



**POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES FOR
UNDERGRADUATE
REVIEW AND
CERTIFICATION**

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR UNDERGRADUATE REVIEW AND CERTIFICATION

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1989, the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA) has recognized those baccalaureate health administration programs that meet the established criteria as eligible for AUPHA Certification. An undergraduate program review is required for Certification. Once certified, programs must undergo a program review at least every three years and most commonly every six years.

The review is informed by the Eligibility Report and Self Study Document. The self-study serves as a guide for faculty reviewers. It is expected that, as part of this review process, the program and its faculty will question, evaluate, and possibly amend the programmatic structure, goals, and teaching methods to reflect the criteria and their own educational goals and objectives. The program's Self-Study Document and any materials requested by the review team stand as evidence in the review. The submitted materials become the property of AUPHA.

AUPHA recognizes that flexibility and innovation are essential to the design and development of curricula. Each program must define its mission and objectives and must, therefore, be judged within the context of that mission and the defined objectives. However, it is incumbent on the program to demonstrate how its curriculum meets the intent of the AUPHA criteria. Failure to provide adequate evidence of this constitutes sufficient reason for the denial of Certification. Upon submission of interim progress reports, and when Certification is reviewed, the Program must indicate progress since the last review, noting in particular any actions taken with regard to recommendations from the previous review.

Programs are encouraged to strive for the highest quality. The established criteria reflect minimal programmatic structure, faculty, and curriculum expectations of AUPHA Certified programs. The review process does not consist of a checklist of characteristics or essentials; rather it is based upon a collegial judgment of whether a program meets the AUPHA criteria for undergraduate health administration education. All programs seeking and holding AUPHA Certification are subject to the criteria.

FREQUENCY OF CERTIFICATION REVIEWS

Certified Undergraduate Programs are required to be reviewed for Certification at least every six years.

Any Certified program due for review which fails to submit a Self-Study under in the appropriate time frame will be subject to termination of Certification.

In unusual circumstances, programs that have achieved six years certification in their last review may apply for a one-year delay in their review. Delays must be recommended to the Board of AUPHA by the Chair of the UPC and approved by a majority vote of the AUPHA Board of Directors. Delays will be considered in the following circumstances:

1. Evidence of extensive damage and/or disruption to the operation of the Program as a result of natural disasters such as tornados, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, or power/facility losses.
2. Unanticipated, unavoidable personnel change due to illness, substantial accident, and or injury, personal circumstance, or professional career action.
3. University-wide or school-wide initiatives that substantially handicap the program in meeting certification criteria.
4. Extensive curricular changes which do not allow for evaluation of program elements that will apply to the foreseeable future.

Programs granted a delay will be invoiced for the Review Delay Fee (see table of Fees) when notified of the approval of their request for delay.

Programs that fail to submit their Self-Study by the due date will not be allowed to stand for review in the scheduled year. If the program is within 6 years of its last review, the review will be delayed one year, the program will be required to pay the Review Delay Fee, and the program will be put into a probationary status for the bridge year. Programs that fail to submit their Self-Study by the due date that were reviewed more than 6 years previously will lose their certification effective July 1 of that year but may stand for certification again the following year if space allows.

Requests for delay must be submitted in writing to the Undergraduate Review Committee before March of the year preceding their scheduled program review. Requests submitted after this date will not be considered unless the rationale for the request is based on Circumstance #1 of the preceding list of circumstances. The request is reviewed by the Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC) Chair and, if deemed appropriate, forwarded to the Board of Directors of AUPHA for their consideration and vote at their next scheduled meeting.

PROCEDURES FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW

The undergraduate program review process enhances program self-assessment, interaction among faculty members, and the quality of programs. The Eligibility Report and Self-Study are the basis for review. The face-to-face portion of the review process is held in conjunction with the AUPHA Annual Meeting. The Program Director must attend the face-to-face portion of the review. It is strongly recommended that at least one other faculty member and/or the Dean (or designate) attend the review as well. Costs associated with reviews (travel, lodging, etc.) are assumed by the program.

The following are the steps in the review process with approximate timing. The timeline starts in the calendar year preceding the year in which the program is reviewed.

February/March year prior to review year

- AUPHA notifies Programs eligible for, or required to, undergo Undergraduate Program Review in the following year
- Eligible programs that are not required to undergo review confirm whether they will stand for Review
- Programs required to undergo review confirm they are aware of this requirement and have the opportunity at this time to request a review delay under the circumstances identified above.

