CAA SITE VISITS

What to Expect
How to Prepare

2022 ASHA Convention
Session # 2120V
Susan Gordon-Hickey
Interim Dean, Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions & Associate Professor
University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL

Financial – I have no financial disclosures.

Non-financial – Member of the Council on Academic Accreditation, however, I do not receive any compensation for this role. I am an ASHA member.
Mary Sue Fino-Szumski

Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Education
Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN

Financial – I have no financial disclosures.

Non-financial – Member of Council on Academic Accreditation, however, I do not receive any compensation for this role. I am an ASHA member.
Shatonda Jones
Associate Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Rockhurst University, Kansas City, MO

Financial - I have no financial disclosures.

Non-financial – Member of the Council on Academic Accreditation, however, I do not receive any compensation for this role. I am an ASHA member.
Valerie Brosius

Bilingual Speech-Language Pathologist, Community Physical Therapy, Moline, IL
Instructor, Department of Literacy, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL.

Financial – I have no financial disclosures.

Non-financial – Member of the Council on Academic Accreditation, however, I do not receive any compensation for this role. I am an ASHA member.
Kelly Velasquez
Associate Director of Accreditation Site Visit Operations, ASHA

Financial – I am a paid employee of ASHA.

Non-financial – I have no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.
Session Objectives

1. **DESCRIBE** the purpose and timing of the site visit in the review process and the program’s roles and responsibilities before, during, and after the visit.

2. **APPLY** strategies for organizing data/materials supporting standards compliance verification during the site visit.

3. **PREPARE** a site visit agenda ensuring a comprehensive and thorough site visit.
Today’s Agenda

- Site Visit – purpose & timing in review
- Agenda development & logistics
- Preparing documentation
- After the Site Visit
  - Site Visit Report
  - CAA's final review and decisions
  - Evaluations and performance feedback
Myth vs. Fact #1

• Site visitors have the authority to recommend accreditation status for a program, including probation.

• No, the above statement is a MYTH.

• Site visitors verify evidence.
• CAA makes accreditation decisions based on:
  • Application
  • Site Visit Report
  • Updates provided by the program in its response to the initial observations and to the site visit report
Roles and Responsibilities
CAA vs. Site Visitors

CAA
• Develop and apply accreditation standards
• Establish knowledge & skills for academic and clinical curriculum
• Establish thresholds and monitor success re. student achievement
• Grant accreditation to programs

Site Visitors
• Use accreditation standards to assess programs
• Verify policies & procedures are in place & consistently followed
• Write report of the teams’ observations and their ability to verify evidence of documentation for all standards
Purpose and Timing of the Site Visit
Purpose of the Site Visit

- Part of the peer review process
- Verifies accuracy & clarifies information
- Collects information about every standard for CAA to consider in final decision
- Policies & procedures
- Congruence with mission and goals
- Student achievement
Site Visitors are NOT

• Looking for problems

• Making a recommendation or a decision on accreditation status

• Advocating for the program, e.g., carrying a message to the dean about more personnel, space
Simple Application Review Process Overview

**Program Submits Application**  
August 1, February 1

**CAA Initial Observations (IO)**  
September/March

**SV Team/dates confirmed**  
Fall/Spring (for following semester)

**Program Responds to IOs**  
30 days prior to Site Visit

**Team Conducts Site Visit**  
Fall/Spring

**Team Submits Site Visit Report (SVR)**  
30 days post visit

**CAA Decision**  
July/February

**Program Notified**  
30 days post CAA meeting

**Program Responds to SVR**  
30 days after receiving report
Program provides written response to IOs
  • Submit any updates, e.g. new faculty, required advance documents
  • Due 30 days before site visit

Site Visit conducted
  • Site Visit Report (SVR) written
  • Sent to program 6-8 weeks after site visit

Program provides response to SVR
  • Include updates for any standard
  • Submit within 30 days of receipt of SVR

CAA makes final decision
  • February meeting for prior February’s submission
  • July meeting for prior August’s submission
How long will the team be visiting?

