

CACREP Team Member Handbook

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. CACREP was incorporated in 1981 as an independent nonprofit organization. There are presently 16 voting members representing the American Counseling Association, its divisions and the public.

The vision of CACREP is to provide leadership and to promote excellence in professional preparation through the accreditation of counseling and related educational graduate programs. As an international accrediting body, CACREP is committed to the development of procedures and standards that protect the rights and address the needs of the diverse clients, students, faculty, and practitioners of counseling and related educational programs, and the general public.

CACREP is dedicated to: 1) encouraging and promoting the development and improvement of preparation programs, and 2) preparing counseling and related professionals to provide services consistent with the ideal of optimal human development and equality of human rights.

CACREP maintains collaborative relationships with other groups that focus on accreditation, licensing, certification, and the professional development of related practitioners.

The mission of CACREP is to promote the professional competence of counselors and related practitioners through the:

- development of preparation standards for counseling and related educational programs;
- encouragement of excellence in counseling and related preparation programs; and
- accreditation of professional preparation programs.

This is the sixth edition of the CACREP Team Member Handbook. We hope this publication will serve as reference materials for both experienced and novice team members. The reader is encouraged to become familiar with the topics in this handbook, as well as with all other CACREP publications

Dear CACREP On-Site Team Member:

Once you have been trained, it may be as soon as a few months or over a year before you are contacted regarding participating in your first on-site team visit. We send the institution a list of appropriate team members and they return a list with the names ranked in priority order. Whenever possible, we try to accommodate the institution's preferences. Consequently, your name may go out on a potential team list many times before we finally contact you.

After a few visits as an on-site team member, you may be interested in being trained as a CACREP on-site team chair. We require that you have participated in at least two on-site visit prior to being eligible for training as a team chair.

Thank you for taking time to participate in this on-site team member orientation. Our accreditation activities could not continue without volunteers like you. On behalf of the CACREP Board, we want you to know that your efforts are greatly appreciated. Your trainers have had numerous and varied experiences with the CACREP accreditation process and would be happy to talk further with you about the experience of serving on a CACREP on-site team. Please feel free to contact the CACREP office for any additional information or clarification.

THE TEAM'S ROLE IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The importance of the visiting team's role in CACREP's accreditation process cannot be overemphasized. The team visit is an integral part of the evaluation procedures, for it is during this phase that the validity of the program(s) narrative presented in the self-study is evaluated. A primary responsibility of the on-site team is the validation of the self-study and any other data submitted to CACREP for review. The validation process is carried out through interviews, visits to practicum and internship sites, classroom visits, review of documentation available in files, etc.

In addition to discerning how the self-study narrative is actually put into practice, team members are asked to provide the CACREP Board of Directors with a thoughtful assessment of aspects of the program which cannot be evaluated fully from written documentation. Here, the team must recognize that programs may present variations in how they meet the standards, and, that while these deviations from the standards exist, that excellence in quality and integrity may compensate for some perceived differences. It is important to remember that accreditation is not policy enforcement, but a process used for making responsible and professional judgment with reference to program effectiveness.

CACREP on-site team visitors are guests of the institution and ambassadors for CACREP. They should not view themselves as "Watergate reporters." Their goal is to attest that the CACREP standards are met in spirit rather than attempting to document, in a literal sense, every nuance of the standards.

CACREP has been accrediting programs since its incorporation in 1981 and prior to that ACES was responsible for accreditation of counselor education programs. At this point, CACREP is now reaccrediting programs that have gone through three cycles of accreditation. Reaccreditation visits are conducted in exactly the same fashion as initial accreditation visits, where the team's purpose is to verify that a; CACREP standards are being met and report to CACREP all concerns related to the standards.

The final activity of the visiting team is writing the on-site team's report to the Board. This report communicates to the Board an understanding of how the program(s) meet the spirit of the CACREP standards as well as how effectively they meet their own educational and administrative objectives. Because the CACREP Board weighs the team's recommendation for program accreditation very heavily in their decision making, the report should reflect a consensus of the observations and opinions of **all** team members as well as create a clear image of the program so that they may render fair decisions. In noting accreditation requirements, team members must make reference to specific CACREP standards. In the report, the team must also make a final recommendation regarding accreditation of the program (2 years, 8 years, or denial). Copies of this report, without the final accreditation recommendations, are forwarded by the CACREP office to the institution's CEO, dean of the college, department chair and CACREP liaison prior to the Board's final review.

