

I.10 Candidacy status and Initial accreditation of an additional program

A school with a program that is already accredited by the ALA and that is seeking Initial accreditation of an additional master's program must file an application for Candidacy status at least two (2) years before the date of the anticipated comprehensive review. The review of the candidate program may occur at the same time as the regularly scheduled comprehensive review of the currently accredited program (in-cycle) or at a different time (off-cycle) upon request of the school. Each candidate program must be reviewed by a separate External Review Panel and undergo an on-site comprehensive review even if the reviews are scheduled concurrently with another accredited program. The school is responsible for the fees and expenses for each of the additional programs being accredited.

Indications that a course of study is a separate program from the accredited program and should be brought forward for Candidacy status include:

- Different criteria and processes for assessing student learning outcomes;
- Different distinct criteria and/or procedural pathways for students through admissions, enrollment, advising, commencement;
- More than one degree title for the accredited program on transcripts, diplomas, bulletins, schedules, website, etc.;
- Different limitations placed on transfer of credits in or between plans of study;
- Different faculty assignments and loads;
- Different criteria applied to faculty evaluation;
- Different campuses with little to no student or faculty overlap;
- Different administrative staff;
- Different chief administrators.

Resources for programs seeking Initial accreditation can be found on the Office for Accreditation website.

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I.10.1 Requirements for Candidacy status for an additional program

An application for Candidacy status of an additional program must be submitted to the Chair of the COA in care of the Office for Accreditation. The Candidacy application must include:

- A letter from the chief executive officer (CEO) of the institution requesting Candidacy status for the additional program. The letter must also contain a statement that the institution understands that Candidacy status in no manner guarantees or implies that the program will be accredited or that accreditation is automatic at the end of the Candidacy period. A letter template is available on the Office for Accreditation website.
- A letter from the dean of the school in which the program is located and, if applicable, the head of the program (director or chair), the chief academic officer, and the chief executive of the institution requesting Candidacy status for the additional program. The letter must also contain a statement that the institution and the program and/or school understand that Candidacy status in no manner guarantees or implies that the program will be accredited or that accreditation is automatic at the end of the

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Candidacy period. A letter template is available on the Office for Accreditation website.

If the comprehensive review of the additional program does not occur at the same time as a previously scheduled review (i.e., off-cycle), the application must also include a report describing how the additional program meets each element of the standards and a projected budget for the Candidacy period.

I.10.2 Review by the COA

The COA reviews the application for Candidacy status at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Committee takes one of the following actions: 1) to grant Candidacy status or 2) to deny Candidacy status. A decision to deny Candidacy status to a program is not appealable.

I.10.3 Length of Candidacy status

A program may remain in Candidacy status for two years. A one-year extension before the comprehensive review is possible pending the approval of the COA. Following the comprehensive review, the COA may vote to retain a program's Candidacy status and schedule another comprehensive review.

The OA Director is available to advise on the ALA accreditation process and on the development of reports that are to be submitted to the COA.

Candidate programs are not listed in the directory of ALA-accredited programs. Use of the ALA Accreditation logo is not permitted.

As a public protection, including for prospective students, program and school communications must indicate that the additional program has Candidacy status and must include this statement:

The [degree name] program at [Name of school and institution] has been granted Candidacy status by the Committee on Accreditation of the American Library Association. Candidacy status is an indication that [name of school and program] has voluntarily committed to participate in the ALA accreditation process and is actively seeking accreditation for an additional program. Candidacy does not indicate that the additional program is accredited nor does it guarantee eventual accreditation of the additional program by ALA.

I.10.4 Reporting to the COA

An annual statistical report and a narrative progress report is due by December 1. The progress report should detail results of efforts underway in reaching programmatic objectives in relation to the *Standards*.

The COA reviews these reports and sends a response to the dean and the chief academic officer (CAO) of the institution. This response is not an indication or checklist of steps that must be taken to achieve accreditation; rather, it is the COA's response to the efforts to obtain accreditation.

If, on review of the annual reports, the COA determines that the program is not yet ready to undergo a comprehensive review, it may grant a one-year extension of Candidacy status.

Instructions regarding the format and content of annual progress reports can be found on the Office for Accreditation website.

I.10.5 Fees

No application fee is required if the additional program is reviewed at the same time as the currently accredited program.

If the comprehensive review of the additional program occurs off-cycle, a nonrefundable application fee is required (see section I.23.1 for the current fee schedule). The program is responsible for all expenses related to the comprehensive review and the comprehensive review fee. If the OA Director or other Office staff member is invited to visit the institution, the institution will be billed for travel-related expenses.