- Standard visit is 2 full days
  - Monday-Tuesday
  - Thursday-Friday
- Days may be added if the program
  - Has **multiple** campuses
  - Has **satellite** campus(es)
  - Is part of a **consortium**
  - If **complexity** of program warrants additional time
# Team Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SLP only program</th>
<th>AUD only program</th>
<th>AUD &amp; SLP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Faculty SLP*</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Faculty AUD*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Faculty SLP</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Faculty AUD</td>
<td></td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>0-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practitioner SLP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practitioner AUD</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total team members</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*An Academic Faculty member will chair the visit. Clinical or Academic Faculty may be assigned for the 2nd university rep. position.*
Observers on Site Visits

• Members of the CAA and Accreditation Staff routinely observe site visits for educational purposes.

• Individual programs are not the focus of an observer’s participation in the visit.

• Individual site visitors are not the focus of an observer’s participation in the visit.
LOGISTICS: you submitted your application, now what?

• What should you expect?
• What should you do first?
Where to Start: Scheduling

- Check calendar for available date options for your site visit
  - Students should be on campus/school in session (except candidacy programs)
  - Consider availability of upper administration (Dean, Provost, etc)
  - Check with faculty and staff
- Review site visitor pool names to identify conflicts of interest
  - Site visitors also have chance to identify if any conflicts of interest with any programs due for SV
Confirming the Visit

- Verification
  - Email to program and site visitors to confirm availability once dates are identified

- Confirmation Letter
  - Finalizes the date and team assignments
  - Bios provided
  - Checklist provided

April 27, 2022

Amy Winston
Rush University
Amy_Winston@rush.edu

CAA # 243 - CAA Site Visit Confirmation

Dear Amy Winston,

This will serve to verify that the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) site visit to your graduate education programs in audiology and speech-language pathology is scheduled for 11/4-5/2021. Please carefully review all materials provided with this letter.
Travel logistics: meals, transport

Site Visit Team responsibilities:
• Flight arrangements
• Transport between airport & hotel
• Hotel cost
• All meals

Program responsibilities:
• Initial hotel reservations
• Arrange meeting space on campus for team to conduct their work
• If ground transport is NOT readily available, assist team in making arrangements to get from hotel to program
Agenda Development & Logistics

- Who is responsible for what?
- And when?

https://caa.asha.org/site-visits/program-preparation/
Who’s responsible for developing the agenda?

• Program Director
  • takes the lead to prepare a draft
  • consults with the Site Visit Team Chair at least 30 days in advance and shares draft agenda

• Site Visit Team Chair
  • recommends order of events, logistics, people, or time
  • has final authority for agenda
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Chair’s Name</th>
<th>Academic Member’s Name</th>
<th>Practitioner’s Name</th>
<th>Trainee’s Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day One (Monday)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-8:15</td>
<td>Travel to campus</td>
<td>Travel to campus</td>
<td>Travel to campus</td>
<td>Travel to campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:15-8:45</td>
<td>Brief intro to all faculty Location</td>
<td>Brief intro to all faculty Location</td>
<td>Brief intro to all faculty Location</td>
<td>Brief intro to all faculty Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45-9:30</td>
<td>Meeting with Program Director Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Program Director Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Program Director Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Program Director Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:00</td>
<td>File Review Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Faculty Member’s Name, Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Clinic Coordinator Faculty Member’s Name, Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Faculty Member’s Name, Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-10:45</td>
<td>Tour Clinic, Classrooms, &amp; Labs</td>
<td>Tour Clinic, Classrooms, &amp; Labs</td>
<td>Tour Clinic, Classrooms, &amp; Labs</td>
<td>Tour Clinic, Classrooms, &amp; Labs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 – 11:00</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Meeting with Faculty Member’s Name, Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Department Support Staff: Name(s) &amp; Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Clinical Faculty Member’s Name, Location</td>
<td>Meeting with Department Support Staff: Name(s) &amp; Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:00</td>
<td>Calling (off campus supervisors &amp;</td>
<td>Calling (off campus supervisors &amp;</td>
<td>Calling (off campus supervisors &amp;</td>
<td>Calling (off campus supervisors &amp;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Locations and specific names are placeholders for illustration purposes.*
Who participates in the visit?

