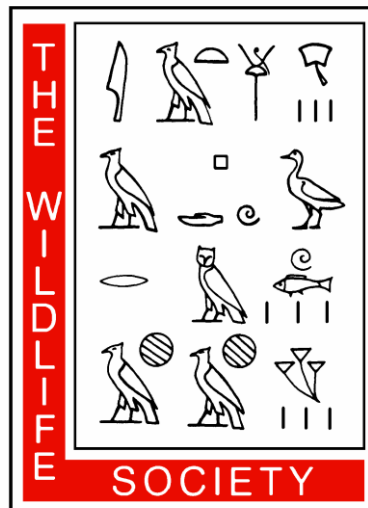


ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

Criteria, Procedures, and Guidelines for Accrediting Graduate Wildlife Programs in the Southeastern United States

NOTE: This Handbook will be in effect for all accreditation-related activities occurring on or after January, 2010.



Southeastern Section, The Wildlife Society

Revised 2010

Foreword

The primary goal of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society is to promote excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. The SE-TWS recognizes the need to ensure that wildlife professionals receive consistent, critical and relevant training from universities. The SE-TWS is responsible for the accreditation of graduate wildlife programs in the Southeastern United States. The purpose of an accreditation evaluation is to provide public assurance of an institution's effectiveness and a stimulus to improve the quality of instruction. Accreditation Criteria were first adopted by the SE-TWS in 1977, and have been revised periodically. The Criteria and Procedures set forth in this Handbook incorporate the experience gained through more than three decades of application. SE-TWS accredits specific curriculum, not degrees, departments, colleges, or institutions. The SE-TWS accreditation program was modeled after the Society of American Foresters Accreditation process, as the SAF has, in many regards, similar standards and expectations concerning education of its professionals.

Accreditation is a non-governmental, peer-review process that assures educational institutions or programs volunteer to undergo this review periodically to determine if certain criteria are being met. It is important to understand that accreditation is not a ranking system. It is simply assurance that a program or institution meets established quality standards.

The SE-TWS continuing effort to improve the quality of wildlife management instruction could not be accomplished without tremendous volunteer effort provided by Visiting Team members in the peer-review process. We acknowledge our members' professional service and thank them for their contribution.

This publication is provided to SE-TWS accreditation Visiting Team members and to departments, colleges, or institutions to explain the on-site visit process.

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PREFACE

The Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society (SE-TWS) has prepared this Accreditation Handbook, as the primary reference for an accreditation review and evaluation of graduate wildlife programs. The Handbook is designed to guide program administrators as they pursue improvement of educational quality and to assist evaluators as they assess program achievements.

This handbook is organized as follows:

Part I presents the SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria, which serve as the minimum criteria for assessing a graduate wildlife program's candidate (initial) or continuing accreditation status.

Part II outlines procedures for establishing or renewing accreditation, including general institutional requirements and time lines.

Part III offers specific Guidelines for organizing the SE-TWS self-evaluation report in preparation for the on-site visitation.

NOTE: This document is periodically evaluated and may be modified as appropriate by the Executive Committee of the SE-TWS, after opportunity for comment and review by the SE-TWS Professional Affairs Committee, other task forces of the SE-TWS, or by wildlife program heads. This document supersedes all previously published criteria, procedures, and guidelines on graduate wildlife program accreditation. Responses to questions regarding clarification, interpretation, or application are official only if in writing and only if issued by the SE-TWS President.

PART I: ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

Introduction

The primary goal of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society, consistent with the goal of The Wildlife Society is to promote excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. The primary objectives of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society, consistent with our parent society are to:

1. Develop and promote sound stewardship of wildlife resources and of the environments upon which wildlife and humans depend;
2. Undertake an active role in preventing human-induced environmental degradation;
3. Increase awareness and appreciation of wildlife values; and
4. Seek the highest criteria in all activities of the wildlife profession.

To ensure these objectives, the SE-TWS recognizes the need to ensure that wildlife professionals receive

consistent, critical and relevant training from universities. This can primarily be accomplished by having an accreditation program for wildlife graduate education programs.

The objectives of SE-TWS accreditation are to:

1. Maintain the overall quality of wildlife graduate programs through periodic program self-evaluation and peer review by qualified educators and practicing wildlife biologists;
2. Foster integrity and excellence through the development, use, and periodic revision of Accreditation Procedures to assess the educational environment and effectiveness of wildlife graduate programs; and to
3. Assure students, employers, the general public, and other organizations and agencies that SE-TWS accredited programs have educational objectives consistent with professional criteria, have the resources to accomplish those objectives, and are expected to continue to offer a quality graduate education.

Accreditation Criteria were first adopted by the SE-TWS in 1977, and have been revised periodically. The Criteria and Procedures set forth in this Handbook incorporate the experience gained through more than three decades of application.

The SE-TWS Professional Accreditation Committee conducts the accreditation process and makes the final decisions. The SE-TWS Professional Accreditation Committee is responsible for all accreditation appeals. Specific procedures for this process are found in Part II.

The six Criteria describe the essential elements of a graduate wildlife education program: graduate wildlife program mission, goals, and objectives; curriculum; wildlife program organization and administration; faculty; students; and parent institution support. The Criteria emphasize qualitative considerations. In addition, the Criteria provide latitude for the institution's and program's rights and obligations for initiative, experimentation, and variation.

Evaluation depends on the self-evaluation report, analysis by the visiting team, and the SE-TWS Professional Accreditation Committee professional judgment. Recognizing that no two institutions are alike, SE-TWSs policy is to evaluate each program independently on its individual merits. Decisions are based on assessment of the total program and its environment for stimulating intellectual professional development and growth.

The SE-TWS recognizes the need for diversity and encourages a rich learning environment composed of students, faculty, and external constituents and representing both genders and a variety of ages, cultures, experiences, and viewpoints.

While the SE-TWS is concerned with the quality of the institution maintaining the wildlife graduate program, it does not examine the total institution in detail. It relies on regional accrediting bodies for this function and requires that the parent institution where the wildlife graduate program is housed be

accepted and accredited by its regional and/or national accrediting entity.

Competencies, as used herein, refer to student outcomes that indicate students have the necessary background to function as a wildlife professional. The term curriculum defines the sequence of courses leading to a degree that prepares an individual for entry into the wildlife profession. It is intended to include all courses and prerequisites that constitute the professional graduate degree. The appropriate unit for accreditation is the academic program leading to a wildlife graduate degree. Program is defined as the curriculum put forth by the institution for accreditation AND the institutional resources needed to support that specific degree program. SE-TWS does not accredit universities, colleges, departments, or other academic units. It accredits graduate programs within these institutional structures. One or more programs may be accredited within a single academic unit. Similarly, an academic unit may contain accredited and non-accredited academic programs.

The following six criteria comprise SE-TWS criteria of accreditation for a graduate wildlife degree program. In these criteria, "must" refers to items that substantially bear on compliance with a criteria and where documentation is required. It is the responsibility of the institution seeking initial or continued accreditation status to be thoroughly familiar with all sections of these Criteria, Procedures, and Guidelines.

Criterion I: Graduate Wildlife Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Accreditation is based on an assessment of the total educational program, the institution's environment for stimulating intellectual and professional growth, and support for the program. Accreditation ensures that the environment, facilities, faculty, and infrastructure for the graduate wildlife program are sufficient and appropriate to meet the wildlife graduate program's stated mission, goals, and objectives.

The graduate wildlife program must be clearly defined and publicly state its mission, goals, and objectives. The program must provide the rationale and purpose for its existence and show how the goals and objectives of its current program meet the mission statement.

Dynamic graduate wildlife programs change with time. Periodic self-evaluation and revision of the program's mission, goals, and objectives are expected and must be documented. The program also must provide specific evaluations and measures of performance based on the integration of mission, goals, and objectives with the SE-TWS Criteria of Accreditation.