March year prior to review year

- AUPHA sends the Eligibility Report Criteria, Invoice and Application to Programs who have tentatively committed to standing for review at the following year's Annual Meeting

April year prior to review year

- Programs submit the Eligibility Report, Application and review fee
- AUPHA reviews the Eligibility Report and notifies the Programs that are eligible to continue the certification process.
- AUPHA send the Self-Study to the Program to complete
- Program attends mandatory Pre-Certification Webinar. In person Workshops are also held at the Undergraduate Workshop and Annual Meeting.

November year prior to review year

- Program is notified of Review Team
- Program submits the Self Study to AUPHA

March – May of review year

- Review Team requests additional information from program, if necessary
- Program responds to review team, if required
- Program is notified of time and date of in-person review

June of review year

- In person review held during AUPHA Annual Meeting

July of review year

- Program provides additional information requested during in-person review

August of review year

- Program receives draft review report

September of review year

- Program responds to Review Team with any comments about draft review report

October/November of review year

- AUPHA Board of Directors acts on certification recommendations by Review Team and Undergraduate Program Committee
- Program notified of AUPHA Board Action

October/November of year following review year

- Program is reminded to complete and submit an Interim Report on any Criteria that were not fully met in the Review Report

January of following year

- If required, Interim Report is due
- Program contacted with results of Interim Report

THE APPLICATION, ELIGIBILITY REPORT and SELF STUDY

Programs wishing to stand for Certification must submit the application, payment and Eligibility Report to AUPHA in April of the year prior to Certification. The application and Eligibility Report will be reviewed to ensure eligibility of the program to stand for Certification. Once eligibility is confirmed, the Program will receive the Self-Study.

The preparation of the Self-Study is guided by the AUPHA Undergraduate Review Self Study Guide available on the AUPHA website. The Self-Study is submitted to AUPHA and the Review Team.

The Self Study is reviewed by the review team several months prior to the face-to-face review. The team may request additional information that is deemed lacking in the original Self Study or clarification on issues not understood. The program is required to respond to these requests and provide the information in a timely fashion. A Program's failure to provide information requested by the team will be taken into consideration in assessing the Program's compliance with review criteria.

Those programs that fail to submit their Self-Study by the due date will be assessed a \$250 late fee. Programs that fail to submit their Self-Study by January 15th will not be permitted to stand for Certification that year. If the program is within 6 years of its last review, the program may submit the \$750 delay fee to delay the certification for one year. The program will be listed in a probationary status for the year. If the program has already received a delay from the previous year, the program will lose its Certified status on July 1st and must restart the process as a new certification the following year.

WITHDRAWAL FROM A SCHEDULED REVIEW

A program may elect to voluntarily withdraw from the review process at any time. However, once the review fee is submitted, the financial and certification status implications of such withdrawal will be treated as follows:

Non-Certified Programs: If a non-certified program voluntarily withdraws from the certification process any time between submission of the fee and the face-to-face review, the review fee will not be refunded. However, it may be applied to a future review within the two years following the scheduled review, upon submission of a request to extend and the annual \$750 review delay fee. Should the program not pursue certification within the two years following their scheduled review, the program forfeits the review fee. Non-Certified Programs that withdraw from the certification process between the time of the review and the final action of the Board of Directors will forfeit their review fee entirely.

Certified Programs: If a certified program that is within 6 years of their last review withdraws from the certification process any time between submission of the fee and the face-to-face review, the review fee will not be refunded. However, it may be applied to a review the following year, upon submission of a request to delay and the annual \$750 delay fee. The program will be listed in a probationary status for the bridge year. Should the program not pursue certification in the following year, the program forfeits the review fee and will lose its Certification effective July 1 of the year following their originally-scheduled review.

If a certified program that was reviewed more than 6 years prior withdraws from the certification process, the program forfeits the review fee and will lose its Certification effective July 1 of that same year.

THE REVIEW TEAM

The Undergraduate Program Review Team will be appointed by AUPHA after consultation with the Chair of the Undergraduate Program Committee. Review Team members are recruited from AUPHA member programs and faculty and may be from undergraduate or graduate healthcare management programs. The Team is comprised of three individuals, one serving as Chair of the Team. The Chair is responsible for initiating and guiding the work of the team, communicating with the program as needed, and ensuring the timely delivery of all feedback and reports to the programs and AUPHA.

Review team members are eligible to serve as chair if they meet the following criteria:

- a) Have served as a team member on at least 3 review teams; and
- b) Are currently full-time faculty at an AUPHA Full Certified or CAHME Accredited Member Program or have been full-time faculty at an AUPHA Full Certified or CAHME Accredited Member Program within the last 5 years.

Exceptions to these criteria may be made at the discretion of the UPC Chair if approved by the program being reviewed. Review team members are trained at various times during the year,

including via web-based training and face-to-face training in conjunction with the Undergraduate Workshop or AUPHA Annual Meeting.