If any questions regarding the writing of the on-site team's report should arise, the team may consult the CACREP office for suggestions and/or clarification.

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ON-SITE TEAM MEMBER

Prior to the actual visit, the faculty at the institution has spent countless hours working to prepare the self-study document which you must carefully examine standard by standard **prior** to your arrival at the site. In addition to reading the self study, you must be familiar with all pertinent correspondence (initial review letter, team set letter, any addenda sent to you with the self-study) that occurs between the program and CACREP from the time CACREP receives the document. Frequently, the Board members who do the initial review of the self-study will ask that the on-site team look for specific verification of statements that were made in the self-study document . You will find these statements in the letter sent to the program liaison by the Executive Director.

Your team chair will be in communication with you about the schedule that has been worked out for the visit. Communicate directly with your team chair regarding all arrangements, unless otherwise directed by your team chair. You will be meeting with the team on the first evening to finalize plans, share impressions, etc.

Always remember that accreditation is the application of professional judgment in the **absence of absolute standards**. Accreditation is an imperfect art. Know CACREP's limits and strive not to exceed its purposes or imperfections.

- **Be prepared and knowledgeable**

- **Be reasonable**

- **Be judicious**

- **Be objective and consistent**

- **Be flexible**

- **Be fair**

- **Be responsive**

- **Be cooperative**

- **Be trustworthy**

Consistency in judgment, action and evaluation is necessary, but recognition of desirable change and accommodation of this change is also vital. Those who seek accreditation from CACREP have invested heavily in both time and money. Be helpful; be prompt; be informative; and be respectful. The knowledge that you have gained from this experience must remain confidential at all times before and after the accreditation decision is made.

The above precepts have been paraphrased and adapted from the accreditation manual published by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA/AMA).

VISIT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Getting to the visit stage in the accreditation process is only half the battle. The institution must now prove itself to an on-site team looking at its program(s) in depth. Visit preparation can be broken down into three stages: prior, during and after the visit.

Both the institution and the team members must assume various responsibilities if the visit is to occur with minimal confusion and/or headaches. The following discussion includes materials and arrangements that the team should expect from the institution as well as items the team members should complete to aid the institution. Remember, the department must conduct long distance correspondence and errors are possible.

The typical on-site visit consists of a three day review of the program(s) seeking accreditation.

THE CACREP OFFICE

PRIOR to the visit, the **CACREP OFFICE** will:

1. Obtain team members and schedule the on-site visit;

CACREP now offers the institution a choice of either a Saturday-Tuesday visit or a Sunday -Wednesday visit. A Saturday-Tuesday visit allows the on-site team members less time away from their respective faculty or clinical positions as well as reducing the airfare costs for Sunday travel. CACREP has no preference for either of the time frames. Some institutions are not able to get their faculty on campus for Sunday meetings and CACREP respects this. When a visit occurs during the traditional Sunday-Wednesday time frame, CACREP encourages team members to fly on Saturday whenever convenient. The additional hotel bill and per diem will be covered for those who travel on Saturday.
2. Inform the institution that the visit has been set and forward procedural details regarding on-site visits to the department chair or CACREP liaison; and
3. Provide the team members with necessary instructions and materials, in addition to pertinent correspondence between the CACREP office and the institution.

DURING the visit, the **CACREP OFFICE** is available during normal office hours for any questions that the team may have which need to be addressed in order to complete the visit.

AFTER the visit, the **CACREP OFFICE** will :

1. Receive the on-site team report, photocopy it (without the final accreditation recommendations) and forward copies to the institution's CEO, dean, department chair and CACREP liaison. The mailing will also include a letter from the Executive Director informing the institution that they have 30 days to respond to the report in writing;
2. Process the on-site team members' travel and expense reimbursement form and mail a check to the team members; and
3. Compile the feedback sheets from the visit and write to the individual team members to share the accreditation decision along with a summary of the feedback received from the institution and fellow team members. Please note that this summary will not occur until 30 days after the institution has been notified of the program accreditation decisions.

