critical in all interview locations.
- Need to have institutional IT staff available for setup, testing, and troubleshooting.

# Exit Meeting

- Similar to those done in in-person reviews but may be restructured by the Team Chair.
- Program Audit Form (PAF) will be available online in the Accreditation Management System (AMS).

# Platform and Technical Support

- Need to establish and test minimum IT requirements.
  - Bandwidth, wired and wireless connectivity, and security. Wired (ethernet) connectivity is always preferable.
  - Identify headset and microphone requirements for one-on-one and group interviews.
  - Provide A/V hardware, training, and support to all institutional participants.
- Establish backup plans.

# Planning and Next Steps

- Team Chairs and PEVs have undergone extensive training developed specially for the 2022-23 virtual review cycle.
  - Many also have experiences from previous virtual visits to work from.
- Team Chairs will provide you with explicit and detailed guidance on all critical areas of the review identified in previous slides.
- Communicate early and often with the Team Chair to assure the visit will be trouble-free and productive.
- A team of ABET Adjunct Accreditation Directors, HQ Staff, and an IT team will also be available to teams to support virtual visits.
- Finally, if you have questions, reach out to your Team Chair!

# Questions/Comments?





# What Happens After the Visit?

# Immediately After the Visit

- **Program**

- Has seven (7) days to correct “errors of fact” in the PAF(s).
- Start to work on your own to address shortcomings identified in the PAF(s).

- **ABET**

- Team Chair uses the PAF or PAFs to generate a Draft Statement.
- Draft Statement is reviewed by two assigned Editors and Adjunct Accreditation Director, Computing.

# After You Receive the Draft Statement

- **Program**

- Has thirty (30) days to submit a Due Process Response – updates on any shortcomings that have been addressed.
- May submit a Post 30-Day Due Process Response provided you submitted a Due Process Response (negotiated with TC but no later than April 30).

- **ABET/CAC**

- Draft Final Statement created by Team Chair, reviewed by two Editors and ABET Adjunct Accreditation Director, Computing.
- Draft Final Statement is held for review and approval by the full Commission at its July Meeting for determining final action.
- Institutions normally notified of the accreditation action decision in August.

# Questions/Comments?





# Accreditation Decisions

# How Accreditation Decisions Are Made

- Each Criterion or Policy is evaluated to determine if it is met
- Each Criterion or Policy **either**:
  - Is satisfied **or**
  - Has one or more shortcomings.

# What Do Shortcomings Mean?

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

# Two Comments on Findings

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

# Findings → Actions and Time to Next Review

Comprehensive Reviews
No Deficiencies No Weaknesses <b>NGR (6 years)</b>
No Deficiencies One or more weaknesses <b>IV or IR (2 years)</b>
One or more Deficiencies <b>SCV or SCR (2 years) or NA</b>

Interim Reviews
No Deficiencies No Weaknesses <b>VE or RE or SE (2 or 4 years)</b>
No Deficiencies One or more weaknesses <b>IV or IR (2 years)</b>
One or more Deficiencies <b>SCR or SCV (2 years)</b>

Term	Meaning
<b>NGR</b>	Next General Review
<b>IR/IV</b>	Interim Report/Visit
<b>SCR/SCV</b>	Show Cause Report/Visit
<b>RE/VE/SE</b>	Report/Visit/Show Cause Extended

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# Questions?

Harold Grossman, [hgrossman@abet.org](mailto:hgrossman@abet.org)

Rajendra K Raj, [rkr@cs.rit.edu](mailto:rkr@cs.rit.edu)

# Thank You !

- Information about ABET, the Criteria, commissions, member societies, and much more is at:
  - [www.abet.org](http://www.abet.org)
- Institutional Representative Orientation: In-person/Virtual Site Visit Preparation.
  - Slides/recordings of this webinar will be posted under the CAC area of
  - [www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/](http://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/)
- Institutional Representative Orientation: Self-Study Preparation.
  - This was presented and recorded in May 2022
  - Slides/recording are already posted at the previous link.
- Also be aware of proposals for future Criteria changes (not applicable this year!):
  - [www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/accreditation-alerts/](http://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/accreditation-alerts/)

