

ARTICLE 23
CRITERIA
FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF
FIRE RELATED DEGREE GRANTING PROGRAMS
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL FIRE SERVICE
ACCREDITATION CONGRESS
DEGREE ASSEMBLY

Philosophy: IFSAC recognizes diversity in the provision and standards of education worldwide. It is our intent to establish the appropriate equivalency based on knowledge level, rigor and related factors, rather than on program titles or terminology.

The documents requested or provided in support of the following criteria should be those used as a standard within the country in which the program being evaluated is presented.

ARTICLE 23 - ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

23.0 Definitions

- 23.1** The institution shall have clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with the program's mission and appropriate to an institution granting post secondary degrees in a fire related field of study.
- 23.2** The institution shall have the human, physical, and financial resources necessary to accomplish its stated purposes.
- 23.3** The institution shall be organized in such a manner that it is able to effectively accomplish its educational and other stated purposes.
- 23.4** The institution shall be accomplishing its educational and stated purposes.
- 23.5** The institution shall be able to continue to accomplish its stated purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.
- 23.6** The institution shall demonstrate integrity in its practices and relationships.

SECTION G23.0

DEFINITIONS

IFSAC recognizes that many of these definitions apply generally to programs in the USA and Canada, but confirm that they will be applied and interpreted positively in whatever geographic, national or international environment that these criteria are used. If a term is not defined herein, standard dictionary definition shall apply.

- G23.0.1 Academic Credit** - Credit applicable toward a degree or credential at the institution awarding it, accepting it on transfer, or acknowledging equivalency from an adequately substantiated learning experience.
- G23.0.2 Academic Year** - Instruction equivalent of two semesters of approximately 15 weeks apiece or 3 quarters of approximately 10 weeks apiece, either of which may include examination days.
- G23.0.3 Accreditation** - The process by which a private, non-governmental body evaluates an educational institution or program of study and formally recognizes it as having met certain predetermined criteria or standards. The process involves an initial and periodic self-study and evaluation by peers. Accreditation implies stimulation toward quality improvement beyond the minimum standards specified by the accrediting body.
- G23.0.4 Accreditation Association or Commission** - A recognized and voluntary non-governmental body established to administer accrediting procedures. An accrediting body is formally acknowledged, or recognized, as being a reliable authority concerning the quality of education or training offered by educational institutions or programs by any statutory institution (i.e., the US. Secretary of Education and/or the Council on Post Secondary Accreditation). It is a voluntary organization and not established by the federal or state governments or any agency, department, or office thereof. An accrediting body may be identified by scope (institutional or specialized program) or area (regional, inter-regional, or national).
- G23.0.5 Accreditation - Institutional** - A status of affiliation with a recognized accrediting body that accords accreditation to an entire institution, indicating that each of its parts is contributing to the achievement of the institution's missions and objectives, although not necessarily all on the same level.
- G23.0.6 Accreditation - Regional** - A status of affiliation accorded an institution by a recognized accrediting association or commission that conducts accreditation procedures.
- G23.0.7 Accreditation - Specialized** - A status of affiliation accorded a unit or program by a recognized specialized accrediting body. The unit accredited may be a school, department, program or curriculum by a recognized specialized accrediting body. It may be a part of a total educational institution or may be an independent, specialized institution.
- G23.0.8 Accreditation Status** - Formal recognition given an institution or specialized program for meeting establish standards of educational quality, as determined by regional, national, international or specialized non-governmental accrediting bodies.