THE CACREP LIAISON

PRIOR to the visit, the **CACREP LIAISON** will:

1. Upon receipt of the team set letter, send/ship a copy of the self-study with any addenda or corrections as well as any other materials such as college catalogues, student handbooks, or brochures to each of the team members;
2. Correspond with the team chair to coordinate the on-site agenda and interview schedule;
3. Inform those being interviewed of the purpose for the interview;
4. Arrange transportation to off-campus interviews;
5. Arrange for the availability of a suitable personal computer for the team's use during the visit. Check with the team chair on preference for a PC or MAC - in any case, a laptop would be ideal. Occasionally a team member will bring their own computer;
6. Forward information to the team members regarding local restaurants, taxi services, parking and transportation arrangements - sometimes the team will coordinate their arrival times and rent a car for transportation to the university; and
7. Arrange hotel accommodations - accommodations may be on or off campus - but should always be close to the institution. Sometimes institutions can get better room rates when they pay the bill directly and allow CACREP to reimburse the institution later. The CACREP liaison needs to inform the team chair about these arrangements.

DURING the visit, the **CACREP LIAISON** needs to:

1. Maintain communication with the on-site team;
2. Make sure that housing arrangements are satisfactory and that site transportation is arranged; and
3. Check periodically with the team chair that the visit is running smoothly.

AFTER the visit, the **CACREP LIAISON** needs to:

1. Send a written response to the on-site team report within the designated 30 day time period; and
2. Return completed team member feedback forms and the CACREP Office feedback form to the CACREP office within 30 days of the visit's completion.

THE TEAM CHAIR

PRIOR to the visit, the **TEAM CHAIR** will:

1. Communicate with the institution's CACREP liaison in order to arrange the tentative on-site agenda;
2. Discuss with the CACREP liaison who should be included in the interviews - i.e. current students, graduates of the program, departmental faculty, faculty outside the department, administrators (Dean, CEO), and site supervisors (internships/practica);
3. Communicate with the team members to discuss travel arrangements and assign duties to each visiting team member either prior to the visit or during the pre-meeting on the evening before the interviews begin; and
4. If you would find it helpful, call the CACREP office and we will e-mail you a team report format.

DURING the visit, the **TEAM CHAIR** will:

1. Lead the team in the validation of the self-study and other data presented to the CACREP Board by gaining an understanding of those aspects of the program that could not be fully evaluated from the documentation supplied by the institution and those standards that were highlighted by the initial review team to be attended to on the visit;

2. Serve as spokesperson for the team if problems or concerns occur. If necessary, the team chair may contact the CACREP office during the visit to seek clarification on the standards or any issue related to the on-site visit;
3. Meet periodically with the team to exchange data and opinions and to plan for the further business of the visit;
4. Divide the tasks of writing the final report among the team members. The final meeting between team members will be a time to formulate impressions, recommendations and requirements in order to prepare the final team report; and
5. Conduct the exit presentation with the team members present and appropriate university officials and faculty prior to departing the site. The team should provide general impressions but does not reveal it's recommendations regarding accreditation decisions.

AFTER the visit, the **TEAM CHAIR** will:

1. Complete the on-site team report and share the final copy with the team members to assure complete consensus;
2. Forward the report to the CACREP office within two (2) weeks of the completion of the visit;
3. Complete the fellow team member evaluation forms and return them to the CACREP office immediately following the on-site visit; and
4. Submit a travel and expense reimbursement form to the CACREP office.

TEAM MEMBERS

PRIOR to the visit, the individual **TEAM MEMBERS** will:

1. Make transportation arrangements to the institution's city via air, train, bus, car, etc. and coordinate these with the team chair. The team member may use his/her own travel agent and include the fare on the reimbursement form or may use the CACREP travel agent;
2. Forward their travel schedules in advance to the CACREP office, the team chair and the institutional CACREP liaison;

3. Thoroughly review the accreditation materials sent by the institution and the CACREP office and make comments so as to be generally prepared for the initial team meeting; and
4. Inform the CACREP office or institution if the materials are not received in a timely manner.

