

IPCA SELF STUDY modified 6/12/16

The IPCA has designed a self-study process to allow program administrators to evaluate the compliance of an academic program, in the Applied Social Sciences/Professional Studies to standards set by professional associations, academicians specializing in the discipline and industry leaders with expertise in the application of learning. This self-study relies on integrity of the submission of documentation completed by an institutional administrator and sent to a IPCA or IPCA Member Society for evaluation. The process requires the person reporting to check off compliance to conditions being met as are described in statements and verify through documentation the existence of educational practices or conditions of the program.

IPCA has elected to implement a certification process which is inclusive by design in that a program need not meet each standard in its entirety to achieve a positive outcome. We strive to help programs strengthen their academic offerings by helping them to come to know what might be expected to achieve academic excellence. These programs may utilize this awareness to improve its content voluntarily so as to achieve a higher level of compliance.

Frequently program certification sets up an adversarial situation by demanding total compliance with conditions or provisions indicated, which if met fully, represent best practices in the field. An otherwise excellent program may be rejected for failing to comply to a specific expectation. We have areas in which the standard must be met to be certified but in most areas we ask that certified programs progress to address deficiencies but do not withhold certification.

Our self-study package requires compliance to 25 standards and substantial compliance (70% or more) with desired criteria (75 STANDARDS) relating to the five categories of expected educational conditions and or outcomes. The criteria may be objective (and demonstrated by a simple proof of existence document) or subjective (which could be demonstrated by various more demanding instruments, typically surveys of students, faculty and administrators using a formula set by IPCA). These practices represent that which we consider to be best practices in higher education. Conditions and outcomes contained in the evaluation documentation process come from the concurrence of thought across multiple disciplines and following these would demonstrate a commitment to the highest quality of instruction and support in any educational institution.

The applying institution designates an administrator to complete the self-study check off document. Not checking a condition as currently being met by the program shows administrators and others, areas to be improved. The administrator must then gather documentation which demonstrates that the standard has been met. In order to be certified, the IPCA Assessment of Academic Programs Process allows a program to be awarded certification with substantial compliance to certain standards but the most critical areas must be shown to exist by full disclosure and proof. IPCA offers a program narrative which is published with the award of certification. The narrative points out both strengths and weaknesses of the program and may be informative to institutional administrators, perspective students and employers. The narrative is published by IPCA and remains on the web site until a new certification is undertaken. If, after publication, conflicting information relating to an award of certification is received by IPCA an investigation could result.

The major areas of assessment are relevant to programs be they certificate, two-year, four- year or graduate level. The five areas of consideration are:

- A. Criteria related to institution and program structure.
- B. Criteria related to curriculum development and implementation.
- C. Criteria related to faculty and staffing.
- D. Criteria related to student support.
- E. Criteria related to program growth and professional commitment.

Justification for assessment

Academic programs are not all alike and not all equal in value or useful for those who might be considering enrolment or who might be making an employment decision based on presentation of transcripts from academic institutions. The IPCA, as previously stated, has created a model for self-assessment for institutions having academic programs in the Applied Social Sciences or Professional Studies.

IPCA following a modified ABET Model for accrediting Applied Sciences will certify and later accredit academic programs that meet general criteria discussed below.

This mechanism specific for security related programs works in conjunction with set minimal standards of member societies adopted for judging the quality and utility of a specific higher educational program based on both total compliance in critical areas and 70% compliance with best practices in areas deemed less critical but must be addressed to be recertified. These member societies\professional associations have been chosen to represent the field of study and have a membership of leading academicians and practitioners throughout the nation. These standards represent what are considered, by peers, to be best practices in the discipline.

An institution or program will request from IPCA or member society an evaluation document package to be completed by a program administrator. The administrator will check off criteria present and present to IPCA proof of the standard as having been met. After submission, the IPCA will pass on the material to an approved reviewer or reviewers. The reviewer or reviewers evaluate submissions, write a program narrative and make recommendations to IPCA to make the award and publish the results on our website. We will furnish documentation to interested third parties regarding evaluations in order to help these persons to make decisions regarding the validity of a specific program in higher education.

Requests for evaluation are submitted by the academic program on a voluntary basis to the professional association or IPCA. To be included in this process a program must be housed at an institution of higher education which has institutional accreditation from a regional accreditation form a regional accrediting body, the USDE or CHIA.