AUPHA, in consultation with the UPC Chair, identifies and assigns team members to program reviews. Whenever possible, AUPHA will make every effort to assign team members that represent programs similar in size, setting, and focus to the program being reviewed.

AUPHA will inform the program of the review team in November of the year preceding the face-to-face review. The program will have 10 business days from notification of the appointed team to provide rationale for why any member might have a conflict of interest in reviewing the program. AUPHA reserves the right to make the final decision regarding selection of the review team. Programs will be notified in December of final team composition. The Self Study will then be forwarded to the reviewers.

FACE-TO-FACE REVIEW FORMAT

The face-to-face undergraduate program review is a group discussion, organized in the format of an on-site visit. Initial reviews for programs not yet certified are scheduled for three hours; re-certification reviews are scheduled for two hours. Prior to the review, the team meets in closed session to review any remaining areas of concern and to develop a strategy for discussing these during the face-to-face review.

The Chair convenes the review and follows this schedule:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Re-Certification</u>	<u>Initial</u>
Review of Process by Team Chair	5 minutes	5 minutes
Overview of Program by Program Director	15 minutes	25 minutes
Discussion	60 minutes	90 minutes
Recess	15 minutes	15 minutes
Final clarification by Program and summary by Team Chair	25 minutes	45 minutes

Upon completion of the review session, the team meets in closed session to:

- (1) Review the program's responses to issues.
- (2) Specify additional information/documentation required (if any). [Note: A letter from the review chair, copied to AUPHA staff, must be sent within ten working days to the Program Director specifying what additional material is required.]
- (3) Summarize the program's strengths and weaknesses based upon each of the criteria.

- (4) Develop a schedule for determining the team's final recommendation.

Within sixty (60) days of the face-to-face undergraduate program review, a draft report is sent to AUPHA. AUPHA staff reviews the report, and, if necessary, consults with the Review Team Chair regarding the report's contents and may amend the report based on that consultation. The draft report is then sent to the program. The program reviews the report for accuracy and completeness and must respond to the review team chair with copy to AUPHA within ten (10) working days. After consideration of the program's response to the draft report, the review team finalizes the draft report and sends it with the recommended action to AUPHA. The final draft report must be submitted by the review team chair to AUPHA no later than September 30. The AUPHA Staff and UPC Chair then review the program's response and the report, make any final revisions required, and AUPHA forwards the recommendations to the Board of Directors. The AUPHA CEO and the UPC Chair, in consultation with the Chair of the Review Panel, have final editorial control of the report.

REVIEW AND VOTING SCHEDULE

The face-to-face portion of the Undergraduate Program Reviews is conducted once a year in conjunction with the AUPHA Annual Meeting.

After the review and subsequent follow-up with the program, the review team will recommend an action to the Undergraduate Program Committee. Condition(s) may be attached to Certification or the continuation of Certification, with a specific deadline for the program to meet those conditions. The UPC Chair will review the recommendations of the review team and determine whether to forward such recommendations to the Board of Directors or return the report to the Review Team for amendment. The Board will review the recommendations of the UPC at their next scheduled Board meeting. An affirmative vote of a majority of the Board of Directors is required for Certification. The Program is notified of the outcome of the Board vote within thirty (30) days.

While the Board relies heavily on the recommendations of the UPC, it is the final authority in deciding upon certification action and may amend review team or UPC recommendations in the final report and action.

REVIEW TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUBSEQUENT ACTION

The review team recommends an action to the UPC Chair and subsequently the UPC Chair recommends action to the Board of Directors for their consideration. The recommendation consists of three parts:

1. The recommendation to award or deny certification
 2. Term of certification
- If the first recommendation is to award certification, the subsequent recommendation will be for the duration and terms of certification. Guidelines are

as follows; though individual circumstances may warrant a deviation from these guidelines.

- a. Programs in substantial compliance with the criteria will receive a 6-year certification
- b. Programs in minimal compliance with the criteria will receive a 3-year certification.
- c. Programs undergoing review for the first time will also normally receive a 3-year certification.

The determination of level of compliance will be made by the review team and confirmed by the UPC Chair and AUPHA Staff.

3. Finally, the team will recommend any required interim progress reports and timeframes for the submission of those reports.

PROGRESS REPORTS

AUPHA uses progress reports to determine that all programs that have participated in the certification process come into full compliance with AUPHA Certification Criteria. Consequently, a progress report may be required of those programs that partially meet or do not meet one or more criteria at the time of the Review. Progress report requirements will be specified in the final Review report and will be due the first week in January of the year(s) specified in the report unless another timeframe is recommended and approved by the board.

