

**Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Education
(CoA-RATE) Committee on Accreditation**

Policies and Procedures

2019

Committee of Accreditation
Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Education
(CoA-RATE)

Mission

The mission of CoA-RATE is to promote the highest levels of professional competence of Assistive Technologists through the:

- development and promotion of professional preparation standards;
- encouragement of excellence in educational program development; and
- review/evaluation of assistive technology professional preparation programs.

The vision of CoA-RATE is to provide effective leadership in the accreditation of Assistive Technology education programs which results in a standard of excellence in safe and effective Assistive Technology practice, as awarded by CAAHEP. CoA-RATE is committed to the development of standards and procedures to effectively prepare students from diverse fields for safe and effective practice in the diversity of settings and populations served by Assistive Technologists. CoA-RATE aims to be inclusive of programs in North America, in addition to international programs as allowed by the CAAHEP guidelines.

CoA-RATE is committed to:

1. Promoting self-evaluation, and continuing development and improvement of professional preparation programs in Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology which remain relevant and responsive to the needs of clients and the changing nature of safe and effective Assistive Technology practice; and
2. Facilitating the preparation of Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology professionals for the provision of services which shall: increase, maintain, or improve on the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability, value human dignity, and offer opportunities for independence and community involvement.

CoA-RATE is committed to maintaining collaborative relationships between related accreditation groups, licensure and certification bodies, and professional associations to improve the practice competencies of assistive technologists.

Core Values of the CoA-RATE:

The Statement of Core Values of CoA-RATE provides further clarification and support for the CoA-RATE Mission and Vision statements.

The CoA-RATE believes in:

- advancing the assistive technology profession through quality and excellence in assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering education that results in advanced levels of safe and effective assistive technology practice;

- ensuring a fair, consistent, relevant, and ethical decision-making process in assistive technology educational practices;
- promoting cooperation, and collaboration in accreditation of assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering education to influence and encourage growth, and consistently increasing levels of competence in assistive technology practice; and
- creating and strengthening standards which reflect the needs of the client and society as-a-whole, respect the integrity of instructional approaches and strategies, and encourage educational program improvement and best practices in assistive technology education and clinical practice.

CoA-RATE Membership

Committee Composition and Selection:

The accreditation committee shall be comprised of twelve to twenty members. At least three members should be a program director or faculty, ideally one from each of the following fields: rehabilitation engineering, health/medical Assistive Technology (AT), and special education. Efforts shall be made to assure the major subspecialty areas within assistive technology are represented. Two members shall be appointed to represent consumers, and such consumer members shall be neither trained in assistive technology service provision nor employed by assistive technology service providers. One member shall be a member of the RESNA Board of Directors; this member must be a member of the Board of Directors at the time of appointment to and throughout their appointment term on the accreditation committee. Other members may include suppliers such as a registered member of National Registry of Rehabilitation Technology Suppliers (NRRTS), professionals from other rehabilitation consortium, or the members of the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) Professional Standards Board (PSB).

The CoA-RATE members are selected via nominations from CoA-RATE, RESNA Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)-accredited institutions, assistive technology professionals, employers, and consumers of services. The sitting Committee will review all nominations and identify CoA-RATE membership which will appropriately reflect the diverse communities of interest in assistive technology education. CoA-RATE membership will demonstrate a commitment to assistive technology education, knowledge of contemporary assistive technology practice, and sensitivity to the needs of consumers.

Membership is on a staggered, rotating three-year term with no member serving longer than 2 full terms.

The proposed CoA-RATE membership shall be presented to the RESNA Board of Directors for consideration before submittal to the Board of Directors of CAAHEP.

Proposed membership in CoA-RATE will be submitted to the Board of Directors of CAAHEP.

Changes in membership will be filled by nomination and submitted for approval. The Chair of the CoA-RATE will be selected via a vote of the CoA-RATE membership.