DURING the visit, the individual **TEAM MEMBERS** will:

1. Review all pertinent materials - including curriculum items, library facilities, clinical facilities, staff/office facilities, student records, etc.;
2. Conduct interviews with academic staff, administrative officers, individual faculty, clinical site supervisors, current students and alumni;
3. Meet periodically together to exchange data and impressions and plan for the remainder of the visit;
4. Discuss the task of writing the final report. The team chair should divide the tasks of writing the final report among the team members. Time is needed to formulate impressions, write specific recommendations and cite specific requirements that still need to be met by the program in order to meet standards. Sometimes the team will complete the report prior to the exit presentation. The team chair is responsible for the final collation of the individual sections. However, all team members should review and approve the final report that the team chair submits to the CACREP office; and
5. The team chair, with all team members present, conducts the exit presentation with appropriate officers and faculty of the institution prior to departing the site. The team provides general impressions giving opportunities for verification or correction by program and other administrative personnel. The team does not reveal it's recommendations regarding accreditation decisions.

AFTER the visit, the individual **TEAM MEMBERS** will:

1. Forward to the CACREP office the ACA travel and expense reimbursement form. Reimbursements will be forwarded promptly to the team members as soon as the form is authorized by the CACREP executive director;
2. Complete the fellow team member evaluation forms and return them to the CACREP office immediately following the on-site visit.

ACCREDITATION RECOMMENDATIONS

After the CACREP office receives the official copy of the on-site team's report, a separate copy is mailed to the institution's CEO, the Dean and to the Department Chair. The institution is allowed thirty (30) days in which to respond to the relative accuracy of the Team's Report. They may, at this time, also choose to provide information on how deficiencies will be met in the future. In addition, based on the information contained within the Report, they may request that some or all of the programs be withdrawn from further review.

In making its final accreditation decision, the Board utilizes the following data:

- * the accreditation application;
- * the self-study document and any addenda that may follow the initial document;
- * the pertinent correspondence between the institution and the CACREP office;
- * the on-site team's report and recommendations; and
- * the institution's response to the team's report.

A review of all of this documentation is conducted by a subcommittee of at least two Board members who then present their findings to the entire Board. By majority vote, the Board renders its decision. The application for accreditation may be withdrawn by the institution any time prior to a decision being rendered.

Decisions are rendered in the following categories:

Accredited (for a 8-year period)

This status is granted to programs which in the professional judgment of the CACREP Board, meet the Standards in a satisfactory manner.

Accredited (for a 2-year period)

This status is granted to programs which do not meet all of the criteria outlined in the Standards. However, the Board believes that there is a reasonable expectation that the institution can meet the criteria within the two-year period. Please note that it is very common for an institution to receive a 2-year accreditation decision.

Denial

This decision is made by the Board when it feels that the evidence indicates that the program is not in compliance with the Standards criteria.

A program cannot be partially accredited. Therefore, in order to allow for programs to make relatively minor changes to be in keeping with the Standards, the Board may grant accreditation for a two (2) year period. By the end of the two year period, the program is required to submit an "Interim Report" which addresses all of the Standards that were not met in the original accreditation process. The institution may also request a 2-year extension of this accreditation. These are outlined clearly in the accreditation decision letter sent by the Executive Director on behalf of the Board of Directors. At the Board meeting following receipt of the "Interim Report," the Board will review this documentation outlining how each step has been accomplished. The Board will then make one of three decisions: 1) deny further accreditation; 2) grant accreditation to the end of the 8-year cycle; or 3) extend accreditation for an additional 2-year period.

Accreditation by CACREP is for a 8-year period. Therefore, a 8-year cycle begins upon notification to the institution's CEO, with July 1 or January 1 becoming the anniversary date for subsequent accreditation decisions. Programs given accredited status with conditions receive a cumulative 8-year accreditation, including the periods before the Interim Report is accepted and all of the conditions are removed.

At the end of the accreditation cycle, another self-study, on-site visit and complete Board review must be conducted.

TEAM FOLLOW-UP AND FEEDBACK

Office Response

CACREP recognizes and appreciates the time and energy expended by our volunteers during the visit process. We realize that the team has developed an interest in the final accreditation outcome for the institution visited. After the accreditation decisions are made by the Board, the institutions have been notified and given the opportunity to appeal, we will provide feedback to team members on the outcome and the institution's evaluation of the team visit.