Results of the IPCA Certification Process are dependent upon the truth and accuracy of data submitted by the institution. We recognize that it is possible that for an institution to be less than truthful in its assertions regarding the integrity of its program and that is why we require complete documentation demonstrating that the standard has been met at the time of evaluation. We trust that peer review process and subsequent publication of statements made will be available on line, in print and subject to be re-examined if deemed necessary by the IPCA board. This is a voluntary certification process designed for information to be disseminated to perspective students, employers and institutions of higher learning in order for them to make informed decisions relating to validity of credentials. IPCA provides a service by which programs may examine both their strength and weakness. We offer these programs an opportunity to demonstrate the validity of assertions by furnishing evidence in the form of documentation of assertions.

In order for the IPCA to distinguish between programs submitting documentation based on an online self-study rather than costly site visits and extensive interviews with administrators and faculty, we have incorporated a two tier certification process which either certifies or grants provisional certification. We hope that you will find it both informative and necessary to better understand the complexities of judging the quality of programs throughout the spectrum.

To be certified a program must demonstrate full compliance with 20 criteria and substantially compliant with the standards. Programs that have a 90 % compliance may be rated with a +.

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PROGRAM FEES suggestion

A \$100.00 administrative fee shall be charged to the institution requesting self-study materials. At the time of submission of self-study for review, a documentation submission fee will be charged \$400.00. (The breakdown of this charge is as follows: \$200.00 IPCA, \$200.00 to the Professional Association member society in the area of study). Additionally, institutions must pay academic review fees for peer reviewers.

The cost of review is \$100.00 for self-study materials and administrative fee. \$400.00 submission fee where no documentation is offered other than the self-study check list. The submission will be checked for completeness and consistency by academics who have been designated as reviewers. These persons will be paid \$250.00 for the review and program narrative which will be published on the IPCA web site with the award.

In cases of partial documentation, \$500 additionally shall be paid to the program reviewer chosen by the member society that is charged with the establishment of standards of the field. Where full documentation is offered, \$1000.00 will go to the academic reviewer. This fee is based on two – three work days spent on the review. In cases where unusually extensive documentation is submitted, a fee of \$250.00 per additional required reviewer per day will be assessed. The professional association will designate reviewers subject to approval by IPCA.

The typical total cost to an institution will be:

- a. for self-study only: \$400.00 submission fee in addition to initial \$100.00 for self-study package and \$250.00 for peer reviewer total \$750.00
- b.

- c. for partial documentation submitted: \$500.00 in addition to the above. Total \$1250.00
- d. for full documentation submitted: \$1750 (\$2000+ in exceptional cases where extensive documentation is evidenced)

An evaluation narrative and breakdown of the compliance information shall be made available to interested parties by applying to IPCA and submitting a minimal administrative fee \$20.00.

A program shall be certified for a 5yr period. A program may be re-evaluated only if they send new documentation, submit to the full review and pursue membership in IPCA and the professional association in their area. The recertification will require an 80% compliance with non-critical areas and any subsequent recertification shall require a 90% compliance.

IPCA presents this service as an initial attempt to improve the academic programs in the Applied Social Sciences\ Professional Studies. We see the advancement of the field will be well served but this effort is not sufficient in the long run. We propose moving to accreditation by a recognized accreditation body and are exploring that avenue by creating a model acceptable to ABET.

For each of the five categories you will find twenty indicators of excellence or best practices. You will, after careful consideration and deliberate process, make a check to verify that you, as an administrator of an accredited institution of higher learning, attest that the practice is being met in the program submitting application for certification. Some of the requirements will be mandatory compliance and are designated by a *. The remaining standards require a 70% initial compliance and remember documentation must be furnished for all categories/

Category A INSTITUTION AND PROGRAM

___ 1. The institution has a Mission and History statement supported by documentation which is available in print and or online.

___ 2. The institution has indicated its accreditation status in print and online. This accreditation is through a regionally accreditation body, the US Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

___ 3. The programs stated mission and set of purposes is derived from and consistent with the overall mission and purposes of the institution of higher education.

___ 4. The program clearly specifies and publishes program goals, objectives (both program specific and student learning), and requirements.

_*__ 5. Requirements for the program are based upon clearly defined and articulated learning objectives, including a mastery of the knowledge, methods of inquiry, and intellectual skills pertinent to the study of the causes, consequences, and responses to circumstance relative to the field of study and its interrelatedness to other areas of inquiry.

*___ 6. The program design is characterized by sufficient content, breadth, depth, coherence, and rigor appropriate to its higher education level. Individual courses and programs are dynamic and responsive to new developments in the field and modes of inquiry. This may be indicated by comparing the program to other programs preferably those previously certified or from accredited institutions.

*___ 7. The program and courses offered by non-traditional modalities (internet, television, video-conferencing, or other means) or through different divisions of the institution (e.g., day division, evening division, continuing education division) demonstrate that students completing these programs or courses acquire levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies comparable to those expected in similar programs offered in more traditional time periods and modalities.

