SELF-STUDY REPORT MANUAL

2024 Edition: Reflects 2022 Accreditation Standards

SELF-STUDY REPORT MANUAL

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PREFACE

This document details the process and procedures for writing and distributing a Self-Study Report (SSR). The document also contains guidance for demonstrating compliance with the standards.

As of 2024, all SSRs will be submitted via Armature Fabric, PAB's online accreditation management system. The SSR templates found on the PAB website are provided for illustrative/working document purposes only.

Other documents that will assist you with preparing for your accreditation review include:

- *Accreditation Standards* - This document contains PAB's preconditions to accreditation and the accreditation standards and criteria. All accredited programs and those applying for accreditation must demonstrate substantial compliance with the standards.

- *Policies and Procedures Manual* - This document describes the policies and procedures used by the PAB in the accreditation of planning programs. It provides guidance on the review process and expectations of the PAB.

- *Site Visit Manual for Program Administrators* - This document contains the processes and procedures used for conducting a Site Visit. It includes guidance for Program Administrators in preparing for the Site Visit.

- *Site Visit Manual for Site Visitors* - This document contains the processes and procedures used for conducting a Site Visit. It includes guidance for Site Visitors in preparing for an accreditation review, including the Site Visit. This document contains the Self-Study Report Manual as an appendix.

- *Fee Schedule* - The fee schedule posted on the PAB website contains the current fees associated with accreditation.

Questions about the accreditation process as administered by the Planning Accreditation Board should be directed to:

Planning Accreditation Board, 2334 W. Lawrence Avenue, Suite 209, Chicago, IL 60625
T: (773) 334-7200/10; www.planningaccreditationboard.org

PURPOSE OF THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

The Self-Study Report (SSR) is the result of a planning program's careful self-analysis in the context of the Planning Accreditation Board's (PAB) accreditation preconditions, Standards and Criteria. The SSR is a crucial element of a program's application for Candidacy Status, initial accreditation or re-accreditation, and is the primary document used by Site Visit Teams (SVTs) and the PAB to assess programs in those contexts.

A good SSR is the product of months of collaborative work; it defines a program's strengths and limitations, assesses its past, and charts its future. A program preparing an SSR gathers and interprets data, reviews accomplishments, reflects on the current state of its development in conjunction with its parent university, and develops plans for the future. Ideally, an SSR incorporates contributions from the Program's faculty, students, alumni, and staff. While the Program Administrator may assemble the SSR, when the entire program is involved in its creation, the document more effectively communicates the essence and nuances of the Program that are so critical to a thorough and fair assessment by PAB.

The SSR is one piece in PAB's continual assessment of a program. It is a document that is simultaneously accountable to the past and the future. It addresses any specific limitations or weaknesses cited in previous Site Visit Reports or Progress Reports, while also describing what the Program does best and how it could do better in both the immediate and the long term. An SSR presents a comprehensive picture of a program's strengths, challenges and potential, and serves as a roadmap to its future.

PAB's primary role is to ensure programs meet minimum standards of educational quality and deliver a common core of planning knowledge and skills. At the same time, PAB seeks to promote continued improvement and excellence in planning education. Because PAB recognizes planning is a broad and diverse field and planning programs are idiosyncratic, it allows programs to interpret for themselves what it means to "meet minimum standards." In other words, PAB's goal in conducting accreditation reviews is to evaluate programs according to the goals the Programs set for themselves. The structured nature of PAB's Accreditation Standards (Standards) is not intended to force all programs into a uniform mold. Rather, Standards represent the baseline of PAB's conception of quality, and provide a vocabulary to help programs articulate their own goals and identities.

BENEFITS OF THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

Preparing an SSR presents programs with a tremendous opportunity for self-reflection and growth. Simply by preparing the SSR, a program benefits from the exercise of assessing how well its mission reflects that of the University, the College, the Department, the Unit, etc. and how fully it is meeting its own goals and objectives. The SSR also provides a means of measuring the Program's own performance against the standards of the profession as defined by PAB's Standards.

These rewards are amplified by the feedback the SSR generates from students, faculty, administrators, Site Visitors, and PAB. Such feedback often lends greater clarity to the Program's goals and objectives while illuminating its accomplishments and opportunities for growth.

Perhaps the most important result of developing the SSR is the incentive it provides for future improvement. If a program views its SSR simply as a mandatory exercise of accreditation, it forgoes the opportunity to use the evidence, assessment and conclusions generated by the SSR to chart its future course. Programs that write the most effective SSRs are those that recognize and use the SSR as a valuable tool in defining and implementing their own goals.

PREPARING AN EFFECTIVE SELF-STUDY REPORT

Before beginning to write the SSR, programs should thoroughly review the Accreditation Standards, this manual, and the SSR template. All documents are provided within the Accreditation Resources section on the PAB website.

Once a program is familiar with the underlying concepts the SSR is designed to address, it should begin the process gathering evidence to demonstrate compliance. This should be done as early as possible in the accreditation review process. The Program should present data (including trend analyses) to support any assertions it makes and conclusions it draws in the SSR. Programs may find the process of data collection less burdensome if they make a habit of collecting and storing the necessary data each year in anticipation of the Program's next SSR. Programs should ensure all data is current when the SSR is submitted.

Making the case for compliance involves bringing together effective narrative with supporting evidence. While an SSR is a comprehensive report that addresses all aspects of a program, it should not allow narrative and data to be obscured by large volumes of marginally relevant information. Overly inclusive SSRs make it difficult for the SVT and PAB to distill the essence of a program, which in turn makes it difficult for them to evaluate it fairly.