In addition to visit feedback and follow-up, the office places all team members on the active mailing list. Active team members receive copies of the CACREP *Connection*, (distributed biannually), periodic updates, notification of workshops and content sessions at the ACA Convention, as well as other assorted mailings.

We want to keep you involved and informed. If you relocate, please notify us of your change of address.

Evaluation Forms:

In response to requests from many of the experienced team members, CACREP has revised its evaluation procedures in order to allow for more concrete feedback. Honest feedback is greatly appreciated. Feel free to write comments about your fellow team members/chair regarding their strengths and weaknesses.

The following pages show the evaluation forms that are currently in use. In addition to forms designed to provide information regarding the visit, the report, and peer responses, there is an evaluation form for the institution to rate the CACREP office staff. The CACREP Board of Directors is also requested to evaluate the on-site team report so as to provide feedback to the team about their written report.

As you will notice, we have requested that minimum numbers of people are asked to complete the evaluations. This will allow for a more complete picture. Once we have all the responses collated, we will pass the information on to the team members involved in aggregate form. As always, your feedback on this process is appreciated.

VISIT CHALLENGES

Every on-site visit will be different. This point cannot be overemphasized, nor should it be overlooked. The differences come from many sources:

1. the uniqueness of each institution along with the individuality of the program(s) under review;
2. the changing composition of the visiting teams sent to the institutions;
3. the clarity, comprehensiveness, and organization of the self-study materials (or the lack of these characteristics);
4. the interactions between the team chair and the program leader(s) in preparation for conducting the on-site visit;
5. the interactions between the team members and all parties involved in the on-site visit; and
6. individual interpretations by team members in attempting to operationally determine when a standard is met or not met.

With the help of some experienced Team Chairs, several problem areas have been delineated according to the following categories: Team Members, Program(s), and the Visit in General. PLEASE make yourself aware of these problems so that you have the ability to avoid and/or correct them.

PROBLEMS RELATED TO TEAM MEMBERS:

The Socially Active Team Member

While it is always enjoyable to be in a new and stimulating environment, team members must not plan to use any portion of the visit to meet with friends, relatives, or colleagues. Commitments during the day belong to the programs under review. Commitments during the evening belong to the team members for questions, evaluations, and report writing.

The Uninformed Team Member

While it has been rare, there have been occasions when team members arrived on-site without having done their homework. The Self-Study and other pertinent materials are sent in advance to all team members for the sole purpose of a thorough reading prior to the on-site visit. Team members should read all materials carefully and prepare a list of their question and concerns for review by the entire team. The team can then have a productive meeting to share their ideas and delegate responsibilities the evening before they begin the actual on-site review. In addition, if you have been asked to be a team member representing a specialty (e.g. Marriage and Family Counseling/Therapy,

Career Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, etc.), please be up-to-date on the current Standards, texts and other knowledge and skill bases for that specialty area.

The Comparing-Contrasting Team Member

If you hear yourself saying, "At my institution, we do it", or "In our Counselor Education program, students", then quickly bite your tongue. Team members must not compare the program(s) under observation with home-campus situations, but must focus on the local context during the visit. A central question must be "Does it Work?" in light of the program's objectives - not "How is it done elsewhere?"

The Overly Accepting Team Member

This team member finds everything about the program(s) and/or the institution to be wonderful and has a total lack of "critical-mindedness." This team member might also be a "Grabber" (see below).

The Grabber

Visiting other programs will provide every team member with new ideas and incentives for changing things at home, but a team member should not allow the need to suction new ideas, brochures, forms, etc. to interfere with the visit's task of self-study validation. Grabbing onto everything possible may also create a false impression of the team's overall evaluation.

The Debater

This team member has made a mistake and allowed a disgruntled staff person to draw the team into a disagreement on the relative merits of specific approaches to certain problems/ situations. As field representatives for CACREP, team members should check each other on this problem and make it clear to the program staff that they can take no position on such issues as faculty loads, class sizes, etc., but will objectively report their findings to the CACREP Board of Directors.

The Reluctant Jurist

As in all group work, the visiting team members will each formulate their own opinions regarding program strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations. These opinions may differ slightly or dramatically; however, it is the responsibility of each team member to remember that a single group report will be submitted to the CACREP office. A consensus needs to be reached, which may mean concessions on the part of an individual team member. Try to work together, not against one another.