___ 8. The institution specifies and publishes requirements for admission into, continuation in, termination from, or re-admission to its applied social science program(s), which are compatible with its educational purposes. Graduation requirements are clearly stated in appropriate publications and are consistently applied in the process for awarding degrees. Degrees awarded accurately reflect student attainments.

___ 9. No credit toward graduation is awarded for pre-collegiate level or remedial work designed to prepare the student for collegiate study.

___10. Only credit from institutions that are accredited by their regional higher education accrediting body, the USDOE or CHIA is accepted for transfer into an undergraduate program. No academic credit is awarded by the program for life experience or for military, police academy, or other professional training except where specific IPCA approved academic/training partnerships exist such as in the case of professional certification which are offered in conjunction with a degree program at an accredited institution of higher learning and as such have an assigned transcript award.

___11. The institution enters into articulation and joint admission agreements whenever possible to clarify curricular issues and academic expectations for both parties. These agreements reflect discussion of how best to advise and prepare students at two-year schools who are considering four-year degrees.

___12. No more than 10 percent of the major credits are completed through knowledge-based examinations (e.g., CLEP). All credit earned through examination is clearly documented on the student's official transcript by specific course designations and numbers, including the source of the credit. Awarding blanket credit for courses in a "block" is not allowed (e.g., "12 credit hour award for security studies or computer engineering").

*___13. The program integrates professional certifications for credit when such certifications are IPCA certified and a credit recommendation has been made by IPCA and the member society in the field.

___14. The program and institution make available enrollment reports, retention reports, policy for non-academic credit and the transfer policy.

*___15. The program has readily available valid documentation for any statements and promises made regarding such matters as program excellence, learning outcomes, success in placement, and achievements of graduates or faculty.

___16. The institution provides for all students, faculty and staff to have access to library and information resources, collections and services that are sufficient in quality level, diversity, quantity, and currency to support and enrich the program's offerings and is in compliance with the standards of that region's institutional accrediting body (e.g., Middle States Association).

*___17. The program's resources comply with the standards of that region's institutional accrediting body (e.g., Middle States Association), the USDOE or CHIA.

___ 18. The institution supports faculty development by making available funding for attendance of conferences in the area of appointment and participation in governance of professional associations in those areas of appointment and the institution supports professional development by having institutional membership in professional associations.

*___ 19. The institution requires program review, program assessment and program certification and or accreditation for academic departments when available for that area of study.

*___ 20. The institution demonstrates support of professionalism and works with business and industry to assure that academic programs will be current in the area of study.

* ___ 1. Courses, both upper and lower division incorporate critical thinking and scientific methodology both quantitative and qualitative and follow guidelines established by an IPCA member society designated as representing the field.

_ * ___ 2. A capstone experience is provided for each program

___ 3. Programs reflect consideration of core competencies which may be required for success in the program and in professional life after graduation.

* ___ 4. Student learning objectives are integral to course adoption and sequencing. These objectives are measured and success rates are made available to those interested.

___ 5. The methods of evaluation of student performance are appropriate and consistent with established institutional and academic standards and are comparable to other programs throughout the institution.

* ___ 6. The program demonstrates that the content areas addressed in the standards created by the member society charged with developing curriculum standards are substantively addressed in the curriculum. Individual courses may address multiple content areas.

___ 7. The program provides evidence that students are taught to employ ethical perspectives and judgments in applying this knowledge to related problems relating to a diverse and changing world.

___ 8. The Programs has elective internship opportunities available to upper-level students. Measures are taken to ensure that internships are integrated into the academic component of the program and related to educational objectives.

___ 9. The purpose of the program is to educate students to be critical thinkers who can communicate their thoughts effectively in oral and written form as well as to prepare the student to enter the work force as a knowledgeable and productive member of society

___ 10. The program seeks to familiarize students with facts and concepts and teach students to apply this knowledge to related problems and changing situations through the development of critical thinking; the scientific method, communication, technology, and computing skills; quantitative and qualitative reasoning; ethical decision-making; and an understanding of diversity.

___ 11. The programs in applied social science are part of a broadly based degree program following guidelines established by an IPCA member society with a balance of general education, required and elective courses in applied social science and in related fields (cognates). Electives, wherever possible, relate to stated program goals and objectives, including those for concentrations and options.

___ 12. There are expected learning outcomes for each course as well as for the program sequence and they are made available to students, faculty and staff.

