



Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board

Bureau canadien d'agrément en foresterie

Introduction to the Academic Standards for the Accreditation of Degree Forestry Programs in Canada

The full curriculum requirements¹ for accreditation of a forestry program are made up of three broad groups of study - foundational, core forestry and complementary. Short descriptions are provided here for guidance. The reader is directed to Section 3.3 of the *Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board Policy Statement, November 24, 2008* for a more complete description.

Foundational Studies

The biological, physical, and social sciences and the humanities which underpin the core forestry studies of a curriculum. There is no minimum level of exposure required for this component.

Core Forestry Studies

The essential curriculum elements to which all graduates must have been exposed and the basis for the demonstrable competencies of the accreditation standards. A minimum of four full-time terms (60 credit hours) is required for this component.

Complementary Studies

Those elements of a curriculum over and above the core and foundational requirements. There is no minimum level of exposure required for this component.

This set of academic standards for the accreditation of baccalaureate level forestry degree programs is a companion piece to the *Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board Policy Statement*. They describe those elements of a forestry program that are considered to be essential and required, i.e., the Core Forestry Studies set out in the Policy Statement. The standards are fully harmonized with the *Certification Standards for the Profession of Forestry in Canada*² and accurately reflect the competency and knowledge expectations of the CFAB member agencies, the professional foresters associations of Canada, for entrance into professional practice.

Each standard adheres to the same format and contains the following elements - a principle statement, a list of relevant components, and a set of demonstrable competency requirements under each of which is given a number of performance indicators. These elements may be defined as shown in italics below:

-
1. To be considered for accreditation, a Baccalaureate forestry program must lead to a science-based degree of a minimum of eight (8) full-time terms (or equivalent) in duration. One academic term is taken to consist of a minimum of twelve (12) weeks of instruction, over and above periods allotted to examinations.
 2. The standards for entrance into professional practice as developed by the Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations.

Principle

A self-evident and enduring statement of the context of a standard.

Relevant components

Areas of potential study that are indicative of the scope of a standard and of the range of subject matter for which a graduate may be expected to demonstrate competency.

It is not intended that each forestry program will cover, or cover in depth, all items of a standard's relevant components. Rather, the list is intended as a guide to instructors. It is expected that the subject matter covered under the relevant components of a standard will be delivered in sufficient depth and breadth that a graduate will be able to perform work requirements in the subject area of the standard at a professional level of practice.

Demonstrable competency

An essential measurement point. A graduate shall be able to demonstrate entry-level competence in each of the described competencies of a standard.

In a substantive and meaningful way, the demonstrable competencies of each standard lead to a final capstone competency that attempts to embody the requirements of the other competencies of that standard.

Performance indicators

Specific statements describing what a graduate will be able to do in a measurable way.

The accreditation review process will focus on the “can do” evidence that is provided by the school in its response to the CFAB Questionnaire and during the course of a site visit. These standards, which reflect the expected outcomes of the baccalaureate level education program, are not satisfied by a description of the inputs and the testing of graduate knowledge alone that lead to graduation. The school housing the program for which accreditation is sought must provide verifiable evidence that all students graduating from the program have achieved competence in the areas which satisfy the criteria for accreditation. In other words, a school must be able to demonstrate convincingly that graduates are capable of using the knowledge they have gained to perform the duties and responsibilities of the entry level practitioner. The responsibility of a review team is the verification of, not the searching out of, evidence that is relevant to the making of an accreditation decision.

In the testing and evaluation of attainment under each demonstrable competency, instructors are encouraged to pay particular attention to the action verbs of the performance indicators. The verbs follow Bloom's hierarchical taxonomy (Bloom 1956) and are as described in Appendix A. In keeping with the entry-level context of these standards, many of the actions required in the performance indicators are in the lower levels of the taxonomy, i.e., knowledge, comprehension, and application. Others, however, reach into the upper levels of the taxonomy, i.e., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Testing should be appropriate to the level of the hierarchy used in each case.