The Politically Incorrect Team Member

Simply stated, politically incorrect humor is not appropriate in this setting. Please remember that you are ambassadors of CACREP and your behavior is a reflection of the CACREP Board of Directors. On rare occasions, CACREP has learned of uncomfortable situations that were regrettable. Please be cognizant of this concern.

The Big Mouth

The CACREP accreditation process requires that team members keep their visit confidential. When the CACREP office receives phone calls from individuals inquiring about the accreditation of a school which CACREP knows is in the application stage, we

do not disclose any information whatsoever - including any acknowledgment that they are in process. We ask that you maintain this same confidentiality about the knowledge that you glean from your experience as a team member. Information about a program's accreditation is not made public until 30 days after the institution's CEO has been informed of the decision. Even at that time, you are not at liberty to disclose information that you learned as a result of being a member of the on-site team.

The Late Arriver/Early Departer

A late arrival or an early departure puts pressure on the remaining members to cover that member's duties and may also prevent that individual from participating in the report preparation. Certainly unexpected events occur which may affect the team members assignments. Whenever possible, please communicate your scheduling needs to your team chair so early intervention can prevent problems in completing the team's task.

PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE PROGRAM(S):

The Excessively Dominant Chair

As might be expected, Department Chairs have invested heavily in the accreditation process. When visiting with groups of faculty members, currently enrolled students, program graduates, etc., the Department Chair(s) should be advised, in advance, when their presence is or is not welcome. Advance warning can usually be done more tactfully than having to ask the Chair to leave a room full of participants. As a courtesy, the team may want to plan brief meetings with the Chair at the end of each day for informational purposes and to reconfirm the next day's agenda.

The Disgruntled Faculty Member

During faculty interviews, rifts among the faculty may become evident. It is important, however, not to draw conclusions from one interview. Instead, wait to formulate opinions with the other team members once the faculty interviews have been completed. Be aware that unhappy faculty may use the interviews to vent their anger and frustrations. Take it in stride. During the exit interview, you may find that the Chair is unaware of these problems.

The Surprised Chair

As mentioned above, evidence of faculty rifts may surprise the Chair. Interfaculty relationships are complicated processes and must be handled delicately. Remember to present the evidence in a manner that appropriately protects individual identities. In addition, the Chair may have spent so much time in preparing the Self-Study Report, that other problems may have gone unnoticed as well.

The Directive Dean

Deans will have a different, more global, perspective on program functioning when compared to the perspectives of the faculty involved in the intricacies of day to day functions. Remember, however, that the report submitted by the visiting team should not recommend department changes requested or prompted by individuals unless the

team objectively concurs that the recommendations are based upon the accreditation standards being used as the evaluative criteria during the visit.

The Amended Self-Study

The CACREP office often requires applicants to provide additional information in the form of an Addendum prior to approving the programs for an on-site visit. Team members should receive all materials, including the addenda, prior to the on-site visit. The CACREP office informs the Department Chair/Liaison of this requirement when providing them with the on-site team members' names and addresses. However, it is a good practice for the Visiting Team Chair to reiterate this requirement.

The Uninformed Site Host

Typical on-site visits include tours of commonly used practicum and internship settings. Team members should plan on discussing the roles and responsibilities of the students obtaining practical experience at the site, in addition to observing the facilities. Also, site hosts and/or site supervisors should be able to provide information in the following areas:

- 1) types of clients served;
- 2) how and if supervision is performed; and
- 3) what benefits they or the faculty receive by providing this valuable service to the program.

In order to avoid the problem of the "uninformed site host," please coordinate, in advance, with the program leader(s) to have site hosts informed of the purpose of the visit. The site host should be aware of the general nature of the accreditation process and why the visitors are coming.

The Coached Student

If you suspect that students have been coached to describe all of the wonderful things about their program, perhaps you might ask them the basis of their opinions. In addition, it is perfectly appropriate to ask them directly what they would change or what problems they perceive. However, please remember that students also take pride in their school and department, and that a certain amount of positivism should be expected. Also, the Department is not going to arrange for the team to meet with students who are obviously disgruntled with the program. This is simply common sense.