- G23.0.9 Accreditation Status - Probationary** - A term used by some associations to indicate that an accredited institution has certain deficiencies which must be corrected within a specified period of time in order to remain accredited.
- G23.0.10 Accrediting** - The process whereby an agency or association grants formal recognition to a school, institute, college, university, or specialized program of study which meets certain established qualifications and educational standards, as determined through initial and periodic evaluations. The essential purpose of the accreditation process is to provide a professional judgment as to the quality of the educational institution or program offered and to encourage continual improvement thereof.
- G23.0.11 Acronyms** - Acronyms used in any documents must be defined. For instance, OSU means Oklahoma State University.
- G23.0.12 Adequate** - Refers to the fact that a reasonable person would find evidence to support the fact that the specified criteria exists at least at the minimum level required to achieve the stated purpose.
- G23.0.13 Admission Policy** - The rationale which determines the applicants who shall be admitted to an institution. Consideration is given to the role assigned to the institution by its governing body; the programs, resources, and facilities of the institution; and the qualifications and goals of the applicant.
- G23.0.14 Adverse (Negative) Accrediting Action** - The denial or withdrawal of accreditation or candidate status by a recognized accrediting association or commission.
- G23.0.15 Advisory Committee** - A group of persons representing the communities and customers served by a program. They provide input, recommend policy and program content and act as a resource to the program administrator.
- G23.0.16 Appeal** - An appeal of a decision in accordance with due process as described in the appeal procedures.
- G23.0.17 Approval** - The official act of a state department of education or other recognized agency having official authority certifying that a unit of educational organization (a school, institute, college, university or specialized program of studies) complies with the minimum legal requirements of such units. Official approval, granted by governmental agencies or the governing body of a school system, is distinguished from accreditation, which is accorded by voluntary non-governmental accrediting agencies.
- G23.0.18 Candidate for Accreditation** - Candidate for Accreditation is a status of preliminary affiliation with IFSAC following a specified procedure for application, institutional self-study, and on-site evaluation. Candidacy is not accreditation and does not assure eventual accreditation. It is an indication that an institution is progressing toward accreditation.
- G23.0.19 Catalog** - The official bulletin or publication of a postsecondary education institution stating admission and graduation requirements, majors, minors, current offerings, costs, faculty, and all other significant qualifications specified by that agency or association.

- G23.0.20 College** - Generic term to denote any of the postsecondary educational institutions including universities eligible for accreditation or accredited by IFSAC. In the Handbook, the term does not refer to a specialized unit of a university campus; it is used as a synonym for "institution."
- G23.0.21 Complaint** - A written complaint to IFSAC against an institution.
- G23.0.22 Continuing Education Unit (CEU)** - A unit of measure for non-credit activities.
- G23.0.23 Consultant** - A person who gives professional, educational or technical advice and assistance. The services may or may not be performed under contract.
- G23.0.24 Cooperative Education** - A combination program of study and practice- conducted on an alternating schedule of half days, weeks, or other period of time- providing employment for students with organized on-the-job training and correlated higher education instruction.
- G23.0.25 Correspondence, Instruction by** - Instruction approved through appropriate institutional channels, which provides for the systematic exchange of course material by mail between the instructor and student.
- G23.0.26 Course** - A single instructional subject commonly described by title, number and credits in the college catalog or bulletin.
- G23.0.27 Credentials** - (1) A certificate stating that the student has been graduated from a certain curriculum or has passed certain subjects; (2) a statement signed by proper authority certifying that a person is authorized to perform certain functions or has been designed as an official representative; (3) a detailed record of an applicant for a position, usually including transcripts of academic records and testimonials relative to previous experience, performance, and character; (4) the confidential file of an applicant sent to prospective employers.
- G23.0.28 Credit, Unit of** - A quantification of student academic learning against time.
- G23.0.29 Degrees** - Recognition of completion of a prescribed program of study in higher education according to systems operating in particular countries.
- G23.0.30 Disclosure and Confidentiality of Information** - Every institution seeking candidacy, accreditation, or re-accreditation is obliged to provide any information with respect to the institutional affairs pertinent to determination of the institution's accreditation status. It is the obligation of IFSAC to maintain the confidentiality of the institutional self-study and report of the evaluation committee.
- G23.0.31 Distance Learning** - Instruction delivered through means other than traditional classroom learning and approved through appropriate institutional channels, which provides for the systematic exchange of course material between the instructor and student.
- G23.0.32 Evaluation** - A process periodically and jointly conducted by the institution and the accrediting agency which may take a number of forms. It will include the following, regardless of form: 1) the institution's self-study; 2) the evaluation team's report; 3) the institution's response to the evaluation's report; 4) the accrediting bodies action; 5)

