



ACCREDITATION COUNCIL FOR PHARMACY EDUCATION
INTERNATIONAL SERVICES PROGRAM



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
FOR CERTIFICATION AND PRECERTIFICATION OF
PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS IN PHARMACY
IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN
THE UNITED STATES AND ITS TERRITORIES

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(Addendum 2 updated February 15, 2022)



Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education International Services Program

Policies and Procedures for Certification and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy in Countries other than the United States and its Territories

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(Addendum 2 updated February 15, 2022)

The purpose of the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education's (ACPE's) Policies and Procedures for Certification and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs is to provide interested stakeholders, such as, schools of pharmacy, universities, other educational institutions, and national bodies, with a guide to ACPE's policies and practices as they apply to certification and precertification of professional degree programs in pharmacy that are based outside the United States of America (USA) and its territories; namely, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands.

The current edition (June 17, 2021) supersedes all previous versions of policies and procedures related to international services and activities of ACPE. These policies and procedures constitute a living document and are subject to change by ACPE. Changes will be announced and published on ACPE's website and communicated electronically to schools of pharmacy and universities with degree programs with Certification Status. Questions about the policies and procedures should be directed to ACPE's International Services Program staff.

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PREAMBLE

International Services Program Mission:

Promote, assure, and advance the quality of pharmacy education internationally to improve patient care through safe and effective medication use.

International Services Program Vision Statement:

Quality-assured pharmacy education and training prepares graduates throughout the world for expanded roles that optimize safe and effective medication use and improve patient care.

Established in 2011, the mission of the International Services Program (ISP) of the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) is to provide assistance to schools of pharmacy and other institutions to advance the professional and continuing education of pharmacists and provide a mechanism for the Certification and Precertification of eligible programs. Certification and Precertification are limited to professional degree programs in pharmacy outside the United States and its territories (Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands).

The primary purpose of ACPE's certification program is to assist schools of pharmacy in their quality assurance and improvement efforts. Certification and Precertification provide an external, peer-review system of evaluation using quality criteria that have been developed and validated through a broad-based, transnational process. Further details regarding the development of the quality criteria can be found in ISP's International Quality Criteria for Certification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy ("Quality Criteria") (available at <https://www.acpe-accredit.org/pdf/ISP/QualityCriteria.pdf>).

The Quality Criteria are designed to be applicable to a range of professional degree programs (such as, bachelors, masters, and professional doctorate degrees) and to assure that the program in question is relevant, contemporary, socially accountable, and appropriate to the needs and health systems of the country in question. ACPE's certification program is not intended to impose US-systems and models for pharmacy education and quality assurance on other countries, but to assure that professional degree programs are designed and implemented in accordance with quality principles and criteria that have been identified and validated through broad-based, transnational consensus. Compliance with Quality Criteria will be evaluated in the context of the health and education systems, government structures and policies, regulation, and culture of the institution's country.

Certification and Precertification are not intended to obviate the need for the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy's (NABP) Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee (FPGEC) Certification Program or assure that the professional degree program would adequately prepare a graduate to be licensed to practice as a pharmacist in any of the states or territories of the United States.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS/DEFINITIONS

The following definitions describe the way the term is used in this document. The Glossary is not intended to provide or imply a globally adopted definition of the term.

Academic Staff: The members of staff who have an academic title and who are involved in teaching, research, scholarly activity, and service for the school. This includes staff personnel who hold an academic rank with titles such as professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, or the equivalent of any of these academic ranks. The category includes personnel with other titles, (e.g. dean, director, associate dean, assistant dean, chair or head of department), if their principal activity is instruction or research. It does not include student teachers or teacher aides. Similar term: faculty. (Source: adapted from OECD¹.)

Action and Recommendations Report (A&R): A report sent to a school of pharmacy detailing the final certification actions taken by the ACPE Board of Directors, the compliance status of each Quality Criterion that was evaluated, any recommendations, and requirements for monitoring and reporting, including applicable terms and timelines.

ACPE: The acronym for the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education; refers to the organization as a whole.

Administrative Extension: An extension granted to the Certification Term by ACPE. (See paragraph 11.16)

Administrative Warning: A status assigned to the Professional Degree Program by ACPE Staff when a school does not comply with administrative requirements for maintaining its Certification Status. (See paragraph 7.7)

Administrators (of the university): The senior executives who provide leadership and manage the daily and long-term operations of the university; would include positions such as President, Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Provost, Rector, Principal.

Adverse Certification Action: The awarding of the status of Certified with Probation, denial of Certification or Precertification, or withdrawal of a program's Certification Status by ACPE. (See paragraph 15)

Affirm/Affirmed: An action by the Board to "affirm" implies that a previously established Certification Term has been confirmed.

Annual Reporting: Reporting requested by ACPE of specific programmatic outcomes, data, and other quality-linked indicators, provided on an annual basis by the school and/or other agencies. (See paragraph 13.6)

Appeals Panel: A committee established by ACPE to consider appeals from a Certified, Precertified or Provisionally Certified program. (See paragraph 16)

¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

<http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=10>

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Applicant for Certification or Precertification: Refers to a school of pharmacy or institution that meets the Eligibility Criteria, has submitted the required application and documents to ACPE, and has paid the applicable application fees.

Board: The ACPE Board of Directors.

Certification/Certified: The Certification Status that may be granted or continued by ACPE to a Professional Degree Program in a country other than the United States and its territories that demonstrates compliance with all or most Quality Criteria and meets all ACPE's requirements for such recognition. (See also Provisional Certification (Category 1), Provisional Certification (Category 2), Precertification/Precertified)

Certification Action: (see also Adverse Certification Action) An action of the Board, other than an Adverse Certification Action, that impacts the Certification Status or Term of a program; the types of action include:

- Affirming a Certification Term
- Continuing a Certification Term
- Extending a Certification Term
- Granting a Certification Status
- Reducing/shortening a Certification Term

Certification Program: The activity of the International Services Program through which Certification, Provisional Certification, and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in pharmacy are offered and managed.

Certification Status: The type of public recognition granted or continued by ACPE; the possible types are:

- Certification/Certified
- Provisional Certification (Category 1)/Provisionally Certified (Category 1)
- Provisional Certification (Category 2)/Provisionally Certified (Category 2)
- Precertification/Precertified
- Certification with Probation/Certified with Probation

Certification Term (or Term): The number of years of a Certification Status awarded to a Professional Degree Program by ACPE.

Certification with Probation/Certified with Probation: The Certification Status granted to a Professional Degree Program that has been identified by ACPE as being partially or non-compliant with one or more of the Quality Criteria and that has not made adequate progress towards bringing the Criterion/Criteria into compliance. A status of Certified with Probation is disclosed to the public and listed as such in the Directory. (See paragraphs 8.7 and 11.14)

Chief Executive Officer: The person with the most important position in the institution; examples of specific titles include: President, Principal, Rector, Chancellor, and Vice-Chancellor.

Commission (or International Commission): The ACPE International Commission, a committee of ACPE.

Commissioner: A member of the ACPE International Commission.

Complaints Policy: ACPE's policy related to complaints that is published on its website <https://www.acpe-accredit.org/complaints/>

Compliance/Compliant (of the Professional Degree Program): No factors exist that compromise current compliance with the Quality Criteria; no factors exist that, if not addressed, may compromise future compliance.

Compliance/Compliant with Monitoring (of the Professional Degree Program): No factors exist that compromise current compliance with the Quality Criteria; factors exist that, if not addressed, may compromise future compliance; **OR** factors exist that compromise current compliance and an appropriate plan exists to address the factors that compromise compliance, the plan has been fully implemented, sufficient evidence already exists that the plan is addressing the factors and will bring the program into full compliance.

Comprehensive Evaluation Visit: An evaluation visit conducted by a team of evaluators to assess the compliance of a program with all Quality Criteria for the purpose of either (a) an application for Certification or Precertification, (b) an application to advance from Precertification to Certification, or (c) continuing Certification after the expiration of the standard review cycle as defined by ACPE. Note: As deemed necessary by the ACPE Board, a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted in person on-site or using a virtual format (see Virtual Site Visits Policy and Guidance; Addendum 7).

Continue/Continued: An action by the Board to “continue” implies that the Certification Term has been extended.

Criterion/Criteria: See Quality Criterion/Criteria.

Dean: The person identified as the leader of the school of pharmacy and Professional Degree Program; the term is intended to include terms such as Director, Chair, or Head of School.

Directory: The Directory (detailed listing) of Professional Degree Programs with Certification Status on the ACPE website www.acpe-accredit.org.

Eligibility Criteria: The conditions and pre-requisites, as set by ACPE from time to time, that must be met by a Professional Degree Program, school and university (if applicable) in order for an application for Certification or Precertification to be submitted to ACPE for consideration, and for Certification Status to be granted or continued. (See paragraph 6)

Enrollment: The number of students enrolled (admitted and currently studying) in the Professional Degree Program of the school of pharmacy.

Evaluation Team: The evaluators appointed by ACPE to conduct an evaluation visit.

Evaluation Team Report (ETR): The written report generated by the evaluation team that assesses compliance of the Professional Degree Program with each of the Quality Criteria as observed during the evaluation visit. The ETR does not represent a final certification action but is an evaluative step in the review process.

Evaluation Visit: The conduct of a comprehensive, focused or verification evaluation of a program either in person on-site or using a virtual format, as determined by the Board (see applicable terms in this Glossary).

Executive Director: The chief executive officer of ACPE.

Fee Schedule: The listing of fees and charges raised by ACPE for services and activities provided by the International Services Program. The schedule is published on the ACPE website <https://www.acpe-accredit.org/international-services-program/#tab-Fees>.

Focused Evaluation Visit: An evaluation visit conducted by a team of evaluators for the purpose of either: (a) evaluating compliance of the program against specific Quality Criteria previously found to be Non-compliant, Partially Compliant, or Compliant with Monitoring, or (b) evaluating continued compliance of the program two-years after the granting of Certification, or (c) evaluating continued compliance of a program that is planning or has undergone a Substantive Change, when deemed necessary by the Board, or (d) evaluating compliance of the program being considered for advancement from Precertification to Certification. A focused evaluation visit is not preceded by a comprehensive self-study by the school, but other forms of reporting may be required. (See paragraphs 11.6, 11.7, 13.5, and 13.6) Note: As deemed necessary by the ACPE Board, a focused evaluation visit will be conducted in person on-site or using a virtual format (see Virtual Site Visits Policy and Guidance; Addendum 7).

Forum for Litigation: The courts where litigation may be instituted by foreign programs, schools, institutions, or ACPE. (See paragraph 16)

Grant: An action of the Board to award a Certification Status.

Institution: The regularly incorporated and legally empowered postsecondary educational institution, such as a university, within which a school of pharmacy operates. (See also University)

Interim Monitoring: Monitoring undertaken between comprehensive evaluation visits for the purpose of evaluating continued compliance or progress toward achievement of compliance when a program has been found to not be in compliance with a Quality Criterion/Criteria. Monitoring may be conducted with a written report (an interim report) or a focused evaluation visit.

Interim Report: A report that provides updates and details of progress in a specific area of concern regarding a Quality Criterion/Criteria that have been identified by ACPE as being Non-compliant, Partially Compliant, or Complaint with Monitoring. (See paragraphs 11.7, 11.8 and 13.6)

International Commission: The ACPE International Commission, a committee of ACPE.

International Services Program (ISP): The program of ACPE through which Certification and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in pharmacy and other international services and activities are offered and managed.

International Services Program Advisory Group (ISPAG): The group of individuals appointed by the International Commission to provide broad geographic and cultural perspectives, input, and advice on ISP programs, services, activities, and documents.

Invitation to Evaluate: The official application for Certification or Precertification submitted by an institution to ACPE.

Letter of Intent: A non-binding (without obligation) expression of interest submitted by a school or institution indicating a desire to apply for Certification or Precertification. (See paragraphs 10.1 and 11.1)

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Mission (of a school or university): Primary purpose and objectives; reason for existing.

National and state agencies: Would include equivalent agency terms, such as “federal” and “provincial” based on the country’s political structure and governance.

Non-Compliance/Non-Compliant (of the Professional Degree Program): Factors exist that compromise current compliance with the Quality Criteria; an appropriate plan to address the factors that compromise compliance does not exist or has not yet been initiated; **OR** adequate information was not provided to assess compliance.

Partial Compliance/Partially Compliant (of the Professional Degree Program): Factors exist that compromise current compliance with the Quality Criteria; an appropriate plan exists to address the factors that compromise compliance and it has been initiated; the plan has not been fully implemented and/or there is not yet sufficient evidence that the plan is addressing the factors and will bring the program into compliance.

Preceptor: An individual who instructs students in a practice setting. Similar terms include: tutor, practice-based tutor, and practitioner-educator.

Precertification: The status of public recognition that ACPE grants to a new pharmacy degree program (i.e., for which there has not yet been a graduating cohort of students) for a limited period of time that signifies that the program is progressing towards Certification and is likely to attain Certification before the expiration of that time period. The term of Precertification of the program shall be limited to a maximum of twelve (12) months beyond the anticipated date of graduation of the program’s first cohort of students, unless the Board, for good cause and at its sole discretion, grants an extension to the Precertification term.

Preliminary Review: A two-stage, initial review of an application for Certification or Precertification and a school’s self-study report, prior to review by ACPE’s International Commission and Board. (See paragraphs 10.3 and 11.3)

Preliminary Review Team (PRT): A team typically comprised of one member of ACPE’s International Commission and at least one member of the ACPE Staff or a consultant appointed for the purpose of conducting a Preliminary Review. (See paragraphs 10.3 and 11.3)

President (of a university): The Chief Executive Officer of the university. Equivalent terms may include Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Principal, or Rector.

Probation: (See Certification/Certified with Probation)

Professional Degree Program (in pharmacy): A postsecondary academic degree program offered at an institution of higher education and designed to prepare graduates to practice as a pharmacist. Professional degree programs may be entry-level or postgraduate programs, and must be recognized as a professional qualification or additional professional qualification in the relevant jurisdiction’s register for pharmacists.

Provisional Certification/Provisionally Certified: The Certification Status of a program that has been granted either Provisional Certification (Category 1), Provisional Certification (Category 2), or Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2).

Provisional Certification (Category 1)/Provisionally Certified (Category 1): The Certification Status that may be granted by ACPE to a Professional Degree Program in a country other than the United States and its territories that may have factors that compromise compliance with Quality Criteria, but that has initiated appropriate plans to address such factors, and meets all ACPE's requirements for such recognition. (See paragraphs 7.3, 7.5, 8.4, 8.6, 10.10, 11.4 – 11.9, 11.13, 11.15, 13.1, 13.5, and 15.3)

Provisional Certification (Category 2): The Certification Status that may be granted by ACPE to a Professional Degree Program in a country other than the United States and its territories that demonstrates compliance with all or most Quality Criteria and meets all ACPE's requirements for such recognition. Provisional Certification (Category 2) may be granted following the conduct of a Virtual Site Visit evaluation when the Board has determined that an on-site evaluation visit is not possible or advisable for reasons of security, health, safety, or other circumstance identified by the Board. Provisional Certification (Category 2) is envisioned as a temporary Certification Status, and the program is expected to advance to Certification at the earliest opportunity, subject to meeting all requirements and conditions set by ACPE. (See paragraphs 7.4, 7.5, 8.5, 8.6, 10.10, 11.4, 11.5, 11.8 – 11.10, 11.13, 11.15, 13.1, 13.5, and 15.3)

Remand: The action of an Appeals Panel to send back an appeal resulting from an Adverse Certification Action to the ACPE Board for further consideration. (See paragraph 16.4)

Report of Proceedings: The official report of accreditation and certification actions of the ACPE Board of Directors; reports are published after the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board (typically January and June), and after any meeting of the Board at which accreditation or certification actions are taken.

Quality Criterion/Criteria: ACPE's International Quality Criteria for Certification of Professional Programs in Pharmacy.

School of Pharmacy/School: The academic unit directly responsible for offering the professional degree program; related terms include College of Pharmacy, Faculty of Pharmacy, Department of Pharmacy, and Pharmacy Program.

Self-Assessment Instrument: ACPE's required template for the self-study report.

Self-Study/Self-Study Report: A comprehensive, broad-based review and self-assessment process/report of a school's professional degree program in pharmacy to document accomplishments and strengths, self-assess compliance with Quality Criteria, identify areas for improvement, and outline a plan for making those improvements.

Social Accountability: The obligation of pharmacy schools to direct their education, research and service activities towards addressing the priority health needs of the community, region, and/or nation they have a mandate to serve. The priority health needs are to be identified jointly by governments, healthcare organizations, health professionals and the public. (Adapted from WHO 1995 and ASPIRE 2012²)

² Association for Medical Education in Europe: International Recognition of Excellence in Medical Education; www.aspire-to-excellence.org
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Staff: The members of the staff of ACPE, unless specifically referring to the staff of the school of pharmacy or institution.

Stakeholders: The individuals, groups, or entities that have an interest or concern in the wellbeing and/or outcomes of the school, institution, or program; for example, pharmacies that employ the graduates of the school, professional organizations, other healthcare providers who work with the graduates.

Substantive Change: A notable change in the professional degree program, the school of pharmacy, or the institution that may impact the quality of the program or its ability to remain in compliance with all Quality Criteria. (See paragraph 14)

Threshold Rubric (Certification): An instrument used by a Preliminary Review Team, the International Commission and the Board to evaluate the readiness of a school and program for an evaluation visit for consideration of an application for Certification.

Threshold Rubric (Precertification): An instrument used by a Preliminary Review Team, the International Commission and the Board to evaluate the readiness of a school and program for an evaluation visit for consideration of an application for Precertification.

University: A postsecondary institution of higher education that is regularly incorporated, legally empowered, and authorized to award degrees in accordance with national laws and regulations, and whose mission encompasses professional education, scholarship, research, and service.

Verification Visit: An on-site evaluation visit conducted for the purpose of verifying the findings of a Virtual Site Visit. (See paragraphs 7.4, 10.9, 11.9, 11.10, 11.16 and 13.3)

Virtual Site Visit: A virtual site visit (VSV) is the evaluation of a pharmacy degree program that uses web-based audio and visual connections to facilitate a synchronous virtual face-to-face interaction with and evaluation of the pharmacy program using an engaged, interactive format that allows for a visual display of individuals, groups, documents, physical facilities, and other locations, as required. The rigor, quality, and process of the VSV, as well as the opportunity for the pharmacy program to provide evidence and verify, clarify, or amplify evidence, must be comparable to an in-person on-site visit. (See Addendum 7)

Vision (of a school or university): Aspirations; desired future state.

ACPE Policies and Procedures for Certification and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy in Countries other than the United States and its Territories

1. Scope of Certification

The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), through its International Services Program (ISP), offers voluntary Certification and Precertification to Professional Degree Programs in pharmacy in countries other than the United States of America and its territories. Evaluation and Certification or Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in pharmacy (*hereinafter "programs"*) is in accordance with ACPE's *International Quality Criteria for Certification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy* (*hereinafter "Quality Criteria"*). Information concerning specific programs may be obtained by corresponding directly with the programs listed in the ACPE Directory of Professional Degree Programs with Certification Status, available at <https://www.acpe-accredit.org/international-services-program/#tab-CertifiedPrograms>.

2. Purpose of Certification

The essential purpose of the certification process is to provide a professional judgment of the quality of the Professional Degree Program(s) of a school of pharmacy and to encourage and facilitate continued improvement thereof. Certification and Precertification concern themselves with both *quality assurance* and *quality improvement*. The responsibilities of ACPE's Certification Program are:

- To formulate the educational, scientific and professional principles and quality criteria for professional degree programs in pharmacy which a school of pharmacy is expected to meet and maintain for Certification or Precertification of its program(s), and to revise these principles and quality criteria when deemed necessary or advisable.
- To formulate policies and procedures for the Certification and Precertification processes and requirements.
- To evaluate the Professional Degree Program(s) of any school of pharmacy outside the United States of America and its territories that applies for Certification or Precertification of its program(s).
- To provide a list ("Directory") of Professional Degree Programs of schools of pharmacy with Certification Status for the use of interested agencies and the public, and to keep such directory current.
- To provide assurances to stakeholders that the Professional Degree Programs which have been certified continue to comply with Quality Criteria, and, therefore, to conduct periodic evaluations in a manner similar to that for an application for Certification.