SELF-STUDY REPORT COMPONENTS

The SSR consists of the four parts described below.

Signatures and Contact Information

Signatures of the Program Director, the administrator to whom the Program Director reports (typically the Dean), the Provost/Chief Academic Officer, and the President/Chief Executive Officer attest to the validity of the report and to the institution's support for accreditation of the Program. Contact information for the Program's planning student organization representative and its local APA Chapter representative is also solicited.

Preconditions to Accreditation

In this part of the SSR the Program demonstrates compliance with PAB's Preconditions to Accreditation and provides a comprehensive overview of its history, and organizational structure within the School/College and University.

Accreditation Standards

In this part of the SSR the Program demonstrates compliance with PAB's Standards. Programs must respond to each standard and criterion as indicated in the template. Responses must explicitly address the extent to which the Program has met the particular standard and criterion. Programs should present clear and concise arguments supporting the narrative. Responses should be written for the benefit of readers who are wholly unfamiliar with the Program.

Documentation for SSR submissions

The following documents and evidence are to be submitted to support the SSR:
1. Faculty Abbreviated CVs (see Cover Sheet and Template) – Use PAB's summary CV template to prepare and provide one consolidated PDF prefaced with the cover sheet/table of contents.
2. Course Syllabi (see Cover Sheet) – Provide course syllabi for all courses required of students and electives. The syllabi should be provided in one consolidated PDF prefaced with the cover sheet/table of contents.
3. Other Evidence (see Cover Sheet) – Use this cover sheet/table of contents to preface supporting documentation that the Program wishes to include. Provide only one consolidated document.

SELF-STUDY REPORT SUBMISSION

The Program's draft SSR is due to PAB on June 15 (if a fall Site Visit has been scheduled) or September 15 (if a Site Visit the following spring has been scheduled). The final SSR is due to PAB two weeks after PAB staff comments to the draft report are shared.

Institutions with an accredited undergraduate and an accredited graduate program should submit the Self-Study Report for Dual Program Reviews.

GUIDANCE WITH REGARD TO EVIDENCE

This section of the manual is presented to assist programs in formulating appropriate responses to document compliance in their Self-Study Reports (SSR).

A program applying for accreditation must demonstrate that it meets the preconditions to accreditation and it is in substantial compliance with the accreditation Standards and Criteria, and that it expects to continue to be in substantial compliance through any term of accreditation granted. The burden of proof for demonstrating this rests with the Program.

PAB's review will center on the specific program leading to the degree(s) for which accreditation is sought. Where two degree programs are accredited or under review, each Standard and Criterion is applicable to each degree program. Where aspects of other degree programs offered by the academic unit are germane to the evaluation, these will be considered within the context of the degree program(s) under review.

PRECONDITIONS TO ACCREDITATION

All programs applying for accreditation review must meet five preconditions. Programs must demonstrate in their SSRs that they meet the preconditions to accreditation at each accreditation review. The existence of a campus-based program which meets all preconditions is a prerequisite for an application from a program delivered via distance education. For accreditation purposes, programs are evaluated in the same way regardless of locations or modalities of delivery.

As PAB is desirous of promoting innovation and experimentation in planning education, programs which do not meet the preconditions in a strictly literal sense, but which meet the spirit of these provisions, may petition PAB for special consideration. Such petitions and SSRs must provide evidence that the Program meets the spirit of the preconditions.

1. **Program Graduates**

Programs shall have granted the degree for which accreditation is sought to at least 25 students.

2. **Accreditation Status of the Institution**

The Program's parent institution shall be accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or by its successor organization.

3. **Program and Degree Titles**

Formal titles of programs and degrees shall contain the word "planning."

4. **Length of Program**

Undergraduate degree programs shall require a minimum of four academic years of full-time study or the equivalent. For students for whom the graduate degree constitutes the first professional degree in planning, a minimum of two academic years of full-time study or the equivalent in planning is required.

Guideline: Fast-tracking. Programs that combine undergraduate education with a graduate degree in planning in a total of less than six academic years or the equivalent shall meet the standards of an accredited graduate degree.

Guideline: Dual Degrees. Programs may allow a degree in planning to be earned simultaneously with a degree in another field, in less time than required to earn each degree separately. All standards of an accredited graduate degree in planning must be met and the electives allowed to meet requirements of the other degree must be appropriate as electives for a planning degree.

5. **Primary Focus**
The degree program's primary focus shall be that of preparing students to become practitioners in the planning profession.

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

1. **Strategic Planning and Progress**

The Program or the Department in which it resides shall strive for self-improvement using an intentional process of goal articulation, planning, outcomes assessment, reflection, and improvement.

A. <u>Strategic Plan</u>: The Program shall have a strategic plan for achieving its goals and objectives – either as a free-standing plan or part of a broader departmental strategic plan – and must be able to demonstrate progress towards goal attainment. Programs must document active engagement in plan development by faculty, students, alumni, practitioners and any other key stakeholders the Program deems important to the process. Practitioners and other key stakeholders may include a broad spectrum of professionals who can be resources for the Program during plan development and implementation. The strategic plan shall include the Program's definition of diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice, and goals and measurable objectives aimed at achieving them. The strategic plan must include the following elements:

To demonstrate compliance: Briefly describe how the strategic plan provides overall guidance for program implementation by, for example, articulating what the Program is, who it serves, what it seeks to accomplish, and how that is and will be done within its context. In the case where two programs are seeking accreditation, goals and measurable outcomes specific to each degree program should appear in the strategic plan. Briefly analyze the consistency of the Program's plan with its mission including the preparation of professional planners. Provide evidence that stakeholders were involved in the development of the plan and are familiar with it. Provide evidence that the plan is being followed in addition to the rationale for the recent/ongoing changes being implemented and identify the anticipated impact of these changes to advance program outcomes.