- the institution's further consideration of and action upon its self-study, the evaluation team's report, and the accrediting bodies' actions.
- G23.0.33 Experiential Learning** - Learning acquired from work and life experience, mass media, independent reading and study, certification, or other alternative methods.
- G23.0.34 External Degree Program** - A course of study different from traditional degree programs, which may or may not require on-campus study or residence, and which often relies heavily on independent study and examination.
- G23.0.35 Faculty** - As used here, faculty refers to fire related instructors, not librarians, administrators, counselors, etc., who may have faculty rank. Full-time faculty: those employed by the institution the majority of whose assignment is class or course instruction but which may also include institutional non-class-related faculty responsibilities such as academic advisement, curriculum development and review, faculty selection and evaluation, and the like. Those performing these functions may also be considered full-time faculty if a portion of their assignment is research, service, or academic administration. Part-time or Adjunct Faculty: faculty whose major responsibility is not related to the institution in question, customarily assigned one or two classes with class-related responsibilities only.
- G23.0.36 General Education Development** - A battery of tests taken by adults who did not graduate from high school to measure the extent to which their past experiences have contributed to their attaining the knowledge, skills, and understandings ordinarily acquired through a high school education.
- G23.0.37 Higher Education** - Post secondary education emphasizing degrees and credentials rather than solely trade or vocational preparation.
- G23.0.38 Institution** - Academic organization, such as a college, university, or technical institute.
- G23.0.39 Level** - Refers to placement of students at a certain level of college work, i.e., first two years or Associate degree, upper division or Bachelor's degree, first level graduate or Master's, professional degree or Ph.D.
- G23.0.40 Mission and Objectives Statement** - The statement in which an institution identifies and demonstrates its understanding of its unique mission and objectives. Particular institutional purposes vary widely. Institutional purposes encompass the study of values and attitudes, public service and much else. The institution's statement of mission describes its particular philosophic stance and serves as a guide for educational planning. It also operates as a frame of reference for decisions about such practical matters as student admission and retention, the curriculum, the faculty, and allocation of funds.
- G23.0.41 Planning** - The process by which the mission and objectives of an institution are determined and the means to achieve them are specified. Institutional planning incorporates the institution's statement of purpose and comprehensive self-study with plans that take into account the possible need for modification of goals, clientele served, programs offered, educational methods employed, and modes of support utilized.

- G23.0.42 Post Secondary Education** - Education offered by institutions primarily to individuals 18 or older; admission may or may not require a high school diploma or equivalent credential.
- G23.0.43 Program** - A systematic, usually sequential, grouping of courses, forming a considerable part, or all, of the requirements for a degree or a credential. May refer to the total educational offering of an institution.
- G23.0.44 Program Faculty** - Both full time and part time faculty with instructional responsibilities in the fire related degree program.
- G23.0.45 Public Service** - A function accepted by nearly all publicly supported institutions and many independent colleges and universities. Service of a practical nature to the external (non-academic) community- local, regional, national, or international. Often includes public lectures and performances, various forms of applied research, non-credit courses, and agricultural or other similar forms of extension.
- G23.0.46 Recommendation** - May refer either to the evaluation team's final statements or its advice to the DABOG regarding an institution's accreditation or candidacy status.
- G23.0.47 Research** - May refer to collection of institutional data useful for self-analysis or planning (institutional research), to that carried on by teacher-scholars in order to remain current in their fields of expertise, or to that expanding the field of knowledge or its application ("pure" or "applied" research).
- G23.0.48 Satisfactory** - Refers to the fact that the entity has fulfilled the intent of the stated criteria.
- G23.0.49 Shall** - Mandatory requirement.
- G23.0.50 Should** - Recommendation.
- G23.0.51 Staff** - Non-faculty, non-instructional, employees of the fire related program.
- G23.0.52 State** - Refers to a country's government or one of its constituent units.
- G23.0.53 Substantive Change** - A change that significantly alters an institution's objectives or the scope of its offerings; alters its autonomy, sponsorship, or the locus of control over it; embarks on offering off-campus academic programs for credit; changes the geographic area(s) served; or offers programs or courses for academic credit on a military base.
- G23.0.54 Tenure** - The employment status of a faculty or staff member whose employment is not subject to discontinuance by the governing board except in stipulated circumstances.
- G23.0.55 Visiting Lecturer** - A person not regularly part of faculty or adjunct faculty, serving in a temporary role in the area of their expertise.

SECTION G23.1

The institution shall have clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with the program's mission and appropriate to an institution granting post-secondary degrees in a fire-related field of study.

G23.1.1 The institution shall have a written, publicly stated purpose.

G23.1.2 The institution shall have a written, publicly stated purpose for the fire related program.

G23.1.3 The institution shall have a written, publicly stated description of the degree or degrees offered.

G23.1.4 The institution shall be accredited by a regional or institutional accrediting organization, or state sanction.