Accredited graduate wildlife programs statements of mission, goals, and objectives must reflect:

1. The SE-TWS Criteria for Accreditation presented in the Accreditation Handbook.
2. The distinction of wildlife management/biology as an interdisciplinary profession.
3. The needs of the constituencies that the program seeks to serve.
4. Sensitivity to the role of certified wildlife biologists in meeting diverse and changing social,

cultural, economic, and environmental needs and values.

5. The professionalism and ethical behavior necessary to manage and use natural resources for the benefit of society.

Criterion II: Curriculum

Subject matter described below may be incorporated differently by different programs. What may be a separate course in one program may be part of a more comprehensive course in another.

The graduate wildlife curriculum must provide a variety of educational experiences including lectures, discussion, activities enhancing verbal and written communication, experimental design, data collection and analysis, computer applications, and individual and group projects in laboratories and field experiences. The purpose of these experiences is to enable students to apply scientific methodologies necessary to attain a level of proficiency to be a professional wildlife biologist.

General Admission Criteria

The department must demonstrate that graduate students are selected based on objective criteria that reflect competency of the students in basic skills pertaining to mathematics, reading and writing, communication, arts and humanities, the biological and physical sciences, and basic natural resources policy and management. These criteria should be based on one or more of the following entrance requirements:

- Baccalaureate Grade Point Average (some minimum level)
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Scores
- Meeting Wildlife Biologist Certification of The Wildlife Society
- Internal/External Reviews/Examinations, particularly for doctoral students

There also should be a process to recognize deficiencies and how the department addresses these issues. For example, are deficient students accepted in some probationary status? The performance criteria subsequent to acceptance must be stated for a student to exit probationary status.

General Education

The department must demonstrate the educational and research components of its graduate program. What graduate-level courses are available in the fields of:

- Statistics
- Research design
- GIS technologies and applications
- Wildlife management
- Plant taxonomy, identification, and management
- Wildlife ecology
- Population ecology

- Specialized areas such as toxicology, wildlife diseases, human dimension, advanced analytical methods, etc.

The department also must demonstrate proficiency in student conduct of research and their professional development through:

- requirement of field research, data analysis, interpretation
- requirement of a thesis or dissertation
- experiential activities
- enhancing written and verbal communication skills
- teaching experience (particularly for doctoral students)
- requisites concerning attending/participating in symposia, workshops, symposiums
- requisites concerning professional activities of graduate students
- requirement of successful completion of a written and/or oral comprehensive exams covering the student's program of study

Criterion III: Graduate Wildlife Program Organization and Administration

Administrator

The program must be administered by a person carrying the equivalent title and authority of administrators of comparable units in the institution.

Student Recruitment, Admissions and Transfers

There must be a clear, published university, department, and/or program procedure for evaluating and accepting students and for transferring credit to fulfill the requirements in the graduate wildlife curriculum. Transfer courses must equal or exceed the content and criteria of the accepting institution's courses.

Teaching

The administration must document that high priority is given to quality instruction through faculty appointments, evaluation, and recognition of performance. Experience and expertise of graduate faculty in teaching must be demonstrated.

Administrative Support

The graduate wildlife program must have adequate staff resources with competencies needed to support the students, faculty, and administration.

Program Planning and Outcomes Assessment

Policies, processes, and/or practices for short- and long-term planning of academic programs must outline how periodic reviews and updates are conducted. The interests of students and external constituents must be represented in the assessment of educational outcomes. These assessments must indicate whether academic and professional goals have been met, the elements contributing to program success or lack thereof, and the means by which assessment findings are used to enhance program outcomes.

Criterion IV: Faculty

The faculty must provide high quality instruction and mentoring, is expected and empowered to keep the curriculum current and in concert with the program's educational goals and objectives, and provide effective guidance for students. The program must document that it follows its institution's policies and guidelines in the recruitment and retention of faculty that reflect cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity. The educational program for which accreditation is sought must show that a minimum of six full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty members who participate in the program, have their primary academic responsibilities in the graduate wildlife program and report to the responsible academic head.

Academic and Professional Competency

Collectively, the faculty must have a diversity of backgrounds in wildlife management/ecology as evidenced by varied professional experiences and education relevant to wildlife from a variety of academic institutions. Close and continuing communication with the wildlife profession and use of individuals from outside the wildlife graduate program can provide additional expertise and breadth of experience.

Teaching Skills

Faculty competence in teaching must be documented by expertise in their assigned areas of instruction; enthusiasm, ability, and effectiveness in instructing; an aptitude for working closely with students; and an ability to stimulate independent thinking and provide intellectual leadership. Faculty must be competent in teaching graduate level courses in natural resources management. Faculty also must be involved in continuous professional development and scholarly activities appropriate to their disciplines.

Research Skills

Faculty competence in conducting science-based research must be documented by expertise in their assigned areas of research. These competencies may be demonstrated via publications in peer reviewed journals, popular outlets, presentations at symposia, workshops, conferences (especially invited or plenary presentations), holding professional offices, or involvement within their professional societies.

Mentoring Skills

Demonstration of the faculty's dedication towards and ability to mentor graduate students which results in successful completion of their graduate program of study and eventual employment is critically important in any graduate program. Faculty competence in mentoring must be demonstrated.

Criterion V: Students

An important index of a program's commitment to its students is a well-planned effort, in line with the program's goals and objectives, to provide a broad range of academic and extracurricular offerings extending from recruitment to placement activities.

Recruitment and Retention

Following institutional policies and guidelines, the program must document that it seeks to recruit and

retain motivated and academically qualified students who reflect cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity. A clear description of the admissions criteria and the admissions process must be provided.

Professional Networking and Job Placement

The institution must provide resources needed to help support professional networking and job placement for students and should track the placement of their graduates for the previous 5-10 years.

Mentoring and Advising

The program must document its commitment to quality student mentoring and advising. Advisors must be readily available to students enrolled in the program for counsel regarding the student's academic, research, professional, and career opportunities.

Criterion VI: Institutional Support

The institution must provide resources needed to support the program being considered for initial or continuing accreditation. Opportunities must be provided for faculty development and continuing education.

Graduate Wildlife Program Support

The parent institution must provide adequate funding and other institutional support to allow the program to attract and retain highly qualified faculty, staff, and administrators. Adequate resources also must be provided for elements critical to the learning environment for professional wildlife biologists such as computers, GIS technologies, specialized laboratories, field instruction, animal holding facilities, and a land base for research that allows experimental treatments.

Supporting Programs

The parent institution must provide strong, well-staffed graduate student and research support programs. Courses (preferably representing multiple disciplines) and support programs must be readily accessible for wildlife graduate students. Adequate library facilities, holdings, electronic access to information, and related services must be provided. A fully functional Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee with a qualified Laboratory Animal Veterinarian should be in place and functional.

Physical Resources and Facilities

The parent institution, in collaboration with the unit housing the program, must provide a physical environment that is safe, healthful, and conducive to learning.

PART II: ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES

Institutions may seek accreditation for programs that lead to graduate (masters or doctoral degrees). All programs, regardless of the degree that is awarded, will be required to conform to all SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria to obtain or retain graduate wildlife program accreditation.

Both the SE Section of The Wildlife Society and universities must be clear in specifying which degree programs are accredited when communicating with students, employers, and the public. This "truth-in-advertising" principle is becoming increasingly important as wildlife schools and departments develop programs related to general natural resource or environmental curricula in which the core competencies for professional wildlife biologists may not be offered.

Graduate wildlife program administrators must work with their university-wide information offices to assure that only accredited programs are so designated in catalogs and promotional materials. Similarly, SE-TWS must assure that all literature it publishes accurately identifies accredited and only accredited programs.