The Program should describe how it defines student and faculty diversity in its strategic plan and how it has developed its goals related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Diversity and the Program's goals related to diversity can be determined in a number of ways, including using the local Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) characteristics as a metric, identifying the characteristics of the population generally served by Program graduates, applying a state-level or national standard, or by other means determined by the Program.

1) *Mission Statement*: The Program or the Department in which it resides shall have a clear and concise mission statement that expresses its core values and fundamental purpose and role in training professional planners.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide the Program's mission statement. Briefly analyze the consistency of the Program's mission with the preparation of professional planners. Describe how the mission provides clear direction.

2) *Program Vision:* The Program or the Department in which it resides shall have a clear and aspirational long-term vision for change resulting from the Program's work.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide the Program's vision statement. Briefly describe how the Program's vision articulates clear and aspirational goals.

3) *Program Goals and Measurable Objectives*: The Program's strategic plan shall identify goals and measurable objectives that advance the Program's mission and vision. The goals shall identify the Program's future aspirations in the context of its mission and that of the University, and shall aim toward excellence beyond that which may already exist. These should include strategic issues for the next 5-7 years and goals. Goals shall reflect the Program's intent to achieve and maintain diversity, as defined by the Program, in its student body and faculty, and to incorporate into the curriculum the knowledge and skills needed to serve a diverse society.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide a listing of program goals; briefly demonstrate that program goals follow from the mission and that they provide clear direction to the Program. Program goals should be sufficiently clear and concrete to generate objectives and provide a means for assessing the success of the Program. In the case where two programs are seeking accreditation, goals and measurable outcomes specific to each degree program should appear in the strategic plan. The Program should specify the strategic issues for the coming 5-7 years identified in the strategic plan. Provide measurable objectives and briefly illustrate how they provide clear direction.

4) *Monitoring and Evaluation:* The Program, or the Department in which it resides, shall have a clearly defined approach, methodology, and indicators for measuring the Program's success in achieving the goals articulated in its strategic plan. The Program shall document how it tracks and assesses the results of the interventions and strategies.

To demonstrate compliance: Describe the Program's approach to measuring and assessing its success in achieving its strategic goals. Describe how the Program documents its assessments.

B. Programmatic Assessment: Performance indicators and their results shall be reported at each accreditation review in the areas listed below, in addition to those that are contained within the Program's strategic plan.

1) *Graduate Satisfaction*: The Program shall survey its graduates and document the percentage of respondents who, 2 to 5 years after graduation, report being satisfied or highly satisfied with how the Program prepared them for their current employment.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence of graduate satisfaction in specific areas related to their preparation for employment. Documentation should include how the data were collected and the degree to which the survey results reflect a representative sample.

2) *Graduate Service to Community and Profession*: The Program shall provide evidence of graduates' contributions to meeting community needs and to providing service to the

planning profession. Evidence for these shall be obtained between 2 and 5 years after graduation.

To demonstrate compliance: Program graduates should be surveyed periodically to determine the extent to which they are involved in community service activities and/or professional services activities and results should be provided in the SSR. Program graduates' service to the community can take many forms, as defined by the Program. Documentation provided should include how the data were collected and the degree to which information gathered accurately and completely represents the Program.

3) *Student Retention and Graduation Rates*: The Program shall report student retention and graduation rates (including number of degrees awarded each year) relative to the program enrollment and to targets set by the program.

To demonstrate compliance: Present a brief narrative discussion regarding the student retention and graduation data contained in the SSR. Describe any special conditions or targets unique to the Program.

4) *Graduate Employment*: The Program shall document the percentage of all graduates who are employed within one year of graduation in professional planning, planning-related or other positions, and the definitions thereof.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence of graduate employment in planning, planning-related, or other fields. The employment rate includes all graduates, regardless of part-time and full-time enrollment status, in part-time and full-time planning or planning-related jobs. Documentation should include how the data were collected and the degree to which information gathered accurately and completely represents the Program.

5) *Graduate Certification Exam Pass Rate*: The Program shall document the percentage, based on the number who take the AICP exam, of master's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 3 years of graduation, and/or the percentage of bachelor's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 5 years of graduation. If the Program believes that alternative credentials are meaningful to its goals and objectives, the Program may supplement its AICP data with these metrics.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide a history of pass rates in the SSR. The narrative should supplement that information. If the Program's graduates obtain other credentials that demonstrate professional accomplishment, the Program is free to include that information as additional evidence of the Program's quality and effectiveness.

6) *Strategic Plan*: The Program shall document any other outcomes identified in its strategic plan, the degree to which the goals and measurable objectives articulated in the plan have been met, and any barriers to meeting the goals and measurable objectives, and how the Program proposes to address barriers.

To demonstrate compliance: Programs can draw from a variety of sources to establish additional outcome measures including their strategic plan and associated program goals and objectives. The primary requirement in documenting compliance is that the outcomes and their valid measures serve to

demonstrate the effectiveness of the Program in preparing professional planners. Describe any barriers to meeting strategic goals and strategies for addressing those barriers.