Certification and Precertification of professional degree programs in pharmacy provide a basis for quality assurance. In so doing, they serve multiple stakeholders:

For the **public and the protection of public health**, Certification and Precertification assure conformity or anticipated conformity to general expectations of the pharmacy profession that have been developed and validated through a broad-based, transnational consensus process, and facilitate the identification of schools of pharmacy that have explicitly undertaken activities directed at establishing and improving the quality of their professional degree programs, and are carrying them out successfully. Certification and Precertification also support improvement of the professional services available to the general public in that schools of pharmacy and universities offering Certified or Precertified degree programs are expected to be socially accountable by modifying and updating their requirements to reflect contemporary national and societal needs, as well as advances in knowledge, technology, and practice.

For **students and prospective students**, Certification and Precertification provide an assurance that a program has been found to provide or be advancing in its development to provide satisfactory educational preparation for practice.

For **institutions of higher education**, Certification and Precertification provide a framework for self-assessment and improvement as well as the opportunity for external review and counsel, and the exchanging of experience with other institutions. Certification and Precertification can also provide a basis for evaluation and decision-making by private and public agencies, including universities evaluating the academic qualifications of candidates applying to graduate programs, **national, state and local governments**.

3. Governance

ACPE established a committee in January 2011, designated the ACPE International Commission (IC), to support the achievement of ACPE's mission to assure and advance the quality of pharmacy education, and to better serve ACPE's international activities and services.

The functions of the IC include:

- making recommendations to the ACPE Board of Directors (the "ACPE Board") regarding Quality Criteria, policies and procedures, and other matters related to ACPE's international activities and services
- assisting in strategic planning from a global perspective.
- identifying potential activities and collaborative opportunities
- advising the Board on entering into memorandums of understanding and other collaborations, and the terms thereof
- reviewing applications for Certification and Precertification and evaluations of Professional Degree Programs in countries other than the United States and its territories, and recommending actions to the ACPE Board
- soliciting and receiving input and advice from stakeholders to obtain broad global perspectives and wisdom to assure the quality, validity and improvement of ACPE's international activities and services
- advising the ACPE Board and Staff, when requested, on matters related to complaints received by ACPE.

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The IC meets approximately one or two months prior to each regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. Additional meetings of the IC may be convened periodically when authorized by the Board. The meetings of the IC may be conducted in person, by teleconference, or by other means approved, from time to time, by the Commission.

Prior to evaluation and action by the Board, the Commission shall review applications for Certification, Precertification, and continuation of a program's Certification Status, potential changes in or withdrawal of a program's Certification Status, and any other certification-related matter as determined by the Board. Based on their review, the members of the Commission shall recommend an action to the Board. Recommendations of the IC will be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting (which typically occur in January and June of each year) or at such other meetings as the Board shall determine. **All Certification and Adverse Certification Actions will be taken solely by the Board.**

The membership, terms of office, meetings, expenses, and responsibilities of members of the IC are determined by Terms of Reference, which are adopted and may be revised from time to time by the Board. The current Terms of Reference of the IC are appended to these Policies and Procedures. (See Addendum 1)

In order to effectively and efficiently achieve the above-listed functions, the IC may recommend to the Board the establishment of structures and mechanisms that facilitate input and advice from stakeholders as deemed necessary and appropriate. The Board approved the establishment of the International Services Program Advisory Group (ISPAG) to support the work of the International Services Program by providing input and advice on ISP activities, services, and documents.

4. Quality Criteria

ACPE's Quality Criteria reflect professional and educational qualities identified by ACPE through international dialogue, consensus, and feedback as essential to programs leading to a Professional Degree Program in pharmacy. Based upon the several evaluative steps in the certification process, the Board determines the eligibility of the program to be certified or precertified, compliance with the Quality Criteria, and the likelihood of continued compliance. Specific examples of documentation, data, and descriptive text have been identified by ACPE for each Criterion to illustrate ways for a school to provide evidence of the program's compliance with the Criterion. Moreover, such elements assist evaluation teams in the application of the Quality Criteria to such programs.

5. Establishment, Review, and Revision of Quality Criteria

The first set of Quality Criteria was adopted and published in 2012. Quality Criteria are revised periodically in keeping with changes in pharmacy education and pharmacy practice globally.

ACPE maintains a systematic program of review that assures that its Quality Criteria are appropriate to the educational preparedness of the students and graduates and are adequate to

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evaluate the quality of professional education provided by the program. The systematic program of establishment, review, and revision is comprehensive and involves the international community of interest, allows for input by relevant stakeholders, and includes examination of each Criterion and evidence of compliance, as well as the Quality Criteria as a whole. The review and revision process for the examples of evidence of compliance (such as documentation and data) may be separate from that of the Quality Criteria themselves. The Quality Criteria will be reviewed approximately every six to eight years, or more frequently if required based on specific need, while the requirements for documentation, data, and descriptive text to provide evidence of compliance can be refined and improved as needed based on experience and feedback from stakeholders. If at any point it is determined by ACPE that a substantive change needs to be made to a Criterion/Criteria, action for change is initiated within 12 months. Completion of the revision process will occur within a reasonable period of time and as soon as feasible, based upon the magnitude of the change necessitated.

Action for establishing or revising Criteria requires that advance public notice of the revisions proposed by ACPE be provided to relevant stakeholders. A draft of the proposed revisions is posted on the ACPE web site (www.acpe-accredit.org) and is made available to the general public and to relevant stakeholders with an invitation to comment. Relevant stakeholders include: the deans (or equivalent), institutional administrative and executive officers, academic staff, and students of programs with Certification Status; educational and professional organizations and other bodies interested in or affected by the certification process. Comments on the proposed revisions received within the published timeframe for the comment period are taken into account and considered in the revision process. Subsequently, proposed revisions are reviewed by the members of the ISPAG and IC, and the recommendations made by the IC are submitted and considered by the Board. The revised Quality Criteria become effective on a date designated by the Board based upon the magnitude of the change.

6. Eligibility for ACPE Certification and Precertification

In order for a Certification Status to be granted or continued, the Professional Degree Program must be part of an independent school of pharmacy, a school of pharmacy within a university, or other structure approved by the Board. The school or university must be a postsecondary educational institution that is regularly incorporated, legally empowered, and authorized to award such a degree in accordance with national and/or regional laws and regulations. The institutional environment or setting for the Professional Degree Program must be equivalent to a university and include a mission that encompasses professional education, scholarship, research, and service. Before a Certification action is taken, the school of pharmacy must have graduated at least one class of students from the Professional Degree Program in pharmacy for which Certification is being applied. Evaluation for purposes of applying for Certification or Precertification requires an invitation by the Chief Executive Officer or designate of the institution.

If national, state or provincial systems for institutional and/or programmatic accreditation are available to the school and institution at the time of application for Certification, ACPE requires that the school, institution and/or program is accredited or actively pursuing such accreditation; provided that ACPE may exempt the program from the requirement to achieve national programmatic accreditation if national regulations exist that permit a program to achieve either international or national programmatic accreditation. The absence of such accreditation will not

necessarily preclude the submission of an application for Certification or Precertification since Certification by ACPE is determined independent of accreditation or certification by any other agency. Accreditation or certification by another accrediting or certifying body may impact the application for Certification but it does not guarantee the granting of Certification or Precertification by ACPE.

If a school and/or institution is actively pursuing national/state/provincial accreditation at the time of application for Certification and the program is subsequently certified by ACPE, unless the institution can provide evidence that the reasons for the failure were not within the control of the institution, failure to achieve such accreditation within three (3) years of being granted Certification will constitute grounds for additional monitoring by ACPE and may result in an action by ACPE including, but not limited to one of the following:

- a) the program being placed on Administrative Warning (see paragraph 7.7)
- b) the program being given the status of Certification with Probation (see paragraph 7.6)
- c) the Certification Status of the program being withdrawn (see paragraph 15).

If national, state or provincial systems for institutional and/or programmatic accreditation become available to the school and institution after the time of application for Certification, ACPE requires that the school, institution and/or program actively pursues such accreditation and becomes accredited within a period of time deemed acceptable by the Board; provided that ACPE may exempt the program from the requirement to achieve national programmatic accreditation if the program has the option to obtain *either* international or national programmatic accreditation pursuant to relevant law. Unless the institution can provide evidence that the reasons for the failure were not within the control of the institution, failure to apply for and achieve such accreditation in the time deemed acceptable by the Board will constitute grounds for additional monitoring by ACPE and may result in an action by ACPE including, but not limited to one of the following:

- a) the program being placed on Administrative Warning (see paragraph 7.7)
- b) the program being given the status of Certification with Probation (see paragraph 7.6)
- c) the Certification Status of the program being withdrawn (see paragraph 15).

ACPE reserves the right to refuse to accept an application for Certification or Precertification of a Professional Degree Program that otherwise meets the Eligibility Criteria or to consider continuation of Certification Status under circumstances that include but are not limited to the following:

- ACPE determines that it is unable to undertake a comprehensive and accurate evaluation of the Professional Degree Program in accordance with these policies and procedures and ongoing compliance of the program with the Quality Criteria and Policies and Procedures
- ACPE representatives are prevented from undertaking travel to the applicant's country or a region thereof in terms of ACPE's travel policies (See Addendum 2 *ACPE Travel Guidelines for International Certification and Consulting Activities*)
- The diplomatic or trade relationship between the applicant's country and the United States prevents ACPE from providing services in the country
- A US-imposed embargo (temporary or permanent) precludes or discourages the provision of services by ACPE in the applicant's country.

The Board may, from time to time, apply additional criteria for the acceptance of applications for Certification or Precertification. Such criteria will be posted on the ACPE website.

ACPE will disclose to the applicant the reasons for its refusal to accept an application for Certification or Precertification. Under such circumstances, any application fees paid to ACPE shall be refundable, less any direct costs that ACPE has incurred in its review of the application for Certification or Precertification.

7. Types of Certification Status and Notification of Certification Decisions

- 7.1 Precertification** A newly instituted pharmacy degree program may be granted Precertification during any stage of its development prior to the graduation of its first class; i.e., either before or after the admission of students. The Quality Criteria are the same as those employed for Certification; however, Precertification involves evaluation of planning in accord with the Quality Criteria and provision by the school and institution of reasonable assurances for a quality outcome. Public disclosure by the school of the terms and conditions of Precertification is required (see paragraph 8, “Reference to Certification and Precertification”).
- 7.2 Certification** A program is granted Certification if it has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Board that the program complies with the Eligibility Criteria and Quality Criteria, and there is reasonable assurance of continued compliance. Certified programs have the ongoing obligation to continually demonstrate compliance with the Quality Criteria.
- 7.3 Provisional Certification (Category 1)** A program is granted Provisional Certification (Category 1) if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Board that the program complies with the Eligibility Criteria and as a result of the initial comprehensive evaluation visit has been found to have factors that compromise compliance with Quality Criteria, but the school has demonstrated its preparedness to comply with all Quality Criteria and has initiated appropriate plans to address factors that compromise compliance. Provisional Certification (Category 1) may only be granted following a program’s initial application for Certification. The standard term for Provisional Certification (Category 1) is two years, during which term the Board will monitor progress toward full compliance with Quality Criteria. If the program is not granted Certification within the two-year term, Provisional Certification (Category 1) may be withdrawn at the end of the two-year term (see also paragraph 11.7).
- 7.4 Provisional Certification (Category 2)** A program is granted Provisional Certification (Category 2) if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Board after the conduct of a Virtual Site Visit (VSV) that the program complies with the Eligibility Criteria and Quality Criteria, and there is reasonable assurance of continued compliance. Programs granted Provisional Certification (Category 2) have the ongoing obligation to continually demonstrate compliance with the Quality Criteria. Programs granted Provisional Certification (Category 2) can be

considered for advancement to Certification after the satisfactory conduct of a Verification Visit (see also paragraphs 11.9, 11.10 and 13.3).

A program with Provisional Certification (Category 2) is subject to the same policies and procedures as a program with Certification, and must fully disclose the meaning and implications of its Certification Status, for example on its website and other appropriate media.

7.5 Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2) A program may hold Provisional Certification (Category 1) and Provisional Certification (Category 2) at the same time, if so determined by the Board. Such a program is subject to the same policies and procedures as a program with Certification, and must fully disclose the meaning and implications of its Certification Status, for example on its website and other appropriate media.

7.6 Certification with Probation/Certified with Probation A certified program that has been determined by the Board to be partially or non-compliant with a Quality Criterion/Criteria and has failed to bring the Criterion/Criteria into compliance may be given the status of Certification with Probation/Certified with Probation at any time during the period of the program's Partial or Non-compliance (see paragraph 13.5.1). Graduates of a program with a status of Certification with Probation/Certified with Probation or Precertification with Probation will be deemed to have graduated from a Certified program. Giving the status of Certified with Probation is an Adverse Certification Action and is appealable (see paragraphs 15 and 16).

7.7 Administrative Warning Administrative Warning is a status assigned by Staff to the Professional Degree Program when a school does not comply with administrative requirements for maintaining its Certification Status. These requirements include, but are not limited to: (1) failure to pay ACPE any invoiced fees or expenses within the time limitation indicated on the invoice; (2) failure to submit interim or annual reporting requirements by the established deadline; (3) failure to submit the self-study report by the established deadline; (4) failure to schedule an evaluation visit at or near the time established by ACPE; (5) failure to submit timely notification of a Substantive Change (see paragraph 14, "Substantive Change"); and (6) inappropriate use of an ACPE logo.

If Staff determine that a school has failed to meet its administrative obligations as listed above, the school will be notified in writing of each delinquency and given thirty (30) days to fulfill all outstanding requirements, after which continued failure to comply will result in the imposition of Administrative Warning. Administrative Warning will be removed once all administrative requirements have been met. Failure to remedy any such delinquency within the designated time period will result in a review for Board action at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting and may result in the program being placed on Probation (see paragraph 7.6, "Certified with Probation") or subjected to an Adverse Certification Action (see paragraph 15).

Administrative Warning is a classification not subject to reconsideration or appeal. During a period of Administrative Warning, a program continues to be recognized according to its most recent Certification Status and is maintained in the Directory. In addition, the program will be listed as being on Administrative Warning in all documents and media published by ACPE that specify Certification Status.

8. **Reference to Certification Status**

The Certification Status of a program and other information as specified below may be disclosed by the school in its promotional and descriptive materials, such as its web site, catalog, or bulletin. Additionally, the Certification Status of a program may be included on the diploma or certificate awarded to a graduate. All references must accurately reflect the designation indicated in the current Directory. References to Certification Status are regularly monitored by ACPE to ensure accuracy; any inaccurate or misleading statements concerning the Certification Status of a program must be corrected immediately upon notice from ACPE. Any time a program's Certification Status changes, the change shall be reflected within 30 days on the ACPE web site.

ACPE's official logo and trademark for its International Services Program (see below) must be used in close conjunction with any reference to a Certification Status described in this paragraph. Additional details regarding use of ACPE logos and marks is provided in the document *Guidelines for Using ACPE Logos and Marks* (see Addendum 3).



- 8.1 **Application/Applicant** References to the effect that a school or institution has applied or is in the process of applying to ACPE for Certification or Precertification of an eligible program may only be made once a complete application has been formally submitted, fees paid, and receipt of the application acknowledged by ACPE. Applicants may state only the following in reference to the program's status: "[**Name of school and institution**] has applied for [**Certification or Precertification**] of its [**name of Professional Degree Program**] by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, Illinois 60603-3499, United States of America, TEL +1 (312) 664-3575; FAX +1 (866) 228-2631, web site www.acpe-accredit.org. For an explanation of the ACPE certification process, consult the office of the Dean (or equivalent) or ACPE (www.acpe-accredit.org)."

A school or institution may continue to use the above statement until such time as the Board has taken a certification action in terms of paragraph 10.3 or 11.3.

- 8.2 Precertification** References to a program that has been granted Precertification must state only the following in reference to the program's status: "[Name of Institution]'s Pharmacy Program has been granted Precertification by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, IL 60603-3499, +1 (312) 644-3575; FAX +1 (866) 228-2631, web site www.acpe-accredit.org. For an explanation of Precertification and the implications thereof, please contact the chief executive officer of the [Name of Institution]."

If the term of a program's Precertification expires and is not extended by the Board, the school will be required to immediately discontinue and remove any references to the Precertification of its program.

- 8.3 Certification/Certified** References to a program that is Certified must state only the following: "The [name of Professional Degree Program] of [name of school and institution] has been granted Certification by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, Illinois, 60603-3499, United States of America, TEL +1 (312) 664-3575; FAX +1 (866) 228-2631, web site www.acpe-accredit.org."

- 8.4 Provisional Certification (Category 1)/Provisionally Certified (Category 1)** References to a program that is Provisionally Certified (Category 1) must state only the following: "The [name of Professional Degree Program] of [name of school and institution] has been granted Provisional Certification (Category 1) by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, Illinois, 60603-3499, United States of America, TEL +1 (312) 664-3575; FAX +1 (866) 228-2631, web site www.acpe-accredit.org."

- 8.5 Provisional Certification (Category 2)/Provisionally Certified (Category 2)** References to a program that is Provisionally Certified (Category 2) must state only the following: "The [name of Professional Degree Program] of [name of school and institution] has been granted Provisional Certification (Category 2) by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, Illinois, 60603-3499, United States of America, TEL +1 (312) 664-3575; FAX +1 (866) 228-2631, web site www.acpe-accredit.org."

- 8.6 Provisional Certification (Category 1 & 2)/Provisionally Certified (Category 1 & 2)** References to a program that is Provisionally Certified (Category 1 & 2) must state only the following: "The [name of Professional Degree Program] of [name of school and institution] has been granted Provisional Certification (Category 1 & 2) by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, Illinois, 60603-3499, United States of America, TEL +1 (312) 664-3575; FAX +1 (866) 228-2631, web site www.acpe-accredit.org."

- 8.7 Certification with Probation/Certified with Probation** References to a program that has been given the status of Certified with Probation must state the following: "The [name of Professional Degree Program in pharmacy] of [name of school

and institution] has been given the status of Certified with Probation by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, Illinois 60603-3499, United States of America, TEL +1 (312) 664-3575; FAX +1 (866) 228-2631, web site www.acpe-accredit.org, for partial or non-compliance with Quality Criterion/Criteria: [specify Quality Criterion/Criteria]. For an explanation of the program's Certified with Probation status, consult the office of the Dean [or equivalent] or ACPE."

8.8 Voluntary Discontinuation of Certification Status: see paragraph 24.

9. Disclosure of Program Information

9.1 Directory of Professional Degree Programs with Certification Status

ACPE publishes the *Directory of Professional Degree Programs with Certification Status* ("Directory") on its web site. The current Certification Status and certification and/or precertification history are indicated for each program. In addition, the Quality Criterion/Criteria found to be partially or non-compliant are presented for any program with the status of Certified with Probation. The Directory presents the name, address (mail and web site), telephone, and fax numbers of the Dean of the school (or equivalent) offering the professional program for all programs with current Certification Status. The certification history and reason for discontinuation will be included in the Directory for programs for which Certification Status has been voluntarily discontinued.

9.2 Report of the Proceedings

Within thirty (30) days following each meeting of the Board at which accreditation and certification actions are taken, ACPE will publish on its web site (www.acpe-accredit.org) the Report of the Proceedings ("Report"), which will provide information regarding the certification actions taken by the Board, as well as a list of programs with upcoming scheduled comprehensive evaluation visits. The Report will also be provided to relevant stakeholders.

