

Article 10. CAHME Candidacy for Accreditation

Revised June 2007

Section 1. The Purpose of Candidacy

The CAHME Candidacy Program, which allows a program to be considered for Candidate Status, is designed to establish communication, assistance and continuity between CAHME and programs in healthcare management seeking CAHME accreditation. The “Candidate” designation indicates that a program has voluntarily committed to participate in a systematic plan of quality enhancement and continuous improvement so that CAHME accreditation is a feasible and operational objective within five years. However, Candidacy status does not indicate accredited status, nor does it guarantee eventual accreditation. CAHME's recognition by the Secretary of the US Department of Education does not include candidate programs, or programs in Canada.

Section 2. Benefits of Candidacy

A program in healthcare management that has been accepted for CAHME Candidacy has made a commitment to quality enhancement and continuous improvement through a focus on attaining accredited status from CAHME. The Candidate program will benefit from:

- CAHME Staff Consultation Visit and Advice
- CAHME Staff Procedural Consultation
- Multiple layers of review designed to make accreditation a feasible objective within five years
- Ongoing support from CAHME that fosters continuous improvement
- A process that minimizes non-productive or misdirected efforts by the program

CAHME will benefit from the participation of programs in Candidacy by expanding its knowledge and reference base for quality enhancement and continuous improvement goals and practices. This base will provide helpful illustrations for use in the training and workshops offered to programs, Accreditation Council members, and Site Visit Team Members.

Section 3. The Candidacy Committee

A Candidacy Committee will direct the CAHME Candidacy Program. The Chair of the Candidacy Committee will be appointed by the Chair of the Board on the recommendation of the Governance Committee. The Chair must be either a member or past member of the Accreditation Council. Additional members of the Committee will be appointed by the Governance Committee. All members will serve renewable 3-year terms. At all times there will be at least three members of the Candidacy Committee, at least two of whom must be sitting members of the Accreditation Council. The Candidacy Committee will meet periodically and report its activities to the Board of Directors. Actions of the Candidacy Committee must be approved by

at least a simple majority of its members and are subject to ratification by and the Board of Directors.

The Candidacy Committee at its regularly scheduled meetings, or the Chair of the Committee acting between meetings, is responsible for:

- Reviewing a program's eligibility statement and supporting documents;
- Making recommendations to the Board on the granting, deferral or denial of Candidacy status to applicant programs;
- Reviewing the status reports of all Candidate programs;
- Recommending to the program the appropriate self-study year;
- Reviewing the first draft of the Program's self study documents.

Section 4. Considering Candidacy

Programs interested in CAHME accreditation must submit an application to the President/CEO of CAHME. A Candidacy period, not to exceed four years, will be used to conduct an initial assessment of the program and to develop an Accreditation Plan. During this time, the program should establish benchmarks for every criterion and assess its current level of efforts and processes for continuous improvement. The Candidacy period can be adapted to apply to a program's stage of development. Programs in the following stages of development may all participate as Candidates:

- The program has admitted two classes but needs to refine various aspects; (such a program must submit evidence that it will have graduated two classes by the time of the site visit or within two years of the application, whichever comes first)
- The program has been in existence for more than two years.

Section 5. Procedures for Entering the Candidacy Program

A program that is not accredited by CAHME begins the accreditation process by submitting a written application addressed to the President/CEO of CAHME. The application summarizes the ability of the program to meet the accreditation criteria. The program should be able to present its qualifications in twenty five pages or less, not including appendices. The application will include:

- Declaration of Intent -A letter of intent to apply for Candidacy signed by the Program Director and the Chief Administrative Officer of the University or designated representative. The letter should include an expression of the program's commitment and indication of institutional support to achieve accreditation
- The Candidacy Application Fee (See Schedule of Fees).
- Completed Eligibility Statement attesting that the program has met the following requirements: (See *Self-Study Handbook*)

REQUIREMENT A

The University will have established healthcare management as a major course of study leading to a master's degree. Establishment of the Program will have been approved by the appropriate University governing body.