CoA-RATE Accreditation Procedures

This section will describe procedures for CAAHEP accreditation of RE/AT education. CoA-RATE incorporates traditional process-oriented review with outcomes based accreditation (OBA) review. The Outcomes-Based Model prescribes a “small” core curriculum and other basic requirements. It focuses on the specific goals and objectives declared by the program. The Outcomes-Based Model requires the measurement of goals, looking for evidence these measurements have been used to foster a quality improvement process. CoA-RATE believes accreditation should be focused on student outcomes as well as the process-oriented activities of the educational program. The data used for accreditation purposes should be as objective as possible. Once CAAHEP-accredited, colleges and universities and other sponsor institutions will be asked to report their outcomes data to the CoA-RATE on an annual basis. CoA-RATE will determine compliance of each program with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology* as a result of the review of a Self-Study Report and by conducting an on-site evaluation to verify information included in the Self-Study Report. Based upon the review of the Self-Study Report and the on-site evaluation, compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines* will be determined and an accreditation recommendation forwarded to CAAHEP for review and action. An accreditation decision will be communicated by CAAHEP to the college or university seeking accreditation.

Application for CAAHEP Accreditation

Colleges and universities who are interested in CAAHEP accreditation should carefully read the Self-Study Instructions of this manual and complete the Request for Accreditation Services Application and assemble the materials required for the Self-Study Report. A completed Self-Study Report and payment of associated fees will constitute application for initial accreditation. Incomplete Self-Study Reports will not be processed for review. Receipt of the Self-Study Report and associated fees by CoA-RATE will initiate the preparation for review of accreditation application materials included in the Self-Study Report and planning for the site visit to verify aspects of the Self-Study Report.

CoA-RATE Self-Study Review Process

The Self-Study Report from a college or university applying for Accreditation will be assigned to a review team who will begin review of the application materials, including the Self-Study Report. Content will be reviewed to determine areas of compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Education Programs in Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology* and areas of concern or questions about compliance. The review team will conduct an on-site visit for the purpose of verifying and evaluating content from the Self-Study Report and other CoA-RATE Self-Study Review processes.

This is an outcome- and process-based evaluation and the program is reviewed and approved based on how it is structurally in compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*. The Self-Study Report and all other related information will be verified through the review of documentation, data collected to evaluate compliance and interview of program faculty/administration, students, graduates, employers, and/or clinical affiliation staff/faculty. In cases where the program does not have basic outcome information to report, the program is expected to have a system for

acquiring outcomes data, analysis, and a plan of action to use data analyzed to enhance the program.

Selection of Site Visit Team

Site visit team members are appointed by the CoA-RATE from a roster of potential evaluators, who have received orientation and training on the evaluation process. Evaluators are selected on the basis of their knowledge, education, geographic proximity to the applicant program, and ability to be impartial in reviewing the program under consideration. For example, close friendship with members of the program faculty or staff or any potential conflict of interest or potential bias which could affect impartial evaluation of the perceived quality of the program would disqualify a person from serving on an evaluation team. To avoid bias, evaluators should not be from an institution in the same state as the applicant. Evaluators shall not be a graduate nor employee of the applying program, faculty, school, or institution.

Approximately 6 weeks prior to the on-site evaluation, the program will receive written notification of the individuals serving on the site visit team for the on-site evaluation. If the program perceives a possible conflict of interest with regard to a team member, it will be given 48 hours, following the written notification, to request another evaluator. Otherwise, the program will be responsible for any expenses incurred due to requested changes made to the on-site evaluation team after the designated 48 hours.

CoA-RATE will provide site visit team members with a copy of the Self-Study Report, Annual Report and/or a previously requested follow up report (if applicable) and any other miscellaneous supporting information. A copy of the *CoA-RATE Accreditation of Education for Assistive Technology Practice Standards and Guidelines* will be provided to each member of the site visit team. Before their arrival at the college/university, team members are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the Self-Study, Annual Reports and all supporting documentation provided by the applicant program to the CoA-RATE.

The process by which the CoA-RATE does on-site evaluations has been organized into three different categories: Initial, Continuing, and Qualitative. After the initial site visit, site visits for the purpose of Continuing Accreditation are scheduled at five-year intervals. Qualitative site visits, for the purpose of assisting colleges and universities to improve compliance, are scheduled as needed. The purpose of the site visit is to clarify, verify, and evaluate information submitted in the Self Study Report and application materials and/or Annual Report and to improve the extent to which the program is in compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*.

Initial Accreditation Site Visit

For programs seeking initial accreditation, site visits should be scheduled at a mutually acceptable time for the university and site visit evaluators while students are in session. The program administration will prepare a schedule for the evaluators' visit to accommodate individual discussions with the program director, faculty members, executive officer of the sponsoring college/university, students, recent program graduates, and others. CoA-RATE reserves the right to request interviews and/or reviews as determined to be necessary based upon Self-Study Report information and/or findings

during an on-site evaluation. Tours of the facilities used by faculty and students are also scheduled.