Application for Initial Accreditation Status

The chief administrative/academic officer of the institution must submit a formal letter of application for initial accreditation to the President of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society. The application fee (see Fees and Charges) must accompany the application letter. The program will be required to submit a self-evaluation and undergo an on-site review, as described below.

The Professional Accreditation Committee (PAC) of the SE-TWS will consider the program's self-evaluation and visiting team report at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and make a decision on the request for initial accreditation. The PAC procedures and notification action are the same as those for continued accreditation.

All graduate wildlife programs must undergo a second self-evaluation and on-site review within five years after first being granted accredited status. Continued accreditation, after this initial five-year period, requires comprehensive self-evaluation and on-site review at least every 10 years.

Accreditation Status

A graduate wildlife program will be accredited by SE-TWS if it has:

1. Requested an accreditation review and paid required fees;
2. Conducted a comprehensive self-evaluation;
3. Undergone an on-site assessment by an SE-TWS-appointed external review team; and
4. Demonstrated to the SE-TWS PAC that the educational program leads to a graduate wildlife degree (MS or Ph.D.) that complies with the SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria.

Accreditation Period

Accreditation is granted for a specific period of time, usually 10 years. Because of circumstances or

program changes taking place or being contemplated, this period may vary among institutions, and among curricula within a program.

Once a graduate wildlife program is accredited, it is subject to periodic review as determined by the PAC. All graduate wildlife programs must undergo self-evaluation and on-site review within five years after first being granted accredited status. Continued accreditation, after this initial five-year period, requires comprehensive self-evaluation and on-site review at least every 10 years.

Between comprehensive self-evaluations and on-site reviews, continued accreditation is contingent upon on-going compliance with SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria. Notification of substantive program changes occurring between reporting periods is mandatory. The Chair of the SE-TWS PAC will request substantive change information annually (see also Substantive Change Reports).

Application Process and Eligibility

The decision to seek initial or continued SE-TWS accreditation is that of the graduate wildlife program, as supported by the chief administrative/academic officer of the institution. General application and review processes for initial or continued accreditation are:

1. A letter, with the application fee, from the institution's chief administrative/academic officer requesting an accreditation review of the graduate wildlife program.
2. A program self-evaluation report prepared in accordance with SE-TWS guidelines.
3. An on-site review and report by an SE-TWS visiting team.
4. Review of the self-evaluation report, visiting team report, oral comments presented at the PAC meeting, and other appropriate materials by the PAC.
5. Final action by the PAC.

Withdrawal from Accreditation Status

Upon request from the chief administrative/academic officer, programs are permitted to withdraw voluntarily from any status of accreditation at any time. Programs that voluntarily withdraw following PAC action will have this decision published by SE-TWS. Half the application fee will be refunded if the withdrawal comes prior to final selection of the visiting team. There will be no refund of the application fee once the visiting team has been selected and the graduate wildlife program head notified.

How to Apply

Step 1: Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation is the essential first step in the accrediting process. The SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria and Procedures provide a framework for important considerations during the self-evaluation and the

assessment by a visiting team. The aim of a program self-evaluation is to demonstrate compliance with SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria. The self-evaluation also is intended to provide the basis for program planning and improvement.

A self-evaluation is valuable only if it is candid, realistic, and comprehensive. A program's ability to collectively assess its strengths and opportunities for improvement is vital to accreditation. Guidelines for preparation of the self-evaluation report are presented in Part III.

The self-evaluation report is considered the property of the institution and SE-TWS will not release its contents unless authorized, in writing, to do so.

Step 2: On-Site Visit

The on-site visit by a SE-TWS review team is the second stage in accreditation following completion of the self-evaluation. SE-TWS's policy is to use visiting teams as information gathering and verifying bodies. The team validates the self-evaluation and gathers information on less documentable items such as morale, motivation, leadership, cooperation, and the learning environment. The visiting team's function is to analyze, for the use of the institution and the PAC, the program's strengths and opportunities for improvement, the quality of its performance, the effectiveness of its procedures, and the adequacy of its resources for sustaining its performance. The visiting team does not make decisions regarding the accreditation of a program.

The report and opinions of the visiting team are given great weight and respect in the accreditation process. However, as described later, the PAC makes the final decision. The PAC may substitute its judgment for that of the visiting team in instances where the PAC feels the evidence fails to substantiate the team's findings or analysis, or where additional facts have come to light since the on-site visit. The visiting team will evaluate the program in terms of the mission, goals, and objectives that the program seeks to attain, provided these are consistent with the Accreditation Criteria. The visiting team's independent insights, based on careful reading of the program's self-evaluation and the brief but intensive on-site review, can serve to:

1. Confirm and validate the conclusions of the self-evaluation;
2. Identify any areas in which the program is in questionable compliance with the SE-TWS Criteria;
3. Assure the PAC that the institution has been responsive to recommendations resulting from previous reviews; and
4. Reinforce the program's commitment to the continuing pursuit of excellence.

Visiting team members are encouraged to offer constructive comments for improvement of graduate wildlife programs along the guidelines suggested by the Criteria. However, the program administrators may wish to engage the visiting team members in a more in-depth discussion of opportunities once the on-site review is completed (see also Visiting Team Consultation).

The dates for all on-site visits will be set to permit the team to spend at least two and one-half days on campus while the institution is in session and when there are no major events that would conflict with the team's review. Given mutual agreement, the visit may be timed to coincide with regional accreditation reviews or other similar activities.

Responsibilities of the Program Head -- On-Site Visit

The graduate wildlife program head has the responsibility to:

1. Be thoroughly familiar with the SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria and Procedures.
2. Keep all of the institution's appropriate administration, faculty, students, and staff informed of the accreditation process, its significance, and its progress.
3. Accept, or challenge for cause, team members assigned by SE-TWS.
4. Mail copies of self-evaluation report and supporting documentation directly to the visiting team members at least 30 days in advance of the visit.
5. Mail one copy to each member of the PAC.
6. Mail one copy to the SE-TWS President
7. Make arrangements for lodging and on-site transportation for the visiting team well in advance of the visit.
8. Prepare an agenda and schedule appointments with key personnel well in advance of the visit, and alert administrators, faculty, students, staff, and others as to the nature and purpose of the forthcoming visit and request that they make time available as needed to meet with the team members.
9. Provide a private meeting room for the visiting team for the duration of the visit and access, including evenings, to supporting data and materials and support services such as word processing, printer availability, photocopying, and reference materials.
10. Provide final written comment on the visiting team's report, and attend the PAC meeting to discuss the review prior to the PAC's decision.
11. Pay visiting team expenses, including travel of the team and accompanying staff, lodging, meals, and miscellaneous expenses related to the visit.

Selection of the Visiting Team

SE-TWS visiting team members will be selected on the basis of interest, experience, training, and overall

knowledge of assessment processes in professional settings. Of primary importance will be the ability to develop and articulate objective opinions and judgments free of self-interest or professional bias. The nomination of qualified persons by individuals and organizations is encouraged at all times.

The President of the SE-TWS, in consultation with the PAC chair as needed, will appoint a visiting team following consultation with the graduate wildlife program head, who may challenge for cause the appointment of specific team members.

The team should consist of no more than five persons. This helps greatly when writing the draft report while still conducting the site visit. The Chair should write the draft for Criteria I and III; each of the 4 remaining Review Team members could then be assigned to write the draft for the remaining 4 criteria, Curriculum, Faculty, Students, and Institutional Support. The team chair must be a graduate wildlife educator with academic administrative experience. At least one team member must come from the nonacademic sector; it is recommended that this practitioner be representative of an important employment sector for the graduates. A third participant must be a member of the PAC. All team members must be SE-TWS members. Each must reside outside the program's home or contiguous states. No team member may be an alumnus, past faculty member, or employee of the institution being reviewed. No team member may have even the appearance of a conflict of interest.