(a) In compliance with Article 21.4.1 and 22.5.3, institutions located in the United States and its territories shall be accredited by one of the nine regional accrediting organizations recognized by the United States Department of Education.

(b) Institutions not located in the United States and its territories shall be accredited by a regional or institutional organization of said country, or by state sanction as defined by said country.

G23.1.5 When required by the regional accrediting organization, the institution shall be specifically accredited to grant college degrees via the Distance Learning method by the regional accrediting organization.

SECTION G23.2

The institution shall have the human, physical, and learning resources necessary to accomplish its stated purposes.

G23.2.1 HUMAN RESOURCES

G23.2.1.1 Faculty

(a) The program shall have a sufficient number of faculty to implement program objectives.

(b) Faculty duties shall be defined.

(c) Faculty responsibilities shall be defined.

(d) Faculty workload shall be defined including program administration duties, online instructional load, and other duties as assigned.

(e) Faculty training, education, and expertise shall be appropriate to assure high quality learning experiences in all phases of the program.

G23.2.1.2 Staff

(a) The program shall have a sufficient number of staff to implement program objectives.

(b) Staff duties shall be defined.

(c) Staff responsibilities shall be defined.

G23.2.1.3 Hiring and Selection

(a) The program shall have a documented formal system for selecting faculty.

G23.2.1.4 Professional Development and Continuing Education

(a) A formal system of faculty training and orientation should be documented.

(b) In-service programs for faculty should be held regularly to promote individual and professional development and program improvement.

(c) A system for professional and personal development should be available for faculty.

(d) All faculty should receive ongoing professional opportunities to increase knowledge and skill in technical and educational areas.

(e) Faculty providing instruction via Distance Learning shall be provided the opportunity for appropriate additional training in instructional methodology and course delivery related to the area of delivery. For example, faculty providing web based instruction via Blackboard, WebCT, or other platform should be specially trained in course design and/or delivery (as applicable) via said program.

G23.2.1.5 Evaluation of Faculty

(a) There shall be a documented system for performance evaluation.

(b) There shall be a documented system for instructional evaluation for both traditional classroom and distance delivery.

G23.2.2 PHYSICAL RESOURCES

G23.2.2.1 On-Campus Instructional Space

(a) The institution shall demonstrate that adequate classroom instructional space is available to achieve stated objectives for each program.

(b) Instructional spaces shall be designed and appropriately equipped for effective instruction.

(c) Adequate laboratory facilities shall be available to achieve the goals of the program.

(d) The location of a facility for teaching psychomotor skills should allow for flexibility in course scheduling so that each student acquires enough practice to become competent.

(e) Laboratory spaces shall be large enough for use in demonstrations and supervised practice of techniques.

(f) Laboratory spaces shall be adequately equipped.

(g) The program administrator should periodically assess the classroom and laboratory spaces.

Basis for Judgment:

The institution should have a procedure in place for the program administrator to periodically assess his/her equipment and make written recommendations for upgrading or acquiring new equipment.

- (h) The program administrator should make appropriate recommendations for modification to facilities.

Basis for Judgment:

The institution should have a procedure in place for the program administrator to periodically assess his/her equipment and make written recommendations for upgrading or acquiring new equipment.

- (i) The program advisory committee or equivalent should be involved in the evaluation of facilities.

Basis for Judgment:

The institution should have a procedure in place for the program administrator to periodically assess his/her equipment and make written recommendations for upgrading or acquiring new equipment.

- (j) Facilities should meet applicable fire and building code provisions.
- (k) A process for reporting dangerous conditions to those responsible shall be documented.

G23.2.2.2 Off-Campus Instructional Space

- (a) Off-campus facilities shall be adequate to achieve course objectives.
- (b) There shall be a working arrangement between the educational institution and the facility.
- (c) A contingency plan shall be developed by the institution should the arrangement be terminated.
- (d) The locations and times available for use of the facility shall be compatible with the instructional needs of the program.
- (e) The program administrator shall retain authority and responsibility for instruction.
- (f) Instruction shall be provided and evaluated by program faculty.
- (g) The program administrator shall periodically assess the facilities.
- (h) The program administrator should make appropriate recommendations for modification to facilities.
- (i) The program advisory committee or equivalent should be involved in the evaluation of off-campus facilities.
- (j) Facilities should meet applicable fire and building code provisions.
- (k) A process for reporting dangerous conditions to those responsible shall be documented.