10. Procedure for Application for Precertification, Granting and Continuation of Precertification, and Subsequent Application to Advance to Certification

A flowchart depicting the process for application and maintenance of Precertification is provided in Addendum 4.

10.1 Letter of Intent

Prior to the formal submission of an application for Precertification, a school or institution must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) in the format required by ACPE. The LOI initiates the process of applying for Precertification. While the LOI is a formal indication of the school or institution's intent to apply for Precertification, it is not a binding contract; i.e., the school or institution is not obligated to submit an application for Precertification in the future. The LOI must be signed by

representatives of the school and institution who are duly authorized to sign such documents.

Documentation specified by ACPE must be submitted with the LOI, primarily to provide evidence that the school, institution, and degree program meet the Eligibility Criteria (see paragraph 6, “Eligibility for ACPE Certification and Precertification”). In addition, the LOI should provide the school or institution’s best estimate of the likely/requested dates for: the required pre-application consultation with ACPE; initiation and completion of the school’s self-study; submission of an Invitation to Evaluate; and the evaluation visit. The dates for these events will subsequently be established by mutual agreement between the school or institution and ACPE.

ACPE staff will review the documentation provided by the school or institution and advise whether or not the school or institution may apply to ACPE for Precertification. During the evaluation visit (see paragraph 13.3), members of the evaluation team will further evaluate the documentation to confirm that the school, institution and program meet the Eligibility Criteria.

10.2 Pre-Application Consultation

Prior to the formal submission of an application, a school or institution that is interested in applying for Precertification must consult with Staff to ensure that it has full knowledge and understanding of:

- the policies, procedures, and fees for Precertification
- the expectations of the Quality Criteria
- the requirements for and format of the self-study report that must be submitted with the application for Precertification
- the short and long-term responsibilities of the school and program for achieving and maintaining Precertification, advancing to Certification, and thereafter continuing Certification, including the financial commitments
- the purpose and benefits of ACPE’s Certification Program

Such consultation must occur sufficiently in advance of the submission of the application for Precertification to ensure that the school and institution have adequate time to comply with all the requirements of the application, primarily the conduct of a comprehensive programmatic self-study based on the Quality Criteria. ACPE recommends that the pre-application consultation occur a minimum of four to six (4 - 6) months ahead of the anticipated date of submission of an application for Precertification unless the school has already completed a self-study/self-assessment exercise, the results of which can be used to prepare a self-study report in the format and detail required by ACPE.

Pre-application consultation is offered by ACPE in a number of formats, including:

- teleconference
- online webinar
- consultation at the ACPE office in Chicago, Illinois, USA
- on-site consultation at the school or institution

The school may request which format will be used; however, under circumstances that warrant such a requirement, ACPE may require that the consultation be conducted on-site. On-site consultations must be scheduled at a mutually acceptable time; a minimum advance notice of three to six months is generally required. The fee associated with each consultation format is provided in ACPE's International Services Program Fee Schedule on the ACPE web site (www.acpe-accredit.org/international).

10.3 Application for Precertification

A college or school seeking Precertification for a pharmacy degree program must submit a written application to ACPE. Written instructions regarding format, length, content, and timeline shall be made available by ACPE.

It is the school's and/or institution's responsibility to advise all necessary agencies or authorities about their application for Precertification, and to obtain any applicable permission.

A school that satisfies eligibility requirements (see paragraph 6, "Eligibility for ACPE Certification and Precertification") may apply for Precertification for the pharmacy degree program by submitting an application and a self-study report of the proposed program in the formats required by ACPE, and paying the applicable fee. In addition to Eligibility Criteria, ACPE may establish from time to time specific criteria that must be met, depending on the stage of development of the program and, for example, the status of admission of students.

The application should be organized by Quality Criterion and present plans and timelines by which compliance with the Quality Criteria will be assured. An invitation to evaluate the program for purposes of granting Precertification, in the format specified by ACPE, is required from the chief executive officer of the institution.

After receipt of the application, self-study report, other required materials and supporting documentation, and payment of the fee, the application documents will undergo a preliminary review, as follows:

- i. The first stage of the preliminary review will be undertaken by a member of the Staff or a consultant appointed for the purpose. The review will evaluate the completeness of the required documentation and data and the adequacy of responses to the focused questions provided in ACPE's Self-Assessment Instrument. If the self-study report and/or supporting documentation are deemed to be inadequate to allow evaluation by the Preliminary Review Team, International Commission and Board, ACPE will provide details of the deficiencies and request the school to resubmit a revised version of the report and/or documentation within a specified period of time. An application for Precertification will not progress to the second stage of preliminary review until it is determined by Staff that the report and/or supporting documentation are complete and adequate.
- ii. The second stage of the preliminary review will be undertaken by a Preliminary Review Team (PRT) comprised of one member of the

Commission and at least one member of the Staff or a consultant appointed for the purpose. ACPE Staff may invite other persons to participate in the review, as deemed necessary. The PRT will review the application, self-study report and supporting documents to evaluate the school and program's readiness for an evaluation visit. The review will be conducted using an instrument (Precertification Threshold Rubric) adopted by ACPE for this purpose. The instrument used will also be made available to the school or institution applying for Precertification of its program.

If the PRT recommends an evaluation visit, its findings, conclusions and recommendations will be presented to the Commission at a regular or special meeting. If the preliminary review of the application, self-study report, and other materials submitted suggests that the program is ready for an evaluation visit, i.e., has a reasonable likelihood of being granted Precertification, the Commission will recommend to the Board that an evaluation visit be authorized by the Board, requesting a prompt response thereto.

If the Board's review of the application, self-study report, and other materials finds that they are incomplete or do not otherwise provide sufficient evidence that suggests that planning has taken into account the Certification Quality Criteria, the school will be advised to defer its application and to resubmit an appropriately revised application. If the Board's review of the application, self-study report, and other materials submitted suggests that planning has adequately considered the Quality Criteria, an evaluation visit will be authorized and scheduled in accord with standard evaluation and operational procedures (refer to paragraph 13). ACPE will include details of forthcoming evaluation visits for the purpose of an application for Precertification in the Report of Proceedings following the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board.

10.4 Inability to Conduct an On-Site Evaluation Visit

When it is determined by ACPE, in accordance with its Travel Policy (see Addendum 2), that an initial evaluation for the purpose of considering an application for Precertification cannot be conducted using an on-site evaluation visit, the institution will be informed that a Virtual Site Visit (VSV) can be offered. The institution would be given the option to either postpone the evaluation visit or accept a VSV.

An institution may request ACPE to conduct a VSV if it is aware of factors that would make an on-site evaluation visit unsafe or unadvisable for any reason, but the final decision as to whether or not an on-site evaluation visit is possible or desirable will be made by ACPE. An institution may not request a VSV purely for reasons of convenience or cost.

The VSV will be conducted in accordance with ACPE's Virtual Site Visits Policy and Guidance (see Addendum 7).

10.5 Action Following the Evaluation Visit

The ETR from the evaluation visit, the application and self-study report, and any updated/supplementary information provided by the applicant will be reviewed by the members of the Commission, who will make a recommendation to the Board regarding the granting of Precertification. If the Commission does not recommend the granting of Precertification at the time, the application will not be forwarded to the Board and the school or institution applying for Precertification will be provided with a list of issues that must be addressed before an application for Precertification can be reconsidered.

If the Commission recommends that Precertification be granted, the application will be forwarded to the Board with suggested actions and recommendations, including a compliance status for each Quality Criterion and monitoring, where applicable. The ETR from the evaluation visit, the application and self-study report, any updated/supplementary information provided by the applicant, and the recommendation of the Commission will be considered by the Board, and Precertification will be granted or denied, or the Board may take another action at its discretion, including but not limited to an invitation to the school to revise and resubmit its application.

Following an evaluation visit, a recommendation from either the Commission or Board to defer and resubmit an application is not an Adverse Certification Action and is not appealable.

At any time after submission of an application for Precertification, the school or institution may voluntarily withdraw its application or request that the Board postpone taking action on the application. If the school or institution subsequently re-submits the application (in its original or an amended form) or requests that the Board take action on the application (in its original or an amended form), the provisions of paragraph 10.6, with respect to the payment of a re-submission fee, shall apply.

10.6 Re-Submission of an Application for Precertification

Following a voluntary withdrawal of an application for Precertification by a school, a revised application submitted within twelve (12) months of the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application shall not incur an application re-submission fee. A revised application submitted later than twelve (12) months after the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application shall incur an application re-submission fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule.

Following a recommendation by the Commission or Board to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted by the school within twelve (12) months of the date of the original application shall not incur an application re-submission fee. Following a recommendation to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted by the school later than twelve (12) months after the date of the original

application shall incur an application re-submission fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule.

A revised application for Precertification shall first be reviewed by a member of the Staff or a consultant appointed for the purpose to ensure that all required issues have been addressed. Incomplete re-submissions will be returned to the school or institution with an appropriate explanation. Complete re-submissions will be sent to the Commission for its consideration and recommended action.

If the Commission does not recommend the granting of Precertification, the school or institution will be invited to submit a new application and self-study report. If the Commission recommends the granting of a Precertification, the re-submitted application will be forwarded to the Board for its consideration and action. If the Board does not grant Precertification, the school or institution may be invited to submit a new application and self-study report.

10.7 Terms for Precertification and Monitoring During the Term

Precertification is awarded and continued in accord with specified terms and conditions, involving monitoring provisions that may include evaluation visits and/or interim report(s). The term of Precertification of the program shall be limited to a maximum of twelve (12) months beyond the anticipated graduation date of the program's first cohort of students, unless the Board, for good cause and at its sole discretion, grants an extension to the Precertification Term.

Failure to attain Certification within the period determined by the Board will require a new application, including payment of any applicable fee(s).

10.8 Denial of Precertification

Denial of Precertification by the Board is an Adverse Certification Action (see paragraph 15) and is subject to appeal (see paragraph 16).

Programs denied Precertification may not re-apply for Precertification until twelve (12) months from the date of the Precertification denial by the Board. Re-application shall include at a minimum an updated application and self-study report, preliminary paper-based review of the application, a comprehensive evaluation visit (if authorized), and the payment of all applicable fees.

10.9 Alterations to the Established Certification Review Procedures or Term

Under circumstances, as determined by ACPE, that prevent ACPE from conducting a scheduled on-site evaluation visit of a program for purposes of continuing Precertification or advancement from Precertification to Certification, ACPE, in cooperation with the institution, shall identify and agree to an alternative venue or format for conducting the evaluation visit in a timely manner. Should the circumstances change after an alternative evaluation visit has occurred, ACPE will conduct an on-site evaluation (comprehensive, focused or verification, as

determined by the Board) as soon as possible. A program for which ACPE has been prevented from conducting an on-site evaluation visit within a five (5) year period will have its Precertification withdrawn, regardless of extenuating circumstances.

The decision to postpone/cancel a scheduled on-site evaluation visit will be made cooperatively between ACPE and the institution in question, with particular deference being given to governmental or institutional policies that may be put into place. Notice of such a postponement or cancellation should be made as soon as is feasible following identification of the causative issue(s). Any costs/fees incurred prior to a postponement or cancellation shall, whenever possible, be credited toward rescheduling the on-site evaluation visit at a later date (preferably as soon as is possible). Costs incurred by ACPE staff and/or volunteers will be reimbursed by ACPE, and ACPE will retain any travel credit toward rescheduling, where possible.

Under extenuating circumstances, at the request of ACPE and/or the institution, the Board may grant an Administrative Extension of the Certification Term. The length of the extension and the reasons therefor, as well as any other conditions or requirements, shall be determined by the Board and communicated to the institution in a timely fashion.

10.10 Application to Advance from Precertification to Certification

Subject to the timeline requirements detailed herein, a school or institution with a Precertified Program may initiate an application to advance from Precertification to Certification at any time, provided that Certification can be granted only after the date of graduation of the first class. The application must include a report from the school detailing how it assesses that its program is in compliance with all Certification Quality Criteria, and any other data or documentation requested by ACPE. The report and other documentation and data must be in the format required by ACPE.

ACPE will not charge an application fee for a program to advance from Precertification to Certification, provided that the program has been maintained in all aspects of its Certification Status to the satisfaction of the Board. All other applicable fees and expenses, such as those related to the evaluation visit, will apply.

An application must be submitted to ACPE on or before **April 1** for a Certification action by the Board at its meeting the following January, or **October 1** for a Certification action by the Board at its meeting the following June. The application will be reviewed first by the Commission. If its review of the application indicates that the program is ready for an evaluation visit, i.e., has a reasonable likelihood of advancing from Precertification to Certification, the Commission will recommend to the Board that an evaluation visit be authorized by the Board.

If the Board authorizes an evaluation visit, it will be scheduled in accord with standard evaluation and operational procedures. The Board will determine if the

format and nature of the evaluation visit. ACPE will include details of forthcoming evaluation visits for the purpose of an application for advancing from Precertification to Certification in the Report of Proceedings following the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board.

If the review of the application by the Commission or Board finds that the school does not provide sufficient evidence that suggests that the program is ready for an evaluation visit, i.e., the program does not have a reasonable likelihood of advancing from Precertification to Certification, an evaluation visit will not be authorized and the school will be advised to defer its application and to resubmit an appropriately revised application. Specific details of deficiencies that need to be addressed in the program and the relevant Quality Criterion/Criteria will be provided to the applicant. ACPE may provide comments and recommendations regarding how deficiencies could be remedied.

Following a recommendation by the Commission or Board to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted within twelve (12) months of the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application to advance to Certification shall not incur an application re-submission fee. Following a recommendation to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted later than twelve (12) months after the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application to advance to Certification shall incur an application re-submission fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule.

The ETR from the evaluation visit, the school's application and report, and any updated/supplementary information provided by the applicant will be reviewed by the members of the Commission, who will make a recommendation to the Board regarding the granting of a Certification Status (Certification, Provisional Certification (Category 1), or Provisional Certification (Category 2)). If the Commission does not recommend the granting of a Certification Status at the time, the application will not be forwarded to the Board and the school or institution applying to advance from Precertification to Certification will be requested to revise and re-submit its application provided with a list of issues that must be addressed before an application to advance to Certification can be reconsidered.

If the Commission recommends that a Certification Status be granted, the application will be forwarded to the Board with suggested actions and recommendations, including a compliance status for each Quality Criterion and monitoring, where applicable. The ETR from the evaluation visit, the application and self-study report, any updated/supplementary information provided by the applicant, and the recommendation of the Commission will be considered by the Board.

The Board may grant Certification, grant Provisional Certification (Category 1), grant Provisional Certification (Category 2), advise the school or institution to defer its application and to resubmit an appropriately revised application, deny Certification, or take such action as it may deem to be appropriate.

In the event of a recommended deferral, the school or institution applying for Certification will be provided with a list of issues that must be addressed before an application for Certification can be reconsidered. In the event of a denial, the school or institution applying for Certification will be provided with a detailed explanation of the reasons, citing the applicable Quality Criterion/Criteria.

Following an evaluation visit, a request by the Commission or Board to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted within twelve (12) months of the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application to advance to Certification shall not incur an application re-submission fee. Following a recommendation to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted later than twelve (12) months after the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application to advance to Certification shall incur an application re-submission fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule.

11. Procedures for Application for Certification, Granting of Certification or Provisional Certification, and Continuation of Certification Status

A flowchart depicting the process for application, granting, denial, appeal, and re-application for Certification is provided in Addendum 5.

At the discretion of the Board, a program for which Precertification was granted may be exempted from elements of the application process and requirements, including submission of a Letter of Intent (paragraph 11.1) and the Pre-Application Consultation (paragraph 11.2).

11.1 Letter of Intent

Prior to the formal submission of an application for Certification, a school or institution must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI), in the format required by ACPE. The LOI initiates the process of applying for Certification. While the LOI is a formal indication of the school or institution's intent to apply for Certification, it is not a binding contract; i.e., the school or institution is not obligated to submit an application for Certification in the future. The LOI must be signed by representatives of the school and institution who are duly authorized to sign such documents.

Documentation specified by ACPE must be submitted with the LOI, primarily to provide evidence that the school, institution, and degree program meet the Eligibility Criteria (see paragraph 6, "Eligibility for ACPE Certification"). In addition, the LOI should provide the school or institution's best estimate of the likely/requested dates for: the required pre-application consultation with ACPE; initiation and completion of the school's self-study; submission of an Invitation to Evaluate; and the evaluation visit. The dates for these events will subsequently be established by mutual agreement between the school or institution and ACPE.

ACPE staff will review the documentation provided by the school or institution and advise whether or not the school or institution may apply to ACPE for Certification. During the evaluation visit (see paragraph 13.3), members of the evaluation team will further evaluate the documentation to confirm that the school, institution and program meet the Eligibility Criteria.

11.2 Pre-Application Consultation

Prior to the formal submission of an application, a school or institution that is interested in applying for Certification must consult with Staff to ensure that it has full knowledge and understanding of:

- the policies, procedures, and fees for Certification
- the expectations of the Quality Criteria
- the requirements for and format of the self-study report that must be submitted with the application for Certification
- the short and long-term responsibilities of the school and program for achieving and maintaining Certification, including the financial commitments
- the purpose and benefits of ACPE's certification program
- the implications for graduates of a program with Certification Status

Such consultation must occur sufficiently in advance of the submission of the application for Certification to ensure that the school and institution have adequate time to comply with all the requirements of the application, primarily the conduct of a comprehensive programmatic self-study based on the Quality Criteria. ACPE recommends that the pre-application consultation occur a minimum of eight to twelve (8 - 12) months ahead of the anticipated date of submission of an application for Certification unless the school has already completed a self-study/self-assessment exercise, the results of which can be used to prepare a self-study report in the format and detail required by ACPE.

Pre-application consultation is offered by ACPE in a number of formats, including:

- teleconference
- online webinar
- consultation at the ACPE office in Chicago, Illinois, USA
- on-site consultation at the school or institution

The school may request which format will be used; however, under circumstances that warrant such a requirement, ACPE may require that the consultation be conducted on-site. On-site consultations must be scheduled at a mutually acceptable time; a minimum advance notice of three months is generally required. The fee associated with each consultation format is provided in ACPE's International Services Program Fee Schedule on the ACPE web site (www.acpe-accredit.org/international).

11.3 Application for Certification

To formally apply for Certification, a school must submit an application (“Invitation to Evaluate”), a self-study report of the program, the required application fee, and any additional materials specified by ACPE, in the required format. Written instructions regarding required documents, format, length, content, and timeline shall be made available by ACPE. (See Addendum 6.) The application should be organized by Quality Criterion and present evidence of compliance with the Quality Criteria. An Invitation to Evaluate the program for purposes of granting certification is required from the Chief Executive Officer of the institution or his/her designee. The Invitation to Evaluate must be in the format established, from time to time, by ACPE, and include any statements and disclosures required by ACPE.

It is the school’s and/or institution’s responsibility to advise all necessary agencies or authorities about their application for Certification, and to obtain any applicable permission.

At any time after submission of an application for Certification, the school or institution may voluntarily withdraw their application, request an extension in the provisionally agreed timeline, or request the Board to postpone taking action on the application. If the school or institution subsequently re-submits the application (in its original or an amended form) or requests the Board to take action on the application (in its original or an amended form), the provisions of this paragraph or paragraph 11.11, as applicable, with respect to the payment of a re-submission fee, shall apply.