REQUIREMENT B

The Program will require the equivalent of full-time study beyond the baccalaureate level of not less than two academic years as defined by the University. CAHME will evaluate whether the Program, as defined by the University, meets this requirement.

REQUIREMENT C

The applicant Program in healthcare management will have graduated at least two classes.

REQUIREMENT D

Programs will be a part of an institution of higher learning which has achieved regional accreditation or equivalent recognition.

REQUIREMENT E

If the Program is in a specialized graduate school or schools (such as a medical school, school of public health, or school of business administration) within the University, the school(s) must be accredited by the appropriate recognized specialized accrediting agency (agencies). In the absence of such accreditation(s), a determination will be made by CAHME as to the extent to which lack of specialized accreditation is detrimental to the quality of the Program.

REQUIREMENT F

There will be no discrimination on the basis of gender, age, creed, race, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation in any aspect of the Program's activities. The Program will be in full compliance with relevant laws and University policy regarding equal opportunity requirements. Nothing herein will be construed to prevent a University from having a religious affiliation and purpose and adopting policies of admission and employment that directly relate to such affiliation and purpose so long as notice of such policies has been provided to applicants, students, faculty, and employees.

REQUIREMENT G

The Program will be subject to a defined policy on academic freedom and academic standards. Faculty in the program will be aware of Program/University faculty grievance procedures.

- Specific documentation must be included for evaluation by CAHME staff and the Candidacy Committee. The following is a list of areas that must be addressed in the written application.
 - Description of university setting, administrative structure, organizational chart, and accreditation status

- Description of the organization of the Program and its relationships with the primary academic unit in which it is located.
 - (Address topics such as the part of the University to which the Program is most closely related, whether the Program is organized as a separate department or is part of another administrative entity; whether the faculty hold appointments in the Program or in other elements of the University; and other information relevant to understanding how the Program fits into the structure of the University.)
- Program(s) and Degree(s) for which accreditation is sought;
- A statement of Program Mission with supporting goals and measurable objectives
- Information on class size, admission process, and student qualifications
- The organizational structure with assigned primary responsibility for curriculum development, admission standards, faculty selection and retention and fiscal planning;
- The program's identified set of competencies
- Curriculum requirements, course sequence, and syllabi
- A curriculum plan, consonant with CAHME criteria, with a timetable for implementation;
- Policies for recruitment and selection of faculty and students
- List of all full-time and affiliated program faculty including qualifications
- List of scholarly activity by the faculty during last three years

(The program should refer to the *Self-Study Handbook*, which is available on www.cahme.org)

An application for Candidacy may be submitted at any time. However, CAHME's Board of Directors, which makes the final determination, does so at its face to face meetings in the Spring and the Fall. To expedite approval, applications must be approved by the Candidacy Committee at least two months prior to the Board meeting. Meeting dates may be obtained from CAHME staff.

CAHME Staff will review the submitted application for completeness before the application is presented to the Candidacy committee for review. Incomplete applications will be returned to the program for review and correction.

The Candidacy Committee or the chair will determine the eligibility of a program for Candidacy status and make a recommendation to the Board.

- If a program has demonstrated through the submission of the above documents that it is eligible to participate in the Candidacy Program, it will be granted Candidate Status
- If a program lacks the required documents or qualifications, the Candidacy Committee may recommend defer candidacy until such time as they are ready to proceed.

Section 6. Candidacy

Once accepted as a Candidate, a program must proceed towards accreditation. An applicant must attend an orientation meeting, schedule a CAHME consultation visit, and submit an acceptable self-study document to CAHME offices within four years of the date accepted as an applicant; failure to do so will result in termination of candidate status.

At any time, during candidate status, a program may withdraw its application, on written notice to the President/CEO of CAHME, and no further accreditation activities will be conducted.

Orientation Meeting

An orientation meeting will be held periodically, usually in conjunction with a national professional meeting, for program directors who are new to accreditation.

CAHME Consultation Visit

The program and CAHME staff will arrange for an initial campus visit. The purpose of the visit will be to discuss CAHME policies, procedures and criteria, to answer questions of administrators, faculty, students and others who will be involved in the self-study process. This visit will also determine a benchmark for the program's ability to meet CAHME's accreditation Criteria.