G23.2.2.3 Office Space

- (a) Adequate office space shall be provided for the program administrator.
- (b) Adequate office space shall be provided for the faculty.
- (c) An area for conducting private or confidential business shall be provided.

G23.2.2.4 Instructional Equipment, Supplies, and Materials

- (a) Adequate equipment and supplies shall be available in classrooms to effectively achieve educational goals.
- (b) Adequate equipment and supplies shall be available in laboratories to effectively achieve educational goals.
- (c) There should be adequate space available for storage of equipment, supplies, and materials.
- (d) The program administrator should periodically assess the instructional equipment, supplies, and materials.
- (e) The program administrator should make appropriate recommendations for modification or replacement of instructional equipment, supplies, and materials.
- (f) The program advisory committee or equivalent should be involved in the evaluation of instructional equipment, supplies, and materials.
- (g) There should be adequate provision for updating equipment in response to changing practices in technology.
- (h) Sufficient expendable materials should be available to accomplish learning outcomes defined in program documents.

G23.2.2.5 Maintenance of Instructional Resources

- (a) Evidence that adequate resources are provided to maintain facilities.
- (b) Evidence that adequate resources are provided to maintain equipment.
- (c) Resources subject to regulatory or specific industry standards shall be maintained in accordance with said standards.

G23.2.3 LEARNING RESOURCES

G23.2.3.1 Library Resources

- (a) The library shall include a wide range of research materials available for utilization by students and faculty.
- (b) The library shall include a wide range of resources available for utilization by students and faculty.
- (c) There should be a mechanism for faculty to periodically review and select current titles for acquisition.
- (d) Library hours and policies should be conducive to faculty and student use of the resources.

(e) Students and faculty shall have access to library resources.

Basis for Judgment G23.2.3.1 (a) through (e):

The students and the faculty shall have access to resources, whether in the form of print or electronic books, periodicals (current and back issues), microfiche, or any combination thereof. These may be available in or via the college library holdings, a lending agreement with other libraries, or the internet.

G23.2.3.2 Tutorial Resources

- (a) Tutorial services shall be available to support student learning needs.
- (b) Tutorial services shall be available to support students with special needs in accomplishing learning objectives.

SECTION G23.3

The institution shall be organized in such a manner that it is able to effectively accomplish its educational and other stated purposes.

G23.3.1 ORGANIZATION

- (a) The institution's structure shall be such that the fire related degree program is recognized.
- (b) There shall be opportunities for program faculty to be represented on institutional committees, as well as those in the program.
- (c) Faculty should be formally represented on all committees, groups, or organizations concerned with the development, implementation, evaluation, and revision of program curriculum.

G23.3.2 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- (a) The program administrator for the degree program shall have the authority, responsibility, and privileges necessary to manage the program to ensure the attainment of program goals.
- (b) The institution shall have a detailed job description of the program administrator.
- (c) The program administrator should have at least a 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE) appointment, as defined by the institution, with responsibility for the fire related degree program.
- (d) The program administrator shall be provided with time for program operation, supervision, evaluation, and revision.

G23.3.3 BUDGET

- (a) The program administrator shall have direct input in the development of the program budget.
- (b) The program should follow a formal budget process.

G23.3.4 DEPARTMENTAL DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS

- (a) The program administrator should establish and maintain record keeping systems to ensure adequate student and program information for faculty and staff.

G23.3.5 SUPPORT SERVICES

- (a) Institutional support services shall include secretarial and clerical staff to handle preparation and processing of materials, correspondence, and records.
- (b) Institutional support services shall include student recruitment, admission activities, and career placement and guidance assistance.
- (c) Information Technology (IT) resources shall be sufficient to provide reliable delivery of courses.
- (d) For programs or courses delivered via Distance Learning appropriate Help Desk or similar support services shall be provided.

G23.3.6 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- (a) Program advisory committees shall be established to provide an active mechanism for liaison with the community served by the degree program.
- (b) The advisory committee shall be representative of the population served.
- (c) The advisory committee should be involved in the process of creating program outcomes.
- (d) There should be written documentation that details the membership, role, function, terms of the Advisory Board, Committees, and meetings.
- (e) Advisory committee minutes should be kept and available for five years.

SECTION G23.4

The institution shall be accomplishing its educational and other stated purposes.