C. <u>Accreditation Review</u>: The Program shall demonstrate progress since the last accreditation review in meeting accreditation standards assessed as partially-met or unmet at the last accreditation.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide detail on the accreditation standards that were assessed as partially-met or unmet at the last accreditation, and provide evidence on the progress made towards compliance since the last accreditation.*

D. <u>Public Information</u>: The Program shall routinely provide reliable information to the public on its performance. Such information shall appear in easily accessible locations including program websites. In addition to the following information, programs are encouraged to showcase student achievement, however it may be determined.
   1) *Student Achievement:* student achievement as determined by the Program;
   2) *Cost:* the cost (tuition and fees) for a fulltime student for one academic year;
   3) *Retention and Graduation:* student retention and graduation rates, including the number of degrees awarded each year, the percentage of first-year students who return in the 2nd year for graduate students and/or the percentage of students enrolled one year after declaring their major for undergraduate students, and the percentage of master's students graduating within 4 years, and/or the percentage of bachelor's students graduating within 6 years;
   4) *AICP Pass Rate:* the percentage, based on the number who take it, of master's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 3 years of graduation, and/or the bachelor's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 5 years of graduation; and
   5) *Employment*: the employment rate of all graduates in professional planning, planning-related or other positions within 1 year of graduation.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide current evidence regarding items 1-5, listed above. The employment rate includes all graduates, regardless of part-time or full-time enrollment status, in part-time and full-time planning or planning-related jobs. Provide the URL of the Program's website where the information above is presented. Programs are required to use the* <u>*PAB-designed template*</u> *for presenting this information. PAB will monitor compliance with this criterion every year through the Program's Annual Report and as the Program progresses through an accreditation review.*

2. Students

The Program shall attract a sufficient number of well-qualified students from diverse backgrounds and shall adequately prepare, support, and advise these students to pursue and contribute successfully to the field of urban and regional planning. Accordingly, the Program shall demonstrate that its students upon graduation possess the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to secure professional employment, to perform effectively as planners, and to participate meaningfully in the planning profession. Among the foremost responsibilities of the

Program are to reject discrimination – within the Program itself – and to advance diversity and a culture of inclusion and equity among the students, particularly with regard to racial and ethnic groups historically underrepresented in the profession.

A. <u>Student quality</u>: The Program shall admit students whose educational attainment, previous academic performance, work experience, aptitude, maturity, motivation, life experiences, and/or hardships overcome indicate the potential for success in their studies and in professional practice. Toward that end, the Program shall establish admission standards, when applicable, that reflect the institution's policies and the Program's goals, and the Program, when applicable, shall apply those standards fairly and consistently. The Program shall document its admission standards and the extent to which its current students meet or exceed those standards.

To demonstrate compliance*: Briefly but completely articulate program admission standards and how they are applied, within the boundaries of the academic and other standards of the university. If the Program lacks full control of admissions and admission standards, typically the case for undergraduate programs, this should be explained in the narrative. Evidence regarding the extent to which current students meet or exceed admission standards should be presented. Evidence demonstrating fair and consistent application of these standards should also be presented.*

B. <u>Student diversity</u>: Diversity is an inclusive concept which encompasses, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sex, sexual orientation, ability, educational attainment, first-generation status, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, political beliefs, and veteran status. The Program shall develop a holistic strategy that addresses the following elements:

   1) *Recruitment*: Consistent with applicable law and institutional policy, the Program shall establish strategic goals that demonstrate an active commitment to attracting a diverse student population. Programs must report how they are arriving at their program's diversity goals and determining what student populations, if any, are underrepresented in their Program. The Program shall collect and analyze data on student demographics to inform and enhance its efforts to identify effective and appropriate methodologies for achieving diversity in its student body. Furthermore, the Program shall establish assessment mechanisms for each of its strategic goals that are focused on achieving diversity. Because diversity is not a static concept, and because all planning programs should seek to improve the diversity of the graduates entering the profession, the Program shall provide evidence of activities and programs intended to assist in achieving student diversity along with specific diversity-related strategic goals that have been met.

To demonstrate compliance: *Provide evidence of a commitment to recruit diverse students, including data to support those efforts. The Program's strategic plan should contain goals and measurable objectives aimed toward improving student diversity. Provide the Program's working definition of diversity (as was done for Standard 1A above), information on strategies to achieve student diversity*

and how the Program is implementing those efforts, and data and information on assessing the efforts and goal achievement. Provide demographic data regarding student composition in the SSR.

2) *Climate of inclusiveness*: The Program shall report on actions being taken to promote a culture of inclusiveness within the Program, including but not limited to support of student groups, promotion of community events, curricular elements, and faculty involvement.

To demonstrate compliance: *Report on efforts and initiatives to create and maintain a climate of inclusiveness and to address implicit bias and microaggressions, trainings, workshops, seminars, and other activities. Dimensions of inclusion/exclusion are behavioral and psychological, for example, student interactions inside and outside the classroom and work setting; student involvement in campus activities and organizations; student feelings of safety and belonging; and student perceptions of discrimination, conflict and institutional response.*

3) *Student support*: The Program shall report on actions being taken to support and retain students from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to mentorship and internship programs, financial assistance and fellowship programs, professional development programs and career services, and initiatives to support engagement in the profession.

To demonstrate compliance: *Report on efforts and initiatives to support and retain students from under-represented groups, including a description of the impact of these efforts.*

C. <u>Student advising, services, and support</u>: The Program shall provide students with competent academic advising, progress appraisal, and career guidance, as well as access within the institution to any personal counseling that students might need. Furthermore, the Program or its institution shall provide students with career services that assist students in securing suitable internships and jobs. The Program shall also support its students by providing them with financial aid opportunities that are sufficient in number and amount to achieve the Program's strategic goals for a well-qualified and diverse student body. The Program shall publish its criteria for the allocation of such financial aid.