The program head may request a team consisting of more than three members and suggest general specialty areas to be represented by these additional members. Appointment of such additional members is at the discretion of the SE-TWS PAC Chair, and, as with other team members, at the institution's expense. Additional team members may be appointed by SE-TWS for purposes of training, and SE-TWS will be responsible for the travel and related expenses in this instance.

Responsibilities of the Visiting Team Chair

The team chair will organize the team, consult with the program head to confirm the final agenda, conduct the visit, and complete the visiting team report in a timely manner. On-site, the team will meet with administrators, faculty, students, employers, and others; visit facilities; and review records and documents as necessary to accomplish its objectives. Under the direction of the chair and before leaving the campus, the team will draft a preliminary team report and conduct exit interviews with appropriate institution officials to verify its findings.

Within two weeks of the visit, the team chair will circulate an edited draft of the visiting team report to the team members and the PAC Chair. A preliminary draft of the report will be provided to the Department Head prior to the Review Team departing from the on-site review.

The visiting team report is considered the property of SE-TWS. SE-TWS will not publicly release its contents. However, SE-TWS reserves the right to release the document in its entirety in the event that the institution releases only portions.

Visiting Team Consultation

Following the completion of the on-site review, visiting team members have a unique perspective on the

institutions strengths and weaknesses. The institution may request an off the record consultation with visiting team members to discuss the institutions strategic opportunities. A consultative visit occurs after all formal exit interviews are conducted, but must be scheduled in advance to ensure that travel plans can accommodate additional discussion. Consultative discussions will NOT be included in the teams report.

Accreditation Status Time Line

- ✧ President of the SE-TWS notifies Program (Unit) administrator of availability of accreditation (or need for reaccreditation) and provides copy of "University Review Procedures."
- ✧ University requests review to President, SE-TWS, suggests review dates and review team members.
- ✧ President refers request to Chair, Professional Affairs Committee (PAC), and acknowledges to the University that it is proceeding.
- ✧ Chair (PAC) appoints member of PAC to organize the review team.
- ✧ This individual, with consultation of the Chair (PAC) (and other PAC members as needed) and with consideration to the nominees from the University, establishes preferences for review team. Consideration is given to minimizing travel costs associated with the review.
- ✧ This individual contacts potential team members or, if necessary, alternates until a review team is firmly established for the desired dates.
- ✧ University is notified that review is scheduled, provided a list of review team members (and addresses), and provided information forms to be completed in advance.
- ✧ University submits completed forms to each review team member at least 3 weeks in advance of on-site review.
- ✧ On-site review is conducted according to a schedule prepared by the University.
- ✧ A preliminary draft of the report will be provided to the Department Head prior to the Review Team departing from the on-site review.
- ✧ Review Team Chairperson completes final report and circulates to team members for comment. Report should address each of the "Criteria" for accreditation.
- ✧ Comments received by chairperson. Report is submitted to PAC with Recommendation: 1) Approve for Accreditation, 2) Conditional Accreditation or 3) Disapproval.
- ✧ PAC provides recommendation to President, SE-TWS, who may confer with the SE-TWS Executive Committee to confirm results of review.

- ✧ President submits report and decision to the university's provost and/or vice president for academic affairs, with copies to the department head, dean, and other appropriate university administrators.

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**REPRESENTATIVE AGENDA FOR SE-TWS ACCREDITATION VISIT**  
(Provided as a guide; programs may suggest alternatives to the visiting team chair)

**Arrival Day**

- Afternoon Team arrives, checks in
- 7:00 p.m. Dinner with program head: Review agenda, logistics, discuss program
- 9:00 p.m. Team meeting Review assignments, documentation, and areas of concentration

**Day 1**

- 7:00 a.m. Breakfast, usually with program head
- Morning Meetings with following as applicable: [**Note: Unless specified, graduate wildlife program head should not attend**]  
A. Chief executive officer of institution (optional)  
B. Chief academic officer and others (may wish to combine with A)  
C. College administration (if other than wildlife)  
D. Wildlife school/college administration (program head and others)
- Late a.m. Tour relevant campus facilities
- 12:00 Noon Working luncheon with small group of employers or recent graduates [**Note: it is imperative that the team meet with a small, representative group of employers of graduates to assess competencies. It is suggested that alumni employers be kept to a minimum. Alumni or advisory groups are welcome to meet with the team at other, appropriate functions.**]
- 2:00 p.m. Begin faculty interviews Scheduling is critical; groups should be kept small and may be composed by subject area, need at least 45 minutes per session. Interviews with graduate wildlife faculty should be given top priority.
- 4:00 p.m. Meet with representative graduate students [**Note: this should be an "open" graduate meeting scheduled at a time to permit the greatest representation from the student body (all years, all majors under review...etc.). Those not available should be invited to present comments to the team.**]
- 5:00 p.m. Return to hotel

6:30 p.m. Dinner - Opportunity for team to meet informally with small group of administrators, faculty, students, alumni, etc.

8:30 p.m. Team meeting

## Day 2

7:00 a.m. Breakfast (can meet with program head or other program administrators)

8:00 a.m. Continue faculty interviews or other scheduled meetings.

11:30 a.m. Working luncheon with any group not represented on first day's lunch (alumni, employers, faculty from supporting areas or other groups, as appropriate)

1:30 p.m. Visit supporting facilities: library, computer, field, research, etc.

2:30 p.m. Scheduled meeting(s) with the Department Head to clarify remaining questions

4:30 p.m. Return to hotel; team begins work on report as soon as possible

6:30 p.m. Dinner - team only  
Work on report; no other activities scheduled

## Day 3

7:00 a.m. Breakfast with program head

8:00 a.m. Team checks out of hotel; luggage ready for transport to airport

8:30 a.m. Exit meeting with chief executive and other administrators, as appropriate (30 to 45 minutes; this is a team reporting process-discussion will be minimal)

9:30 a.m. OPTIONAL -- Separate, additional exit meeting may be appropriate with institution administration, if different from graduate wildlife program administration)

10:30 a.m. Exit meeting with program faculty and staff (30 to 45 minutes; this is a team reporting process-discussion will be minimal)

11:30 a.m. Team departs for airport

## OR

11:30 a.m. Visiting Team Consultation begins (see page 15 for details)

## **Professional Affairs Committee – Accreditation Action**

### *Time Frame*

The SE-TWS PAC meets annually, usually immediately preceding the Annual SEAFWA Meeting in the fall. The purpose of the meeting is to review and make final decisions on all accreditation activities conducted or reviewed during the previous academic year.

The graduate wildlife program head and the visiting team chair will be asked to meet with the PAC during the meeting; the agenda will be provided well in advance of the meeting to facilitate travel plans. The graduate wildlife program head will be invited to submit written comments regarding activities or plans occurring after the on-site visit. Such comments must be submitted to the Chair, PAC, at least 45 days prior to the meeting of the PAC. Any documentation submitted after this date may not reach the PAC in time for consideration.

At least 60 days in advance of the meeting, the PAC Chair will send the PAC members copies of the self-evaluations, supporting documentation, visiting team reports, and institutional comments. The PAC will systematically review the documentation and consult with the visiting team chair and the program head prior to making their final decision. It is the function of the PAC to make an independent analysis of the facts and to determine whether a program's accreditation is initially granted or continued.

### *Actions*

The PAC's final action may include, but is not limited to, the general actions of granting or denial of initial accreditation, or the granting or denial of continued accreditation. Accreditation may be continued for a maximum of 10 years; initial accredited status is for maximum of five years.