Continuing Accreditation Site Visit

Each program will receive a continuing on-site evaluation at five-year intervals from the last scheduled on-site evaluation, in order to assess continued compliance with the Standards and Guidelines. Continuing Accreditation occurring on five year cycles of odd years (years 5, 15, 25, etc.) requires a review by one educator and on the even Continuing Accreditation cycle (years 10, 20, 30, etc.) the review requires a full review with three independent reviewers comprised of two educators and one practitioner. Even Continuing Accreditation cycles should be budgeted for three visitors similar to the Initial Accreditation visit.

The purpose of the on-site evaluation is to verify information provided in the self-study or annual report. Interviews of graduates, employers and a review of the facilities are not typically performed during site visits as this information is provided through the standardized surveys and program assessment tool in the Self Study Report. CoA-RATE reserves the right, however, to perform the interviews and or reviews as determined to be necessary based upon Annual Report information and/or findings during an on-site evaluation.

Qualitative Site Visit

In the case a program is consistently unable to demonstrate compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines* as demonstrated by consistently low outcome thresholds, a qualitative visit may be performed to verify or identify and clarify any specific areas of non-compliance for the purpose of determining opportunities to improve compliance. A Qualitative Site Visit is scheduled upon a mutually agreed upon date, and since the evaluation done during this site visit may take the place of the continuing evaluation, a site visitor will verify data reported in Annual Reports and other miscellaneous submitted data to determine compliance or non-compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*. The CoA-RATE will assist the program in developing an on-site evaluation schedule that will best accommodate and focus on identified deficiencies.

Scheduling a Site Visit

The actual site visit schedule will be dependent upon the type and focus (e.g., Initial Accreditation, Continuing Accreditation, or Qualitative) of the site visit. As the Qualitative evaluation will target specific areas of deficiency, additional time and areas of observance may be added/customized to each specific program evaluation.

A thorough and accurate evaluation of the program can be conducted by a team of three people (for initial and every ten year cycle) within a period of approximately two days including the evening before. For alternate continuing accreditation reviews a one-person site visit can be conducted within a period of approximately two days. The on-site evaluation should verify and clarify the self-study or Annual Reports submitted and/or any other submitted documentation through the exposure of the members of the team to all facets of the educational program and provide the team with opportunities to meet and discuss the program with the administrative staff, faculty, advisors and students.

The breadth of exposure provides the on-site evaluation team with a heightened awareness of the various components of the total educational experience afforded students of the program. While the actual schedule may vary to avoid any unnecessary disturbance in normal routine, it is suggested that the types of activities to be considered in developing the agenda are illustrated below (This agenda is particularly appropriate for an Initial and recurring ten year cycle Accreditation Site Visit.):

EVENING BEFORE

Members of the Evaluation Team arrive at designated hotel. The team members meet to get acquainted, to discuss their perspectives of the program on the basis of the information provided in the Annual Reports, and/or other miscellaneous documentation, to review the schedule prepared by the program director and to identify those areas that need their most thorough attention.

FIRST DAY

Activity 1: Meeting with Program Director & Chairperson

The on-site evaluator(s) should meet with the Program Director and Chairperson to review the schedule of activities planned by the program director for the site visit, making adjustments as necessary. (15 minutes)

Activity 2: General Group Session

The evaluator(s) meet with the program director, members of the administrative staff, and faculty members:

1. To allow the evaluation team to explain the accreditation process;
2. To discuss the functions of the on-site evaluation team;
3. To review the types of accreditation status available to the program; and
4. To affirm the purposes of the on-site evaluation.

Similarly, the on-site evaluation team will have an opportunity to make individual observations of the program's guiding philosophies, operating procedures, curriculum content and sequence, student evaluation procedures, program enrollment, student attrition, and success of graduates, from those most directly informed in these matters. (30 minutes)

Activity 3: Review of Program Documentation and Laboratory Facilities

The on-site evaluation team should be provided with the opportunity to review relevant documentation available (to include, but not limited to, student records, complete course syllabi, program documentation, etc.—a list of materials available for a site visit will be provided to programs) and to observe the laboratory facilities and supplies, as appropriate. (90 minutes to 2 hours)

Activity 4: Meeting with Representatives of the Program's Advisory Committee.