G23.4.1 PROGRAM DOCUMENTATION

- (a) The curriculum shall include written master course document.
- (b) Each master course document shall have a list of specific instructional objectives.
- (c) Each master course document shall include an outline for instruction to achieve the goals and objectives.
- (d) Evaluation procedures designed to assess students should be identified on each master course document.
- (e) The program shall have written program outcomes that successful students will possess upon completion of the degree or program of study.
- (f) A current course syllabus shall be on file for each course during the semester it is being taught.
- (g) The program level shall be documented.

(h) The program length shall be documented.

Clarification and Basis for Judgment (G23.4.1):

It is recognized that institutions may vary in the way business is conducted. For the purposes of Section G23.4.1 and all subsections the following are the intended definitions/judgments.

- (a) A master course outline, master course document, course continuity guide, or equivalent, is a document that outlines the course description, course goals, and objectives, course topics, instructional methodology, and recommended means of testing students. This document is not specific to any one given academic quarter or semester, and is usually approved by an advisory committee and any other applicable collegiate committee or administrators.
- (b) A syllabus, class schedule, or course schedule is a document provided by the instructor to the students. It is specific to a given semester. It is expected that every student shall be provided with this document for every course in which he/she is enrolled. The syllabus should contain a schedule of reading assignments and any quizzes, exams, or other assessments for the semester.
- (c) It is recognized that different institutions may use the document terminology interchangeably or even by other names. The Basis for Judgment is both types of documents shall be on file regardless of institutional terminology.

G23.4.2 COURSE AND PROGRAM CONTENT

G23.4.2.1 Program Content

- (a) Content areas shall include those generally accepted, or required by law or recognized standards of good practice. If the program has implemented and is following the current version of the Fire & Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) Model curriculum, then IFSAC accepts that all sections of 23.4.2.1 have been met.
- (b) Program content should include areas such as fire science, legal issues, fire prevention, fire suppression, emergency management, hazardous materials, fire service administration, fire investigation, technical rescue, fire protection systems and other fields or sub-fields as deemed appropriate by the institution, with input of the program advisory committee.
- (c) The program content should provide an integrated educational experience directed toward development of students' ability to apply pertinent knowledge to the solution of practical problems in professional occupations.
- (d) Curriculum should follow a logical sequence.

G23.4.2.2 Course Content

- (a) Theory courses should stress problem identification and solution, with emphasis on a quantitative, analytical approach.
- (b) Simulations of real life encounters and 'hands-on' activities should accompany theory courses when appropriate.

- (c) Where appropriate courses should include and advocate the evaluation of current literature to prepare students for lifelong learning.
- (d) When multi-delivery methods are used, the courses shall be similar in goals, objectives, and content, to the traditionally delivered program.

G23.4.3 AWARDING CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING OR EXPERIENCE

- (a) There shall be a documented system to assure the quality and outcomes of prior learning or experience when considered for credit.
- (b) Credit for prior learning or experience shall be related to the degree being sought and to comparable program and course outcomes.

G23.4.4 COOPERATIVE EDUCATION/INTERNSHIP

- (a) If the opportunity for experiential learning exists, the faculty shall implement a mechanism for planning, supervising, and evaluating cooperative education.

G23.4.5 MANAGEMENT OF EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- (a) Policy and procedures, consistent with requirements of statute or regulation and recognized standards, shall exist to manage emergency situations.
- (b) Faculty shall be trained and prepared to manage emergency situations arising in the laboratory and at other training sites.
- (c) Emergency equipment shall be readily accessible and functional.
- (d) Students shall be trained in emergency procedures arising in laboratory and other training sites.
- (e) Students shall be advised of dangers associated with psychomotor skill development activities and physical demands, which will be placed upon them.
- (f) All training for emergencies should be documented.

G23.4.6 INSURANCE

- (a) The institution shall provide faculty liability coverage for events occurring in the educational setting.
- (b) The institution should provide opportunity for students to acquire insurance coverage for personal injury or property damage occurring as a result of training and educational experiences.

G23.4.7 INSTRUCTION

- (a) All students shall receive comparable instruction in the program.

Basis for Judgment:

Students who are taking evening classes or at remote locations should receive comparable instruction and the use of libraries, audio-visual equipment or computer modules. All students should receive the same final, or exit examination so that the learning results can be compared.