The Dissatisfied Graduate

Much like the "Disgruntled Faculty Member," the graduate who has been unable to find a job in the field or who was not admitted into the doctoral program, may use the team as an outlet for emotions. Try to ascertain the basis for the dissatisfaction and steer the feelings to concrete, programmatic evidence. When working with a group of graduates, it is important to allow everyone a chance to provide impressions. Hence, the dissatisfied student(s) may need to be interrupted. As with all group interactions, the team will need to use some leadership skills to obtain the necessary information.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interviewing the various faculty, staff, students, supervisors and administrators becomes similar to playing a stimulating game of "21 questions." All the facilitating skills you use and teach will come to the forefront during the interviews.

The realm of questions which could possibly be posed is endless. Sample questions are outlined below, but other questions can and should be developed to obtain answers specific to team concerns for each individual program area. As well, the team will have an opportunity to review the initial review letter sent to the CACREP liaison by the executive director and will gain some insight into specific areas that the team has been asked to address. These questions should be discussed and delegated during the team planning time.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR FACULTY:

1. Describe your department's method for conducting practica (or internships) including one-to-one supervision, site selection, on-site supervision, and the classroom component.
2. How do you feel about the institution's support of the department? Please explain your answer.
3. What process does the department utilize for curriculum changes, program evaluation and/or development?
4. What do you believe are the major assets of your training program? Major weaknesses?
5. How does your department assess teaching effectiveness?
6. Explain your department's relationship with the library and/or the computing center.
7. How does your department's acquisition of resource materials compare with other departments?
8. Explain how information processing resources are integrated into the department in order to accomplish its goals and objectives.
9. How does the computer network system on campus effect your overall performance?
10. How would you describe your familiarity with the campus/departmental information processing resources?

11. For adjunct faculty: What opportunities do you have to participate in faculty in-service/professional development? How do you feel about your relationship with the full-time faculty?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS:

1. What do you believe are the major strengths and weaknesses of each of the Counselor Education programs?
2. How do the department's resources compare with other departments? Please explain your answer relative to staff size, budget, facilities, graduate assistants, and information processing resources.
3. Standard I.F. states that "The institution provides encouragement and support for program faculty to participate in professional organizations and activities (e.g. professional travel, research, offices held). How does your institution meet this Standard?
4. What are the institution's contributions to the department's faculty and students regarding statistical consultation, computer assistance, and funds for data analyses?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:

Note: It has been suggested that the team may request the opportunity to visit a class to conduct the student group interview.

1. Was the process of admissions into the program clearly explained in the institution's catalog and program brochures? Explain.
2. Explain the department's process in disseminating materials regarding the program's objectives, courses, etc. Were the materials clearly stated?
3. Explain whether you feel you receive adequate evaluation regarding your development of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the counseling profession.
4. Please describe some of the curricular experiences you have had in the program which have enhanced your personal development.
5. Explain how access to the library, computer equipment, and counseling facilities affects your overall performance in the program.
6. What are your perceptions regarding the helpfulness in obtaining information from departmental faculty, staff, library assistants, computer center personnel, etc.?

7. Please describe your understanding of the program's retention policy and the advising process.

SAMPLE QUESTION FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS:

1. Please describe how the curricular experiences you have had at the Doctoral level have increased your knowledge and skills in academic and clinical instruction, clinical supervision, leadership, research, program evaluation and consultation.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR PROGRAM GRADUATES:

1. Now that you are employed as a counselor, what do you think were the major strengths and weaknesses of the program?
2. Explain how the program's ongoing evaluation of your academic performance, professional development, and personal development provided insight into how you would perform in your chosen field?
3. Explain what resources/support the institution provided you in your job hunt. Were they satisfactory?
4. In what ways did the entry level program provide you with adequate curricular experiences in the core areas?
5. Explain how advisement and curricular experiences during your doctoral program helped in the completion of your dissertation.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICUM/INTERNSHIP SUPERVISORS:

1. What is your evaluation of the students' preparation for the practicum/internship? What strengths do you see? Weaknesses?
2. Describe the communication that occurs between you and the program prior to the start of the practicum/internship.... during?..... and/or near the end of the clinical experience?
3. What preparation have you received from the program in order to host and supervise an intern or practicum student?
4. When vacancies have occurred in your organization, has your counseling center/school hired graduates of this program? If no, why not?
5. Describe the program's expectations for the student's activities during the practicum/internship.
6. Please indicate the number of hours of direct client service you require during the practicum internship.