The team should assess the extent to which the program and the advisors

understand the functions of the committee and the subjects addressed by it. (Faculty members should not be present during these interviews.) (30 minutes)

Activity 5: Interviews with Members of the Faculty

The evaluator(s) identify the frequency with which the faculty jointly assess curriculum content, the clarity to which they have described the learning objectives of the various components of the didactic and supervised practice components of the curriculum, the means and frequency for which they assess each student's progress through the various units of a course or supervised practice assignment, and the manner in which students are informed of their successes and their need for improvement. This activity may include interviews with program faculty, general education faculty, and librarian. (60 minutes)

Activity 6: Interviews with Students in the Didactic Phase and/or the Clinical/Practical Phase of the Program. The evaluator(s) obtain students' assessments of the curriculum, faculty, frequency and means by which faculty assess their progress, and related subjects. Evaluator(s) also obtain students' responses to the program and their understanding, knowledge, and perception of their roles after graduation. (Faculty should not be present during these interviews.) (30 minutes)

EVENING OF THE FIRST DAY

No meetings or social activities should be scheduled in order to allow the evaluation team sufficient time to review their observations of the program and their need to obtain further information on the following day.

THE SECOND DAY (When Applicable)

Activity 7: Conversation with Program Director

The program director is given an opportunity to clarify and discuss the observations made by the on-site evaluation team with regard to program content, processes, policies, etc. (15 minutes)

Activity 8: Preparation of the draft Site Visit Report

During the preparation of the site visit report, the evaluation team drafts an initial report with regard to program content, processes, policies, etc. (1-2 hours)

Activity 9: Final Meeting with Program Director, Chairperson, and Other Principals. The final meeting provides an opportunity for members of the evaluation team to present an oral report of their conclusions, comments, concerns, and considerations. (Approximately 30 – 60 minutes is recommended for this session.)

Adjournment

Fees for Accreditation

Fees for accreditation application, annual accreditation maintenance fees, and site visit fees are charged to cover the costs of the accreditation process. No college or university will be recommended to CAAHEP for initial or continuing accreditation until all fees and reimbursements, including site visit expenses have been paid in full. Extensions or exceptions may be requested if an institution is experiencing a temporary financial crises. All CoA-RATE fees are non-refundable, regardless of the accreditation decision. The CoA-RATE-approved fee structure is as follows:

- **Initial Application Fee** (\$2000): Due upon submission of the Self-Study Report.
- **Site Visit Fee** (\$2000): Due upon scheduling the site visit.
- **Annual Accreditation Maintenance Fee** (\$1000): Payable in each calendar year to the CoA-RATE, after initial accreditation. This fee is due with the submission of the required annual report.
- **Late Fee** (\$100). This fee will apply to any materials received by the CoA-RATE after the assigned date. This fee will only be waived if the program notifies the CoA-RATE prior to the due date of its inability to meet the assigned date and an extension is granted by the CoA-RATE. Only one extension will be granted to each program.
- **Inactive Accreditation Fee** (\$600): The sponsoring college/university may request Inactive Accreditation status for a program that does not enroll students for a period of up to two years. Such programs must continue to pay annual fees to the CoA-RATE and CAAHEP. After being inactive for two consecutive years with appropriate notification to the college/university, the program will be considered discontinued and accreditation will be withdrawn.
- **CAAHEP Annual Fee** (\$550): This is a fee invoiced annually in May, and paid directly to CAAHEP. This fee is charged to an institution regardless of the number of CAAHEP-accredited programs the institution may have; if a college or university has multiple CAAHEP-accredited programs, the fee remains at \$550.
- **NB – All funds to be considered in United States dollars.**
- **No funds can be exchanged between academic programs and evaluators.**

Expenses associated with the on-site evaluation are described below:

Initial Site Visit (Expenses TBD by Site Visit Team and university):

Site Visit Team members will be reimbursed by CoA-RATE at the conclusion of the site visit for all actual expenses associated with the on-site evaluation, including transportation, meals, lodging, and any other expenses associated with the site visit. All Initial Accreditation site visits require three independent reviewers comprised of two educators and one practitioner.

Continuing Accreditation Site Visit (Expenses shall be jointly determined by the Site Visit Team and university): Continuing Accreditation requires a one visitor continuing accreditation review and occurs on five year cycles with two cycles, the odd years' cycle

(years 5, 15, 25, etc.) and the even years' cycle (years 10, 20, 30, etc.). The odd years' cycle for Continuing Accreditation review involves one evaluator and the cycle for even years continuing accreditation review requires a full review with three independent reviewers comprised of two educators and one practitioner. Each type of continuing accreditation review should be budgeted accordingly and the reviewer(s) should be reimbursed for all actual expenses, including transportation, meals, lodging, and any other expenses associated with the site visit, at the conclusion of the on-site evaluation by the sponsoring college/university.