Programs failing to submit progress reports within 120 days of the day they are due will be subject to adverse action by the UPC or Board up to and including withdrawal of Certification.

The program must submit the progress report(s) to AUPHA electronically by the date(s) specified in the Review Report. If progress reports are not submitted on time, the program will be charged a late fee of \$250 for each month or portion thereof that the report is late.

The report must address the program's progress towards meeting any criteria not judged to be fully met during the review.

Upon receipt, AUPHA will forward the progress report to the UPC Chairs. The Chairs will review the progress report and inform the UPC as to its recommendation on the report within thirty (30) days of receipt. If the program has evidenced sufficient progress toward meeting all of the recommendations in the report, the Chairs will recommend that no further action is needed from the program and the program will receive notification of such within sixty (60) days of report submission.

If the Chairs find there has not been sufficient evidence of progress towards meeting the recommendations in the report, the Chairs may recommend an additional progress report or an interim review should the situation warrant. In the event that an interim review is recommended by a Chair, the UPC will assess such recommendation and make a determination as to whether or not to forward this recommendation to the Board or take alternative action. Interim reviews will be required upon recommendation of the UPC and a two thirds vote of the Board.

CHANGE IN STATUS

A program may withdraw from Certified status if changes in program status result in it not continuing to meet the criteria for Certification. The program must write a letter to the AUPHA Board Chair stating the reasons for its desire to withdraw and indicating when the program expects to be able to undergo undergraduate review to return to certified status.

LOSS OF CERTIFICATION

In the case of a Board decision to deny or terminate Certification, the program will receive formal notice of the Board decision within thirty (30) days of the vote, advising the program of the reason for the action. In the event of a denial or termination of Certification, the program may exercise its right to appeal the decision.

APPEALS PROCESS

Appeals are only available to programs that have been denied certification or whose certification has been terminated. Actions regarding the number of years of certification or the number of progress reports to be submitted are not eligible for appeal.

If the program chooses to appeal the Board decision, the following steps apply:

1. The program must inform the Board of this intent within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notice Board action by certified letter, along with the appeals fee of \$1,500.
2. The Board, in consultation with the UPC, will appoint an appeals committee consisting of two (2) members of the Board and one (1) faculty member from an AUPHA Certified Undergraduate program. No member of the original review team may serve on the appeals committee. The program is notified of the composition of this committee within two (2) weeks of the Board's receipt of the notice of intention to appeal.
3. The program must submit four (4) copies of its appeal to AUPHA within thirty (30) days of the appointment of the appeals committee. The appeal should include the Program's response to the final review report and additional comprehensive documentation presenting the grounds for the appeal. AUPHA will immediately forward the appeal to the appeals committee.
4. The appeals committee reviews the documentation, and within sixty (60) days writes a report to the Board and to the program with its recommendation. In conducting the review, the appeals committee will have access to the program's self-study application, the review report and the appeals documents.
5. The Board, after consultation with the UPC, votes on the recommendation of the appeals committee and communicates its decision to the program within two (2) weeks. The decision of the Board is final.

A program that has lost its Certification through denial or termination may not re-apply for Certification until one (1) year from the time of the Board decision has passed.

WITHDRAWAL OF CERTIFICATION

AUPHA retains the right to withdraw certified status from any program for just cause and after due process. The Board, in consultation with the UPC, may withdraw the certification of a program through a two-thirds vote at which a quorum is present.

Sufficient cause includes, but is not limited to, failure to submit required progress reports and review self-studies when due notice has been given, failure to come into compliance with all AUPHA certification criteria within the timeframe specified in the review report, and failure to pay fees.

FEES (subject to change annually)

Annual AUPHA Membership Fee	TBD annually
Initial Certification Review	\$4,000
Re-Certification Review	\$3,200
Appeals Fee	\$1,500
Review Delay Fee	\$ 750
Late Report Fee	\$ 250 per month, prorated based on date report is received.

ROLE OF THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM COMMITTEE (UPC)

The UPC oversees the undergraduate certification review process as part of its responsibilities. The following activities are conducted by the UPC and its membership:

- Assessing the review upon completion of the final report and making a recommendation to the Board on certification actions
- Assessing the progress report evaluation and making a recommendation to the Board on actions related to progress reports
- Bi-annually evaluating the Review Criteria to ensure it is current and relevant, and revising as needed, not less than every 8 years
- Providing substitute review team members from its ranks or recruiting such from the membership if appointed team members can no longer serve
- Overseeing review team selection process
- Intervening when there are issues or concerns with the process or outcome of reviews (e.g. when the team does not fulfill its responsibilities)
- Providing advice and consultation to the Board in regards to appeals issues