After receipt of the application, self-study report, other required materials and supporting documentation, and payment of the fee, the application documents will undergo a preliminary review, as follows:

- iii. The first stage of the preliminary review will be undertaken by a member of the Staff or a consultant appointed for the purpose. The review will evaluate the completeness of the required documentation and data and the adequacy of responses to the focused questions provided in ACPE’s Self-Assessment Instrument. If the self-study report and/or supporting documentation are deemed to be inadequate to allow evaluation by the Preliminary Review Team, International Commission and Board, ACPE will provide details of the deficiencies and request the school to resubmit the report and/or documentation within a specified period of time. An application for Certification will not progress to the second stage of preliminary review until it is determined by Staff that the report and/or supporting documentation are complete and adequate.
- iv. The second stage of the preliminary review will be undertaken by a Preliminary Review Team (PRT) comprised of one member of the Commission and at least one member of the Staff or a consultant appointed for the purpose. ACPE Staff may invite other persons to participate in the review, as deemed necessary. The PRT will review the application, self-study report and supporting documents to evaluate the school and program’s readiness for an evaluation visit. The review will be conducted using an instrument (Threshold Rubric) adopted by ACPE for this purpose.

The instrument used will also be made available to the school or institution applying for Certification of its program.

If the PRT recommends an evaluation visit, its findings, conclusions and recommendations will be presented to the Commission at a regular or special meeting. If the preliminary review of the application, self-study report, and other materials submitted suggests that the program is ready for an evaluation visit, i.e., has a reasonable likelihood of being granted a Certification Status, the Commission will recommend to the Board that an evaluation visit be authorized by the Board, requesting a prompt response thereto.

If the Board authorizes an evaluation visit, it will be scheduled in accord with standard evaluation and operational procedures. Prior to the evaluation visit, ACPE will provide to the school or institution applying for Certification a copy of the PRT Report, with any modifications made by the Commission and/or Board and any requests for additional information. ACPE will include details of forthcoming evaluation visits for the purpose of an application for Certification in the Report of Proceedings following the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board.

If the review of the application, self-study report, and other materials by the PRT, Commission, or Board, finds that they do not provide sufficient evidence that suggests that the program is ready for an evaluation visit, i.e., the program does not have a reasonable likelihood of being granted a Certification Status, an evaluation visit will not be authorized by the Board and the school will be advised to defer its application and to resubmit an appropriately revised application. Specific details of deficiencies that need to be addressed in the program and the relevant Quality Criterion/Criteria will be provided to the applicant. ACPE may provide comments and recommendations regarding how deficiencies could be remedied.

Following a recommendation to defer, revise and re-submit (by the PRT, Commission, or Board), a revised application submitted within twelve (12) months of the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application shall not incur an application re-submission fee. Following a recommendation to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted later than twelve (12) months after the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application shall incur an application re-submission fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule.

11.4 Inability to Conduct an On-Site Evaluation Visit

When it is determined by ACPE, in accordance with its Travel Policy (see Addendum 2), that an initial evaluation for the purpose of considering an application for Certification cannot be conducted using an on-site evaluation visit, the institution will be informed that a Virtual Site Visit (VSV) can be offered, but that the only Certification Status that could be granted as a result of the evaluation visit would be Provisional Certification (Category 2) or Provisional Certification (Categories 1 & 2).

The institution will be given the option to either postpone the evaluation visit or accept a VSV. Under the latter circumstances, the institution must confirm in writing that it acknowledges and accepts that Provisional Certification (Category 2) would be the best Certification Status granted as a result of the VSV.

An institution may request ACPE to conduct a VSV if it is aware of factors that would make an on-site evaluation visit unsafe or unadvisable for any reason, but the final decision as to whether or not an on-site evaluation visit is possible or desirable will be made by ACPE. An institution may not request a VSV purely for reasons of convenience or cost.

The VSV will be conducted in accordance with ACPE's Virtual Site Visit Policy and Guidance (see Addendum 7).

11.5 Action Following the Evaluation Visit

The ETR from the evaluation visit, the application and self-study report, and any updated/supplementary information provided by the applicant will be reviewed by the members of the Commission, who will make a recommendation to the Board regarding the granting of a Certification Status; i.e., Certification or Provisional Certification (Category 1) following an on-site evaluation visit, or Provisional Certification (Category 2) or Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2) following a VSV. If the Commission does not recommend the granting of a Certification Status at the time, the application will not be forwarded to the Board and the school or institution applying for Certification will be provided with a list of issues that must be addressed before an application for Certification can be reconsidered.

If the Commission recommends that a Certification Status be granted, the application will be forwarded to the Board with suggested actions and recommendations, including a compliance status for each Quality Criterion and monitoring, where applicable. The ETR from the evaluation visit, the application and self-study report, any updated/supplementary information provided by the applicant, and the recommendation of the Commission will be considered by the Board.

Following an on-site evaluation visit, the Board may grant Certification or Provisional Certification (Category 1), advise the school or institution to defer its application and to resubmit an appropriately revised application, deny Certification, or take such action as it may deem to be appropriate.

Following a VSV, the Board may grant Provisional Certification (Category 2) or Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2), advise the school or institution to defer its application and to resubmit an appropriately revised application, deny Certification, or take such action as it may deem to be appropriate.

In the event of a recommended deferral, the school or institution applying for Certification will be provided with a list of issues that must be addressed before an application for Certification can be reconsidered. In the event of a denial, the

school or institution applying for Certification will be provided with a detailed explanation of the reasons, citing the applicable Quality Criterion/Criteria.

11.6 Initial Term following Granting of Certification

Programs granted Certification will have an initial term of two (2) years. Prior to the expiration of the two-year term, ACPE will communicate with the school to schedule a focused evaluation visit for the purpose of evaluating compliance with all Quality Criteria. No less than six (6) weeks prior to the evaluation visit, the school must submit a written report to ACPE, in the required format, that summarizes progress and achievements made by the school and program and provides evidence of continued compliance with all Quality Criteria. The school or institution shall pay ACPE the applicable fee and cover all expenses related to the evaluation visit in accordance with these policies and procedures.

In addition to the report to be submitted ahead of the focused evaluation visit, the school must submit an interim written report that provides details of progress and other changes since the granting of Certification. The report must be in the required format and must be submitted on or before the due date specified by ACPE. Based on the school's interim report, the Board may request additional monitoring of the program.

Based on the ETR following the focused evaluation visit, any additional data or documentation provided by the school, and the recommendations of the IC, the Board shall take a certification action in accordance with paragraph 13.5. Following the initial two-year term, the standard term for a program that is in compliance with the Quality Criteria, is four (4) years, to bring the program onto the standard review cycle of six (6) years.

The Board may grant an exemption from the two-year post-Certification focused evaluation visit if an evaluation visit was carried out during a period of Provisional Certification (Category 1). Under these circumstances, the school will only be required to submit a written report, as described above.

11.7 Term following Granting of Provisional Certification (Category 1)

Programs granted Provisional Certification (Category 1) will be awarded a term of two (2) years. Prior to the expiration of the two-year term, ACPE will communicate with the school to schedule a focused evaluation visit for the purpose of evaluating compliance with all Quality Criteria. No less than six (6) weeks prior to the evaluation visit, the school must submit a written report to ACPE, in the required format, that summarizes progress and achievements made by the school and program and provides evidence of compliance with all Quality Criteria. The school or institution shall pay the applicable fee and cover all expenses related to the evaluation visit in accordance with these policies and procedures. Based on the ETR following the focused evaluation visit, any additional data or documentation provided by the school, and the recommendations of the IC, the Board shall take a certification action.

In addition to the report to be submitted ahead of the focused evaluation visit, the school must submit a written report that provides details of progress and other changes since the granting of Provisional Certification (Category 1). The report must be in the required format and must be submitted on or before the due date specified by ACPE. Based on the school's report, the Board may request additional monitoring of the program.

At any regularly scheduled meeting of the Board within the awarded two-year term, the Board may re-evaluate the program to consider the granting of Certification. The Board may grant Certification to the program provided the issues identified in the Actions and Recommendations Report have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Board. If the issues identified in the Actions and Recommendations Report have not been addressed to the satisfaction of the Board, the Board will (subject to the provision below) withdraw Provisional Certification (Category 1), which constitutes an Adverse Certification Action (see paragraph 15) - at the end of the two-year term.

A school with a Provisionally Certified (Category 1) program may submit to ACPE a petition to be granted an extension of the two-year term. The Board may grant an extension of the term if the school can demonstrate good cause as to why such an extension may be warranted. Examples of potential circumstances that may warrant an extension of the term include natural or man-made disasters, such as flood, hurricane, and war, as well as major programmatic factors affecting a school's ability to achieve Certification, such as a sudden change in leadership or major national change in direction for education or the profession of pharmacy. The school's petition must be submitted to ACPE **no later than seventy-five (75) days** before the expiration of the term. The petition must include a detailed description and timeline of the school's plan to address the area(s) of Partial and/or Non-compliance and evidence of adequate support from the school and/or institution to ensure effective and timely implementation of the plan. Monitoring in accordance with the Board's direction will be conducted to ensure that the plan is being effectively implemented.

11.8 Term following Granting of Provisional Certification (Category 2) or Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2)

Programs granted Provisional Certification (Category 2), will be awarded an initial certification term of two (2) years. The Board will define all monitoring and future evaluation requirements, and may set additional terms and conditions as it deems appropriate and necessary. Prior to the expiration of the two-year term, ACPE will communicate with the school to schedule a focused evaluation visit for the purpose of evaluating compliance with all Quality Criteria. No less than six (6) weeks prior to the evaluation visit, the school must submit a written report to ACPE, in the required format, that summarizes progress and achievements made by the school and program and provides evidence of compliance with all Quality Criteria. The school or institution shall pay the applicable fee and cover all expenses related to the evaluation visit in accordance with these policies and procedures. Based on the ETR following the focused evaluation visit, any additional data or

documentation provided by the school, and the recommendations of the IC, the Board shall consider the program for continued Provisional Certification (Category 2) and take a certification action in accordance with paragraph 13.5. Following the initial two-year term, the standard term for a program that is in compliance with the Quality Criteria, is four (4) years, to bring the program onto the standard review cycle of six (6) years.

For programs granted Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2), the provisions of Paragraph 11.7 may also be applied, as deemed appropriate by the Board.

11.9 Advancement from Provisional Certification (Category 2) to Certification

For a program to be considered for advancement from Provisional Certification (Category 2) to Certification, an on-site Verification Visit (VV) must be held in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 11.10 within the awarded Certification Term. For a program to be granted Certification, the VV must, at a minimum with regard to compliance, affirm the findings and conclusions from the VSV. If the VV does not, at a minimum with regard to compliance, affirm the findings and conclusions from the VSV or the VV evaluation team identifies new concerns or issues of compliance, the Board will take an action in accordance with its established decision-making process, which may include the withdrawal of the Certification Status.

For a program to be considered for advancement from Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2) to Certification, an on-site VV must be held in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 11.10 within the awarded two-year term and the Quality Criterion(ia) rated as Partially Compliant must have been brought into compliance (i.e., rated as Compliant or Complaint with Monitoring) as determined by the Board as the result of an evaluation (interim report or VV).

A program with a Certification Status of Provisional Certification (Category 1 and 2) may be advanced to Provisional Certification (Category 2) when the Quality Criterion(ia) rated as Partially Compliant has(have) been brought into Compliance (rated as Compliant or Complaint with Monitoring) as determined by the Board as a result of an evaluation conducted via an interim report or evaluation visit.

For a program granted Provisional Certification (Category 2), if due to extenuating circumstances it has not been possible for the program to advance to Certification within the awarded Certification Term, at its sole discretion and for good cause, the Board may continue the Certification Status for a period of time and with such evaluation and monitoring requirements and/or other conditions as it deems appropriate.

11.10 Conduct of Verification Visits

Depending on the type and complexity of the evaluation visit, the VV will be conducted by an evaluation team with one or two members, at least one of which will be a member of the ACPE Staff or an ACPE consultant. As far as possible, one or both of the team members will have conducted the original or a subsequent VSV.

The VV will be scheduled as soon as possible after the original or any subsequent VSV; dates for which will be mutually agreed by the school and ACPE. Depending on the type and complexity of the evaluation visit, and the number of different locations/campuses to be visited, the VV should typically take no more than one to one-and-a-half days to complete.

A fee will be charged for the VV, in accordance with the Fee Schedule. ACPE will try to ensure that the total cost (fees and expenses) to the institution for the conduct of the original VSV and the subsequent VV will not be greater than the fees and estimated expenses would have been for a typical comprehensive on-site evaluation with the standard four-member team.

Prior to the VV, the school will be required to submit to ACPE a report summarizing any notable changes and/or updates since the conduct of the last VSV. The report should be received by ACPE no later than thirty (30) days before the VV. In addition to providing details of any notable changes or updates, a key component of the report is for the school to affirm that the findings and conclusions from the original or any subsequent VSV regarding compliance are still valid. The school may also respond to issues or concerns raised during the VSV, however, this is not required by ACPE, as such issues will be handled through the monitoring determined by the Board following the VSV. ACPE will provide a template and/or guidance for the report (format, page limits, etc.) and, if applicable, any other documentation or data to be submitted. Evaluation team members may request additional documents before, during, and after the VV.

The conduct of the sessions, interviews, etc., during the VV will follow a similar – but abbreviated – format to sessions in a typical on-site evaluation visit. The evaluation team members will verify the findings from the VSV regarding each Quality Criteria (QC), paying particular attention to the evaluation of aspects of the program that are more challenging to evaluate in a virtual environment, such as physical facilities, practice sites, etc.

The evaluation team will produce an Evaluation Team Report (ETR) following the VV (the VV-ETR), which will use as a basis the ETR from the VSV, and either: (a) affirm the findings and conclusions of the ETR, or (b) note any differences or updates in findings and conclusions (either “positive” or “negative”) and make appropriate recommendations to the ACPE Board. The procedure for the finalization of the VV-ETR will be the same as for a typical ETR, including the opportunity for the school to review a draft and correct any errors of fact and to submit a response to ACPE after the VV-ETR is finalized.

11.11 Re-Submission of an Application for Certification (after an evaluation visit)

Following an evaluation visit, a recommendation from either the Commission or Board to defer and resubmit an application is not an Adverse Certification Action and is not appealable. Following a recommendation to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted within twelve (12) months of the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application shall not incur an application re-submission fee. Following a recommendation to defer, revise and re-submit, a revised application submitted later than twelve (12) months after the date of receipt by ACPE of the original application shall incur an application re-submission fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule.

A revised application for Certification shall first be reviewed by a member of the Staff or a consultant appointed for the purpose to ensure that all required issues have been addressed. Incomplete re-submissions will be returned to the school or institution with an appropriate explanation. Complete re-submissions will be sent to the Commission for its consideration and recommended action.

If the Commission does not recommend the granting of a Certification Status, the school or institution will be invited to submit a new application and self-study report. If the Commission recommends the granting of a Certification Status, the re-submitted application will be forwarded to the Board for its consideration and action. If the Board does not grant a Certification Status, the school or institution may be invited to submit a new application and self-study report.

11.12 Denial of Certification

Denial of Certification by the Board is an Adverse Certification Action (see paragraph 15) and is subject to appeal (see paragraph 16).

Programs denied Certification may re-apply for Certification after a minimum period of twelve (12) months from the date of the certification action by the Board. Re-application shall include at a minimum an updated application and self-study report, preliminary paper-based review of the application, a comprehensive on-site evaluation (if authorized), and the payment of all applicable fees.

11.13 Continued Certification Status

The procedures for evaluation for purposes of continuing Certification Status are determined by the Board. ACPE will inform the Chief Executive Officer of the institution and the Dean of the school of the approach of a period during which a comprehensive re-evaluation would normally be conducted, as determined during the previous evaluation of the program, presented in the last Action and Recommendation Report, and published on the ACPE web site. The standard review cycle between comprehensive evaluation visits is six (6) years. For a program granted Provisional Certification (Category 1), the period between comprehensive evaluation visits may be up to eight (8) years. The exact dates of the evaluation visit are established in consultation with the Dean. Instructions concerning the details of the evaluation visit, the materials required (e.g., Invitation

to Evaluate, self-study report), the evaluative procedures employed, and the fees will be made available by ACPE.

ACPE may review programs for purposes of continued Certification Status at any time within the six (6) year cycle. Shorter review cycles are designed to monitor progress on specified issues. Such reviews may be based upon a written report of progress (interim report) from the school, an evaluation visit (focused visit), or another method of review as deemed appropriate. A focused evaluation visit requires a written report to be submitted in accordance with standard evaluation and operational procedures. Modifications to the review cycle, including extensions, may be made by ACPE for administrative or other valid reasons, and ACPE will also consider requests from a school for an alteration in the review cycle; however, the review cycle will not extend beyond six (6) years without due cause.

Failure of a school to cooperate in any part of the certification review process after due notice of the scheduled review has been given may constitute grounds for an Administrative Warning or an Adverse Certification Action by the Board.

11.14 Certification with Probation/Certified with Probation

In the event that the Board determines that a certified program is in Partial or Non-compliance with a Quality Criterion/Criteria and has not made adequate progress toward bringing the Criterion/Criteria into compliance, the program may be given the status of Certified with Probation (see also paragraph 13.5.1). The awarding of the status of Certified with Probation is an Adverse Certification Action and appealable (see paragraphs 15 and 16).

In the event that a program is given the status of Certified with Probation or following an appeal the status is affirmed, such status and the Quality Criterion/Criteria found to be Partially or Non-compliant will be published in the Directory on the ACPE web site. Any response of the school to the certification action should be presented in advance of the next meeting at which the program is scheduled for consideration. The Chief Executive Officer of the institution or a designate, and the Dean are invited to present comments at this Board meeting, either in person or via an appropriate form of telecommunication.

Failure by the school to address the deficiencies that resulted in the status of Certified with Probation within the timeframe designated by ACPE may result in an additional Adverse Certification Action (see paragraph 15).

11.15 Continued Non-Compliance for a Provisionally Certified Program

In the event that the Board determines that a program with Provisional Certification (Category 2) is in Partial or Non-compliance with a Quality Criterion/Criteria and has not made adequate progress toward bringing the Criterion/Criteria into compliance, the program will be invited to show cause, within a stated period of time, as to why Certification Status should not be withdrawn. Any response of the school must be presented in advance of the next meeting at which the program is scheduled for consideration. The Chief Executive Officer of the institution or a designate, and the Dean may be invited to present comments at a meeting(s) of

the International Commission and/or Board, either in person or via an appropriate form of telecommunication. Failure by the school to adequately address the deficiencies or provide a plan that is acceptable to the Board to address the deficiencies may result in an Adverse Certification Action, including withdrawal of Certification Status (see paragraph 15).

11.16 Alterations to the Established Certification Review Procedures or Term

Under circumstances, as determined by ACPE, which prevent ACPE from conducting a scheduled on-site evaluation of a program for purposes of continuing Certification, ACPE, in cooperation with the school, shall identify and endeavor to agree to an alternative venue or format for conducting the evaluation in a timely manner. Should the circumstances change after an alternative evaluation has occurred, ACPE will conduct an on-site evaluation visit (comprehensive, focused, or verification, as determined by the Board) as soon as possible. A program for which ACPE has been prevented from conducting a comprehensive on-site evaluation within a twelve-year period (i.e., that span of two standard six-year Certification Terms) will have its Certification Status withdrawn, regardless of extenuating circumstances.

The decision to postpone/cancel a scheduled on-site evaluation will be made cooperatively between ACPE and the institution in question, with particular deference being given to governmental or institutional policies that may be put into place. Notice of such a postponement or cancellation should be made as soon as is feasible following identification of the causative issue(s). Any costs/fees incurred prior to a postponement or cancellation shall, whenever possible, be credited toward rescheduling the on-site evaluation at a later date (preferably as soon as is possible). Costs incurred by ACPE staff and/or volunteers will be reimbursed, and ACPE will retain any travel credit toward rescheduling, where possible.

Under extenuating circumstances, at the request of ACPE and/or the institution, the Board may grant an Administrative Extension of the Certification Term. The length of the extension and the reasons therefor, as well as any other conditions or requirements, shall be determined by the Board and communicated to the institution in a timely fashion.

12. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy

12.1 Access to School and Program Information All information pertaining to the applicant/school and the program is accessible only to those authorized to have access and is protected throughout the certification process.