- (b) Program should make reasonable accommodations of student needs in scheduling of required courses.
- (c) A course syllabus shall be provided to students at the beginning of each course.
- (d) Information regarding system requirements, software, and other needed resources for computer based learning shall be provided to the student prior to the beginning of the term.

G23.4.8 STUDENT ASSESSMENT

- (a) Student assessment criteria and procedures shall be developed to assess course objectives and learning outcomes.
- (b) Student assessment should be conducted formatively and summatively as feedback mechanism for the student.
- (c) Student assessment criteria shall be predetermined, consistent and communicated to students.
- (d) On the basis of designated criteria, both students and faculty should be able to periodically assess progress in relation to the stated objectives.
- (e) If a student does not meet assessment criteria, provisions should be made for remediation and reassessment or dismissal.
- (f) Psychomotor assessment methods shall provide evidence of student progress toward attainment of competence in performing practical procedures.
- (g) Where appropriate, third party evaluation should be provided, such as IFSAC Certificate Assembly or other accredited certifying agencies.

Basis for Judgment (G23.4.8 (a) through (g)):

Assessment criteria and outcomes shall be documented.

G23.4.9 COURSE EVALUATION

- (a) On the basis of designated criteria, both students and faculty should periodically assess course material.
- (b) Course evaluation should include evaluation of the facilities.
- (c) Course evaluation should include evaluation of instruction regardless of delivery method.

G23.4.10 OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

- (a) The program must have an ongoing outcomes assessment process with measured and documented results.
- (b) The program must demonstrate that the outcomes assessments are being applied to the further development and improvement of the program.

Basis for Judgment:

Institutions should assess and provide documentation of achievements through various methods, e.g., graduate outcome assessments and employer feedback.

- (c) The program shall provide reliable information to the public on their performance, including student achievement. This information shall be provided at least on a yearly basis.

Basis for Judgment:

- a. The information provided to the public may include, but is not limited to:
- i. Job placement rates of the program
 - ii. Graduation rates of the program
 - iii. Pass rates of professional certification exams
 - iv. Average starting salaries of graduates
 - v. Other information as determined by program and institution
- b. This information must be made publically available and as example may be posted on the program website, in program/college catalogs, in local, state, or regional newspapers, or specific trade journals or publications.

SECTION G23.5

The institution shall be able to continue to accomplish its stated purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

G23.5.1 CONTINUATION OF THE STATED PURPOSE

G23.5.1.1 Planning

- (a) Administrative provisions should be adequate to assure continuing quality in education and evidence of program stability.

Basis for Judgment:

Most institutions have provisions to help achieve and improve academic excellence. A description and analysis of how the process is applied to the program should be part of the self study.

- (b) Short and long range planning shall include input from the faculty with the assistance of the program advisory committee.

Basis for Judgment:

- Documentation shall be available indicating that annual meetings are conducted for short and long range plans for the program. The meetings shall include program faculty and the advisory committee.
 - The resulting plans shall be disseminated to all program faculty and advisory committee members.
 - Meeting minutes shall be maintained for a period of at least five years; or as required by the institution or applicable laws.
- (c) There shall be mechanisms for ongoing curriculum evaluation, revision and implementation.

G23.5.1.2 Needs Assessment/Surveying

- (a) Needs assessment should be a major component in changing curriculum.

Basis for Judgment:

- Documentation shall be provided that shows a needs assessment is conducted on a routine basis (for example, once every two or three years) for the program and courses.
- Any changes to the program or course curriculum shall be accomplished by a needs assessment.
- The needs assessment may be conducted by the institution's research office, program faculty, and/or program advisory committee.

- (b) The institution should maintain surveys of graduation rates.

Basis for Judgment:

Published documentation will be available which present, analyze and evaluate data, gathered over periods of time sufficient to indicate trends, directions and change.

- (c) The institution should maintain surveys of employability of students.

Basis for Judgment:

Published documentation will be available which present, analyze and evaluate data, gathered over periods of time sufficient to indicate trends, directions and change.

- (d) Needs assessment should be a major component in establishing new programs or options.

G23.5.2 CONTINUATION OF FORMAL EDUCATION

- (a) The curriculum shall be designed to provide maximum opportunity for students to continue their formal education with a minimum loss of time and duplication of learning experiences.
- (b) Institutions with degree programs at the 2-year level should establish articulation agreements with 4-year baccalaureate level degree programs to provide for maximum transfer of related course work.