To demonstrate compliance: *Provide evidence regarding how the Program provides quality academic advising, student progress appraisal, and career guidance through the use of faculty and/or professional advisors including resources both within and outside the Program. Provide evidence regarding Program support for internship and job placement, and how students are provided such information. Evidence of the publication of financial availability and criteria for awarding financial aid should be provided. These services should reflect the Program's goals and objectives and be adapted to the characteristics of the students (e.g., part-time, international, prior professional planning experience, etc.).*

D. <u>Student engagement in the profession</u>: The Program shall provide opportunities for student engagement in the profession, including but not limited to participation in a planning student organization affiliated with the Program, in the local chapter of the American Planning

Association (APA), in professional mentoring programs, in other professional societies and activities, and in work, internships, community-based planning activities, or project experiences that develop their skills as planners. The Program shall also promote socialization into the planning profession by encouraging students to attend APA's conferences and other events in which students might interact with professional planners from a variety of backgrounds.

To demonstrate compliance: Provide evidence that students are encouraged and involved in a range of activities that provide meaningful engagement with the profession and/or larger community. Such activities include internships, student organizations, professional organizations, community initiatives, student-organized charrettes or projects, studios with real clients, participation in/attendance at public hearings, and/or attendance at/participation in local, state and national APA and other planning-related conferences.

3. Faculty

The Program shall employ a sufficient number of qualified, productive, and engaged faculty members to permit the achievement of program goals and objectives. Among the foremost responsibilities of the Program are to reject discrimination - *within the Program itself* - and to advance diversity and a culture of inclusion among the faculty, particularly with regard to historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

A. Faculty quality: The fulltime and adjunct faculty of the Program shall have educational and professional backgrounds, a relevant mix of credentials (i.e., accredited degrees in planning, significant experience in planning, PhDs in planning, degrees and experience in related fields, and AICP membership), be qualified to serve the Program's mission and capable of executing the Program's goals and objectives, particularly as they pertain to teaching, research, and service.

To demonstrate compliance: Summarize relevant information in data included in the SSR. Tables or figures that show combined accomplishments during the most recent seven years (or a similar time frame for which data are better available) provide evidence to assess the Program's currency in the field and ongoing contributions. Distinguish credentials and accomplishments by the three faculty categories of full-time in program, part-time in program (but full-time in institution), and adjunct.

B. Faculty diversity: Diversity is an inclusive concept which encompasses, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sex, sexual orientation, ability, educational attainment, first-generation status, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, political beliefs, and veteran status. The Program shall develop a holistic strategy that addresses the following elements:

   1) *Recruitment*: Consistent with applicable law and institutional policy, the Program shall establish strategic goals that demonstrate an active commitment to attracting a diverse faculty. The Program shall collect and analyze data on faculty demographics in order to inform and enhance its efforts to identify effective and appropriate

methodologies for achieving diversity among its faculty. Furthermore, the Program shall establish assessment mechanisms for each of its strategic goals that are focused on achieving diversity. Because diversity is not a static concept, and because all faculty representation within each planning program should seek to contribute to the diversity of the learning environment and improve the diversity of graduates entering the profession, the Program shall provide evidence of activities and programs intended to assist in achieving faculty diversity along with specific diversity-related strategic goals that have been met.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide evidence of a commitment to recruit diverse faculty, including data to support those efforts. The Program's strategic plan should contain goals and measurable objectives aimed toward improving faculty diversity. Provide the Program's working definition of diversity (as done for Standard 1A above), information on strategies to achieve faculty diversity and how the Program is implementing those efforts, and data and information on assessing the efforts and goal achievement. Provide demographic data regarding faculty composition in the SSR.*

2) *Climate of inclusiveness*: The Program shall report on actions being taken to promote a culture of inclusiveness within the Program.

To demonstrate compliance*: Report on efforts and initiatives to create and maintain a climate of inclusiveness and to address implicit bias and microaggressions through trainings, workshops, seminars, and other activities. Dimensions of inclusion/exclusion are behavioral and psychological, for example, faculty interactions in the work setting; faculty involvement in Program activities and events; faculty feelings of safety and belonging; and faculty perceptions of discrimination, conflict and institutional response.*

3) *Faculty support:* The Program shall report on actions being taken to support and retain faculty from underrepresented groups. This includes, but is not limited to mentorship programs, support for research and teaching initiatives, and professional development opportunities. The Program should report data on promotion, and initiatives to support engagement in the profession.

To demonstrate compliance*: Report on efforts and initiatives to support and retain faculty from under-represented groups, including a description of the impact of these efforts. Efforts to support and retain faculty from under-represented groups can include but are not limited to formal mentoring programs, attention to salary equity, addressing the issue of bias in teaching evaluations, and support for professional development and promotion and tenure case preparation (detailed more fully under Standards 3G and 5E below).*

C. <u>Faculty size</u>: The faculty shall be of a sufficient size to accomplish the Program's mission and goals, administer the Program, and teach the curriculum. The Program shall have no greater than a 15/1 ratio of undergraduate student FTE to instructional faculty FTE, and a 10/1 ratio of graduate student FTE to instructional faculty FTE.

***To demonstrate compliance**: While sufficient faculty size can be met by a combination of full- and part-time and/or adjunct faculty, the presumption is that the foundation of the core curriculum will be taught primarily by full-time faculty (See criterion 4E). Programs should summarize and reference relevant information from the data included to the SSR. If the Program relies heavily on part-time and adjunct faculty, demonstrate how such faculty are engaged with the Program beyond teaching and demonstrate the continued commitment of such faculty to the Program. If a program exceeds the student/faculty ratio, address the extent to which adequate instructional quality and student support are provided. Other evidence of adequate faculty size such as contact hours, course coverage, and advising effectiveness can also be provided.*

    D.   <u>Engagement with students</u>: The faculty shall be engaged with students beyond the classroom as mentors, advisors, and/or committee members or committee chairs on thesis, reports and dissertations. Faculty shall provide career advice and assist in job placement in ways that coordinate with the efforts of staff and academic professionals.