12.2 Conflict of Interest Policy ACPE maintains internal policies and procedures to avoid conflicts or appearances of conflict of interest, which are applicable to and enforced in respect to all aspects of the Certification Program.

- 12.3 Avoidance of Conflict of Interest** To avoid any perception of conflict of interest, it is standard policy that neither ACPE, its Staff, nor any other representative acting on behalf of ACPE, may accept from an individual, school, institution, or organization any gift, payment, payment-in-kind, or any other consideration of material value, other than the agreed fees for Certification, evaluation, training, or consultation (see paragraph 19). ACPE's Executive Director shall determine whether or not a gift is deemed to have "material value."

13. Evaluation and Operational Procedures

- 13.1 Materials, Communications, and Conduct of Evaluation** The operational language of ACPE is English and ACPE reserves the right to require that all communications with ACPE and its representatives be conducted in English. This includes applications for Certification and Precertification and continuation of Certification, Precertification and Provisional Certification, all submitted materials and data, interim monitoring or annual reporting, appealing an action of the Board, evaluation and consultation activities, and any hearings. Translations must facilitate accurate and efficient evaluation of materials and data. All costs for translation must be covered by the school or institution. When it is not feasible for a school or institution to provide documents in English (such as historic and/or lengthy documents), a summary in English of the key elements should be provided. Whenever possible, ACPE will endeavor to accommodate languages other than English, for example, by using consultants and evaluators with relevant language skills, qualifications, training, and experience.

No school or institution may impose arbitrary restrictions with regard to the selection of the evaluation team members or the activities or duties of team members while conducting an evaluation visit.

ACPE establishes and periodically reviews and updates the criteria for identification, selection, and retention of members of evaluation teams; such criteria include qualifications, experience, understanding of contemporary and needs-based pharmacy practice and education, cultural competence, ethics, professionalism, consistency, impartiality, and adherence to ACPE guidelines, policies and procedures. Prior to deployment, all members of evaluation teams and persons otherwise involved in the evaluation of programs must complete initial training on the Quality Criteria, policies and procedures, evaluation techniques, and respective roles in the evaluation process. Periodic refresher training, especially following significant revisions of the Quality Criteria, must be completed by all persons involved in the evaluation process.

- 13.2 Self-Study and Self-Study Report** For the purposes of applying for Certification or Precertification, submission of a self-study report and other administrative details as specified by ACPE are required. The self-study process for Certification should be in-depth and broad-based, involving a representative portion of the school's administrative leaders, Academic Staff, professional, technical and administrative staff, students, graduates of the program, preceptors, practitioners,

governing body, and other appropriate stakeholders. The self-study process for Precertification should be in-depth and broad-based, involving all administrative leaders, Academic Staff, and other stakeholders, as applicable.

A self-study report must use the template or format required by ACPE and should include:

- required documentation and data as specified by ACPE
- a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the strengths and limitations of the program
- qualitative and quantitative information on both Academic Staff and student achievements, and
- evidence of outcomes that demonstrate the school's successes in achieving its mission and goals, including success in student learning.

A Certification self-study report should:

- provide a description and analysis of the Professional Degree Program
- present findings and conclusions
- provide the school's self-assessment of compliance with the Quality Criteria
- appraise strengths and weaknesses, and where deficiencies exist:
 - outline plans for improvement, with appropriate implementation strategies, resource implications, and timelines, and
 - describe progress with implementation of the plan and provide evidence of success towards achieving full compliance of the program with the Quality Criterion/Criteria.

A Precertification self-study report should contain as many of the above elements and attributes as possible, commensurate with and appropriate to the stage of development of the program. Where elements are not yet in place, the school should provide full details of its plans and timelines.

As an integral component of its certification review, ACPE conducts its own analyses and evaluations of the self-study process, self-study report, and other data and documentation provided. The self-study report should serve as a point of reference for the institution's future strategic planning.

To ensure adequate evaluation of educational quality and to effectively present efforts to improve quality, ACPE requires schools to submit a printed or electronic self-study report directly to ACPE using the *Self-Assessment Instrument for Certification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy* or the *Self-Assessment Instrument for Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy* as a template. Similar instruments, *Evaluation Instrument for Certification of Professional Degree Program of Schools of Pharmacy* and *Evaluation Instrument for Precertification of Professional Degree Program of Schools of Pharmacy* (the "Rubrics") are used by evaluation teams during evaluation visits to facilitate the team's evaluation of the program's compliance with the Quality Criteria or progress towards compliance, as applicable. The final determination of a program's compliance with Quality Criteria or progress towards compliance is made by the Board.

13.3 Evaluation Visits Prior to the evaluation visit, the self-study report and other pertinent materials are distributed by Staff to members of the evaluation team for their independent analysis. Evaluation teams shall generally include four evaluators for comprehensive visits, two evaluators for focused visits, and one or two evaluators for verification visits. Evaluators must be qualified by experience and training, and may include members of the Board, Commission, and Staff. In order to be trained as an evaluator, an individual must have held an academic appointment in a school of pharmacy or have been employed as a pharmacy practitioner for a minimum of five years.

The Dean of the school to be visited is given the opportunity to review the proposed team for perceived or real conflicts of interest. With the agreement of the institution and ACPE, other individuals may be invited to observe the on-site evaluation to facilitate a better understanding of and engender confidence in the certification process. The size of the evaluation team, the specific dates of the evaluation visit, and the number of days necessary for completion of the evaluation visit are established in consultation with the Dean. (See also Addendum 2; ACPE International Travel Guidelines).

Ordinarily, the evaluation visit involves two to four days and includes interviews with the Dean and other administrative leaders of the school, members of the academic staff, students, graduates of the program, preceptors (if applicable), and university administrators. Evaluation visits related to an application for Precertification will be structured appropriately commensurate with the stage of development of the program. During the evaluation visit, the members of the evaluation team will confirm that the school, institution, and program meet the Eligibility Criteria. An inspection is made of physical facilities, the library and educational resources, and the facilities utilized for pharmacy practice experiences. Evaluation team members are provided with guidelines for the conduct of meetings and interviews and a Criterion-by-Criterion evaluation instrument (the “Rubric”) to aid in their review. At the conclusion of the evaluation visit, the evaluation team presents findings verbally to the Dean of the school and to the Chief Executive Officer of the institution, generally the President (or equivalent) or a designate. These findings serve as the framework for the written ETR, which is first provided to the members of the evaluation team for their review and comment, then to the Dean for correction of any factual errors, and subsequently (in final version) to the institution, Commission, and Board for action.

The school is expected to demonstrate that it systematically obtains outcome information, and that it applies this information to foster programmatic improvements and to enhance student learning and achievement of the required competencies. Other activities of the school may markedly influence the instruction given in professional programs. Accordingly, the evaluation for purposes of Certification or Precertification will include a review of other activities that may be sponsored by the school, such as non-practice undergraduate degree programs in pharmacy-related disciplines, graduate offerings including master and doctor of philosophy degree programs in pharmacy-related disciplines, continuing education

activities, certificates or other non-degree programs, research and scholarly activities, and professional and public service programs.

ACPE may rely upon the assessments made by any applicable accrediting/quality assurance agencies concerning the basic science and general education components of the professional programs. Additionally, the evaluations of the national or regional accrediting/quality assurance agency concerning general institutional policies and central administrative support may be used in the evaluation/assessment process. However, ACPE is not obliged to consider the evaluations of any other agency.

Note: When deemed necessary by the ACPE Board, an evaluation visit may be conducted virtually (see Addendum 7).

13.4 Evaluation Team Report As a result of the evaluation visit, a written ETR that describes the evaluation team's findings and conclusions regarding compliance of the program with each of the Quality Criteria is provided to the Dean of the school and the Chief Executive Officer (or designated representative) of the institution at a reasonable time after the evaluation visit. The ETR also comments on the program's areas of strength and areas needing improvement; mentions specific areas, if any, where the evaluation team believes that the program is Partially or Non-compliant with the Quality Criteria; and may offer suggestions concerning means of improvement for the school to consider. The Dean of the school is given the opportunity to correct factual errors and to comment on the draft ETR prior to finalization and distribution of the ETR to the school, institution, Commission, and Board. The Chief Executive Officer of the institution and the Dean of the school may also provide supplemental materials related to the facts and conclusions presented in the ETR prior to the time the ETR is reviewed by the Commission, and the Board for action. Any such materials must be received by ACPE no later than the submission date(s) communicated to the school. The ETR is not a certification action but is an evaluative step in the certification process. The evaluation team validates the school's self-study report, providing the perspective of an independent external peer review.

13.5 Certification Actions Based on the ETR, the self-study report, communications received from the institution, if invited a presentation by the Chief Executive Officer of the institution or a designated representative and/or the Dean of the school, and the recommendation of the Commission, the Board determines the program's compliance with the Quality Criteria, takes a certification action (type of Certification Status, Certification Term, and any conditions associated with the Certification Status), and presents comments and recommendations. A copy of the Certification Action and Recommendations ("A&R") indicating the Certification Status granted by the Board, along with Certification Term and conditions, comments, required interim monitoring, and the timeframe within which ACPE will conduct its next on-site evaluation of the program is sent to the Chief Executive Officer of the institution and the Dean of the school. ACPE staff will schedule evaluation visits within the designated timeframe as specified in the A&R.

In the unlikely event that an evaluation visit cannot be scheduled during the timeframe specified in an A&R, ACPE in conjunction with the school shall determine when such an evaluation visit can be scheduled for a date falling outside the timeframe specified in the A&R.

The ETR and the A&R are confidential documents and are considered to be the property of the institution. Except in the instance of exercise of the appeal procedure as provided in these policies and procedures, or as otherwise indicated in this paragraph, these documents will not be released by ACPE to third parties without the authorization of the Chief Executive Officer of the institution. Without such authorization, the sole information available to the public consists of that information contained in the Directory and in the Report of Proceedings from the meeting at which the certification action was taken. If the institution publishes or releases any portion of the ETR or the A&R, or releases any statement concerning such documents and/or the Certification Status of the program, that ACPE determines requires public clarification or presents a misleading impression, ACPE may publish an appropriate response or require the release of such documents in their entirety.

Except where circumstances require immediate action, certification actions shall be made by the Board only during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. The regularly scheduled meetings of the Board are currently in January and June of each year.

13.5.1 Findings of Partial or Non-Compliance

In the event that the Board determines a program is in Partial or Non-compliance with a Quality Criterion/Criteria, the A&R will include notification of the finding of Partial or Non-compliance and outline the requirements for bringing the Criterion/Criteria into compliance. Failure to bring any Criterion found to be Partially Compliant or Non-compliant into compliance in a timely manner may result in the status of Certified with Probation or another Adverse Certification Action.

The ACPE Board may grant an extension of time to bring a Criterion into compliance if the school can demonstrate good cause as to why such an extension may be warranted. Examples of potential circumstances that may warrant an extension of time include natural or man-made disasters, such as flood, hurricane, and war. Demonstration of good cause must include a detailed description of the school's plan to address the area(s) of Partial and/or Non-compliance, the provision of adequate support from the school and/or institution to ensure effective implementation of the plan, and evidence that the plan will be effectively implemented within a period of time acceptable to and specified by the Board. Monitoring in accordance with the Board's direction will be conducted to ensure that the plan is being effectively implemented.

13.6 Annual and other Reporting during the Certification Term Program evaluation between comprehensive evaluation visits is achieved by means of annual reporting, correspondence, written interim reports, and focused evaluation visits as may be

requested by the Board. As determined by ACPE, schools with certified programs are required to annually report requested program information, including enrollment trends and Academic Staff resources, and performance of graduates on standardized licensure examinations (where applicable). Schools must submit the required data in the format and timeframe specified by ACPE.

13.6.1 Changes and Trends in Enrollment

At least once per year, the Commission and Board will review data relating to enrollment of students in the program for the purpose of identifying changes and trends in enrollment that may impact the ability of a program to remain in compliance with the Quality Criteria.

Under conditions described below, or as otherwise deemed necessary by the Board, ACPE will follow-up with applicable schools via written correspondence requesting that they identify the cause of the change or trend and provide an action plan for correcting any changes or trends that may negatively impact programmatic quality.

13.6.1.a A letter will be sent to a school having a change in enrollment in the first professional year larger than 20 percent over a five year period or less. Situations in which a program is deemed to be in a period of transition between professional programs will be taken into account in a review of a program's ability to remain in compliance with the Quality Criteria, particularly those addressing curricular effectiveness,

13.6.1.b A letter will be sent to a school based on any other analysis indicating a substantial trend affecting a program's ability to remain in compliance with the Quality Criteria, particularly those Quality Criteria addressing curricular effectiveness.

13.6.2 Academic Staff Resources

At least once per year, the Commission and Board will review data provided by the school relating to the Academic Staff resources available to the program for the purpose of identifying changes and trends that may impact the ability of a program to remain in compliance with the Quality Criteria.

Under conditions described below, or as otherwise deemed necessary by the Board, ACPE will follow-up with applicable schools via written correspondence requesting that they identify the cause of the change or trend and provide an action plan for correcting any changes or trends that may negatively impact programmatic quality.

13.6.2.a A letter will be sent to a school based on an analysis indicating a substantial trend affecting a program's ability to remain in compliance with the Quality Criteria, particularly those Quality Criteria addressing curricular effectiveness.

13.6.3 Non Compliance with Requirements for Annual Reporting

ACPE reserves the right to reasonably request, on an annual basis, data and/or other relevant information from schools with programs with Certification Status, which allows ACPE to evaluate ongoing compliance of the program with the Quality Criteria. The program of any school that does not provide data and/or information in accordance with the above policies and procedures and within the timelines specified in communications from ACPE may be placed on Administrative Warning (see paragraph 7.7).

13.6.4 Repeated Annual Reporting Concerns

Programs with Certification Status that repeatedly raise the concerns of the Board in one or more of ACPE's annual reporting areas will be subject to further action by the Board.

13.7 Document Retention See paragraph 18.

14. Substantive Change

ACPE is responsible for reviewing all Substantive Changes that occur between regularly scheduled comprehensive evaluation visits to determine whether or not the change has affected the quality of the program and to assure the public that all aspects of the Professional Degree Program continue to comply with the Quality Criteria. While the decision to implement a Substantive Change is the prerogative and responsibility of the school and institution, ACPE is obligated to determine the effect of any Substantive Change on the program's ability to comply with the Quality Criteria.

It is the responsibility of the Dean of a program with Certification Status that proposes to implement a Substantive Change to provide written notification of the proposed change to ACPE in advance of the implementation of the change. If a school is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, the Dean should consult with ACPE staff.

ACPE's definition of Substantive Change includes, but is not limited to:

- A substantial change in the established mission or goals of the institution or school;
- Curricular change that represent a significant departure in either content or method of delivery, from those that were offered during the program's previous certification review including:
 - development of an agreement for joint delivery of a program
 - use of distance learning technologies or other unique methodologies to deliver a substantial portion of the curriculum; e.g., 25% or higher (see also Addendum 8);
- A substantial change in enrollment in the professional program (defined as 20% or more in one year or cumulatively over two consecutive years);
- A substantial change in the number of clock or credit hours required for successful completion of the program;
- A significant change in the length of the program;
- The establishment of an additional geographic location at or from which substantial portions of the program are delivered;
- A substantial change in Academic Staff composition or capacity;

- Change in the legal status, governance, or ownership of the school or institution;
- Changes in financial resources that could affect the quality of the program;
- Changes in leadership;
- Changes in organizational structure;
- Change in status with another accrediting or quality assurance agency; and
- Any other changes that the Dean feels require notification to ACPE

Documentation that the program will continue to comply with the Quality Criteria must be provided. The notification must allow sufficient time for evaluation of continued compliance with the Quality Criteria by ACPE. ACPE reserves the right to review and reconsider the terms of the program's Certification Status in accord with standard evaluation and operational procedures or appropriate monitoring, such as an evaluation visit (see Addendum 8 *Guidelines to Substantive Change Policies and Procedures* for additional information regarding Substantive Change reporting procedures). Substantive change notifications are evaluated at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. A communication is returned to the school following the Board's review of the change and will outline any additional monitoring required, any change in a Criterion's rating of compliance, and notification of an evaluation visit, if warranted by the Board.

If a school fails to follow this Substantive Change policy and its procedures, the Certification Status of the program may be placed in jeopardy.

15. Adverse Certification Actions: Certification with Probation, Denial of Certification or Precertification, or Withdrawal of Certification Status

15.1 Certification with Probation A program that has been determined by the Board to be Partially or Non-compliant with a Quality Criterion/Criteria and has failed to bring the Criterion/Criteria into compliance may be given the status of Certified with Probation at any time during the period of the program's Partial or Non-Compliance (see paragraph 13.5.1).

15.2 Denial of Certification or Precertification

Denial of Certification or Precertification will occur when there is evidence that the program applying for Certification or Precertification exhibits substantial deficiencies that prevent compliance with the Quality Criteria.

15.3 Withdrawal of Certification Status

Withdrawal of Certification Status by ACPE will occur when there is documented evidence that a program with the status of Certified, Precertified, Provisionally Certified, or Certified with Probation exhibits ongoing deficiencies in achieving or maintaining compliance with a Quality Criterion/Criteria and that the deficiencies are sufficiently serious to raise concerns regarding overall programmatic quality.

15.3.1 Withdrawal of Precertification

For a Precertified program, withdrawal of status will occur if the Board finds the program to be making inadequate progress in implementing its plan to

achieve full compliance with one or more Quality Criteria within the required developmental time period determined by the Board, and after written notification to the program of the specific issues of inadequate progress, the school fails to remedy all issues cited within the time frame indicated in the notification. The developmental time period may be extended only for good cause as determined by the Board.

15.3.2 Withdrawal of Certification Status

For a Certified, Precertified or Provisionally Certified program, withdrawal of Certification Status will ordinarily occur after the Board has found the program to be Partially or Non-compliant with one or more of the Quality Criteria, has given the school written notification of the finding of Partial or Non-compliance, and the program has failed to achieve compliance with the cited Criterion/Criteria within a timeframe acceptable to the Board. The time period to remedy all issues of Partial or Non-compliance may be extended only for good cause, as determined by the Board (see paragraphs 11.7 – 11.9 and 13.5.1).

15.3.3 Immediate Withdrawal of Certification Status

Regardless of the Certification Status of a program, rapid and precipitous deterioration of the quality of the program may be sufficient grounds for the immediate withdrawal of Certification Status, whether or not a period of Certified with Probation or other opportunity to remedy issues of Partial or Non-compliance with the Quality Criteria has been provided.

15.4 Notification of Adverse Certification Action

Notification of an Adverse Certification Action by the Board shall be in writing and delivered (with proof of delivery required) to the Chief Executive Officer of the institution and to the Dean of the school affected. Such notification shall provide a statement of the reasons for the Adverse Certification Action, along with notice of the right to appeal and the time constraints for initiating such an appeal as detailed under paragraph 16 of these Policies and Procedures.

Within thirty (30) days of a final decision (after appeal or expiration of the opportunity to appeal) of an Adverse Certification Action, written notification shall be made to the institution, any applicable agency, and published on the ACPE web site (<https://www.acpe-accredit.org/>) within 24 hours of its notice to the school. A brief statement summarizing the reasons for the Adverse Certification Action and any comments from the affected institution shall be made available to any applicable agency and to the public via presentation on the ACPE web site (<https://www.acpe-accredit.org/>) not later than 60 days after such final action.

In the event of withdrawal of Certification Status, within thirty (30) days of such notification, or in the case of enduring materials, as soon as practically possible, the school or institution must discontinue and remove all references to Certification Status of the program by ACPE. Any outstanding fees or expense reimbursements for services provide by ACPE become payable immediately.

15.5 Reapplication for Certification or Precertification

Not less than twelve (12) months after the effective date of denial of Certification or Precertification or withdrawal of Certification Status, but at any time thereafter, the Chief Executive Officer of the institution may reapply for Certification or Precertification. The application shall follow the application procedure in its entirety as detailed under paragraph 10 or paragraph 11 of these Policies and Procedures.

