

Getting closer—update on first public draft of new *Standards and Procedures*

BY TOM TANNER

The Redevelopment Task Force met October 17 and 18 at the ATS office in Pittsburgh to review and revise the first internal draft of a proposed set of Standards and Procedures.

The draft was based on more than a thousand member comments gathered during this past “year of listening.” During that time, the task force engaged more than 700 ATS participants from nearly 200 member schools and analyzed a dozen reports from working groups, looking at everything from duration and formation to diversity and modality.

The task force heard the membership express a strong desire for a simpler set of standards focused on both educational quality and contextualized flexibility. They also heard a strong desire for a simpler set of policies and procedures that streamline the work of accreditation without compromising commitments to mutual accountability.

In response, the task force has worked hard to honor the membership’s desires in these areas. At a special meeting in mid-November, the Board of Commissioners will review the task force’s first internal draft. It proposes **one set of ten standards to replace the current three sets of 19 standards** (see accompanying box on next page).

The first internal draft of the proposed standards has roughly 8,000 words compared to the current standards’ 30,000 words. An annotated version is also being developed that includes explanatory notes to provide rationales for various changes, as well as self-study prompts



to assist schools preparing self-study reports under the new standards ([see accompanying article](#)).

The first internal draft of the proposed new *Policies and Procedures* (combining the current *Commission Procedures* and the *Board Policy Manual*) is about 35 pages long, compared to the current total of 80 pages. The task force achieved brevity by drafting standards and policies that focus more on general principles than prescriptive practices. Where brevity might have led to questions, the annotated versions provide guidance.

The first public draft of the proposed *Standards and Policies and Procedures* is scheduled to be released by December 2, after the Board’s mid-November review and any subsequent revisions. Based on membership feedback, a second public draft will be released in February 2020 and a third and final public draft in May 2020, before the membership votes at the June 2020 ATS/COA Biennial Meeting in Vancouver.

The first public draft that goes out by December 2 will be posted on the [ATS website](#) and emailed to every ATS

member school. The [redevelopment page](#) on the ATS website will provide several ways to provide comment, including sending an email to redevelopment@ats.edu.

Proposed New Standards

(with comparisons to current standards)

- 1. Mission and Integrity**
(would replace Standards 1.1 and 2)
- 2. Planning and Evaluation**
(would replace Standards 1.2 and ES.6 on Assessment)
- 3. Student Learning and Formation**
(would replace Standards 3, ES.2-5 and ES.7-8)
- 4. Master's Degree Programs**
(would replace Standards A-D and I; reduces 5 types to 3)
- 5. Doctoral Degree Programs**
(would replace Standards E-H and J; reduces 5 types to 3)
- 6. Library and Information Services**
(would replace Standard 4)
- 7. Student Services**
(would replace Standard 6)
- 8. Faculty**
(would replace Standard 5)
- 9. Governance and Administration**
(would replace Standard 7)
- 10. Institutional Resources**
(would replace Standard 8)



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