***To demonstrate compliance**: Document the customary expectations of faculty with respect to advising, committee activities, and mentoring and engaging students in non-classroom activities. Where there are differential workloads among individual faculty with respect to student engagement (for example, specific faculty have more advising responsibility), specify the nature of these assignments. Provide evidence that such engagement is adequate to meet the needs of students.*

    E.   <u>Research, Scholarship, and Other Creative Activity</u>: Faculty teaching and administrative assignments provide for engagement in research, scholarship, and/or outreach reflective of the stage of their careers, the mission of the Program, and expectations of the University. Faculty creative activities should undergo peer review appropriate to the scholarly or practice orientation of the work, including, but not limited to, appropriate journals or other publication outlets, conferences, or other venues allowing dissemination of the work.

***To demonstrate compliance**: Summary curricula vitae are provided in the SSR, in addition to a table summarizing faculty productivity in the most recent 7 years. Supplement the chart in a narrative to capture the range and/or depth of accomplishments. Detail the Program's approach to assessing research/scholarship/outreach productivity of faculty. Explain any differential expectations among faculty that exist and note when the Program's expectations differ from the institution's.*

    F.   <u>Professional involvement Community Outreach, and Civic Engagement</u>: Faculty demonstrate involvement in the profession through participation in national organizations and/or participation in local, state, regional, and national professional conferences, workshops and other sponsored activities including activities of professional planning organizations. They shall demonstrate community outreach through continuous engagement in activities leading to the advancement of the profession, the University, and progress toward meeting the needs of the broader society.

***To demonstrate compliance**: Summary curricula vitae are provided in the SSR, in addition to a table summarizing key professional involvement/outreach and outputs. Summarize and supplement these materials in the narrative. Detail the Program's approach to assessing the professional involvement and*

outreach productivity of faculty. Explain any differential expectations among faculty that exist and note when the Program's expectations differ from the institution's.

G. <u>Professional development</u>: Faculty shall be provided opportunities to continue to develop themselves professionally. Work assignments and other development opportunities shall be such that skills in teaching, research, leadership, professional practice and other creative activities are sufficiently maintained and developed. Adequate resources shall be available to support faculty professional development, including training with respect to institution policies, student needs, the use of appropriate instructional technology, and topics such as implicit bias. Faculty, especially those from underrepresented groups, should also be provided with opportunities to be mentored throughout their career.

To demonstrate compliance*: Demonstrate how faculty professional development needs are addressed and supported, especially incentives and support for acquiring the AICP credential. Policies should be cited, the related incidence of use of policies should be explained, and specific examples should be presented. Professional development support includes, but is not limited to, the funding of training and programs for new faculty members; supporting service and engagement opportunities with ACSP, APA, and AICP; and support for training on new and emerging research methods and tools. The extent to which professional development activities are supported by institutional versus by individually developed resources should be made clear. When special policies apply to junior faculty, or other sub-groups, these should be identified.*

4. Curriculum and Instruction

Planners are committed to serve the public interest, infusing the values of equity and sustainability into their knowledge and skills as they envision the future and lead in decision-making that affects people and places. They understand the dynamics of cities, suburbs, regions, and the theory and practice of planning. They attend to the diversity of individual and community values. They develop and implement ethical plans, policies and processes. The minimum curriculum criteria below reflect these educational goals. Programs are expected to be innovative and to experiment in developing curricular approaches that achieve the objectives of this standard.

The curriculum should demonstrate consistency and coherence in meeting the Program's mission, goals, and objectives. While an accredited degree program must meet basic minimal performance criteria, PAB recognizes that programs may have different profiles with varying emphases. The Program being reviewed must demonstrate how its curricular content matches the profile emphasized in its overall mission.

Consistent with the Program's mission and strategic plan, course content and co-curricular activities should seek to broaden understanding of historical and contemporary factors across the full range of practice settings from local to global in which planners work, including demographic, environmental, institutional and political variation, and to promote awareness of and respect for differing beliefs, values and expectations of populations served by the profession.

The Program shall provide a curriculum and offer instruction to assure achievement of the knowledge, skills, and values that qualify graduates of accredited degree programs to enter diverse planning practice settings. Programs may do so using such established and familiar learning activities as courses and internships, and other program innovations that prove effective in meeting the criteria.

An accredited degree program must ensure that each graduate demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for competent professional planning in diverse occupational and institutional settings. The criteria below provide a framework for judging the scope and quality of minimum educational outcomes.

A. <u>Guiding Values</u>: The Program shall address in its strategic plan its commitment to fundamental ethical and normative principles and ensure that these principles are embedded in a range of required courses, specifically:
   1) *Equity, Diversity, Social Justice, and Inclusion*: Key issues of equity, diversity, and social justice, including planners' role in expanding choice and opportunity for all persons; planning for the needs of disadvantaged groups; reducing inequities through critical examination of past and current systems; and promoting racial and economic equity.
   2) *Sustainability, Resilience, and Climate Justice*: Environmental, economic, and social/political factors that contribute to sustainable communities, reducing impacts of climate change, and creating equitable and climate-adapted futures.
   3) *Professional Ethics and Responsibility*: Key issues of planning ethics and related questions of the ethics of public decision-making, research, and client representation (including the provisions of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, and APA's Ethical Principles in Planning).