The PAC will decide the specific educational programs to be approved, the duration of the accreditation, any conditions or requests for additional information, including limited on-site visits, and the format and due date for any requested report. The Chair, PAC, will inform the graduate wildlife program head of the format of the requested report and due date. Between on-site reviews, the SE-TWS staff will annually request substantive change information on behalf of the PAC.

The PAC may decide that a program be placed on probation or that it be requested to show why candidacy or accreditation should not be terminated.

### *Probation*

Probation may be recommended when a program, in the opinion of the PAC, has failed to respond satisfactorily to previous PAC requests or when it has deviated significantly from SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria.

### *Show Cause Request*

A request to show cause may be made when a program has not responded satisfactorily to conditions imposed on it as a result of significant noncompliance with SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria.

In either of these two cases, the PAC's action must include specific findings related to specific Criteria. The action also must specify the date by which the institution is requested to respond and the actions it must take to remedy the situation.

### *Notification*

The PAC findings will be transmitted to the institution as part of the PAC's final action. The documents are considered confidential and the property of SE-TWS. SE-TWS will not publicly release their contents. However, in the event that the institution releases portions, SE-TWS reserves the right to release these documents in their entirety.

Once the SE-TWS PAC has taken final action, the SE-TWS President will notify the chief administrative/academic officer, program head, and public of the PAC's decision, as follows:

1. Notify by formal letter to the institution's chief administrative/academic officer and graduate wildlife program head no later than sixty (60) days following final PAC action. Notification will include a copy of the PAC's decision and any recommendations or required actions.
2. Publish on the SE-TWS website and in the SE-TWS Newsletter or other SE-TWS publication of the general action, the duration of the action, and the graduate wildlife program involved.

## **Reference To Accredited Status In Institutional Publications**

The Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society and universities must be clear in specifying which degree programs are accredited when communicating with students, employers, and the public. Institutions with SE-TWS-accredited graduate programs must use the following statement, or equivalent wording, to describe programs with accredited status publicly in their catalogs or elsewhere:

The graduate program in wildlife ecology/management, leading to the advanced degrees (M.S. and/or Ph.D.) is accredited by The Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society

## **Substantive Change Reports**

The graduate wildlife program head is responsible for reporting substantive changes in a program to the PAC. A substantive change is one that may significantly affect the quality or direction of a program. It includes, but is not limited to, such factors as a major change in:

- × Objectives,
- × Complement of faculty,
- × Curriculum,
- × Financial support,
- × The administration of a program, or
- × Revisions of student admissions or retention criteria.

Preparation of the report must follow the Guidelines in Part III of this document and reference the appropriate criterion.

The PAC will review substantive change reports at its annual meeting or as necessary. The PAC may (1) request additional information; (2) acknowledge the change with or without reservation, or (3) request that an on-site visit or other action be scheduled. Failure to report a substantive change may result in probation or a show-cause recommendation.

The SE-TWS President will provide a checklist annually to facilitate substantive change assessment and reporting.

## **Fees And Charges**

The SE-TWS Executive Committee sets fees and charges. The 2007/2008 schedule of fees and charges is as follows:

Annual accreditation fee: \$100; billed July 1.

On-site review fee: \$1,000. (Note: this fee is in addition to the annual fee.)

Substantive change fee: None

Visiting team expenses: Variable; the responsibility of the academic institution under review.

### *Explanation of Fees and Charges*

The annual fee is assessed to the program administering the accredited graduate program, but is not assessed to each individual accredited program.

Annual and review fee revenues help underwrite educational review team costs, marketing of accreditation to prospective employers and students, and other program expenses directly associated with the accreditation process. SE-TWS also allocates a percentage of membership dues revenue to accreditation activities, and absorbs overhead normally associated with these expenses.

Visiting team expenses include travel expenses for the team members including any accompanying SE-TWS staff lodging, meals, and miscellaneous expenses related to the conduct of the visit. These expenses are paid by the academic institution under review, and are in addition to the on-site review fee. Unless otherwise requested, SE-TWS will arrange team travel, reimburse expenses of team members, and subsequently invoice the institution undergoing the on-site visit.

### *Receipt of Fees and Charges*

All review fees and charges are due and payable when invoiced. Late payments may jeopardize a program's application or accreditation status.



## **Appeal of SE-TWS Accreditation Decisions**

An institution may appeal a negative decision of the PAC. Appeals are heard and decided by the Society's governing body, the SE-TWS Executive Committee, which for this purpose includes a public member representative. A negative decision is defined as a denial of initial or continued accredited status.

### *Grounds*

Grounds for appeal are limited to allegations that the PAC has made an erroneous decision by:

1. Failing to adhere to Accreditation Criteria;
2. Failing to follow Accreditation Procedures; or
3. Failing to consider or accurately interpret all the evidence and documentation presented on behalf of the applicant.

The status of the program will remain unchanged pending the outcome of the appeal. There will be no public notice of a negative decision until the appeal is complete and the Executive Committee has taken final action on the appeal.

### *Process*

The appeal must:

1. Be made within 30 days of the date of the SE-TWS President's formal letter giving notice of the negative decision;
2. Come from the chief administrative/academic officer of the institution,
3. Be in writing to the SE-TWS President, and copied to the Chair, PAC,
4. Specify the grounds for the appeal, and
5. Request a hearing.

The institution has 90 days from the date of notification from PAC to submit detailed documentation supporting its position and its request. This documentation will be made a part of the record. It must state the issues clearly and must contain sufficient detail and information to support the position of the institution.

### *Review*

The hearing will be held before the SE-TWS Executive Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting occurring 45 or more days after receipt of the detailed documentation. The institution will have the opportunity to present its case and to respond to questions. The PAC chair will be available to answer

questions regarding the PAC's decision. The SE-TWS and the institution shall each be responsible for its own expenses.

In addition to considering the written documentation and the testimony introduced by the institution at the hearing, the SE-TWS Executive Committee will consider the institution's self-evaluation report, the visiting team's report, and any other material upon which the PAC based its findings and decision.

### *Actions*

The SE-TWS Executive Committee's decision in an appeal case will be to:

1. Uphold the decision of the PAC, or
2. Remand the decision to the PAC, along with rationale for so doing, or
3. Overturn the decision of the PAC.

The SE-TWS Executive Committee shall issue a written statement of its decision on the appeal, including the facts and reasons that are the basis for its action, and respond to the program's grounds for an appeal within 45 days after the hearing.

In this action, all decisions of the SE-TWS Executive Committee shall be final.

If the decision to deny or withhold accredited status is upheld, the program may reapply only after it is prepared to demonstrate that it has corrected the deficiencies noted in the PAC action. In any event, it must wait at least one year before reapplying.

## **Procedures for Responding to Complaints Against Accredited Programs**

The SE-TWS is concerned that accredited program performance is consistent with the SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria, program accountability, and program integrity. SE-TWS cannot intervene in internal procedures of institutions or perform as a regulatory body but will respond to documented complaints. The SE-TWS's review of complaints is based upon the Criteria for Accreditation.

### *Process*

A complaint to the SE-TWS about a candidate or accredited program must:

1. Be typewritten, signed, and addressed to the PAC in care of the SE-TWS President;
2. Clearly identify the individual, group, or legal entity making the complaint;
3. Present substantial evidence that a program has made substantive changes affecting its quality or has been or is engaging in practices that violate SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria; such evidence must state relevant facts, and, when possible, cite written materials and individuals for corroboration; and

4. Demonstrate, when reasonably possible, that a serious effort has been made to pursue the issue with the institution or program and that all review procedures provided within the institution and the program have been exhausted.

### *Review*

The SE-TWS President, in consultation with the PAC Chair, will review the complaint. If it does not appear to be within the scope of the SE-TWS's policies and jurisdiction, the complainant shall be so informed within a 30-day period of receipt of documentation. If the complaint appears to be within the scope of the SE-TWS's policies and jurisdiction, the complainant will be notified within a 30-day period that the complaint is being forwarded to the institution and program for response.