SECTION G.23.6

The institution shall demonstrate integrity in its practices and relationships.

G23.6.1 FACULTY AND STAFF RIGHTS

- (a) There shall be published policies to protect the rights of faculty and staff in regard to academic freedom.
- (b) Institutions shall openly publish all limitations on freedom of inquiry or expression.

- (c) There shall be published policies to deal with theft of intellectual property.
- (d) The institution shall publish Codes of Conduct covering fair practices, non-discrimination and equal opportunity policies for faculty and staff.
- (e) Codes of conduct, ethics and standards of behavior shall reflect requirements of applicable law and regulation.
- (f) Codes of conduct, ethics and standards of behavior shall detail procedures which assure timely and just consideration and disposition of complaints.
- (g) There shall be published policies to protect faculty and staff.
- (h) These policies shall provide avenues for appeal and due process.

G23.6.2 STUDENT RIGHTS

- (a) There shall be published policies to protect the rights of students in regard to academic freedom.
- (b) Institutions shall openly publish all limitations on freedom of inquiry or expression.
- (c) There shall be published policies to deal with cheating, plagiarism and theft of intellectual property.
- (d) The institution shall publish Codes of Conduct, ethics and standards of behavior required of students during their time on-campus and in classes.
- (e) Codes of conduct, ethics and standards of behavior shall reflect requirements of applicable law and regulation.
- (f) Codes of conduct, ethics and standards of behavior shall detail procedures which assure timely and just consideration and disposition of complaints.
- (g) There shall be published policies to protect students.
- (h) These policies shall provide avenues for appeal and due process.

Basis for Judgment G23.6.2 (a) through (h):

The rights of the students shall be identified and published in the college/university handbook, catalog, and/or available electronically. These shall be available to each student. The rights of employees (faculty members, adjunct faculty, others affiliated with degree program) shall be identified and published in the college/university handbook (or equivalent). Any limitation on freedom of inquiry or expression shall be identified and published in appropriate handbooks based on audience (i.e., for faculty, this information shall be published in the faculty handbook). All of this published information shall be available for each respective group of people. It shall be written in such a way that it is easy to read and understand. This information should also be made available in the program office. Faculty members should have the information concerning students available on file.

If faculty/staff handbooks are not used by the institution, an alternative method of providing this information shall be identified.

G23.6.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- (a) There should be published policies that prohibit members of advisory committees from having financial or other interest that conflict with the proper discharge of their duties.
- (b) There should be published policies that prohibit faculty or staff from having financial or other interest that conflict with the proper discharge of their duties.

G23.6.4 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES DOCUMENTATION

- (a) Each program shall have access to the institution's policy and procedures manual.
- (b) If policy and procedures manual is not used by the institution, an alternative method of providing this information shall be identified.
- (c) Each program shall have access to the faculty/staff handbook.
- (d) If faculty/staff handbook is not used by the institution, an alternative method of providing this information shall be identified.
- (e) The policies and procedures of the program should be compatible with the philosophy and goals of the institution.

G23.6.5 RECORD KEEPING

- (a) Records shall be kept that accurately reflect the academic accomplishments of students in the program.
- (b) Student records shall be maintained in a manner to ensure confidentiality and security.
- (c) Access to records shall be in accordance with applicable laws or regulations.
- (d) Employment records for faculty and staff shall be maintained in a manner to ensure confidentiality and security.
- (e) Access to employment records for faculty and staff shall be in accordance with applicable laws or regulations.

G23.7 READER AND SITE VISITOR COURSE ACCESS

- (a) There shall be provisions for readers and site visitors to access distance learning courses.

Basis for Judgment and Commentary for G23.6.6:

- (a) Student level access to online courses shall be provided to the site visitors and readers. Said access should be provided at least 45 days in advance of the site visit and continue until the end of the actual site visit.
- (b) Access required in (a) can be as simple as establishing a single student user such as "IFSAC" for all evaluators to use. Additionally, an email account must be established to allow at least one site visitor to receive copies of any emails to or among students. This can be as simple as ifsac@yahoo.com or via a similar temporary account.

- (c) Site visitors shall have access to materials such as course syllabi, quizzes, exams, assignments and student evaluations.
- (d) There shall be a method established for the site visitors to interact and/or interview students in online courses. This may be done by email, telephone and/or in-person interviews.