*___ 13. The program maintains evidence demonstrating that that students' mastery of the program's stated learning objectives and outcomes are formally and systematically assessed prior to completion of the program with scientific methods and measures utilized

___ 15. The institution makes available a statement regarding method used to ensure programs and courses are dynamic and responsive to new developments in the field and new modes of inquiry as well as ethical and non-discriminatory.

___ 16. Course syllabi and copies of final exams for each course are maintained and available for review.

___ 17. Evidence is made available regarding a comprehensive evaluation or capstone experience.

*___ 18. There is Evidence, that students taught through non-traditional methods such as distance learning modalities, or through different divisions of the institution acquire levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies comparable to those expected in similar programs offered in more traditional time periods and modalities.

___ 19. The program makes available a statement of methods used to evaluate student performance and that methods of evaluating student performance are comparable to other programs throughout the institution and that the methods are appropriate and consistent with institutional and academic standards.

___ 20. There is evidence that graduates are critical thinkers with effective oral and written communication skills that graduates are familiar with facts and concepts relative to the scientific understanding of Applied Social Science and can apply the knowledge to problems and changing situations.

Section C FACULTY AND STAFFING

___ 1. Faculty holding terminal academic degrees from an accredited institution in a discipline directly related to an Applied Social Science\Professional Studies program are preferred and actively sought when hiring.

___ 2. The Institution does not typically (under 20%) rely on faculty who are graduates of their own programs.

___ 3. The institution is committed to academic freedom and encourages free speech (which does not include add homonym attacks or in support of positions which are deemed unlawful) for all faculty, staff and students.

___ 4. The program has faculty members direct the search process for new program faculty members.

* ___ 5. All faculty in the program possess a minimum of a master's degree in the area or a closely related discipline. When a faculty member holds a graduate degree in a closely related discipline, there should be evidence of experience, scholarship, and professional involvement, demonstrating a clear commitment to and identification with the field of appointment.

___ 6. The program strives to have faculty members with terminal academic degrees (Ph.D., Ed. D). Degrees must be earned and be from programs accredited regionally, by the U.S. Department of Ed. or CHIA. A Law degree or medical degree is (J.D. or MD) is not a terminal academic degree. IPCA, following the NEACJS standard, accepts a combination of a J.D. and a graduate degree in an Applied Social Science as the equivalent of a terminal degree.

___ 7. When there are four or more faculty members in an associate degree program, twenty-five percent of the faculty should hold an earned doctorate in the discipline or a closely related discipline. A four-year program must have 75% of its full time and part time faculty with a terminal academic degree from an accredited institution.

___ 8. The program administrator or department chair must hold an academic terminal degree from an accredited institution other than from the institution in question.

___9. A program's faculty FTE to student ratio must comply with the standards of that region's institutional accrediting body (e.g. Middle States Association).

___10. The institutional policy must state that faculty assignments and workloads allow adequate time to provide effective instruction, to advise and evaluate students, to continue professional growth, and to participate in scholarship, research, and service compatible with the mission and purposes of the institution and program. This allows for a teaching load if no more than 12 credit hours per semester for 4 year programs and 15 hours per semester for two year programs. Those faculty acting in an executive position in a professional association must be released from at least 1 course per academic semester.

___11. Faculty categories (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) are clearly defined, as to specify the role of each category in fulfilling both the program's and the institution's mission and purposes. Orientation, oversight, evaluation, and professional development opportunities are provided for all faculty, including part time and adjunct faculty.

___12. Senior faculty are encouraged to teach independent study, mentor students and or junior faculty and to offer independent study for students holding advance standing.

___13. Faculty members are demonstrably effective in carrying out their assigned responsibilities. The institution employs effective and transparent procedures for the regular evaluation of faculty appointments, performance, and retention. Tenure and promotion are based solely upon these criteria.

*___14. Programs rely on full-time faculty or retired formerly full time faculty to teach three quarters of core-courses and to deliver at least two-thirds of the teaching in the program. This standard may be met by using senior adjunct faculty or visiting faculty who are full time at any another accredited college or university who possess terminal academic degrees and have demonstrated expertise in the area of instruction.

___15. The institution makes available a table of all faculty currently teaching in the program by full- and part-time status along with a curriculum vitae for each. Indicate the level of course offering, state if the course is required or an elective, the course number, and the name of courses taught by semester or quarter for the past two years.

___16. There exists indication that the teaching load, the number of FTE students and majors complies with the standards of that region's institutional accrediting body (e.g., Middle States Association) or the standard set by the professional association which speaks for the field in the certification process; provide the standards and formula.

___17. The institution makes available documents relating to funds spent on professional development and on faculty orientation.

___18. The institution and program makes available evidence of faculty effectiveness by showing samples of performance evaluation forms and releases results by category of employment (full time, part time or adjunct).