- **Graduate Program**
  - Program Director, Clinic Director, Dept. Chair (if different than program director)
  - Full- and part-time academic faculty
  - On-campus clinical educators & supervisors
  - Students
  - Support staff

- **Central Administration**
  - dean, provost, or president

- **External Contacts**
  - Off-campus supervisors/preceptors
  - Alumni
  - Employers
  - Clients & their families
  - Members of the campus or local communities...
External Contacts

• Organize a sampling of individuals for site visitors to contact:
  • Externship site clinical supervisors/preceptors
  • Employers
  • Alumni

• Establish time in the agenda for calls
Separate or Together?

- Team members may be separated
  - interview individual faculty and supervisors
  - public and student meetings, as appropriate

- Team members are together
  - initial meeting with program director
  - meetings with Dean, Provost, etc.
  - facilities tours (virtual discussion)
  - exit report
Agenda Considerations

• Build-in time for:
  • Breaks!
  • Transition/walking time between interviews and appointments
• It is not necessary to schedule observations in the clinic.
What do I need to do about organizing a “public meeting”?

• “Widely” publish an announcement no later than 15 days prior to the site visit
  • program determines vehicle (website, campus/local newspaper, clinic or campus flyers, emails, etc.)
  • indicate date & time
    • RSVP instructions for Zoom meeting
    • location if holding meeting on campus (ensure accessible locations)
• Indicate how CAA Standards and/or Policy on Public Comment may be obtained
Public Comments

- Can programs solicit public comments for submission to CAA before the visit?

  - Yes. Programs may contact students, alumni, clients, community members, etc. to inform them about the options to provide comments before or during the site visit. CAA’s Policy on Public Comment outlines the process for submitting information to the CAA.

  - Written comments must be signed and include contact information to allow for verification and be submitted 15 days in advance of the visit to the CAA office.

  - Comments are not shared directly with programs; rather they are considered as part of the aggregate data.
Handling Emergencies

• Decision made jointly by program director & Site Visit Chair
  • Is university open?
  • Is there electricity or cell service?
• Include Accreditation Office staff in decision to ensure available resources
Conflicts of Interest

• In accordance with the CAA’s conflict of interest policies, examples of conflicts for site visitors would be:

  • Asking for or accepting gifts
  • Accepting or requesting a sample of wares
  • Accepting payment for meals
  • Recruiting instructional staff
  • Recruiting students
  • Accepting employment positions
Documentation

• What will site visitors be looking for?
Documentation is used by site visitors to:

- verify information in your application
- ensure policies are in practice – and practices are in policies
- confirm student achievement/progress tracking
Team’s Review

• Based wholly in Standards for Accreditation
• Guided by Requirements for Review
• Based on evidence presented
What will they expect to see?

• Two key resources that help identify materials can be found on the CAA’s website
  • Site Visit Review Materials
    • https://caa.asha.org/site-visits/program-preparation/
  • Documentation Guidance (for 2017 Standards, rev2023)
    • https://caa.asha.org/reporting/standards/

• Documentation must be prepared and available in English.
What will they expect to see?

Examples of documentation include:

- Handbooks (University/Department/Program)
- All course syllabi
- Assessment instruments and data
- Lists of student files, current & past 3 yrs
- Faculty meeting minutes
- University's promotion and tenure guidelines
- Copies of course evaluation forms, practicum evaluation forms (student and supervisor/site)
- Copies of employer, alumni, and exit surveys
Documentation Prep/Access

• Key documentation must be made available to the Site Visit team at least 1 month in advance of the visit.
  • Virtual Workroom/library
  • Website

• Add dates to documents to ensure most current version available to team
Access to files & confidentiality

• FERPA - students
  • Allows site visitors access to student files for purposes of accreditation
  • Site visitors will not record or report any identifying information