Question	Answer
We learned at the EAC preparation webinar that textbooks are no longer expected/required as part of the materials to be reviewed. Is that also the case for CAC? Or is that up to individual PEVs?	That is also the case with CAC however, a PEV may wish to see a specific textbook. So you do not have to have all textbooks available, but be prepared to provide one if requested.
I have not been contacted by our TC. Should I contact them?	Definitely! If you have any issues, please contact the CAC Adjunct: hgrossman@abet.org
If data gets difficult to collect while COVID 19 what will be the effect in the result	Depends. Collect what you can, document what you have done, and let the chips fall where they may. If your program has been in face-to-face operations, it is hard to claim that COVID has interfered with your data collection.
1) Should virtual display be organized on course-by-course basis?	Your choice, I personally would. I also strongly suggest that you go through with the TC how the display materials are organized.
2) Make a website for ALL virtual material?	I would but that is your decision, not CAC's. Again "train" the visit team how the material is organized.
Are the course displays now migrating to virtual as well (e.g., on Moodle)?	If you have a virtual visit, course display are virtual via whatever mechanism you use. If your visit is f2f, then course displays may be virtual. In both cases they must be available 30 days before the visit.
The slide says "syllabus". Are we supposed to provide the actual course syllabus or the 2-page ABET-style syllabus?	No but we would expect to see the course syllabus in the course display materials.
If you have assignments of the form : Solve problems 1, 4 and 8 in Chapter 1. In this case do you need the textbook or at list a printout of the questions?	A list of questions will do.
Will there be any deduction of marks in criterion 5 if we are not able to show all faculty members as mentioned in SSR, specially female faculty members left due to maternity leave?	Unless your program has unusual turnover, CAC does not evaluate who leaves for what reason.
For first-time evaluations, what kind of Assessment Data is required?	A complete cycle, data collection, data evaluation, decision made, action plan.
What is a tracking form?	CAC has a form called the PEW. It is the criteria, one sentence at a time. It is also available on the ABET website, main page, left side, under the PEV workbook.
When do we provide the transcripts? Is there a specific timeline?	You will be asked for transcripts by the TC, how many what letter to start with, etc. I suggest that you upload those to AMS but

	you can deliver them as an attachment via email.
Is it necessary to make the course material to make it online available I mean public domain	No public domain, but if you do put it online, the visit team needs to know the organization.
What is the role of the Observer? Do we arrange our schedules based on their availability or do they adjust their schedules to those of the PEV or TC?	Observers adjust their schedule to yours.
Where in the AMS can the transcripts be uploaded?	As an appendix. Just tell the TC where to find it.
Can a Non PhD Faculty Become ABET Coordinator of the Institute ?	ABET coordinators at the institution is the institution's decision, not ABET's.
(Is it just as "additional documents" on the self-study or a separate spot?)	Yes or just send what you have as an attachment to an email.
When will be the laboratory visit?	Typically Sunday afternoon.
What about the project visit?	Maybe Sunday afternoon.
Addendum to the question about tracking forms	That question may have been about what to include with transcripts. If so, the answer to that is: Your institution probably has a form that you use to keep track of which program requirements a student has completed. If you have such a form, it helps to include that with each transcript so that the team can more easily see how that student meets your program requirements.
Any other stakeholders interaction apart from students and facilities?	Some programs invite alumni, industry folks, anyone that the program thinks would clearly represent their program.
In the past, we have received two site visits, What is the main difference between site visit and virtual visit?	ABET visits once and only once. You may have a visit two years after the first, but not two visit for one evaluation.
What is the ideal length and coverage of a Day 1 morning presentation? Should it include a synopsis of self-study report?	The visit team can read and might have questions. However your first meeting with the team is the place where you can blow your horn about your program. Don't take too long.
What is the timeline for clarification to the questions raised by the pev or team chair?	Before the visit, one week. At the visit, one hour. Now one hour may not be possible, but it would really be helpful to have that answer as quickly as reasonably possible.
In case of online what are all the things that program needs to be recorded and where to be made it available	The labs are recorded and shared with the team via AMS. Upload those materials as additional documents.

Do we need to share the assessment data for the physical visit in July or December?	When the team visits, they may want to see the "raw" data. Have it readily available.
After the submission of SSR, what data could be asked by the team or team chair?	Anything that raises a question w.r.t. the criteria.
Can you provide information regarding PhD course	No, CAC does not have any criteria regarding PhD courses.
Will the programs will get information before three months regarding the mode of visit?	You should already know. Someone at your institution knows.
Who can contact the team chair? Dean or HOD?	The dean or chair at your institution normally appoints someone, maybe in each program, as the point of contact. That person should interact with the team. In CAC's case that normally is someone in the program and that program person interacts with the CAC team chair.