The key steps regarding policies and procedures for Adverse Certification Actions are summarized in Addendum 9.

16. Appeals Panel and Appeal Procedure for an Adverse Certification Action

16.1 Right to Appeal and Retention of Certification Status

An institution may appeal only the following negative decisions: (1) awarding the status of Certification with Probation; (2) denial of Certification or Precertification as a result of a decision by the Board, or (4) withdrawal of Certification Status as a result of a decision by the Board. The appeal procedure specified herein is the exclusive remedy for an institution that believes a negative decision was unwarranted.

After receipt of notice of an Adverse Certification Action, the Chief Executive Officer of the institution involved may appeal the decision of the Board to an Appeals Panel on the grounds that: (a) the decision of the Board was arbitrary, capricious, or not supported by substantial evidence in the record on which the Board took action; or b) the procedures used by the Board to reach its decision were contrary to the Board's bylaws, certification procedures or other established policies and practices, and that procedural error prejudiced the Board's consideration. The Certification Status of the program existing prior to the Adverse Certification Action shall continue, pending the disposition of the appeal, and such status shall continue to be reflected in the Directory until the appeal procedure is finalized. **Notice of appeal by the institution shall be in writing and delivered to ACPE within 30 days after receipt of notification of the Adverse Certification Action either: by certified mail, postage prepaid, with return receipt requested; or by email; or by facsimile to the offices of ACPE.** The appealing institution shall affirm its responsibility to undertake the costs of the appeal and enclose or remit a deposit as specified in the Fee Schedule to be applied against expenses, as set forth in paragraph 16.3.1. Such notice of appeal shall summarize the facts supporting the grounds on which the appeal is based. ACPE shall promptly notify the appealing institution of the date the notice of appeal was received.

ANY NOTICE OF APPEAL NOT FILED WITHIN THE 30 DAY PERIOD SHALL RESULT IN A DISMISSAL OF THE APPEAL.

Both parties of the appeal have the right to representation by counsel throughout the appeals procedure.

16.2 Members of the Appeals Panel

- 16.2.1** The Appeals Panel shall consist of no more than five (5) members. One (1) member shall be selected by the current chief elected officer (CEO) of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy; one (1) member shall be selected by the CEO of the American Pharmacists Association; one (1) member shall be selected by the CEO of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy; and two (2) members shall be selected by ACPE from former members of the ACPE Board of Directors, former members of the Commission, or members of ACPE's International Services Program Advisory Group (ISPAG). Members selected pursuant to the foregoing sentence shall be appointed for this purpose by ACPE's President. The Appeals Panel must include individuals with experience in quality assurance of pharmacy education and international pharmacy education and practice, and additional members may be added to the panel if the individuals appointed to the panel under the guidelines outlined above do not provide such representation. ACPE will ensure that all members of the Appeals Panel are well informed about ACPE's Quality Criteria and Policies and Procedures, and their application. In order to ensure currency, a special training session will be held for all Appeals Panel members prior to the convening of the Panel.
- 16.2.2** No former Board or Commission member shall be appointed to the Appeals Panel if that member participated in any manner while a Board or Commission member with respect to the Adverse Certification Action taken by the Board against the appealing party or who, under the policies of ACPE, has an apparent or real conflict of interest with the appealing party.
- 16.2.3** No member of the Appeals Panel shall be a current member of the Board, Commission, or ACPE Staff, nor shall any member have an affiliation with the institution involved that would create an apparent or real conflict of interest (e.g., graduate, present or former member of the Academic Staff).
- 16.2.4** Each member of the Appeals Panel will execute an agreement attesting to the fact that he or she has no conflict of interest with the appealing institution or the Professional Degree Program of that institution and agrees to hold confidential all matters pertaining to the appeal procedure, including but not limited to, all documents, all information and testimony received prior to and at the hearing, and the Appeals Panel's deliberations, unless a release of all or any part of such information is mutually agreed to by the parties.

16.3 Convening of the Appeals Panel

- 16.3.1** Promptly after receipt of the notice of appeal, ACPE shall contact the members and notify them of their appointment to the Appeals Panel as set forth in paragraph 16.2. ACPE shall notify the institution that initiated the

appeal that the Appeals Panel has been created and inform it of the names of the members of the Appeals Panel. The Appeals Panel can be convened only on notice of appeal as described above. Meetings of the Appeals Panel may take place in person or by other means approved by the Board.

All reasonable expenses incurred by the Appeals Panel, including, but not limited to, travel expenses (e.g., transportation, accommodations, and meals) and telecommunications expenses, shall be paid by the institution that initiated the appeal. Notice of appeal shall be accompanied by a deposit as specified in the Fee Schedule be used against expenses. If the total costs for the appeals process exceed the amount of the deposit paid, the additional amount shall be communicated to the institution and must be promptly paid. Any surplus from the deposit paid that remains after the conclusion of the appeals process shall be promptly returned to the institution. The institution shall be provided with an itemized list of the expenses of the Appeals Panel.

- 16.3.2** ACPE shall advise the members of the Appeals Panel of their responsibilities promptly upon identification of the members. Once convened, the Appeals Panel shall designate a chairperson who shall conduct the meetings of the Appeals Panel and shall act as the presiding officer at any hearings.

16.4 Appeals Procedure

Within thirty days of the receipt by ACPE of the notice of the appeal, the institution shall present a written statement of its position to the Appeals Panel. Within thirty days after the institution submits its written statement, the ACPE Board may submit a written response to the Appeals Panel. A hearing shall be held at a date mutually agreed upon by the parties and the Appeals Panel but not more than ninety (90) days after receipt of the notice of appeal by ACPE, at which time the appealing institution shall have the opportunity to make a verbal presentation for no more than 45 minutes, followed by representatives of the ACPE Board which shall also have the opportunity to present for no more than 45 minutes. Thereafter, the Appeals Panel shall have the opportunity to direct questions to and hear responses from the program and ACPE. The written statements and presentations must be relevant to the conditions existing at the program during the dates on which the site visit or other evaluation activity was made and on which the Adverse Certification Action was taken. New evidence that was not considered by the ACPE Board at the time of its decision, including improvement in conditions and corrections of deficiencies made subsequent to the Adverse Certification Action shall not be considered. The hearing shall be conducted in English and recorded. Either party may, at its expense, request such recording be transcribed. If translation services are required, the expense of such services shall be covered by the institution that initiated the appeal.

Within thirty (30) days after the hearing, the Appeals Panel shall render a decision. The Appeals Panel may (i) affirm, (ii) remand, or (iii) amend the Adverse

Certification Action taken by the Board. In a decision to remand the Adverse Certification Action to the Board for further consideration, or to amend the decision, the Appeals Panel must identify specific issues that the Board must address by providing an explanation and basis for remanding or amending the Board's decision. If the Appeals Panel affirms the Board's decision, the decision becomes final at that time. The Appeals Panel shall provide a written report of its findings, which shall be submitted to the Board, the Executive Director of ACPE, the Chief Executive Officer of the institution, and the Dean of the school concerned.

A decision by the Appeals Panel to remand or amend the Board's decision shall be considered by the Board at its next special or regular meeting. The Board shall take final action consistent with the decision and/or instructions of the Appeals Panel. A report of the final decision shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer of the appealing institution, the Dean of the school, and members of the Appeals Panel.

The Appeals Panel shall be discharged by the Board at the adjournment of the regular or special Board meeting following the final action by the Board.

17. Forum for Litigation

17.1 Court

Any litigation instituted by (i) any school of pharmacy against ACPE concerning any action taken by ACPE involving the certification process or (ii) any litigation instituted by ACPE against any school involving the certification process shall be brought in Cook County, Illinois, USA, in the Circuit Court of Cook County or in the Federal District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

17.2 Personal Jurisdiction, Right of Removal, and Applicable Law

Each such school and ACPE consent to personal jurisdiction by these courts. Nothing herein shall restrict the right of a school of pharmacy or ACPE to remove such litigation from state court to federal court in the USA where permitted by law. The laws of the State of Illinois shall be applicable to all matters to come before the court provided that U.S. federal law will be applicable to federal questions that may arise during any litigation.

17.3 Prerequisite to Litigation

No litigation shall be instituted by a school of pharmacy involving an Adverse Certification Action taken by ACPE until after the appeal procedure shall be instituted by such school and concluded in accordance with paragraph 16 of these Policies and Procedures.

18. Record Keeping Procedure for Professional Degree Programs with Current or Former Certification Status

ACPE will maintain complete and accurate records for each Professional Degree Program with current or former Certification Status in accordance with its Documentation Retention Policy ("Policy"), as updated from time to time. As required by the Policy, records will include ETRs, reports of periodic or special reviews conducted during the period with Certification Status, data, A&Rs (including Adverse Certification Actions), a copy of the most recent application/self-study report, communications regarding substantive changes, and correspondence regarding the ETR or ACPE decisions. Documentation, data and correspondence will be retained by ACPE for the period of time specified in the Policy and then destroyed.

19. Fees and Expenses

Fees for evaluation by ACPE for the purpose of Certification or Precertification and consultation are set at a level intended to assist in the support and continued improvement of certification and consultation services and to defray actual costs involved in the evaluation of professional degree programs and provision of consultation. In addition, an annual fee is charged to programs with Certification Status. ACPE reserves the right to adjust the fees and set effective dates for such adjustments at any regular or special meeting of the Board. Due to the variability of travel arrangements and requirements to different countries, certain fees have to be set on a case-by-case basis. Direct expenses incurred by ACPE and its representatives that may be billed to the school or institution include the following (see also Addendum 2):

- Air travel, including airport taxes
- Additional time for evaluation visits and consultation, which ACPE assesses to be over-and-above the standard evaluation or consultation time that is provided for in the relevant fee; such assessment will be made in advance of the evaluation visit or consultation and declared to the school or institution
- Additional reporting requirements by ACPE, which ACPE assesses to be over-and-above the standard reporting that is provided for in the relevant fee; such assessment will be made in advance of the evaluation visit or consultation and declared to the school or institution
- Visa or other documentation fees
- Local (in the country of the school or institution and/or any required transit country) transport, accommodation, and meals, when not agreed in advance to be provided and paid for by the school or institution
- Bank charges
- Insurance or medical expenses (over and above the cost of ACPE's pre-existing health and other insurance policies)

ACPE reserves the right to require that certain fees and expenses are paid in advance and/or are non-refundable in the event that an international activity cannot be completed in accordance with an agreement or contract. In the event that an international activity cannot be completed as agreed or contracted, ACPE reserves the right to levy a pro-rated charge for time spent on the activity, and/or any other expenses incurred by ACPE directly related to the activity.

ACPE will not accept any liability for expenses incurred by the school or institution that cannot be recovered in the event that an international activity cannot be completed as agreed or contracted.

All possible fees and expenses associated with a service are transparently presented in advance of the provision of the service. Information regarding the current ISP fees and assessment policy is available upon request and is published on the ACPE web site (www.acpe-accredit.org). Failure to pay fees and costs within the time limit indicated on the invoice issued by ACPE may result in the assessment of late fees and an Administrative Warning.

20. Assistance in Certification Matters

Members of the ACPE Staff provide guidance, upon request, on matters pertaining to pharmacy education, especially as related to the certification process and Quality Criteria. Staff guidance is available through various formats, including discussions at the ACPE office, at the site of the school or institution, or using a virtual (online) format. The Board, Commission, and Staff also provide assistance in the advancement and improvement of pharmacy education through active cooperation with professional organizations and societies in support of sound educational policies and procedures. ACPE reserves the right to charge a fee and to recover its reasonable expenses for services rendered under this paragraph.

21. Complaints Regarding a Program with Certification Status

- 21.1** ACPE has an obligation to assure that any program that holds a Certification Status remains compliant with the Quality Criteria or is making progress towards achieving compliance at an appropriate pace, and that the school conducts its affairs with impartiality, non-discrimination, honesty, and frankness.

Any complaints from institutions, students, academic staff, or the public against a Professional Degree Program with Certification Status or institution housing a Professional Degree Program with Certification Status must be based upon the fact that such program or institution is not in compliance with Quality Criterion/Criteria or is not making progress towards achieving compliance at the appropriate pace, or is not in compliance with the Certification and Precertification Policies and Procedures, as established, from time to time, by ACPE.

- 21.2** Any complaint must be submitted to ACPE within one hundred and eighty (**180**) days from the date the complainant knew or should have known of the occurrence of facts on which the complaint arose. Any complaint not filed with ACPE within the time limitations set forth above shall not be considered by ACPE; provided however, any complaint held in abeyance by ACPE by reason of threatened or existing legal challenge before a court of law or governmental agency as provided in paragraph 21.8 may be reinstituted by the complainant by written notice to ACPE within thirty (30) days after the later of a final judgment by the court of law or governmental agency or finalization of any appeal of such judgment.

- 21.3** Complaints must be submitted in writing to the ACPE office, must provide a detailed description of the complaint and its relation to Quality Criteria or the Certification Policies and Procedures, and must provide direct contact information of the complainant(s). Requests for confidentiality by the complainant shall be respected to the extent that any identifying information is not necessary for the resolution of the complaint. Any complaint submitted anonymously to ACPE will receive the following response, when it is possible to contact the complainant:

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that we have received the information which you forwarded to the attention of ACPE.

In accordance with ACPE's Complaint Policy, a complaint against a school of pharmacy, as related to ACPE's Quality Criteria or Certification Policies and Procedures, must be placed in writing and signed by the complainant. Any such complaint must provide direct contact information of the complainant(s) and should contain specific evidence of non-compliance with ACPE's Quality Criteria or Certification Policies and Procedures to ensure that the matter can be resolved in a timely manner. ACPE will respond to such a complaint in accordance with its Complaint Policy. The complaint you have submitted does not contain contact information and, therefore, cannot be processed. If you would like ACPE to move forward with your complaint, please provide your contact information to ACPE within 30 days. If this information is not received within 30 days, your complaint will be considered to be closed. Requests for confidentiality will be respected to the extent that any identifying information is not necessary for the resolution of the complaint.

For further information regarding the Quality Criteria, Certification Policies and Procedures, and ACPE's Complaint Policy, please refer to our web site at www.acpe-accredit.org.

*Sincerely,
ACPE Staff*

- 21.4** Anonymous complaints pertaining to certification matters are retained and, depending on circumstances and the severity of the complaint as determined by the ACPE Executive Director, may be forwarded to the Dean of the affected Professional Degree Program for a response.
- 21.5** ACPE will proceed expeditiously in the investigation and resolution of complaints in a manner that is fair and equitable to all parties. The Executive Director, or his/her designate, shall have the authority to: (i) review the complaint in order to determine relevance to the Quality Criteria, policies, or procedures; (ii) dismiss a complaint if it is determined that such complaint has no merit or is outside the scope of ACPE certification activities; (iii) forward relevant complaints to the Dean of the school for a response to ACPE; and (iv) conduct any further investigation deemed necessary to promptly determine the facts surrounding the issue and the validity of the complaint. ACPE shall diligently investigate and resolve complaints in a timely manner, taking into

consideration all parties involved, the severity and complexity of the allegations, and pursuant to any legal obligations.

21.6 If, on the basis of such investigation, after notice to the school and opportunity for response from the school, the Executive Director finds a complaint to be extremely serious in nature, charging egregious conduct that may warrant an Adverse Certification Action by ACPE, or involve an interpretation that the Executive Director believes should be made by the Board, the complaint will be submitted to the Board for consideration at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Where the Board finds that a program or school has violated the Quality Criteria, engaged in unethical conduct, or that its integrity has been seriously undermined, the Board will either:

(a) request that the school show cause, within a stated time period, as to why an Adverse Certification Action should not be taken; or

(b) in extreme cases, immediately discontinue its relationship with the program by denying Certification or Precertification or withdrawing the offending program's Certification Status.

21.7 A record of complaints regarding a specific school or program is maintained *in perpetuity* at the ACPE office for future consideration. The complaint file will be reviewed by Staff members as a component of the evaluation visit process. Evaluation teams will be informed regarding any open complaints against the program under review. Information provided to the evaluation team will include the following for any open complaint: (1) the nature of each complaint; (2) the process used to review the complaint; and (3) the status of the complaint. Any complaints received since the prior evaluation visit and the related investigative materials will be provided to the members of the International Commission and Board as a component of the review process.

21.8 Where a complainant has threatened or filed legal action in a court of law or before a governmental agency against a program or institution housing said program, ACPE reserves the right to hold such complaint in abeyance until after the later of a final judgment by a court of law or governmental agency or finalization of any appeal of such judgment.

22. Complaints Regarding ACPE

In accordance with its Complaints Policy, published on its web site, ACPE has an obligation to respond to any written complaints that may be lodged against ACPE by any party regarding the application of the Quality Criteria and/or Certification and Precertification Policies and Procedures where the complaining party is directly affected thereby. However, this complaint procedure shall not be available to any school concerning certification decisions taken with regard to its Professional Degree Program. The ACPE Executive Director shall promptly determine the facts surrounding the issues and shall attempt to resolve the matter. Complaints that cannot be resolved by the ACPE Executive Director shall be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

23. Decisions of Other Accrediting, Quality Assurance, National and State Agencies and Relationship to ACPE Certification

In making certification decisions, the Board has the right to take into account all actions by recognized accrediting and quality assurance agencies, including but not limited to: (i) denial of accreditation to the parent institution offering the program; (ii) denial of accreditation to the pharmacy degree program; (iii) placement of the parent institution or pharmacy degree program on public probationary status (or equivalent); (iv) revoked accreditation of the parent institution or program; and (v) actions taken by a national or state/provincial agency that has suspended, revoked, or terminated the parent institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education. Upon discovery of any decision referenced above by another accrediting, quality assurance, national or state/provincial agency, ACPE will initiate a request for information regarding the action of the other agency and the effect of the cited issues on the ability of the program to maintain compliance with the Quality Criteria and these Policies and Procedures. The request for information will be communicated to the Dean of the school in writing as follows:

Dear [Dean]:

It has come to our attention that the [SCHOOL NAME/INSTITUTION NAME/PROGRAM NAME] has been placed on probation or is the subject of an adverse action by [NAME OF AGENCY]. It is our obligation to make inquiry as to whether or not the factors contributing to the [AGENCY]'s action have any impact on the ability of the Professional Degree Program to continue to comply with the ACPE Quality Criteria and Policies and Procedures for Certification and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy.

In accordance with ACPE Policies and Procedures, please respond to this inquiry within thirty (30) days of receipt of this letter and provide any relevant information regarding: (1) the reasons for and nature of this action and (2) the effect of the cited issues on the ability of the Professional Degree Program to maintain compliance with ACPE's Quality Criteria and Policies and Procedures for Certification and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy. I look forward to your response and will advise you of any follow up monitoring determined by the Board of Directors to be necessary. Thank you.

*Sincerely,
ACPE Staff
cc: ACPE Board President*

The school will be given thirty (30) days to respond to such a request. Upon receiving the school's response, Staff will review the information provided to determine whether the circumstances leading to the other agency's decision impact the Professional Degree Program's ability to maintain compliance with the Quality Criteria and/or these Policies and Procedures. If it is determined that the program may be impacted, all relevant information will be presented to the Commission and Board for review and consideration as to whether action, including a possible Adverse Certification Action, is warranted.

24. Voluntary Discontinuation of Certification Status

A school or institution with a program with Certification Status may at any time elect to discontinue its Certification Status by providing written notice to ACPE. Discontinuation of Certification Status

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will be effective from the date of acknowledgement of receipt of such notice by ACPE. The details of the certification history of the program will continue to be displayed in the Directory, along with the reason for discontinuation. The discontinuation of Certification Status will be reflected in the Directory within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notice by ACPE. Within thirty (30) days of such notification, or in the case of enduring materials, as soon as practically possible, the school or institution must discontinue and remove all references to Certification Status of the program in question by ACPE. Any outstanding fees or expense reimbursements for services provide by ACPE become payable immediately.