• HIPAA - clinic “covered entity”
  • May need site visitors to sign a form acknowledging confidentiality, consistent with your institution’s protocols
  • Client files are typically not reviewed; but clinic schedule could be
  • CAA/ASHA does not need to sign Business Associate Agreements
Technology Considerations

• What software is used to support (distance) education?
• What resources support satellite campus(es)?
• What resources are required of students, faculty, staff?
• What training is provided?
• What support is provided and by which entity (university, program)?
Required web content

• Student outcome data
  • 2013 Standards change (required publication online)
  • 2017 Standards – required labeling
  • 2017 Standards revised for 2023 remove employment data as required outcome measure

• Accreditation statement (July 2013 policy; January 2017 policy; February 2022 policy)
  
  Programs in audiology and/or speech-language pathology that are accredited by the CAA:

  The [master’s degree title + abbreviation education program in speech-language pathology
  {residential, distance education, satellite location, contractual arrangement} and/or the doctoral
  degree title + abbreviation education program in audiology {residential, distance education,
  satellite location, contractual arrangement}] at [name of parent institution of higher education]
  is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language
  Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard,
  #310, Rockville, MD 20850, 800-498-2071 or 301-296-5700.
Myth vs. Fact #2

- CAA requires programs to use a specific form or software to track student progress.

  - No, the above statement is a myth.
    - Programs should develop forms/mechanisms to track a student’s progress consistent with program’s stated goals.
    - Site Visitors will look to ensure these mechanisms and processes consistently track:
      - acquisition of knowledge and skills
      - supervised clinical practicum hours
      - progress toward graduation
      - progress toward state and national credentials
Myth vs. Fact #3

• Site visitors’ in-depth knowledge of the program is limited to the current accreditation application and related resources, e.g., program’s website.

• Yes, the above statement is a FACT.
  • The site visit team is not provided past applications or annual reports for their review for the visit. Nor is a history of the program’s citations or follow-ups provided.
  • Site visitors are expected to review the webpages of the program and university to verify data and its currency.
The site visit team is required to generate a report of the site visit.
Site Visit Report

• Becomes official record of team’s observations

• Considered a critical element by the CAA to make fair, impartial, and informed decisions on program’s accreditation
Site Visit Report

• Results of the team’s observations are presented twice to the program:
  • orally at end of visit (Exit Report) as a summary
  • written report (Site Visit Report) with details > 8 weeks post visit
Exit Report

• **Oral report** of SV team’s observations to the program
  • Standards for Accreditation = source for verification
  • Know what will be included in written report

• Attendees include Program Director
  • Others determined by program, e.g. faculty, clinic director, administrators, students, department chair

• Opportunity to receive information, ask questions
Site Visit Report

- **Written** site visit report is sent to:
  - Program Director
  - President or designee
    - Usually the provost or dean - whoever signed the application authorization

- 8 weeks after the visit
Site Visit Report - Response

- Program director and the president/designee have opportunity to provide written response within 30 days to:
  - clarify accuracy of the site visitors' observations
  - provide updates on progress made on issues noted by site visit team
  - provide updates about standards that were not necessarily identified as issues by the site visit team

- Program’s response is considered by the CAA when making its final accreditation decision.
Myth vs. Fact #4

• Observations reported by the team may be different than those identified by the CAA in its initial review of the application.

• Yes, the above statement is a FACT.
  • The Site Visit team has access to documentation on-site that the CAA does not have while conducting its initial review of the application. As a result, the site visitors may offer a different perspective on your program’s ability to demonstrate compliance.
CAA Decisions

- CAA makes most final accreditation decisions at face-to-face meetings 2x/year
  - Fall site visits = February meeting (accreditation, candidacy)
  - Spring site visits = July meeting (accreditation) or specially designated meetings (May – candidacy)

- Programs can typically expect decisions 3-5 months after site visit; 12 months after application submission
  - ... and no later than 30 days after the CAA meeting
§602.20 Enforcement of standards.