Qualitative Site Visit (Expenses shall be determined by the Reviewer): Qualitative site visitations will only involve a single CoA-RATE visitor (RT/TR educator) and should be budgeted for accordingly. A Qualitative Site Visit may be needed to assist a program which is consistently unable to demonstrate significant compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*. A Qualitative Site Visit may be performed to identify, verify and clarify any specific areas of non-compliance. The purpose of this evaluation is to try to find the core cause(s) of non-compliance. This evaluation is scheduled at a mutually agreed upon date, and since this evaluation may take the place of the continuing evaluation, the site visitor will verify data reported in Annual Reports and other miscellaneous submitted data to determine compliance or non-compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines* and The CoA-RATE will assist the program in developing an on-site evaluation schedule that will best accommodate and focus on predicted deficiencies. The single visitor Qualitative Site Visit should be budgeted accordingly and the reviewer should be reimbursed for all actual expenses, including transportation, meals, lodging and any other expenses associated with the site visit, at the conclusion of the on-site evaluation by the sponsoring college/university. All questions regarding the evaluation process and schedule should be directed to the CoA-RATE.

Accreditation Decisions

A Site Visit Report will be drafted jointly by members of the Site Visit team at the conclusion of the site visit. A verbal report is provided to the program director and senior administrative officer of the college or university to review the site visit team's evaluation of the program before the team departs. The format used for the report is the Site Visit Report (See Appendix C). The final, written Site Visit Report will be sent to the program within six weeks of the site visit and will reflect the evaluators' determination of the relative compliance of the degree program with the *CoA-RATE Standards and Guidelines*, including compliance with CoA-RATE competency requirements. The academic institution will have an opportunity to submit corrections to any factual information at that time. Should the Site Visit team need additional follow-up information from the program, delays in the 6-week target may occur. The original of this Site Visit Report is sent by the coordinator of the CoA-RATE site visit team where an accreditation decision is determined within the six-week window following the receipt of the Site Visit Report. A letter is sent to the administrative officer of the college or university academic unit to inform him or her of the CoA-RATE accreditation decision. It will be administrative officer's responsibility to notify the RT/TR program director, if different, of the results. The letter will contain a clear statement of any deficiency identified in the accreditation decision. When deficiencies are identified, the letter also indicates one or more actions: (1) a progress report or plan of correction is required by a specific date and upon receipt of a satisfactory progress report, CoA-RATE may inform the appropriate officials of the sponsoring

college/university that the accreditation award may be extended to the approved maximum duration without requiring a new Self-Study Report and on-site evaluation; (2) failure to come into compliance with the *CoA-RATE Standards and Guidelines* and CoA-RATE recommendations may result in conditional accreditation or the withdrawal of accreditation; and (3) currently enrolled students, and those seeking admission, should be advised that the program is on conditional status. Failure to submit a satisfactory progress report or plan to correct the deficiencies may result in reduction of length of accreditation and early accreditation review, conditional or probationary accreditation, involuntary withdrawal of accreditation and/or other action. CoA RATE sends written correspondence to programs following review of progress reports that originate from CAAHEP action(s). In the event it takes more than one progress report for the program to resolve areas of non-compliance, CoA RATE will send subsequent written correspondence each time a progress report is reviewed. These correspondences include feedback to the program, where the correspondence clarifies what has been resolved and what remains unmet.

The college or university program director has sixty days to request an appeal of an accreditation decision by submitting a written letter of appeal that provides specific information to dispute findings of the site visit or content of the Site Visit Report. Unless this letter of appeal is received by CoA-RATE within the sixty-day time requirement, the accreditation decision is considered final. CoA-RATE will respond to any appeal within sixty days of receipt of the letter requesting an appeal of an accreditation decision.

Types of Accreditation Decisions

Initial Accreditation

The term “Initial” refers to a program seeking accreditation for the first time or has permitted their accreditation status to lapse. Initial accreditation is for a period of 5 years.