A school or institution that has voluntarily discontinued the Certification Status of its Professional Degree Program may submit a new application for Certification or Precertification at any time, but the school or institution will be required to provide evidence that the program still satisfies the Eligibility Criteria and follow the process and meet the requirements for a new application for Precertification (paragraph 10) or Certification (paragraph 11), as applicable.

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ADDENDUM 1

ACPE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION (IC)
TERMS OF REFERENCE
AMENDED JUNE 2021

The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) established a committee in January 2011 designated the ACPE International Commission (IC) to support the achievement of ACPE's Mission to assure and advance the quality of pharmacy education and to better serve ACPE's international activities and services undertaken through its International Services Program (ISP).

The Mission of ISP is to promote, assure, and advance the quality of pharmacy education internationally to improve patient care through safe and effective medication use.

The functions of the IC include:

- making recommendations to the ACPE Board of Directors (the "ACPE Board") regarding Quality Criteria, policies and procedures, and other matters related to ACPE's international activities and services
- assisting in strategic planning from a global perspective.
- identifying potential activities and collaborative opportunities
- advising the Board on entering into memorandums of understanding and other collaborations, and the terms thereof
- reviewing applications for Certification and evaluations of Professional Degree Programs in countries other than the United States and its territories, and recommending actions to the ACPE Board

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- soliciting and receiving input and advice from stakeholders to obtain broad global perspectives and wisdom to assure the quality, validity and improvement of ACPE's international activities and services
- advising the ACPE Board and Staff, when requested, on matters related to complaints received by ACPE.

Recommendations of the IC will be reviewed at the ACPE Board's regular January and June meetings or such other meetings as the Board shall determine. All official actions will be taken solely by the ACPE Board.

In order to effectively and efficiently achieve the above-listed functions, the IC may recommend to the ACPE Board the establishment of structures and mechanisms that facilitate input and advice from stakeholders as deemed necessary and appropriate. In pursuance thereof, in November 2011, the IC established an International Services Program Advisory Group (ISPAG).

Membership of IC: Eight members will be appointed by the ACPE Board to provide the global diversity deemed optimal by the International Commission and Board to achieve the mission of ACPE's international activities. Commissioners may serve a maximum of two, full three years terms. In the event the number of commissioners is increased or decreased, the terms shall be adjusted to provide a maximum staggering of terms.

Each Commissioner must have expertise and experience in quality assurance of pharmacy education and awareness of contemporary pharmacy education and practice around the world. Individuals employed by or serving as directors or officers of agencies that are involved in international accreditation or certification will not be eligible for consideration as candidates for open positions on the IC. In identifying candidates for appointment to the IC, preference will be given to candidates from countries not currently represented in the membership of the IC. The ACPE Board will ensure that the composition of the IC reflects ACPE's commitment to having diversity and worldwide representation on the IC.

The ACPE Board will annually select a Board Member to serve as Board Liaison to the IC. The Board Liaison does not have voting rights at meetings of the IC.

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Officers of IC: The members of the Commission will elect one of their members to serve as Chair and one to serve as Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair will also be Chair-Elect, assuming the office of Chair after the conclusion of the term of the Chair. The term of office of the Chair shall be one year.

Terms of Office: Unless otherwise directed by the ACPE Board, the terms of office of Commissioners, the Chair, and Vice-Chair will commence on February 1 and conclude on January 31 of the applicable year. Officers and Commissioners may, however, continue to serve until their vacant position on the Commission has been filled by election or appointment, as appropriate.

The ACPE Board will appoint a Commissioner to fill any vacancy that may occur from time to time. A Commissioner so appointed will serve the remainder of the term in question. ACPE may remove any member as a Commissioner who is unable or fails to meet the responsibilities of a Commissioner for any extended period of time. A Commissioner appointed to fill vacancy will be eligible to serve two full terms following the expiration of the vacancy term being filled.

Meetings of IC: The meetings of the IC may be conducted in person, by teleconference, or by other means approved, from time to time, by the Commission. Regularly scheduled meetings of the IC will be held approximately two months prior to each January and June meeting of the ACPE Board. Additional meetings of the IC may be convened periodically as and when required for the conduct of IC business. ACPE's Executive Director, the Director, International Services, and the International Coordinator (or any designee appointed by the Executive Director should any of the above be unavailable) will attend meetings of the IC *ex officio*, but will not be eligible to vote on any matter.

Quorum and Voting: For in-person and other meetings that allow "live" interactive discussion, a majority of the total number of members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum; the vote needed to adopt recommendations and other activities of the Commission shall be the majority of a quorum. The IC shall adopt and implement a policy for the conduct of business via electronic

means that do not allow “live” interactive discussion. The current version of the policy is appended to these Terms of Reference.

Recommendations to the ACPE Board of Directors: At the January and June meetings of the ACPE Board, the IC Chair and the Director, International Services, or designates appointed for the purpose will present any recommendations of the IC to the ACPE Board for action. Such presentations may be made in person or via conference call. All decisions as to the acceptance or rejection of the IC recommendations shall be taken by the ACPE Board.

IC Expenses: ACPE will be responsible for: (i) reasonable expenses associated with in-person IC meetings, including Commissioners’ travel, lodging, and meal costs that meet ACPE’s travel policies and guidelines, and (ii) telecommunications and related costs for meetings conducted by teleconference or other means.

No compensation will be paid to Commissioners for their service to the IC, including their time related to preparation for and participation in meetings of the IC. Commissioners who participate in activities and services of the International Services Program will not be paid for such service.

IC Member Responsibilities: IC member responsibilities and expectations include:

- Participation in the regularly scheduled IC meetings and most, if not all, other meetings, business, and discussions whether conducted in person, via teleconference, electronic ballot, electronic mail, or other means
- Oversight of the effective planning and implementation of the international services and activities undertaken by the ISP
- Completion of an orientation program related to ACPE, the work of the ISP, its mission and vision
- Completion of training related to the Certification Policies and Procedures, Quality Criteria, on-site evaluation process, and use of ISP instruments
- Review of applications for certification, evaluation team reports and associated documents, and recommending actions to the Board
- Participation (periodically) in ISP’s evaluation visits and other activities, such as consultations

- Participation in the periodic development and review of quality criteria, policies and procedures, and other materials for international activities and services
- Promotion of legal, cultural and ethical integrity of international activities and services
- Provision of advice to the ACPE Board and Staff of ACPE's International Services Program

Time Requirements for each IC Member:

- Attendance at a maximum of two regularly scheduled IC meetings per year - each of approximately two days in duration (excluding travel time) with, on average (depending on the agenda) 6 to 8 hours preparatory reading.
- Participation in \pm two to four scheduled conference calls per year; each of approximately one hour in duration. The amount of advance preparation for each meeting varies between 0 to 3 hours.
- Participation in additional, *ad hoc* meetings as required (by teleconference or similar means); not anticipated to exceed four per year. The amount of advance preparation for each meeting is approximately 2 to 3 hours.
- Reviewing materials related to applications for Certification or Precertification; 20 – 30 hours per year.
- Review and response to electronic mail and electronic ballots, as required; typically less than two hours per month.
- Participation in periodic document reviews and provision of feedback.
- Participation (periodically) in international activities and services, such as evaluation visits of professional degree programs, consultations, or training; not anticipated to exceed one or two per year. On-site evaluations usually require 5 to 6 days for the visit, 8 to 12 hours advance preparation and 2 to 4 hours work after the visit; virtual site visits do not involve travel and, hence, are typically shorter in total duration. Other *ad hoc* international activities could include attendance at an ACPE exhibit at an international congress, e.g., FIP.

SERVICE AGREEMENT: To be eligible to serve as a Commissioner, each appointee will be required to execute a document(s) agreeing to undertake the responsibilities set forth above, to maintain complete confidentiality as to the information obtained in their service as a

Commissioner, to disclose any conflict of interest related to their service as a Commissioner, and to such additional terms as established by ACPE.

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ADDENDUM 2

ACPE TRAVEL POLICY

The following policy of ACPE is applicable to ACPE employees, members of the ACPE Board of Directors, site visit members, members of ACPE committees or commissions, consultants and all other persons traveling on behalf of ACPE. Such persons are referred to individually as a “Representative” and collectively as “Representatives.” For purposes of this policy, “travel” shall include travel to any location in the world including locations within the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and U.S. Territories.

Because of terrorism, civil conflicts, war zones, unrest in many areas, disease and virus epidemics and other unpredictable problems, travel can present a potential safety and/or health hazard for travelers. ACPE’s top priority is to have in effect measures to help avoid travel by ACPE Representatives into hazardous situations. Accordingly, ACPE has adopted the following Travel Policy.

ACPE regularly monitors travel warnings and travel advisories of the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other appropriate agencies, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada and other agencies and organizations that release travel advisories and warnings.

The U.S. Department of State has adopted the following ranking for travel advisories:

Level 1 – Exercise Normal Precautions: This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.

Level 2 – Exercise Increased Caution: Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Level 3 – Reconsider Travel: Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Level 4 – Do Not Travel: This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. The Department of State advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country

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or leave as soon as it is safe to do so. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

In addition, the U.S. State Department may assign a higher level of advisory to a specific geographic region of a country, which shall be taken into consideration by ACPE when a decision is made whether or not to sanction travel to the applicable country.

Unless specific conditions exist that would make travel unsafe, travel to countries with Level 1 and 2 Travel Advisories will likely be sanctioned by ACPE.

For countries with a Level 3 Travel Advisory, the Executive Director – if desired, in consultation with the ACPE Executive Committee - will determine whether travel to the designated country or location will be sanctioned by ACPE.

For countries with a Level 4 Travel Advisory, travel will not be sanctioned.

In determining whether to sanction travel to a particular country or region, ACPE will also consider the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination.

Based on new information, at any time before or after commencement of travel any decision taken in accordance with this policy may be reversed or altered by the Executive Director who, in making the decision, will consult with the Executive Committee if time permits. The resulting action to be taken could include cancellation, discontinuation, or postponement of travel. On-site evaluation visits may also need to be cancelled, discontinued, or postponed if a required number of team members is no longer able to participate in the visit. Notice of such a postponement or cancellation should be made as soon as is feasible following identification of the causative issue(s). Any costs/fees incurred prior to a postponement or cancellation shall, whenever possible, be credited toward rescheduling the on-site evaluation at a later date (preferably as soon as is possible). Costs incurred by ACPE staff and/or Representatives will be reimbursed, and ACPE will retain any travel credit toward rescheduling, where possible.

When planning travel, ACPE will maintain a record of its monitoring and any applicable decisions or conditions. ACPE will communicate the results of monitoring to all Representatives involved in the proposed travel and other applicable stakeholders. Representatives are also responsible for independently monitoring the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) travel advisories, and reviewing and complying with the COVID-19-related requirements for entering and departing the site visit country or region, which may change frequently and vary based on factors such as their country of citizenship and/or country or region from which they are traveling. Any Representative may elect to decline travel to any particular country or location because of concerns for his or her health, security, and well-being or for any other reason.

ACPE, in its sole discretion, may require any Representative traveling to any location on behalf of ACPE to execute a written agreement to be prepared by ACPE concerning the terms and conditions in respect to such travel. Two versions of ACPE's "Travel Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement" have been prepared – one for

international travel and one for travel within the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and U.S. Territories.

This policy may not take into account and does not supersede relevant local, state or federal laws. All ACPE Representatives are expected to comply with relevant local, state or federal laws, as well as any airline requirements for travel.

Scheduling of Travel and Visits

Security, health and other related implications may be considered when dates are selected for all ACPE activities.

Class of Travel and Accommodation

For international activities with a scheduled traveling time, including any necessary stopovers, exceeding six hours, applicants for ACPE services are requested to provide or reimburse ACPE for travel in business class for ACPE staff and other Representatives traveling on behalf of ACPE.

For international activities with a scheduled traveling time, including any necessary stopovers, exceeding ten hours, the duration of the visit may be extended to ensure adequate rest and recuperation for the staff and Representatives of ACPE prior to the formal start of the activity.

The school or institution requesting services from ACPE must provide or reimburse ACPE for business class hotel accommodation for staff and Representatives of ACPE.

Visa and/or Other Entry or Departure Requirements

The school or institution requesting services from ACPE is responsible for ensuring that all documentation and other assistance requested by ACPE to support or facilitate applications for visas and/or other entry requirements (if required) for staff and Representatives of ACPE are provided in a timely manner. Failure to obtain visas and/or other entry requirements for a member(s) of the on-site evaluation team constitutes grounds for cancellation or postponement of an on-site evaluation visit. The school or institution is also responsible for providing to on-site evaluation team members any documentation or assistance needed for the members to depart the site visit country, including facilitating any necessary COVID-19 testing.

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ADDENDUM 3

GUIDELINES FOR USING ACPE LOGOS AND MARKS

The ACPE Logo, ACPE International Logo, and PLAN Logo are the exclusive property of the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education and are protected by law. They are registered trademarks and may not be reproduced or published outside of the authorized uses listed below without prior written approval from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education.



ACPE Logo



PLAN Logo



ACPE
International

These Guidelines are for ACPE accredited professional degree programs in pharmacy, ACPE accredited providers of continuing pharmacy education, ACPE certified and precertified professional degree programs in pharmacy, and other parties wishing to use ACPE's logos, marks or images in promotional, advertising, instructional or reference materials, or on their web sites, products, labels or packaging. By using an ACPE trademark, in whole or in part, you are acknowledging that ACPE is the sole owner of the trademark and promising that you will not interfere with ACPE's rights in the trademark, including challenging ACPE's use, registration of, or application to register such trademark, alone or in combination with other words, anywhere in the world, and that you will not harm, misuse, or bring into disrepute any ACPE trademark. The goodwill derived from using any part of an ACPE trademark exclusively inures to the benefit of and belongs to ACPE. Except for the limited right to use as expressly permitted under these Guidelines, no other rights of any kind are granted hereunder, by implication or otherwise. If you have any questions regarding these Guidelines, please contact ACPE's Assistant Executive Director/Director, Operations and Human Resources; or send your questions via email to one of the following addresses:

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education
190 S. LaSalle Street – Suite 2850
Chicago, IL 60603-3499
Tel: +1 (312) 664-3575
Fax: +1 (866) 228-2631

Email regarding ACPE accredited professional programs in pharmacy:
csinfo@acpe-accredit.org

Email regarding ACPE accredited providers of continuing pharmacy education:
ceinfo@acpe-accredit.org

Email regarding ACPE certified professional degree programs in pharmacy:
international@acpe-accredit.org

Email with general questions regarding all ACPE logos
info@acpe-accredit.org

Authorized Use of ACPE Logos

- 1. Identification as an ACPE Accredited Provider of Continuing Pharmacy Education:** ACPE accredited providers of continuing pharmacy education may use the ACPE Logo in printed and electronic formats for publications, advertising, promotional and sales materials. Such use must always be in close conjunction with a statement identifying the accredited provider(s) according to the exact language of the prescribed statement:

The [name of accredited provider(s)] is/are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education as a provider of continuing pharmacy education.

The ACPE Logo and Provider Statement are required for activity announcement literature.

- 2. Required usage:** The official ACPE Logo is required on all official documents indicating the successful completion of continuing pharmacy education activities that are sponsored or co-sponsored by ACPE accredited providers of continuing pharmacy education.
- 3. Link to the ACPE Website:** Web sites that serve as noncommercial electronic informational forums concerning ACPE policies and procedures may use the ACPE Logo, the ACPE International Logo, or the PLAN Logo to indicate a link to ACPE's web site at www.acpe-accredit.org. The area around the logo must be clean and uncluttered and the ACPE Logo, ACPE International Logo, or PLAN Logo must not be altered, used as a design element or incorporated into any other design, graphic, illustration, or logo on the web site.

Unauthorized Use of ACPE Logos, Marks and Graphic Symbols

- 1. ACPE, ACPE International, and PLAN Logos:** You may not use the ACPE, ACPE International, and PLAN logos or any other ACPE-owned graphic symbol in connection with web sites, products, packaging, manuals, promotional/advertising materials, presentations or for any other purpose - except as authorized above - without prior written approval from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education.
- 2. Company, Product, or Service Name:** You may not use or register, in whole or in part the ACPE, ACPE International, or PLAN logos or any other ACPE-owned graphic symbol or an

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alteration thereof, as or as part of a company name, trade name, product name, or service name except as specifically noted in these Guidelines.

- 3. Variations, Takeoffs or Abbreviations:** You may not alter or use the ACPE, ACPE International, or PLAN logos or any other ACPE-owned graphic symbol as design elements or incorporate them into any other design, graphic or illustration for any purpose.
- 4. Disparaging Manner:** You may not use the ACPE, ACPE International, or PLAN logos or any other ACPE-owned graphic symbol in a disparaging manner.
- 5. Endorsement or Sponsorship:** You may not use the ACPE, ACPE International, or PLAN logos or any other ACPE-owned graphic symbol in a manner that would imply ACPE's affiliation with or endorsement, sponsorship or support of a third party product or service.
- 6. Merchandise Items:** You may not manufacture, sell or give-away merchandise items, such as T-shirts and mugs, bearing the ACPE, ACPE International, or PLAN logos or any other ACPE-owned graphic symbol except pursuant to express, prior written approval.

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ADDENDUM 4

**FLOWCHART FOR APPLICATION, GRANTING, DENIAL, APPEAL & RE-APPLICATION FOR
PRECERTIFICATION**
(under construction)

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ADDENDUM 6

**INSTRUCTIONS, REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND FEES FOR APPLYING FOR
CERTIFICATION OR PRECERTIFICATION OF A PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PROGRAM IN
PHARMACY**

Please refer to the ACPE Website: <https://www.acpe-accredit.org/international-services-program/>

ACCREDITATION COUNCIL FOR PHARMACY EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES PROGRAM

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PRECERTIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS IN PHARMACY IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THE UNITED STATES AND ITS TERRITORIES

ADDENDUM 7

VIRTUAL SITE VISITS POLICY AND GUIDANCE JUNE 2021

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and other security-related concerns have necessitated that many activities that were formerly accomplished in a face-to-face manner will now be completed virtually. The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) made the determination that all site visits in the USA for Fall 2020 would be conducted virtually to respect the shelter-in-place orders and travel bans that many colleges' and schools' administration and faculty members are facing. In Spring 2021, ACPE's international evaluation visits were conducted virtually and all Fall 2021 evaluation visits will be conducted virtually. The Board's current position is that virtual site visits will continue to be used post-pandemic for domestic and international programs, when appropriate. Internationally, virtual site visits can be conducted for continuation of Certification, and a virtual site visit for an initial application for Certification can only result in consideration for the granting of Provisional Certification. For additional details, refer to the Certification and Precertification Policies and Procedures (June 2021).

Virtual Site Visits

ACPE is now selectively offering to eligible programs a virtual site visit (VSV) in lieu of an on-site in-person visit. A VSV will follow all of the procedures as outlined in the *Policies and Procedures for Certification and Precertification of Professional Degree Programs in Pharmacy in Countries other than the United States and its Territories (June 2021)*. Unless otherwise determined by ACPE for good reason, the fee for a VSV will be the fee specified in the Current Fee Schedule. In addition, any expense incurred by ACPE directly related to the VSV may be charged to the institution.

ACPE reserves the right to update or change these policies and processes at any time as circumstances dictate.

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Minimum Eligibility Requirements

ACPE maintains sole authority in determining which programs are eligible for a VSV. Selection eligibility criteria include but are not limited to: the nature of the certification review, process outcomes thus far (identified areas of concern, type of visit, etc.), and the complexity of the evaluation (e.g., number of campuses, delivery methods, time zone differences).