• (a) If the agency's review of an institution or program under any standard indicates that the institution or program is not in compliance with that standard, the agency must—
  • (1) Follow its written policy for notifying the institution or program of the finding of noncompliance;
  • (2) Provide the institution or program with a written timeline for coming into compliance that is reasonable, as determined by the agency's decision-making body, based on the nature of the finding, the stated mission, and educational objectives of the institution or program. The timeline may include intermediate checkpoints on the way to full compliance and must not exceed the lesser of four years or 150 percent of the—
    • (i) Length of the program in the case of a programmatic accrediting agency; or
    • (ii) Length of the longest program at the institution in the case of an institutional accrediting agency; …
Myth vs. Fact #5

• The site visit team’s findings are the only data used by CAA for final accreditation decision and citations.

• *No, the above statement is a MYTH.*

  • The CAA considers all information, from the accreditation application through the program’s response to the site visit report and any program updates, to determine a program’s compliance with each standard and the resulting accreditation decision. The CAA also takes into consideration whether any unresolved issues remain from previous reviews.

  • The CAA’s final decision and citations may differ from SV team observations, as the CAA has access to updated information from the program after the site visit.
Site Visitor Performance Feedback/Evaluations
Site Visitor Performance Feedback

Complete online survey immediately following the site visit, but no later than end of the semester.

Provide feedback on each member of site visit team; helpful to include input from entire faculty/staff.

Evaluation form:
- Uses numeric rating system
- Reflect knowledge, skills, responsibilities, & expected behaviors of site visitors
- Opportunity for written comments
Myth vs. Fact #6

• Completing site visitor evaluations before the final decision is rendered will affect the results of the accreditation decision.

• No, the above statement is a MYTH!
  • The evaluations are used to improve the site visit process and performance of site visitors. Evaluation materials are not considered when the CAA renders accreditation decisions and are kept entirely separate.
Next Steps & Reminders
Checklist for Program Directors

- Complete the availability survey if you have not yet done so and have a Spring 2023 site visit
- Review Site Visit Confirmation Letter/Reach out to SV Chair/Make hotel reservations
- Develop draft agenda
- Make key documents electronically available to team (30 days in advance)
- Review website for accuracy and currency
- Submit response to CAA’s initial observations & provide updated faculty list/CV (30 days in advance)
- Publish public meeting announcement (no later than 15 days in advance)
- Arrange logistical considerations for public and student meetings
- Arrange hotel reservations and ground transportation for team
- Provide a response to the site visit report (30 days after receipt)
- Complete feedback survey on the site visit process and site visitors
Follow-Up Site Visits

• USDE requires accreditors to visit campuses

• Abbreviated visit
  • 1 day (longer if multiple campuses, consortium)
  • 1 site visitor/ professional area
  • Tour
  • Public Meeting
  • Any issues cited by the CAA in their decision/AAR

• Candidacy vs. Accredited program meetings/activities may differ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CANDIDATE PROGRAM</th>
<th>ACCREDITED PROGRAM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tour (6.3)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with program director</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with students</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with public</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with dean or other central administrators</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review student/alumni files</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>If needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview new hires (2.0)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review clinical agreements/ interview supervisors</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other areas/standards identified by the CAA in its decision</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Site Visit Resources

CAA WEBSITE - CAA.ASHA.ORG

ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK – LINK FROM ANY PAGE ON CAA WEBSITE

DOCUMENTATION GUIDANCE - CAA.ASHA.ORG/REPORTING/STANDARDS

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS (IN HANDBOOK)

https://caa.asha.org/site-visits/program-preparation/
Accreditation Staff Resources
(1-800-498-2071)

Kelly Velasquez
X5794; kvelasquez@asha.org
(Site Visits)

Allen Read x8723;
aread@asha.org
(Site Visits)

Gretchen Ehret Hoshaw
x5765; gehret@asha.org
(Accreditation Applications)

Maia Williams x5766;
mawilliams@asha.org
(Accreditation Applications)