- In advance of the CAHME consultation visit, the program will conduct a base-line assessment of its performance in relation to the Criteria for Accreditation and identify needed areas for improvement. This assessment will follow the outline of the Self Study Handbook and should ultimately give the program the framework for the completion of its draft Self Study Document.
- This document, which should not exceed 75 pages, should be submitted electronically at least four weeks prior to the campus visit.
- At least one week prior to the campus visit, a full agenda of the visit with times of appointments scheduled, and names of individuals to be interviewed or university officials with whom meetings will be held should be sent to CAHME offices.

- During the campus visit:
 - CAHME staff will be provided with information pertaining to the administrative unit (College or School) in which the program is located.
 - CAHME staff will meet with Program Director, next highest-level administrative official, faculty, students, and alumni.
 - CAHME staff will tour facilities, paying special attention to classrooms, computing facilities and libraries.
 - CAHME staff will review the baseline assessment and give a summary of the observations from the visit and present these at an exit interview to the Program Director,
- Following the Candidacy Visit, CAHME staff will submit a noted copy of the assessment to the Program director, based on the visit to the campus. The notes will provide guidance to the program on how the compliance with the criterion can be achieved.
- The program will respond by preparing a new assessment that incorporates the staff suggestions. This version will include a timeline for implementation for those areas that are not yet in place. This will be the Accreditation Plan
- The Accreditation Plan will be considered by the Candidacy Committee in the determination of the self-study year.
- CAHME Staff are available to the program for limited procedural consultation following the Site Visit.
- The Candidacy Committee will formally recommend to the Board when the program should commence its self study year. The Board will take action on this recommendation and inform the program of its decision within thirty (30) days.

Section 7. Status Reports

The Candidate program must submit a Status Report to the Candidacy Committee annually to ensure that the program continues its commitment to accreditation and its progress is satisfactory. The Candidacy Committee will review these Status Reports. Programs failing to make satisfactory progress will be contacted to determine appropriate next steps, such as a second campus visit.

These reports are completed at the end of each calendar year, due February 1st annually. Status Reports will be used by the Candidacy Committee to ensure that the program follows the time line established in its Accreditation Plan.

Section 8. Advancement from Candidate to Accreditation

Candidate programs may begin the self-study year only on the recommendation of the Candidacy Committee. The Candidacy Committee will use the status reports, baseline assessments and Accreditation plans to determine: 1) the appropriate time for the program to begin the self-study year, or 2) if the program should be denied further consideration in the accreditation process.

In the event that the program wishes to delay its self-study year, or initiate the self-study year prior to the time designated in the Accreditation Plan, it must communicate the request to the Candidacy Committee in writing with justification.

Candidate programs must submit a draft self study document to CAHME staff to review for completion and adequacy six months in advance of the scheduled site visit. An independent review may be assigned to a former CAHME fellow or Council member. The program will receive guidance on how the document could be improved.

Section 9. Assessment of Fees

- A non-refundable Candidacy Application Fee is due with the submission of the Declaration of Intent for Candidacy. This fee covers the initial, on-campus consultation by CAHME Staff. There are no annual program fees for Candidate programs.
- If the program requests an additional staff visit, the program will be billed for an additional visit as listed in CAHME's schedule of fees. All travel and other expenses will be billed directly from to the program.
- If the Candidacy Committee determines that a second campus visit is required, the program will be billed for an additional visit as listed in CAHME's schedule of fees. All travel and other expenses will be billed directly from to the program.

Section 10: Communication Guidelines

All Candidate programs advancing from Candidacy Status to Accredited Status will be identified in the CAHME Official List of Accredited Programs. All publications and/or statements by the candidate program must use the following declaration regarding the program's candidate status:

Candidate status is an indication that a program in healthcare management has voluntarily committed to participate in a plan of self-improvement and is actively progressing toward the status of accreditation. Candidate status is not accredited status and does not guarantee eventual accredited status.