The chief administrative/academic officer of the institution will be requested to respond and advise the PAC what action if any has been or is being taken to resolve the issue. The institution will have 60 days in which to respond.

### *Actions*

The PAC will review the complaint and response from the institution within 120 days of receipt of the complaint and determine whether the matter should be closed or discussed for further action. If no response is received from the institution under the above guidelines, the PAC shall take action, which may include a request to show why accreditation or candidacy should not be terminated.

The complainant will be informed periodically of the steps taken by the SE-TWS in investigating the complaint, including any action taken by the PAC. If appropriate, material relating to a complaint will be filed and reviewed at the time of the next regularly scheduled review or on-site visit.

## **PART III: GUIDELINES FOR THE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT**

### **Introduction**

This section suggests guidelines for presenting self-evaluation information required by the SE-TWS Professional Affairs Committee (PAC) and the visiting team for each graduate wildlife program seeking accreditation status or reaccreditation. Its use is not intended to limit the scope of comments about the program; however, SE-TWS requests that the report correspond to the recommended outline.

Continuous self-study and self-evaluation are the essential first steps in the accrediting process. The SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria are the framework for the self-evaluation report and assessment procedures used by a visiting team. The goal of the self-evaluation is to demonstrate compliance with SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria. Program self-evaluation also should determine accountability and provide the basis for program planning and improvement.

A self-evaluation is valuable only if it is candid, realistic, and assesses all aspects of the program(s) under review. The self-evaluation report should include materials that show evidence of critical thinking, planning, development, and implementation during the period since the last SE-TWS review, and anticipated future program directions and changes.

## **Suggestions for Preparing the Self-Evaluation Report**

The quality of the self-evaluation is more important than the quantity of the materials submitted. The self-evaluation is a major undertaking, requiring full support of all those involved in the program. It requires collecting and analyzing extensive amounts of data in preparation for the SE-TWS visiting team. Questions and comment may be directed to the SE-TWS Chair, PAC, who is available to assist the program in undertaking its self-evaluation and on-site visit.

Suggestions for conducting the self-evaluation include:

- ✧ Complete the self-evaluation no more than 12 months in advance of the on-site visit.
- ✧ Appoint a small steering committee with a strong and capable coordinator to plan the work and keep it on schedule. It is helpful for the committee to include a person who was actively involved with a previous self-evaluation.
- ✧ Provide the coordinator with adequate time to carry out this important function. Make sure the committee has adequate support services throughout the self-evaluation process.
- ✧ The committee must become very familiar with the SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria and be ready to question, analyze, and debate the contents of the report.
- ✧ Determine early what factual and statistical data are required and request the appropriate institutional persons or committees to prepare them.
- ✧ Set up subcommittees to accomplish tasks. Existing standing committees can be used.
- ✧ Adopt and adhere to a definite and realistic timetable. The report is due at least 30 days in advance of the scheduled on-site visit.
- ✧ The steering committee should inform the graduate wildlife program community and constituencies about the self-evaluation and encourage involvement. Involve faculty, administrators (including central administrative officers), advisory boards, staff, students, employer groups, and alumni in the self-evaluation process.
- ✧ Allow at least a month prior to the mailing date for final editing and copying. The steering committee must reduce the bulk of materials to a concise, comprehensive report that the visiting team can be expected to read, study, and understand.
- ✧ Send copies, along with supporting materials, directly to each of the visiting team members and members of the PAC; mailing information will be provided by SE-TWS. Send three copies to the SE-TWS President.

Conciseness in the main body of the report is suggested. Supportive data, summaries in graphic and

tabular form, and other materials documenting the main body summaries must be included, where requested, in clearly defined appendices.

The self-evaluation report is considered the property of the institution and SE-TWS will not release its contents unless authorized in writing, to do so.

## **Outline of Information Required in the Self-Evaluation Report**

Use the following outline in conjunction with the SE-TWS Accreditation Criteria (Part I) to determine appropriate information to include in your self-evaluation report. This outline suggests the type of response required to satisfy each Criterion. It is not presented to restrict a program's description of how compliance with a Criterion is achieved. However, SE-TWS requires that certain data be submitted in the format shown (see documents A-F).

**NOTE: Graduate wildlife programs must provide separate discussion on the following items for EACH accredited degree program (M.S., Ph.D.).**

### *Criterion I: Graduate Wildlife Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives*

It is essential to clearly state and document printed references to the items required by Criterion I, as evaluation of subsequent Criteria depends on a thorough explanation of a program's educational objectives.

1. Document how the graduate wildlife programs mission, goals and objectives (1) are consistent with the SE-TWS Criteria for Accreditation, (2) reflect the distinction of wildlife as an interdisciplinary profession, (3) respond to the needs of the constituencies that the program seeks to serve, (4) reflect sensitivity to the role of professional wildlife biologists in meeting diverse and changing social, cultural, economic, and environmental needs and values, (5) maintain the professionalism and ethical behavior necessary to manage and use natural resources for the benefit of society. Show where they appear in publicly disseminated materials.
2. Document the process for periodic self-evaluation and revision of the program's mission, goals, and objectives.

### *Criterion II: Curriculum*

#### General

The wildlife graduate program must document the general degree requirements for graduate study (M.S., Ph.D.) such as

- ✧ entrance requirements of graduate students,
- ✧ probationary processes, if they exist,

- ✧ performance expectations, and
- ✧ expected deliverables of graduate students (e.g., Thesis/Dissertation Proposal, Program of Study outlining course work)

The program also must document the process by which

- ✧ candidates are recruited (e.g., national search),
- ✧ graduate committees are selected and associated criteria for membership, and
- ✧ faculty qualify for graduate faculty membership

### Educational Requirements

The graduate wildlife program must document that general education subject areas, such as verbal and written communication, science, mathematics, computer skills, and social sciences, are included in the graduate wildlife curriculum as a distinct course, or as components of courses.

Further, the graduate wildlife program must document depth, breadth, and balance among key major professional subject matter categories relevant to a graduate program in wildlife, including but not limited to ecology and biology, plant taxonomy, identification, and management, wildlife population ecology, scientific writing and presentation, research design and methods, wildlife inventory/habitat evaluation techniques, management of wildlife and natural resources, and natural resource policy and administration. This is performed by completing the following documents:

- ✧ Document A-1: *Required Courses*: Specify any courses that are required as part of the graduate student's curriculum, as for M.S. or Ph.D.
- ✧ Document B-1: *Required Courses- Course Content*: Indicate which critical content area(s) each required course addresses.
- ✧ Document A-2: *Elective Courses- Wildlife*: Specify any courses taught by graduate faculty within the department under review for accreditation that are available for graduate students to take as part of their curriculum, but are not required
- ✧ Document B-2: *Elective Courses- Wildlife- Course Content*: Indicate which critical content area(s) each required course addresses.
- ✧ Document A-3: *Elective Courses- Non-Wildlife*: Specify any courses taught by graduate faculty not within the department under review for accreditation that are available for graduate students to take as part of their curriculum.
- ✧ Document B-3: *Elective Courses- Non-Wildlife- Course Content*: Indicate which critical content

area(s) each required course addresses.

