

## INITIAL ACCREDITATION

Students will be considered graduates of a CAAHEP accredited surgical assisting program if they are enrolled in the program any time while the program is accredited. There is no grandfather clause of retroactive recognition for CAAHEP accreditation.

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Initial Accreditation may be granted when the SASA and ARC-ST confirm that the surgical assistant program is in substantial compliance with the **Standards**. Initial Accreditation is for those programs that apply for accreditation for the first time and/or have allowed a past CAAHEP accreditation status to lapse.

#### Application Process

When applying for Initial Accreditation, programs should: 1) call the ARC-ST/SASA office to schedule an on-site evaluation; and 2) submit a Self-Study application, CAAHEP request for accreditation services form and \$750 initial application fee.

It is recognized that emerging programs may not have had an opportunity to fulfill all of the **Standards**. It is required that the tools and methodology for conducting ongoing program evaluation and outcomes assessment must be in place. All preliminary data and analysis conducted must be reported. Programs that have not yet developed tools and methods do not meet the criteria for an acceptable application for accreditation.

#### On-Site Evaluation

An on-site evaluation may be tentatively scheduled in advance of the submission of the Self-Study application, but will not be confirmed until the Self-Study application is received in the ARC-ST/SASA office. The Self-Study application must be received in the office approximately 4 months prior to the on-site evaluation.

Following submission of the Self-Study, the on-site evaluation will occur at a mutually agreed upon date any time after students have entered the clinical component or final phase of the program. Students must be in the professional program at the time of the on-site evaluation. An on-site evaluation will not occur if students are not in the clinical component or final phase of the program.

#### ON-GOING REQUIREMENTS

Upon the award of Initial Accreditation, a program is given a three-year period of accreditation. At that time the program will begin submitting an Annual Report. Beginning with the first class, copies of the SASA standardized Graduate Satisfaction Survey and the standardized Employer Satisfaction Survey should be issued approximately 6 months and 1 year following the students' completion of the program (please see Annual Report guidelines).

Copies of each of the surveys can be obtained by contacting the ARC-ST/SASA office at (303) 694-9262 or at our web site [www.arcst.org](http://www.arcst.org).

After the review of two or more Annual Reports and the submission of the Program Review Report (PRR), the SASA and ARC-ST will determine if the program is in compliance with the *Standards*. If compliance is determined then a recommendation for Continuing Accreditation will be forwarded to CAAHEP. If the SASA is unable to determine that a program is in compliance with the *Standards* then a Qualitative on-site evaluation will be scheduled upon a mutually agreed upon date.

Initial Accreditation cannot be renewed or extended therefore it is essential that the program respond in a timely manner to all requests for information. In the case that a program does not complete requirements before the designated date approved by CAAHEP, the program's accreditation will expire. If a program's Initial Accreditation expires, the program will 1) assume non-accredited status and 2) will need to re-apply for Initial Accreditation.