Upon the award of initial accreditation, each program will begin submitting an Annual Report used for the Outcomes Based Assessment (OBA) on an annual basis. The template for this report is provided by the CoA-RATE. The duration of initial accreditation awarded is five years, with yearly Annual Report reviews. Initial Accreditation can neither be extended nor renewed so it is essential each program awarded Initial Accreditation respond in a complete and timely manner to all accreditation requirements including those for annual reports.

At any point during the initial accreditation period, a program may be recommended for continuing accreditation or, if warranted, for probationary accreditation. If no recommendation is forthcoming, the Initial Accreditation will automatically expire.

Continuing Accreditation

Continuing accreditation is awarded to programs re-evaluated at specific intervals which document continued compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*.

Probationary Accreditation

Probationary Accreditation is a temporary status of accreditation imposed when a program does not continue to meet accreditation Standards but should be able to meet them within the specified time.

The program is provided with a clear statement of each deficiency. The program is given an opportunity for reconsideration, or may voluntarily withdrawal its accreditation.

Administrative Probation

Administrative Probation may be granted when the program does not comply with one or more of the administrative requirements for maintaining accreditation, which include the following:

1. Submitting the Self Study Report or a required progress report within a reasonable period of time as determined by the CoA-RATE;
2. Agreeing to a reasonable on-site evaluation date before the end of the period for which accreditation was awarded;
3. Informing the CoA-RATE within a reasonable period of time of changes in program personnel, as required by the *Standards and Guidelines*;
4. Paying the CoA-RATE accreditation fees and charges within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the CoA-RATE; and
5. Completing and returning the Annual Report by the established deadline.

Prior to CAAHEP placing a program on Administrative Probation for failure to file an Annual Report following due notice, CoA-RATE will inform the appropriate administrative officials of the sponsoring college/university and the RT/TR Program Director that this action is being considered.

Administrative Probation is an accreditation category not subject to appeal. During a period of Probationary Accreditation - Administrative, programs are recognized and listed as being accredited; their probationary status is not publicized except as required by legislation or regulation.

Accreditation may be involuntarily withdrawn from a program with Administrative Probation if, at the conclusion of the specified probationary period, it is determined the program is not in substantial compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines* or with the administrative requirements for maintaining accreditation.

Accreditation Withheld

A program seeking initial accreditation may have Accreditation Withheld if the program is not in substantial compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*.

The program is provided with a clear statement of each deficiency and is informed the application for accreditation as a new applicant may be made whenever the program is believed to be in substantial compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*. In this situation, the college/university has an opportunity for reconsideration and/or appeal.

Accreditation Withdrawn

Students enrolled in a program at the time the sponsoring college/university is notified an accreditation has been withdrawn may complete the requirements for graduation and be considered graduates of a CAAHEP-accredited program.

1. **Accreditation Withdrawn - Voluntary** (at request of the sponsoring college/university); and
2. **Accreditation Withdrawn - Involuntary** (for failure to be in substantial compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*).

The program is provided with a clear statement of each deficiency. The program is given an opportunity for reconsideration and/or appeal, or may voluntarily withdraw its accreditation.

Inactive Accreditation Status

The sponsoring college/university may request Inactive Accreditation Status for a program not enrolling students for a period of up to two years. Such programs must continue to pay annual fees to the CoA-RATE and CAAHEP. After being inactive for two consecutive years with appropriate notification to the college/university, the program will be considered discontinued and accreditation will be withdrawn.

Other Miscellaneous Actions/Information

Students will be considered graduates of a CAAHEP accredited program if they are enrolled in the program anytime while the program is accredited. There is no grandfather option for retroactive recognition of graduates of CoA-RATE accredited colleges/universities.

Communication Regarding Accreditation

If a program has achieved accreditation, the program shall use the following language when referring to that accreditation in all communication:

The (name of program and academic credential earned) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (www.caahep.org), upon the recommendation of the Committee on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Education (CoA-RATE).

When the communication occurs via the program's website, the following information shall also be included:

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
25400 US Hwy 19N., Suite 158
Clearwater, FL 33763
727-210-2350
www.caahep.org

CoA-RATE sends written correspondence to programs following review of progress reports that originate from CAAHEP action(s). In the event it takes more than one progress report for the program to resolve areas of non-compliance, CoA-RATE will send subsequent written correspondence each time a progress report is reviewed. These correspondences include feedback to the program, where the correspondence clarifies what has been resolved and what remains unmet.

ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report for accreditation is designed to offer a complete picture of the current profile for the academic program including background information, facilities and resources, and academic outcomes. The Annual Report is required of all accredited programs. The program should utilize the instructions provided for the completion of the Annual Report. When completing the Annual Report, each program should include reporting information as delineated on the Annual Report Form. Basic information and significant events or changes in the program should be included. The reporting form and instructions are self-explanatory and should be completed for the most currently completed academic year listed on the form.

General Academic Information

The program is to report administrative information and any changes. The current status of the institution's regional accreditation(s), with inclusive dates is to be provided.

Academic Program Information

The academic program should provide current information as it relates program structure (resources, personnel, curriculum, etc.), process (admissions), and outcomes (student measures).

Clerical, Technological, and Laboratory Support

The program should receive support consistent with other academic degree programs within the institution and academic unit.

Budget

The program shall provide budget information demonstrating adequate support for the program. The annual report asks for data from the current year, one year past, and two years past. In the case where complete data are not available for all three years, an explanation for the missing data and a plan of action for future reporting must be included in the report. Support should be consistent with support provided to other academic units.

Faculty

All existing and new faculty/staff must meet or exceed the existing standard. Changes in program faculty/staff should be accompanied by copies of program director/faculty/instructional staff curriculum vitae and proof of credentialing.

Curriculum

Changes in the curriculum since the last Annual Report should be reported.

Clinical/Fieldwork Placement Sites

Changes in clinical fieldwork sites should be reported including agencies affiliation agreements that have been added and discontinued.

Student Measures

The agency should have well documented admission processes reflecting fair practices. Documentation demonstrating that student evaluation of competencies is conducted on a recurrent basis with sufficient frequency should be provided. Examples of student work should be kept in a file for review during an on-site evaluation.

Student Retention

Students must continue in the program at a rate reasonably justified by the college/university. The annual report will ask for retention rates for your program. A simple formula on the annual report will help you calculate these rates.

Culminating Experiences

The institution should keep records which reflect the outcome of student culminating experiences. Outcomes for culminating experience include passage rates on credentialing examinations, and students securing licenses and certification where applicable. Institutions are to utilize the Clinical Performance Appraisal Summary and Reference Form as a measure to track student performance for practice. Results should be reported for the academic year of the Annual Report and compared to prior performance data.

Graduate Information/Placement

An important measure of an academic programs performance is reflected by outcomes measure such as placement, and employer and graduate satisfaction. Students should obtain jobs (or continue in the educational system) at a level reasonably justified by the college/university. Programs should institute methods to track graduates and their post-graduation placements.

Employer Surveys

The academic program should attempt to seek approval and secure information from employers on the job performance of program graduates. The Employer Satisfaction survey asks for employers of your graduates to respond as to the quality of your graduates in the workplace one year after graduation. The minimum recommended standard set by the CoA-RATE for these surveys is a 30% survey return, with 85% of the measures having a 3 or better on a 5-point Likert scale. Efforts should be implemented by the academic program to track student placement.

Graduate Satisfaction

The program should secure graduate satisfaction data. The graduate satisfaction survey should be administered to students who have recently graduated approximately six months after graduation. Institutions must report the survey return CoA-RATE as well as document efforts to reach the majority of their graduates.

ANNUAL REPORT FORMAT

The Annual Report format is provided within the Annual Report. The report is to be completed in a narrative format by section where requested.

ANNUAL REPORT SCHEDULING

The scheduling of the Annual Report is staggered based upon an academic program's accreditation time line. Program accreditations completed between January and June will follow the Group A schedule. Program accreditation completed between July and December will follow the Group B schedule.

Group A

1. Accreditation year-end dates of January-June;
2. Annual Report is due October 1st;
3. Any deficiencies found will be reviewed at the Spring CoA-RATE meeting; and
4. Deficient programs begin “Due Process” system.

Group B

1. Accreditation year-end dates of July – December;
2. Annual Report is due April 1st;
3. Any deficiencies found will be reviewed at the Fall CoA-RATE meeting; and
4. Deficient programs begin “Due Process” system.

OUTCOMES MONITORING BY THE CoA-RATE

Outcomes data from the annual report which graphs the performance of the program will be reviewed by the CoA-RATE. Deficiencies are noted whenever a particular outcome drops below the pre-determined minimal standard. The program will be asked for an explanation and a remedy, and the CoA-RATE will decide if the situation merits further review and consideration. If the remedy is feasible, then the CoA-RATE will continue to monitor the situation through follow-up reports.