### Other Requisites

1. Document how oral and written communication skills are reinforced throughout the curriculum.
2. Document how computer skills are reinforced throughout the curriculum.
3. Document how adequate field instruction and practice are provided to ensure that graduate students have the opportunity to be competent to practice wildlife management or research as professionals.
4. Document how the graduate wildlife curriculum fosters analytical and critical reasoning skills, including systematic problem solving and decision-making for individuals and in a team environment.
5. Document how student awareness of historical and current issues and policies affecting resource management and conservation is established.
6. Document that the graduate wildlife program provides a variety of educational experiences including lectures, discussion, simulations, computer applications, and individual and group projects in laboratories and field experiences, enabling students to apply the scientific methodologies necessary to attain an array of beneficial wildlife-related products, services, and conditions.
7. Document that any distance-learning component of a program is consistent with the program's stated objectives. Distance learning includes off-campus classroom programs, external degree programs, branch campuses, correspondence courses, and off-campus, electronically-based instruction.
8. Describe the extent to which faculty research and extension enriches the wildlife graduate program and opportunities available to students to participate in research activities.
9. Discuss where and how professional ethics are incorporated into the graduate wildlife program and are reinforced by faculty.
10. Discuss how the graduate wildlife program supports TWS Wildlife Certification

### *Criterion III: Graduate Wildlife Program Organization and Administration*

1. Document that the program is administered by a person carrying the equivalent title and authority of administrators of comparable units in the institution. Present an organizational chart of the graduate wildlife program, showing its relationship to the institution's central administration.
2. Document that high priority is given to quality instruction through faculty appointments, evaluation, and recognition of performance.

3. Document that the graduate wildlife program has adequate staff resources with competencies needed to support the students, faculty, and administration.
4. Present the published procedure for evaluating and accepting students and for transferring credit to fulfill the general and graduate education requirements in the graduate wildlife program. Document that transfer courses and courses accepted for students in the graduate wildlife program are equal to or exceed the content and criteria of the accepting institutions courses. In accordance with the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment), visiting team members may ask to review files for students to assess compliance in this area.
5. Document that policies and processes for short- and long-term planning of academic programs detail how periodic reviews and updates are conducted.
6. Document in detail the process and methods for assessing educational outcomes of the specific elements articulated in Criterion II. Indicate whether academic and professional goals are being met, the elements most contributing to program success or lack thereof, and the means by which assessment findings are used to enhance program outcomes. Document that the interests of students and external constituents are represented in the assessments.

#### *Criterion IV: Faculty*

1. Complete Documents C-1 and C-2, and Document D; follow the format as presented.

Use Document C-1: Background Summary for Faculty Reporting to the Graduate Wildlife Program Head, to show that faculty has a diversity of backgrounds as evidenced by varied professional experiences and education relevant to wildlife from a variety of academic institutions.

Use Document C-2: Background Summary for Faculty Teaching Courses Listed in Forms B-1 and B-2 but NOT Reporting to the Program Head to indicate faculty from other departments or outside agencies who teach required professional courses or electives. Document any use of individuals from outside the graduate wildlife program.

Use Document D: Academic Summary for Faculty Reporting to the Graduate Wildlife Program Head, to show the budgeted time allocation for faculty members who report to the graduate wildlife program head; include adjunct or contract faculty who hold joint appointments or are otherwise part-time members of the graduate wildlife faculty. List authorized vacant positions for which funding is available. Do not list emeritus faculty unless actively teaching.

Document D must document that a minimum of six full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty members who participate in the program have their primary academic responsibilities in the graduate wildlife program and report to the responsible academic head.

2. Complete Document E: Individual Faculty Information for each graduate wildlife faculty member who teaches wildlife or wildlife -related, graduate-level courses used in graduate programs of study.



3. Document that the faculty provide high quality instruction, are empowered to keep the course current and in concert with the program's educational goals and objectives, and provide effective guidance and mentoring for students.
4. Document faculty expertise in their assigned areas of instruction; ability and effectiveness in instructing; aptitude for working closely with students; and ability to stimulate independent thinking and provide intellectual leadership.
5. Document faculty involvement in professional development and scholarly activities appropriate to their disciplines.
6. Document that the program follows its institution's policies and guidelines in the recruitment and retention of faculty that reflect cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity.

#### *Criterion V: Students*

1. Complete Document F: Wildlife Graduate Employment Summary. Summarize the professional employment record for the graduates.
2. Document that the program follows institutional policies and guidelines in recruiting and retaining motivated and academically qualified students who reflect cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity. Use Document G: Student Data Summary to show the total current graduate enrollment by gender and race/ethnic diversity; provide those figures for the previous three years and the expected number during the next three years. Show the number of wildlife graduates for the last three years and the expected number during the next three years.
3. Document the programs commitment to quality student advising and mentoring. Document that advisors are readily available to students enrolled in the program for counsel regarding academic, professional, and career opportunities.

#### *Criterion VI: Parent Institution Support*

1. Document the degree to which the parent institution provides resources needed to support the program being considered for accreditation. Document that the parent institution provides adequate funding and other institutional support to (1) allow the program to attract and retain highly qualified faculty, staff, and administrators, and (2) provide for elements critical to the learning environment for graduate education such as computers, office space, spatial information technologies, specialized laboratories, and field instruction and research.
2. Compare support for the graduate wildlife program, including faculty salaries by academic rank, to other academic units in the parent institution and indicate changes that have occurred or are anticipated in the educational budget. Provide the graduate wildlife program budget for the current fiscal year, and indicate by percentage how the budget has changed in the last three years in terms of

salaries, equipment, supplies, and travel and its relationship to the overall institutional budget. To the extent data for other graduate wildlife programs are available, regional comparisons also are encouraged.

3. Document that faculty are provided opportunities for professional development and continuing education.
4. Document that the parent institution provides strong, well-staffed student support programs, and that non-graduate wildlife courses and support programs are readily accessible to wildlife students.
5. Document major strengths and weaknesses of the parent institution and supporting departments, including breadth and accessibility, and how they affect the graduate wildlife program.
6. Document that adequate library facilities, holdings, electronic access to information, and related services are provided.
7. Document that the parent institution, in collaboration with the unit housing the program, provides a physical environment that is safe, healthful, and conducive to learning.

## **REQUIRED FORMS**

**Document A-1: Graduate Wildlife Program Summary Required Courses**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year:

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Course Name</b> | <b>Course Symbol &amp; #</b> | <b># Credit Hours</b> | <b>Instructor</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
|                    |                              |                       |                   |

**Document A-2: Graduate Wildlife Program - Elective Course Offerings - Wildlife:**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Course Name</b> | <b>Course Symbol &amp; #</b> | <b># Credit Hours</b> | <b>Instructor</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
|                    |                              |                       |                   |

**Document A-3: Graduate Wildlife Program - Elective Course Offerings - Non-Wildlife:**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Course Name</b> | <b>Course Symbol &amp; #</b> | <b># Credit Hours</b> | <b>Instructor</b> | <b>Department</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                    |                              |                       |                   |                   |

**Document B-1: Graduate Wildlife Program Summary—Required Courses - Course Content**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| Course Name,<br>Symbol & # | Course Content Contains Significant Content in (T all that apply): |            |                    |                       |                 |                              |                       |                                             |                                        |            |                  |                     |                                 |                  |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
|                            | Lecture                                                            | Discussion | Oral Communication | Written Communication | Research Design | Data Collection and Analysis | Computer applications | Individual projects in lab/field experience | Group projects in lab/field experience | Statistics | GIS Applications | Wildlife Management | Plant taxonomy & Identification | Wildlife ecology | Population ecology |
|                            |                                                                    |            |                    |                       |                 |                              |                       |                                             |                                        |            |                  |                     |                                 |                  |                    |

**Document B-2: Graduate Wildlife Program Summary—Elective Courses (Wildlife) - Course Content**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| Course Name,<br>Symbol & # | Course Content Contains Significant Content in (T all that apply): |            |                    |                       |                 |                              |                       |                                             |                                        |            |                  |                     |                                 |                  |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
|                            | Lecture                                                            | Discussion | Oral Communication | Written Communication | Research Design | Data Collection and Analysis | Computer applications | Individual projects in lab/field experience | Group projects in lab/field experience | Statistics | GIS Applications | Wildlife Management | Plant taxonomy & Identification | Wildlife ecology | Population ecology |
|                            |                                                                    |            |                    |                       |                 |                              |                       |                                             |                                        |            |                  |                     |                                 |                  |                    |