To demonstrate compliance*: Describe the ways in which the Guiding Values appear in the curriculum with reference to specific courses. The narrative should make clear how the Program interprets and operationalizes the Guiding Values requirements. While it is possible for these Guiding Values to be the focus of particular courses in the required curriculum, the Program should demonstrate how these values significantly appear throughout the required curriculum, summarizing the evidence that they are delivered and mastered. Evidence will include information on inputs, outputs and outcomes; when the outcomes measurement system is well developed, such evidence will take precedence. Input evidence will include references to course syllabi compiled in the appendix of the SSR. Output evidence will include a representative sample of student work made available during the Site Visit.*

When the curriculum includes courses required of all students, the course prefixes and numbers of those courses should appear in boldface font in the narrative so that it is not necessary to repeatedly state that these courses are required.

B. <u>Required Knowledge and Skills of the Profession</u>: The Program shall offer a curriculum that teaches students the essential knowledge and skills central to the planning profession. These required components will be taught in such a manner that it is possible to demonstrate that every graduate has studied them. Ordinarily, this means that they are included in courses required of all students, although other approaches are possible. Programs are encouraged to

keep their curriculum in tune with emerging trends in the profession and engaged with contemporary issues. Specifically:

1) *General Planning Knowledge in Global Context***:** The comprehension, representation, and use of ideas and information in the planning field, in the U.S. (or Canada) and internationally including appropriate perspectives from history, social sciences, design, and other allied fields.

   a) *Planning History and Theory*: The evolution and current practice of planning in communities, cities, regions, and nations; how planning has advanced and hindered the attainment of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; expectations about planning outcomes in different local and national contexts; conceptual models about what planning is and how it works; past and present conceptions of the future, including the relationship between planning and the future; the role of planning in responding to the global climate crisis.

   b) *Planning Law and Institutions*: Behaviors and structures available to bring about sound planning outcomes; mechanisms and practices for ensuring equitable and inclusive decision-making; legal and institutional contexts within which planning occurs in the U.S. and/or internationally.

   c) *Urban and Regional Development*: Political, economic, social, and environmental explanations of and insights on historical, present, and future development; relationships between the built and natural environments and individual and community health and well-being; planning responses to mitigate climate change, reduce risks, and recover from climate-exacerbated impacts; interactions – flows of people, materials, ideas, and cultures – across world regions.

2) *Skills and Tools for Planning Practice*: The use and application of knowledge to perform tasks required in the practice of planning.

   a) *Planning Process and Engagement:* Planning process and community and stakeholder engagement; plan creation and implementation; methods of design and intervention to understand and influence the future.

   b) *Analytical Skills and Tools*: Research and critical analysis skills for preparing and conducting research; quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, analysis, and forecasting; methods of geo-spatial analysis, mapping and data visualization; data analytics and urban technology.

   c) *Professional, Communication, and Leadership Skills*: Ability to work in teams and with professionals in allied fields; professional leadership in the planning context; written, oral, and graphic communication.

To demonstrate compliance: *Provide evidence, in a narrative, for how the Program ensures coverage of the elements identified under "General Planning Knowledge in a Global Context" and "Skills and Tools for Planning Practice." The narrative should make clear how the Program interprets and operationalizes the General Planning Knowledge and the Skills and Tools requirements and summarize the evidence that they are delivered and mastered. The narrative should specifically itemize how the italicized elements of the curriculum outlined in 4B1 (a through c) and 4B2 (a through c) are delivered and mastered, and that the curriculum is in substantial alignment with the full description of each italicized element. Evidence will include information on inputs, outputs and outcomes; when the outcomes*

C. <u>Electives</u>: Beyond the required courses in the curriculum Programs shall offer additional courses to provide both greater depth and breadth of material. The curriculum shall contain elective opportunities for students to gain exposure to a range of planning domains, other professions, and emerging trends and issues. Programs have the option of grouping elective courses together to create areas of specialization that provide students with a concentrated mastery of a specific planning domain.

*<u>**To demonstrate compliance**</u>: Drawing on syllabi, summarize in a narrative the range and content of electives available and provide the context necessary to understand the approximate frequency with which the electives are offered and subscribed by planning students, whether the teaching faculty are familiar with planning, and the extent of planning content in the electives.*

Demonstrate that the Program has sufficient faculty, curricular offerings, and other resources to offer an adequate set of electives to provide valuable application of general planning knowledge and skills, and/or expand students' horizons through multi-disciplinary content. Where applicable, the connection of elective classes to the Guiding Values of the planning curriculum should also be described.

D. <u>Student Learning Outcomes Assessment</u>: The Program, or the Department in which it resides shall have a clearly defined approach, methodology, and indicators for measuring student learning outcomes and competencies for the expected knowledge, skills, and guiding values that students are expected to acquire. Evidence should connect materials covered in the core curriculum to the learning outcomes sought and achieved for students.

*<u>**To demonstrate compliance**</u>: Identify student learning outcomes associated with the required elements under "Guiding Values," "General Planning Knowledge," and "Skills and Tools," and develop valid measures, including direct measures, of student attainment of these learning outcomes. Provide concrete results from these measures and analysis regarding the extent to which students have attained each learning outcome. Explain, as appropriate, how learning outcomes assessment informs continued teaching of the core curriculum.*

E. <u>Instructional delivery and scheduling</u>: Courses shall be taught by qualified faculty. In general, most required courses will be taught by fulltime planning faculty. Courses shall be offered in formats and times to assure appropriate student access to them and timely completion of program requirements.