7. How often do you meet with the practicum/internship student on a one-to-one supervisory basis?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR LIBRARY, COMPUTER CENTER STAFF:

1. How does library usage by the Counseling Department faculty and students compare with other department? Explain how you derived this conclusion.
2. Explain the computer network(s) on this campus. How do the computer systems match in the library and the departments?
3. How does the informational resource budget for the Counseling programs compare with other departments? How does the department utilize this money?
4. How many and which acquisition committees do Counseling program faculty serve on?
5. Explain the library's policies regarding accessing off-campus information.

THE EXIT PRESENTATION

The first two days of any on-site visit have been spent reviewing data, visiting clinical sites, and interviewing students, faculty and other administrative staff. During this time, the team has become involved with the program and its faculty, staff and students. Much information has been obtained and emotional energy has been expended. The exit presentation serves as a debriefing time to present the team's impressions, recommendations, and potential requirements with the program leader(s) and other administrative personnel. Deans and sometimes CEOs wish to be involved in this process as well. Offer the option of inviting the president, vice-president, and provost. This may help the program avoid dealing with a surprised administrator's reaction when the team report arrives. It may also give the program added credibility when it requests funds, faculty, staff, etc. Lastly, their inclusion in the exit presentation may give the institutional group an opportunity to discuss the visit immediately after the exit presentation.

This time frame is for a summary presentation, not interviewing, as all the team's questions should have been asked prior to this time.

The key to the exit presentation is style; therefore, team members need to confer with each other and plan for this important meeting. The Team Chair serves as the spokesperson throughout the meeting. The meeting does not need to be lengthy - 30 minutes may be plenty of time to present the information.

If the team has found a considerable number of "NOT MET"s during their visit, or some very significant "NOT MET"s, but is uncomfortable as to what to say in the exit presentation, it is advisable to contact the CACREP office for advice. When the Board reviews all of the materials in rendering their accreditation decision, they consider the reasonableness of the program being able to meet the "NOT MET"s within a two year period. A final denial decision should never come as a complete surprise to the institution.

It is generally recommended that the team depart the university following the exit presentation. The university personnel may wish to pump and probe a little before you leave their campus, and if your departure is swift, you can avoid this situation. If the team report has not been completed prior to the presentation, it is strongly advised that before the exit presentation, the team discuss the specifics regarding completion, mailing/faxing of the final copies to each team member for review and/or additional changes, and for the final signatures.

REMEMBER, the CACREP office should receive an original copy of the team report within two (2) weeks after the completion of the on-site visit.

TIPS TO REMEMBER FOR THE EXIT PRESENTATION

1. Preparatory statements indicating which programs were reviewed and how the information will be presented both in the exit presentation and in the team's report to the CACREP Board of Directors would be helpful information and set the tone for the final review.
2. Preface your comments with a statement indicating that this is not a discussion session, but rather an oral preview of the team's written report to CACREP.
3. The program(s) should be apprised of the team's view of both strengths and weaknesses. These comments should be stated clearly, concisely, and with reference to specific standards.
4. Comments should focus on the components of the program(s) in general. Be certain to present these statements in a manner which distinguishes the program from the faculty or staff member(s) who may be directly involved with implementing aspects of the program.
5. Be honest about the problems you perceive. If the team believes that it cannot recommend accreditation, they may inform the program that they have strong reservations based on the weaknesses that they have found. When the institution receives the on-site team report, depending on how they feel they can address concerns in it, the program can be withdrawn from any further review. CACREP policy states that the "application for accreditation can be withdrawn by an institution any time prior to a decision of the Board."
6. If a program requests "in your best judgment" a prediction for the Board's decisions, **DO NOT** get trapped. Simply inform those present that you cannot anticipate the Board's actions
7. Remember, when you return home from your on-site visit, your knowledge about the programs gained from this experience must remain confidential at all times before and after the accreditation decision is made.