**Document B-3: Graduate Wildlife Program Summary—Elective Courses (non-wildlife) - Course Content**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| Course Name,<br>Symbol & # | Course Content Contains Significant Content in (T all that apply): |            |                    |                       |                 |                              |                       |                                             |                                        |            |                  |                     |                                 |                  |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
|                            | Lecture                                                            | Discussion | Oral Communication | Written Communication | Research Design | Data Collection and Analysis | Computer applications | Individual projects in lab/field experience | Group projects in lab/field experience | Statistics | GIS Applications | Wildlife Management | Plant taxonomy & Identification | Wildlife ecology | Population ecology |
|                            |                                                                    |            |                    |                       |                 |                              |                       |                                             |                                        |            |                  |                     |                                 |                  |                    |



**Document C-1: Summary of Faculty Reporting to the Graduate Wildlife Program Head**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year:

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| Faculty Member | Academic Rank or Title | Major Field(s) | Highest Degree Held/Year/Inst. | Experience (years)  |                   |              |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|
|                |                        |                |                                | Current Institution | Other Institution | Non-academic |
|                |                        |                |                                |                     |                   |              |

**Document C-2: Summary of Faculty Teaching Courses Listed in Forms A-1 and A-3, but NOT reporting to the Graduate Wildlife Program Head**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year:

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Faculty Member</b> | <b>Course(s) Taught</b> | <b>Academic Rank<br/>or Title</b> | <b>Major Field(s)</b> | <b>Highest Degree<br/>Held/Year/Inst.</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|
|                       |                         |                                   |                       |                                           |

**Document D: Academic Summary for Faculty Reporting to the Graduate Wildlife Program Head**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year:

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| Faculty Member | Budgeted Time Allocation (%) |          |           |       | All Courses Taught |          |              |               |                  |          |               |
|----------------|------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|--------------------|----------|--------------|---------------|------------------|----------|---------------|
|                | Teaching                     | Research | Extension | Other | Course Title and # | Required | Credit Hours | Contact Hours | Total Enrollment |          | # of Advisees |
|                |                              |          |           |       |                    |          |              |               | Undergrad        | Graduate |               |
|                |                              |          |           |       |                    |          |              |               |                  |          |               |

## Document E: Individual Faculty Information

[In format chosen by the program; please include...]

1. Name
2. Academic Rank, specialization, appointment basis (9- or 12-month, etc.)
3. Academic education background: Degrees, institution, major field of study, dates attended, date degree earned or expected.
4. Professional and research experience:  
Employer, nature of work, title, dates, total years
5. Teaching experience:  
Institutions, rank, specialization, dates, total academic years
6. Dates of appointment and promotions at present institution
7. List in bibliographical style publications during the last five years
8. Off-campus consulting, or other professional activities, special honors, recognition, during the past five years
9. Membership and offices held in professional organizations
10. Major professional self-improvement activities during past 10 years (including sabbatical)
11. External grants and other research funding during the last 10 years
12. Graduate students directed during last 10 years (state as M.S. or Ph.D.). State when they graduated and employment information.
13. Graduate student committees served on in last 10 years

## Document F: Wildlife Graduate Employment Summary

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| Post Graduation Status                          | NUMBER OF GRADUATES FOR PAST FIVE YEARS |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----------------|
|                                                 | Yr:                                     |   | Yr: |   | Yr: |   | Yr: |   | Yr: |   | Total Graduates |
|                                                 | #                                       | % | #   | % | #   | % | #   | % | #   | % |                 |
| <b>Employed permanent:</b>                      |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Wildlife</b>                                 |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Wildlife-related</b>                         |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Other employed</b>                           |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Employed temporary:</b>                      |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Wildlife</b>                                 |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Wildlife-related</b>                         |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Other employed</b>                           |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Graduate Study:</b>                          |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Unemployed:</b>                              |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Unknown:</b>                                 |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |
| <b>Total Number and Percentage of Graduates</b> |                                         |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |                 |

## Document G: Graduate Student Data Summary

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Degree Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| STUDENTS ENROLLED  | M.S. |        | Ph.D. |        | Total Students |        |
|--------------------|------|--------|-------|--------|----------------|--------|
|                    | Male | Female | Male  | Female | Male           | Female |
| Current Enrollment |      |        |       |        |                |        |
| Last Year          |      |        |       |        |                |        |
| Two Years Ago      |      |        |       |        |                |        |
| Three Years Ago    |      |        |       |        |                |        |

| STUDENTS ENROLLED  | TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS |       |           |          |              |       |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-------|-----------|----------|--------------|-------|
|                    | African Amer.            | Asian | Caucasian | Hispanic | Native Amer. | Other |
| Current Enrollment |                          |       |           |          |              |       |
| Last Year          |                          |       |           |          |              |       |
| Two Years Ago      |                          |       |           |          |              |       |
| Three Years Ago    |                          |       |           |          |              |       |

| Projected Total Enrollment for Next Three Years | Year: | Year: | Year: |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                                                 |       |       |       |

| STUDENTS ENROLLED        | TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATING STUDENTS |       |               |       |           |          |              |       |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---------------|-------|-----------|----------|--------------|-------|
|                          | M.S.                                | Ph.D. | African Amer. | Asian | Caucasian | Hispanic | Native Amer. | Other |
| Current Graduating Class |                                     |       |               |       |           |          |              |       |
| Last Year                |                                     |       |               |       |           |          |              |       |
| Two Years Ago            |                                     |       |               |       |           |          |              |       |
| Three Years Ago          |                                     |       |               |       |           |          |              |       |

| Projected Total Graduates for Next Three Years | Year: | Year: | Year: |
|------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                                                |       |       |       |



## Document H: Accreditation Review Report Format

### 1. TITLE PAGE

Accreditation Review Report  
for  
Graduate Wildlife Program  
Department of \_\_\_\_\_  
Submitted to  
Professional Accreditation Committee  
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society  
by  
Accreditation Review Team:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 3. INTRODUCTION

### 4. CRITERION I: GRADUATE WILDLIFE PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

- A. Accreditation Requirements
- B. Observations
- C. Opportunities for Program Enhancement

### 5. CRITERION II: CURRICULUM

- A. Accreditation Requirements
  - 1. General Admission Criteria
  - 2. General Education
- B. Observations
- C. Opportunities for Program Enhancement

### 6. CRITERION III: GRADUATE WILDLIFE PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- A. Accreditation Requirements
  - 1. Administrator
  - 2. Student Recruitment, Admissions and Transfers
  - 3. Teaching
  - 4. Administrative Support
  - 5. Program Planning and Outcomes Assessment
- B. Observations
- C. Opportunities for Program Enhancement

### 7. CRITERION IV: FACULTY

- A. Accreditation Requirements

1. Academic and Professional Competency
  2. Teaching Skills
  3. Research Skills
  4. Mentoring Skills
- B. Observations
- C. Opportunities for Program Enhancement

#### 8. CRITERION V: STUDENTS

- A. Accreditation Requirements
1. Recruitment and Retention
  2. Professional Networking and Job Placement
  3. Mentoring and Advising
- B. Observations
- C. Opportunities from Program Enhancement:

#### 9. CRITERION VI: INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

- A. Accreditation Requirements
1. Graduate Wildlife Program Support
  2. Supporting Programs
  3. Physical Resources and Facilities
- B. Observations
- C. Opportunities for Program Enhancement