



Accreditation without Agony

AVMA CVTEA Staff

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If you were to have a site visit next week, how would you describe your program's level of preparedness?

- 😊 We are always prepared.
- 😬 We are generally on track.
- 😬 We could scramble and be ready last minute.
- 😬 We're a hot mess.

What is your program's greatest accreditation challenge?

- Documentation for self-study and site visit
- Collecting and analyzing assessment data
- Finding time for accreditation activities
- Understanding the Standards
- Engaging administration and/or faculty in the accreditation process
- What else?

Objectives

- Reduce accreditation stress
- Understand what, and why, CVTEA looks for at a site visit
- Identify some common pitfalls of accreditation compliance
- Look forward to a site visit

CVTEA staff is unable to speak for the Committee. Some questions may need to be submitted to the full CVTEA for a response.

Understanding what CVTEA looks for

Standard 1 – Institutional Accreditation

Key Evidence:

- Current letter of accreditation status
- If relevant, resolution of any citations

Discussion Topic(s):

- Ensure the accreditation status documentation is current

Standard 2 – Finances

Key Evidence:

- Audited financial statements (preferred)
- Program budget documentation
- Emergency funding processes

Discussion Topic(s)

- Program Director involvement in budgeting
- Financial stability
- Availability of emergency funds

Standard 3 – Organization & Communications

Key Evidence:

- Advisory Committee Roster-identify who is or is not program affiliated
- Meeting minutes that captures exchange of feedback, ideas, and recommendations
- Pre-site visit Advisory Committee survey

Discussion Topic(s)

- Examples of implemented recommendations from PAC
- Attendance issues (PAC)
- Effectiveness of communication between the program and Administration, students, and among faculty

Standard 4 – Facilities & Equipment

Key Evidence:

- Video walkthroughs of off-campus facilities
- Cattle chute images-all 4 sides
- MOUs for all clinical sites for primary learning sites
- Rabies Policy

Discussion Topic(s)

- Statement on Safety (Appendix A)
- Distributive modalities
 - Signed agreement with personnel evaluating essential skills
- Off-campus primary learning facilities issues (radiology, surgery suites, etc.)

Standard 5 – Resources for Clinical Instruction

Key Evidence:

- MOUs with animal resources, equipment
- IACUC Assessment Guidance
- IACUC Protocols – all of them

Discussion Topic(s)

- Missing signatures on IO reporting
- Missing the approval, or the review process, of protocols
- Notification for clients if students are involved in primary learning

Standard 6 – Library

Key Evidence:

- Qualified resource specialist
- Available online resources
- Examples of student support to access library resources

Discussion Topic(s)

- No longer a physical tour at site visit
- Presentation by librarian
- Demonstrate a search picked by site team

Standard 7 – Admissions

Key Evidence:

- Admission criteria
- Admission information to students
- Technical Standards criteria
- Transfer credit policy

Discussion Topic(s)

- Program Director participation in Admission policy and selection of students
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Transfer credit and prior learning (high school courses, essential skills)

Standard 8 – Students

Key Evidence:

- Student-to-faculty ratio – *under review*
- Student Handbook
- Rabies Policy and/or Rabies Mitigation Plan if applicable
- Pre-site visit Student survey

Discussion Topic(s)

- FTE calculations
- Process to handle student complaints
- Student support services (tutoring, counseling)
- Student session on site visit – as many as possible (feed them!)

Standard 9 – Faculty

Key Evidence:

- Faculty CVs, licenses, CE
- Position descriptions
- Faculty evaluations
- Pre-site visit Faculty survey

Discussion Topic(s)

- Faculty vacancies
- Non-veterinary personnel as faculty
- Workload assignments-when difficult to discern
- Pedagogical success

Standard 10 – Curriculum

Key Evidence:

- Curriculum map-course sequencing
- Course syllabi
- Skills checklists
- Externship evaluations

Discussion Topic(s)

- Curriculum review process and faculty involvement
- Alignment with Program mission

Standard 11 – Outcomes Assessment

Key Evidence:

- AAVSB VTNE Score Reports (vettech@aavsb.org)
- Reporting to the public – 11c under review
- New Outcomes Surveys and their rubrics
 - Student Exit Survey-current students graduating or leaving
 - Graduate Survey-Alumni 6-24 months after graduation
 - Employer Survey-Employers of graduates 6-24 months after graduation

Discussion Topic(s)

- VTNE pass rate is **not a bright line** Standard
- Updates to Standard 11 under review (11c and 11d)

Biggest Accreditation Mistakes

Top 5 Accreditation Issues

1. **Lack of documentation** (inspection records, meeting minutes, equipment maintenance, etc.)
2. **IACUC documentation and implementation** (approved protocols for everything you are doing, meeting minutes, reporting to the IO)
3. **Admissions** – consideration for aptitude and interest in veterinary technology. Ensure applicants understand the realities and expectation of the profession and rigors of program.
4. **Outcomes assessment** - comprehensive review of program evaluation data. Analyze VTNE domain performance, “close the loop” – use assessment for program improvements and articulate to the CVTEA.
5. **Program personnel development** for pedagogical success. Support ongoing teaching and instructional best practices.

Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

Mandatory Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

- 30 business days

Demonstrating
progress OK, but
Documentation is
needed

In the works?
Provide a
timeline for
completion.

Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

Example:

Deficiency: The program must have a comprehensive rabies mitigation plan in place to protect any students that are not vaccinated against rabies.

Program response – **UNMET**

A new rabies mitigation plan has been developed, and the plan is with administration and legal counsel for review and signature.

Program response - **MET**

The new rabies mitigation plan has been developed and is approved and signed by administration and legal counsel and is now implemented. The documentation has been provided (uploaded) as well.

Wrap Up

In the Works

- Changes to Deficiencies, no more 'critical' or 'major' categories
- Programs will have opportunities to address Recommendations in progress reports
- Updating the Standards to 'active voice'. Does not change the Standard, only clarifies (sneak peek to follow)
- Standards rubric - two-fold resource for site teams and programs to assist with consistency) (sneak peek to follow)
- Standards Review cycle changing to all at the same time
- Review of Faculty-to-Student ratios for different program modalities
- Review of branch or extended campus accreditation

Sneak Peek Example: Standards in “Active Voice”

3a. The program consistently publishes and measures the achievement of its mission that guides the delivery of a quality veterinary technology education ~~must develop, publicize, and follow its mission statement.~~

9a. The program maintains sufficient ~~F~~faculty and staff numbers ~~must be sufficient to deliver the~~ a quality veterinary technology educational program education and ~~meet~~ achieve the mission and instructional goals of the program.

Sneak Peek Example – Standards Rubric

Standard	Compliant	Partially Compliant	Not Compliant
5d. Animal records	Records and logs for program animals are comprehensive, accurate, and current	Records are mostly complete but have gaps or inaccuracies in some areas	Records are missing, incomplete, or inaccurate in ways that undermine accountability

Summary of Accreditation Resources

Available to you 24/7:

- IACUC assessment guidance
- IACUC protocol template
- Outcomes Surveys
- Outcomes Surveys Assessment Rubrics – to help you assess the data
- Rabies protection checklist
- Summary of documents needed for your self-study report
- Site visit cost estimate
- Site Team recruitment flyer
- Landscape Survey – updated

Staff – we are not 24/7 but welcome emails (jhorvath@avma.org)

CVTEA Opportunities

Call for Candidates due February 2027

Veterinary Technician-At-Large Representative

Public Representative

Veterinarian or Veterinary Technician – Representing Veterinary State Boards