*<u>**To demonstrate compliance**</u>: Summarize the information found in the table listing of courses taught in the past 2 years and provide any relevant information to demonstrate the incidence of timely*

graduation. Demonstrate in the narrative how faculty are qualified, either through academic training or professional experience, for the instruction roles to which they are assigned, and how course scheduling is such that students are able to graduate on the expected schedule without compromising the integrity of the degree studies.

F.   Facilities: Students, faculty and staff shall have access to sufficient physical resources and facilities to achieve the Program's mission and objectives. This includes facilities for instruction, student work, and offices.

To demonstrate compliance*: Summarize the nature of facilities used and briefly assess their adequacy to the Program's needs.*

G.   Information and technology: Students, faculty and staff shall have access to sufficient information systems and technology, and technical support, technical equipment and training thereon to achieve the Program's mission and objectives. Information and technology include, but are not limited to, maintained computer hardware, software and access, and library resources and collections.

To demonstrate compliance*: Summarize information and technology resources available to the Program's students and faculty and briefly assess their adequacy to the Program's needs.*

5. Governance

The Program shall make administrative decisions through a governance process that exhibits a high degree of transparency, inclusiveness, and autonomy. The Program shall be located within an identifiable and distinct academic unit, such as a department or school of planning, and the Program's faculty shall be clearly identifiable as such. The Program shall involve faculty and students, as appropriate, in administrative decisions that affect them and shall demonstrate that those decisions serve to implement the Program's strategic plan.

A.   Program autonomy: In accordance with customary university procedures, the planning program will normally be headed by its own administrator, who will report directly to a dean or an equivalent academic official. The Program shall have control over the design of its curriculum and shall have an independent voice in the appointment, promotion, tenure, and evaluation of its faculty, and the admission and evaluation of its students. The planning faculty and students shall be involved in the development of the Program's Self-Study Report and shall be made aware of the content of all submissions by the Program to PAB as well as reports and decisions by PAB concerning the Program.

To demonstrate compliance*: Clearly outline the Program's organizational placement and governance structure within its larger organization. This discussion should clearly demonstrate that the Program has sufficient authority, resources, and institutional support to achieve its educational objectives, including control over program curriculum, faculty recruitment and retention, promotion, tenure, and evaluation of faculty, and student admissions and evaluation. Clearly indicate which of these or any other*

resources are fully dedicated to the Program and which are shared with other units. Identify the limits in program authority in these areas.

    B. <u>Program leadership</u>: The administrator of the degree Program shall be a faculty member whose leadership and management skills, combined with education and experience in planning, enables the Program to achieve its goals and objectives. Typically, this administrator will be a tenured faculty member with an academic rank of associate professor or higher.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide evidence of the administrator's qualifications to effectively lead the Program and document effectiveness. In cases where the administrator is not on the tenure track or not a full-time faculty member, provide a rationale. It is expected that the Program administrator will not be an assistant professor.*

    C. <u>Communication</u>: The Program shall use a variety of media to provide effective two-way communication with current and prospective students, faculty, alumni, employers, professional associations, practitioners, and other stakeholders about the Program's goals and objectives and about its progress toward achieving them. The administrator of the Program shall be regularly accessible to these stakeholders, providing them with suitable opportunities for interaction.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide evidence of regular communication, including social media and more traditional mechanisms, employed to maintain communications with all stakeholders.*

    D. <u>Faculty and student participation</u>: The Program shall provide fulltime and adjunct faculty, individual students and student organizations with opportunities to participate fully and meaningfully in administrative decisions that affect them.

To demonstrate compliance*: Briefly describe how the Program provides opportunities for faculty and student involvement in programmatic decisions that affect them. Provide specific examples of how such opportunities are provided and how information regarding the outcome is disseminated. Evidence should cover a range of time and types of decisions that have been made.*

    E. <u>Promotion and tenure</u>: The Program shall publish policies and procedures for making decisions about the promotion and tenure of faculty. The Program shall provide support, including mentorship opportunities, for all faculty at the Assistant and Associate Professor (or equivalent) levels. The Program shall demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that women, racial and ethnic minorities, and members of underrepresented groups in academia have access to the mentoring, tools, and other support they need to advance professionally.

To demonstrate compliance*: Present evidence of a clear promotion and tenure process, in addition to evidence that it has been consistently applied. Provide a description of resources and mentoring available to faculty and concrete evidence that the Program is attending to the development of faculty. Support for the development of faculty includes but is not limited to formal mentorship, yearly reviews, release time and reduced service levels, start-up support for new hires, faculty grants, travel funding, stipends for Open Access publishing, and support for professional development (see criterion 3G above).*

F. <u>Grievance procedures</u>: In accordance with relevant university guidelines, the Program shall publish policies and procedures for resolving student and faculty grievances, and shall appropriately disseminate such policies and procedures to students and faculty. The Program shall maintain records to document the number and kinds of grievances it has received and the manner in which it has resolved those grievances.

To demonstrate compliance*: Describe the policies and procedures in place to address grievances and how these policies are disseminated. This includes procedures related to harassment and discrimination. Records of grievances should be maintained along with their resolution, including review within the administrative unit, and other procedures for resolution and mediation within the university. These records should be available for examination by Site Visitors.*

G. <u>Online Integrity</u>: In accordance with relevant university guidelines, the Program shall have in place effective procedures through which to ensure that the student who registers in an online course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The Program makes clear in writing that these processes protect student privacy and notifies students at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional costs associated with the verification procedures.

To demonstrate compliance*: Provide evidence of policies and procedures to ensure online integrity. Also, provide evidence that students are notified of processes to protect privacy and that any additional costs are communicated to students.*