___ 19. The program makes available a list of faculty awards, recognitions, presentations and memberships in professional associations etc.

___ 20. There is Faculty handbook containing an institutional policy on hiring of faculty and the rights of faculty to free speech.

D. STUDENT SERVICES

*___1. The program provides an environment that fosters the intellectual and personal development of its students, consistent with its mission and purposes.

Facilities Classrooms, offices, laboratories, and associated equipment must be adequate to support attainment of the student outcomes and to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. Modern tools, equipment, computing resources, and laboratories appropriate to the program must be available, accessible, and systematically maintained and upgraded to enable students to attain the student outcomes and to support program needs. Students must be provided appropriate guidance regarding the use of the tools, equipment, computing resources, and laboratories available to the program.

___2. All students in the program have access to appropriate and effective orientation, academic advisement, career development, and placement counseling.

___3. The institution systematically identifies the characteristics and learning needs of its student population and makes provision for responding to them by offering academic tutoring in the applied science major area.

___4. The institution offers mentoring opportunities for students.

___5. The institution offers academic support services and prepares and distributes a student handbook which clearly indicates the level of support offered. This support level is in keeping with standards of the regional accrediting bodies and complies with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

___6. The institution makes available IT support for all students.

*___7. The institution provides evidence of methods to assess student learning needs and provision for responding to them.

___8. The institution provides financial aid counseling to students.

___9. The institution provides an opportunity for student internships.

___10. The code of ethics published by the institution contains a statement supporting non-discrimination.

___11. The program encourages free speech by students and faculty and an effort is made to present a balanced view point of topics considered.

___12. The institution encourages professional certification of students in order to support job prospects upon graduation.

___13. The institution is committed to student retention and makes available documentation of retention rates grouped by demographics.

___14. The institution supports student participation and membership in professional associations and conferences.

___15. The program supports student presentations at academic conferences sponsored by professional associations or societies.

*___16. The program encourages student learning and professional preparation by encouraging the completion of professional certifications offered by professional societies or associations in the field of studies.

___ 17. The institution supports membership in honor societies affiliated with programs in the applied social sciences.

___ 18. The program encourages student internships in the area of student study.

___ 19. The institution offers students an opportunity for work study such as graduate teaching assistantships to those qualified in terms of education, experience, and training in the field. Typically teaching assistants teach only lower-level undergraduate courses. Where graduate teaching assistants are employed, the program carefully selects, trains, supervises and evaluates them.

___ 20. The institution offers scholarships in the applied social sciences.

E Program Growth and Professional Development check list

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*___1. The program undergoes systematic evaluation of all program components and uses the results section for program improvement.

_*_2. The program demonstrates that its graduates have acquired the knowledge and developed the skills that are identified as the program's objectives and the desired student learning outcomes.

_*_3. The institution periodically reviews the program under established, clearly defined institutional policies and uses the results to improve student learning and

program effectiveness. The review includes requirements from IPCA and a professional association member society.

___4. The institution requires a written program assessment plan.

*___5. The institution makes available evidence which indication where program objectives are taught in curriculum, how learning outcomes are measured prior to graduation, and the results of such assessment.

___6. The institution or program makes available evidence demonstrating that the program is achieving its mission, goals, objectives and outcomes (both student and administrative).

___7. The institution or program makes available results of program evaluation including graduate satisfaction with program, employer satisfaction with graduates; retention and graduation rates; placement rates and levels of employment.

___8. The institution or program makes available analysis of student evaluations of teaching.

___9. The institution or program makes available evidence that students completing courses in non-traditional time periods and modalities, in different divisions, and at satellite or branch campuses acquire levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies comparable to those expected in similar programs offered in more traditional time periods, modalities and locations.

___10. Reports are available from institution's program reviews, indicating cycle of reviews, findings, and related program improvements due to the review process.

___11. The program demonstrates a commitment to excellence by having institutional membership in a professional association in the field.

___12. The program demonstrates a commitment to excellence as indicated by having institutional membership in IPCA.

*___13. The majority of the faculty maintain membership in national or international professional associations.

___14. The majority of faculty maintain membership in state or regional professional associations.

___15. The majority of the faculty attends meetings of national or international professional associations.

___16. The majority of faculty attends meetings of state or regional professional associations.

___17. The majority of the faculty present papers or actively participate in national or international professional associations.

___18. The majority of faculty present papers or actively participate in state or regional professional associations.

___*_19. The program has an external advisory board made up of persons outside the world of academia but who are closely associated with the professional world in the field of study such as business and industry.

___20. The program integrates professional certifications for credit only when such certifications are IPCA certified.