To be approved for a VSV, an institution at a minimum must be able to demonstrate the ability to provide interaction for the members of the evaluation team with an acceptable number of representatives of the institution and the standard constituent groups that participate in ACPE Certification on-site evaluation visits, to afford a full review of the program. In addition, if a required component of the evaluation, the institution must be able to provide media in a format acceptable to ACPE (live or recorded, as determined) that presents an accurate and comprehensive representation of physical, pharmacy practice, and other facilities, as required.

Technology: Videoconferencing

ACPE utilizes Zoom as the platform for VSVs, using ACPE accounts. This platform will be used to provide a private meeting space for the site team and to provide space for team members to meet with institutional and school representatives, and representatives of other groups including, but not limited to, current students, graduates, and preceptors.

Guidelines for Videoconferencing

- All participants who will meet with the evaluation team must be identified by the institution in advance and names, titles/positions/affiliations, email addresses, and (ideally) mobile number must be submitted to ACPE in advance, in accordance with the timeline required by ACPE.
- All participants must have their own (individual) meeting space and the ability to log in separately for the meetings. There should not be multiple participants on any single screen or in any room.
- Each participant should have a quiet and private space without distractions available for participation in the meeting(s).
- ACPE will utilize a waiting room for approved access to all meetings with individuals outside of the evaluation team. Only the participants listed on the agenda will be admitted to the meeting.
- All participants must have their video on and be on screen throughout the duration of the meeting. ACPE will not accept picture placeholders or blank screens with names on them for participation in the meeting. Anyone using picture placeholders or blank screens with names on them will be removed from the meeting.
- ACPE will not record any of the meetings. ACPE prohibits the recording of the meetings by the institution or school and/or any of the meeting participants.

- Screenshots of visit sessions may be taken and used in the same way that ACPE uses photographs from on-site visits, including for its own records and communications (e.g., newsletters, reports, postings on social media, the ACPE website, etc.) This fact should be brought to the attention of meeting participants, and any objection raised by a participant(s) should be brought to ACPE's attention as soon as possible; failing which, ACPE will assume that permission to use the screenshot(s) has been given.
- Earphones/buds are recommended during the meeting to limit background noise and ensure privacy for the meeting.
- The Zoom Chat feature will be disabled for meeting participants. Private conversations will be not be allowed.
- It is strongly recommended that all meeting participants download and utilize the Zoom Client for Meetings App available at the Zoom Download Center to access meetings.
- It is strongly recommended that all participants sign in approximately 10 minutes before the scheduled time to allow for Zoom updates or other issues that may require a few minutes to resolve.
- The institution should have IT technical support personnel available to assist participants who are experiencing technical issues.
- As a back-up, it is recommended that the Zoom App be installed on the participant's cell phone in the event that a connection cannot be made on a computer or tablet.
- It is tempting for participants to multitask during an online meeting. Participants of meetings with the evaluation team are requested to assure that their attention is fully focused on the conversation-at-hand, and conduct themselves in the same manner as they would for an in-person meeting.

Backup/Contingency Plan

There are multiple ways to access Zoom videoconferencing, including via PCs, laptops, tablets, and cell phones. If for some reason a meeting participant has trouble accessing the videoconferencing for a meeting, after trying multiple avenues, he or she should notify the ACPE Evaluation Team Leader or his or her designee as soon as possible. If the situation cannot be resolved quickly, the participant should use his or her cell phone to dial in to the meeting. The applicable access number(s) will be made available by ACPE. Cell phones should only be used in situations where efforts to resolve the access to the videoconference were unsuccessful. All participants should participate in the videoconference, if possible, with video/audio, and must have reliable video/audio capability before being selected to participate.

Should a power failure or act of nature interfere with the conduct of the visit, the use of cell phones will be the immediate backup plan. All participants should be advised to have hard copies of the dial-in numbers available.

In the event the Evaluation Team is not able to complete its review, including the review of documents or to conduct meetings with required participants due to problems with technology or for any other reason, ACPE, in its sole discretion, may schedule another VSV or an in-person on-site visit. In the event this occurs, an additional fee may be assessed.

During the Evaluation

The Evaluation Team Leader will:

- Act in a support capacity for the team members and institution regarding the use of technology and logistical considerations.
- Indicate in the Evaluation Team Report if the school was not able to provide to the team a virtual/video tour of the program's facilities, including the clinical (experiential) and didactic instruction environments. Video tours of facilities may be recorded and provided to the team prior to the visit but the team may request a supplemental tour in real-time using technology such as FaceTime.
- Ensure that all participants understand and agree that, with the exception of the above option of pre-recorded video, no part of the site visit may be audio and/or video recorded.
- Provide or assign a designee to provide in all virtual meetings a brief introduction of the team and participants or participant groups.

Procedures and Structure of Virtual Evaluations

Each Virtual Evaluation will follow the same general procedures and structure as a standard in-person on-site visit, with the following exceptions:

- The school must provide ACPE with a list of all approved attendees for the evaluation visit so that they can be registered for the Zoom sessions. Timing for this will be coordinated between ACPE and the school. Details of the visit schedule will be finalized between the ACPE Staff, Evaluation Team Leader, and the Dean or his/her designee.
- All participants entering the meeting will enter a waiting room.
- The Evaluation Team Leader, working off the approved attendee list provided by the school will allow entry into the meeting room from the waiting room.
- Unique ACPE Zoom links will be established for the evaluation visit. Only those individuals listed on the agenda will be admitted into the session.

Additional Policies and Considerations

- This Virtual Site Visit Policy does not, in any way, alter the reserved rights and authority of the ACPE Board of Directors.
- Unless specifically stated in this document, all ACPE policies, processes, procedures, practices, and protocols apply and remain in force.

- Unless specifically stated in this document, all applicable policies, processes, procedures, practices, and protocols shall be the same as for an in-person on-site visit.
- ACPE reserves the right to cancel a full or partial virtual site visit at any time prior to or during the scheduled visit and schedule a full in-person on-site visit instead. An in-person on-site visit will be scheduled within a reasonable period of time following the canceled virtual site visit.
- All evaluation team leaders and team members will participate in an ACPE training session for virtual site visits prior to participating in a visit.
- The ACPE Board of Directors will review the Evaluation Team Report from the virtual site visit and take action on the Certification Actions and Recommendations at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting.
- ACPE's International Services Program conducts evaluations of pharmacy degree programs in countries in different parts of the world, and the evaluations involve team members who are based in different countries. Accordingly, it is anticipated and unavoidable that many virtual site visits will involve participants in multiple time zones, which could be substantially different from each other. While the evaluation visit meetings will be scheduled (start and end times, total duration, and breaks) to minimize the inconvenience for all participants as much as possible, it must be understood and accepted that some inconvenience to all participants cannot be avoided.

SAMPLE AGENDA FORMAT

Considerations in Planning:

- Meeting start and end times should be adjusted in consideration of the location of team members and the institution
- ACPE staff will send invites to all meeting participants with the Zoom links
- Participants should ensure they have access to resources to be able to answer team members' questions, including a copy of the self-study or interim report
- The agenda should include the names, degrees (MD, PhD, EdD, etc.) and position/titles of each person with whom the team will be meeting. **The names must match the individual Zoom profile names.**
- A virtual site visit agenda will be created from the mutually agreed agenda. The virtual site visit agenda will include breaks for the team members between meetings and sufficient time for the next group of individuals to log into Zoom.

*Note: ACPE staff will provide a full sample schedule based on the type of visit that needs to be accomplished (e.g., comprehensive or focused) **and the various time zones of those participating.***



ACCREDITATION COUNCIL FOR PHARMACY EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL SERVICES PROGRAM

VIRTUAL SITE VISIT AGREEMENT

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or other security issues, ACPE is selectively offering the option for a certification evaluation visit via a virtual site visit (VSV) in lieu of an in-person on-site visit (IPV). The VSV option is primarily being offered as a solution where it is currently impractical or impossible to conduct an in-person on-site evaluation due to complications caused by the pandemic and/or other security issues, but when appropriate, the ACPE Board has approved that certain evaluation visits will continue to be conducted virtually after the pandemic is over.

Institutions and programs must meet the eligibility criteria, the minimum requirements for hosting a VSV, and agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this *Agreement*. The decision concerning whether to offer and proceed with a VSV is at ACPE's sole discretion.

All programs offered the option may opt to move forward with planning for a VSV or may opt to defer the visit until an in-person on-site can be (re)scheduled. It is not known at this time when in-person on-site visits will resume or the timeline in which a program may be scheduled once in-person on-site visits resume.

Agreement

This Agreement is entered into this day by _____ (Institution) and the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), collectively the Parties, and sets forth the understandings and obligations of the Parties relating to a Virtual Site Visit (VSV) of the certified pharmacy degree program (Program) as part of ACPE's evaluation of the Program's Certification Status.

Whereas the Parties have determined that it is impractical or impossible for the Institution to host an IPV on its campus due to complications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and/or other security issues; and

Whereas the Institution acknowledges that it prefers to proceed with a VSV rather than reschedule an in-person on-site visit at a later time; and

Whereas ACPE has determined that the Institution and Program have met the eligibility criteria and logistical and other requirements set forth in the *ACPE International Services*

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Program Virtual Site Visits Policy and Guidance qualifying the institution to host a VSV; and

The Parties, therefore, agree to the following terms and conditions:

Terms and Conditions

The Institution agrees that it has capacity and will comply with the guidelines set forth in the *ACPE International Services Program Virtual Site Visits Policy and Guidance* in preparing for and participating in the VSV.

Technology:

- The Institution has the technological capacity to host a VSV and to use ACPE's platform, *Zoom*, to facilitate secure and stable communication between and among VSV team members, and the Institution's administrators, faculty, students, preceptors, etc.; and
- The Institution will ensure that all potential participants are trained to use the technology selected by ACPE for audio/video communication and that they understand and agreed to the videoconferencing requirements and guidelines.

Preparation and Logistics

- The Institution accepts and will follow the VSV planning process outlined in the *ACPE International Services Program Virtual Site Visits Policy and Guidance*; and
- The Institution will provide final lists of participants, including but not limited to Program administrators, site supervisors, faculty members, students, graduates, and preceptors for all meetings to the evaluation team leader a minimum of 1 – 2 weeks prior to the start of the evaluation visit;
- During the planning of the evaluation visit, the Parties will discuss and agree on the dates, format, and scheduling of the evaluation meetings (including start and end times, total duration, breaks, etc.) to minimize the inconvenience for all participants as much as possible, but accept that some inconvenience to all participants cannot be avoided; and
- In the event the Evaluation Team is not able to complete its review, including the review of documents or to conduct meetings with required participants due to problems with technology or for any other reason, ACPE, in its sole discretion, may schedule another VSV or an in-person on-site visit. In the event this occurs, an additional fee may be assessed by ACPE.

Other Terms and Conditions

- The Institution bears the responsibility to assure the confidentiality of interviews with the Evaluation Team in the same manner as if the visit were to take place in-person on-site.
- In order to foster collegiality and open communication, the Parties agree that legal counsel shall not be present at any stage of the VSV, including the Evaluation Team's exit presentations.
- The Parties agree that no meetings will be recorded.
- The Institution agrees to accept the report of the Evaluation Team and acknowledges that it cannot, at a later date, request a new site visit with a different format, or appeal the resulting certification decision solely on the basis of the virtual format of the site visit.

Acknowledgement

As the Dean of the Pharmacy Degree Program at

_____ (Institution), I have read and agree to the foregoing requirements for the Program to be evaluated via a virtual site visit by ACPE. I understand that the virtual site visit will be part of the certification evaluation process and that the results will become part of the record to be reviewed by the ACPE Board in making its certification decision of the Program.

As the Dean of the Program, I agree that the Institution will not challenge the results of the visit or ACPE's decision relative to the certification of the Program solely on the basis that the visit was conducted virtually.

Dean's Printed Name, Title & Signature

Date: _____

For ACPE, Printed Name, Title & Signature

Date: _____

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ADDENDUM 8

GUIDELINES FOR SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

Procedures for Reporting Substantive Change

In general, a school considering or planning a Substantive Change should notify ACPE early in the institution's planning. For unplanned Substantive Changes, ACPE should be notified as soon as possible after the change occurs. Such notification will provide an opportunity for a school to seek consultation from ACPE's professional staff regarding the potential effect of the change on the Certification Status and the procedures to be followed. Notification of ACPE may require the submission of a comprehensive academic plan demonstrating the program's continued compliance with the Quality Criteria. For reporting a Substantive Change, schools are requested to use the template provided on the ACPE [website](#) and provide the information detailed below, as applicable.

The Comprehensive Academic Plan

The academic plan submitted to ACPE should include the following information regarding the Substantive Change, where applicable:

1. Abstract
 - Describe the proposed change.
 - Provide a timeline for implementation of the Substantive Change.
 - State the projected number of students affected by the change, if applicable.
 - Describe the instructional delivery methods that will be used to implement the change, if applicable.
2. Background Information
 - Provide a clear statement of the nature and purpose of the change in the context of the school's mission and goals.
 - Discuss the rationale for the change.
 - Provide evidence of inclusion of the change in the school's ongoing planning and evaluation processes.
 - Describe any changes to the school's organizational structure that will be implemented as a result of the Substantive Change.
 - Include documentation that Academic Staff and other groups were involved in the review and approval of the change.
 - Describe the strategy for protecting students if the proposed initiative fails to be viable.

3. Curriculum

- Describe any modifications to the curriculum, including the teaching and learning processes used to deliver the curriculum, which will be implemented as a result of the initiative.
- Describe the school's technology capacity to assure effective teaching and learning.
- Describe the plan for curricular assessment; including assessment of teaching strategies, indicators for student learning and the curriculum, related to the Substantive Change.

4. Students

- Describe any change in the school's policies and procedures for recruitment that will be implemented as a result of the Substantive Change.
- Describe modifications to the school's Student Services area, which will be implemented as a result of the Substantive Change, if applicable.
- Describe the proposed methods the school will utilize to ensure adequate professionalization of students for Substantive Changes involving the establishment of campuses at separate geographic locations or involving distance-learning techniques.

5. Academic Staff

- Provide a complete roster of Academic Staff employed to teach in the program.
- Describe academic and other staff positions required to fully implement the Substantive Change.
- Include plans for recruiting academic and other staff, if applicable.
- Describe the impact of the new initiative on Academic Staff workload.
- Describe the actual and planned mechanisms for Academic Staff development related to the Substantive Change.

6. Library and Learning Resources

- Describe the library and educational resources available to support the Substantive Change.

7. Physical Facilities

- Provide a description of physical facilities and equipment to support the initiative.
- If applicable, include a feasibility study of available practice sites, including:
 - A description of the number and types of sites, and the level of practice at the sites.
 - Assess the impact of the Substantive Change on the existing program.

8. Financial Resources

- Provide a business plan that fully describes the financial resources to support the change.
- Provide a cash flow analysis for the first year of implementation.
- Demonstrate with supporting documentation that adequate funds will be available for a minimum of one year for operations.

- Construction/capital development (where appropriate)

Institutional or Collegiate Reorganization

Those schools in operation, that have an ACPE-certified or precertified program and propose to become affiliated with or become an integral part of another institution, or propose to implement Substantive Changes in their institutional or collegiate organization and administrative structure, should notify ACPE of such proposals. Should a change of ownership that results in a change of control be effected, an on-site review may be required and conducted as soon as practicable but no later than six months after the change of ownership.

Distance Campuses

ACPE defines a distance campus as a site other than the main (original) campus from which Academic Staff deliver significant components of the professional degree program didactic curriculum (either live or via electronic transmission) or a group of students receive didactic instruction in any format during any of the years of the Professional Degree Program. Sites used by the school for the coordination of practice experiences are not classified by ACPE as a distance campus if didactic components of the curriculum are not delivered to or from the site.

ACPE defines for its certification and monitoring purpose that the term distance campus is equivalent to terms such as satellite campus, branch campus, and other such labels.

ACPE has adopted the definition of distance education developed by the United States Department of Education to be the use of one of the technologies listed below to deliver a significant portion of the didactic component of the degree program curriculum to students who are geographically separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies used to support distance education may include—

1. The internet;
2. One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
3. Audio conferencing; or
4. Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in (1) through (3) above.

ACPE requires one-year advance notice (minimum of 12 months before arrival of students) for the addition of a distance campus or the implementation of distance education for an existing school. This notification is required to allow ACPE sufficient time to conduct the monitoring to ensure readiness and continued compliance with the Quality Criteria. Failure to comply with the one-year notice requirement constitutes grounds for review and potential action under paragraph 14 of Policies and Procedures.

ACPE requires there to be a single Dean with overall responsibility for the school and there to be one committee structure serving programmatic needs for all sites (i.e., one curriculum committee, one admissions committee, one grievance committee, etc.).

ACPE requires academic and other staff, and students at any distance campus to be integrated fully into the academic, professional, and social life of the school. Evidence of this integration

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includes distance campus Academic Staff and students having committee assignments, distance campus students being engaged in professional organizations, distance campus academic and other staff having comparable research, scholarly activities, and development opportunities, as applicable.

ACPE requires all students, regardless of site, to have comparable access to Academic Staff, advising, academic affairs, teaching and learning technology, student services, professional organizations, and library resources.

ACPE requires that all schools offering distance education have processes in place through which the school establishes that the student who registers in a distance education program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit awarded.

The certification review process applies to the degree program in its entirety. Non-compliance or partial compliance with the Quality Criteria at one site (main campus or distance campus) will impact the certification status of the entire program.

When one or more groups of students receive didactic instruction at distance campuses as well as the main campus location, ACPE, as a component of its routine monitoring (e.g., licensure examination scores), will compare outcomes from each distance campus with the outcomes from the main campus. Schools must provide explanations and address concerns of this nature and, if warranted, take corrective action.

Evaluation by ACPE

Any program that plans to deliver at least 25% and less than 50% of the curriculum via distance education is required to provide ACPE notification of this substantive change at least one year prior to doing so. In the notice, the program must describe the curriculum, list all of the courses and associated credit hours, and indicate which courses are being taught virtually. Any program that plans to deliver 50% or more of the curriculum via distance education is required to provide ACPE notification of this substantive change at least one year in advance and submit a comprehensive academic plan. The Board will review the comprehensive academic plan to determine the need to further assess its impact on the total program's ability to comply with the Quality Criteria. The circumstances provided may present the need for additional review and reconsideration of Certification in accord with standard evaluation and operational procedures or appropriate monitoring, such as a focused on-site evaluation.

Non-Compliance with Substantive Change Reporting

If a school fails to follow this Substantive Change policy and its procedures, the Certification of the program may be placed in jeopardy.

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ADDENDUM 9

ADVERSE CERTIFICATION ACTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SUMMARY OF KEY STEPS

Any program for which ACPE has given the status of Certification with Probation, denied Certification or Precertification, or withdrawn Certification Status has the right to appeal the Board's decision (see paragraphs 15 and 16). In the event that the Board's decision to deny Certification or Precertification, or withdraw Certification Status is affirmed on review, the school may submit a new application for Certification or Precertification. The application must be accompanied by the appropriate application fee and all policies, procedures, and documentation pertinent to the application apply (paragraph 10 or paragraph 11). A summary of key steps relating to denial or withdrawal follows:

1. Denial (pertains to an application for Certification or Precertification)
 - a. Take denial action (paragraph 15) – discuss/list reasons (Quality Criteria and/or administrative)
 - b. Appeal Procedure (paragraph 16)
 - c. Option to reapply for Certification or Precertification
 - i. After no less than twelve (12) months
 - ii. Completion of new application
 - iii. Payment of required fee
2. Withdrawal (pertains to a Certified, Precertified or Provisionally Certified program) for failure to address partial or non-compliance with Quality Criteria in the timeframe required by ACPE
 - a. Take withdrawal action (paragraph 15) – discuss/list reasons (Quality Criteria and/or administrative)
 - b. Appeal procedure (paragraph 16)
 - c. Option to reapply for Certification or Precertification
 - i. After no less than twelve (12) months
 - ii. Completion of new application
 - iii. Payment of required fee

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education
International Services Program

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