



LIBERAL EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC

Application

**Institutional
Preaccreditation
2010-2011**

**The American Academy for Liberal
Education**

526 King St, Suite 203, Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703.299.9030 Website: www.aale.org



INSTITUTIONAL PRE-ACCREDITATION

Additional copies of the information regarding membership may be secured from:

**The American Academy for Liberal Education
526 King St, Suite 203
Alexandria, VA 22314**

Or by going to the Academy's website: www.aale.org

Information contained herein concerning programs, procedures, requirements, standards, and fees is subject to change without notice by the appropriate body of the Academy.

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APPLICATION PACKET

FOR

PRE-ACCREDITATION

Pre-accreditation is an AALE candidate membership status primarily intended to allow recently formed institutions to establish formal and publically recognized relations with the Academy as they progress toward full compliance with AALE Accreditation standards and criteria. Pre-accreditation is granted for a period of up to three (3) years, renewable once for a total of five years.

AALE Pre-accreditation enables institutions to establish eligibility to participate in Federal student financial assistance programs administered by the Department of Education under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, as well as in student financial assistance programs established under other Federal legislation requiring accreditation by a recognized agency.

An institution should consider applying for Pre-accreditation if:

- the institution has been in continuous operation for fewer than 10 years and has never been accredited or pre-accredited by an institutional accreditor (AALE, NEASC, MSACS, SACS, NCACS, NWAS, WASC, or other); **or**
- the institution's previous institutional accreditation or reaccreditation has lapsed or been withdrawn for any reason; **or**
- the institution is currently preaccredited by an institutional accreditor other than AALE (NEASC, MSACS, SACS, NCACS, NWAS, WASC, or other), and is free of recent or pending adverse actions by any of its accreditors.

Institutions seeking Preaccreditation must demonstrate substantial compliance with the Academy's Eligibility Requirements, Education Standards, and Institution Standards through a detailed and concise self-study report and must also receive a peer evaluation visit.

- During its term of Preaccreditation, an institution must provide concise annual reports describing progress and developments in relation to compliance with AALE's Education and Institution Standards.
- A preaccredited institution seeking a change in accreditation status to Accreditation must demonstrate full compliance with the Academy's Eligibility Requirements, Education Standards, and Institution Standards through a detailed and concise self-study report and receive a peer evaluation visit before the expiration of its term of Preaccreditation.

Attainment of the AALE Preaccreditation does not ensure or imply that an institution will eventually be granted AALE Accreditation status.

- All institutions preaccredited by AALE are required to complete and submit AALE Institutional Profile Forms on an annual basis.

Preaccreditation entitles institutions to most of the rights and privileges of AALE Accreditation, including participation in AALE General Membership Meetings.

All AALE application materials and handbooks are available for viewing, downloading, and printing at our website (address below). Bound copies are available by request from the Academy.

If you have any questions about AALE Program Accreditation, about this application packet, or about the Academy's accreditation policies and procedures, please feel free to contact us at any of the following phone numbers or electronic addresses:

Phone: (703) 299-9030
Email: info@aale.org
Website: <http://www.aale.org>

An Overview of the Application Process

The time required to achieve AALE Preaccreditation varies from case to case, but it is possible to complete the entire process 12 to 18 months after submission of a complete application. The following page offers brief descriptions of each step in the application process, along with an estimated timetable for completing these steps. Please note that this schedule is only approximate; the process for achieving Preaccreditation may take less than a year or extend beyond the estimated time frame. Much depends on the speed with which an institution acts, on the scheduling of the site visit by an AALE peer review team, and on the schedule of meetings for AALE's Council of Scholars and Board of Trustees.

Estimated Timetable

	<u>Week</u>	<u>Month</u>
I. Institution contacts AALE regarding Accreditation		
I AALE sends out Application Packet		1
II. Institution submits completed Application Packet		
AALE reviews application information and materials and notifies institution to begin self-study		6

Notes to Steps I and II: The information requested in this Application Packet is designed to ensure that an institution meets the basic criteria for full Accreditation. Supplying this essential information, along with a letter of intent and the various

requested supporting documents, is the first formal step in the process leading to Accreditation. An application processing fee of \$1,500 is also required at this time.

AALE reviews all information and materials returned with the completed Application Packet to determine whether the institution may proceed with the application process, or whether further information or materials are required. If all is in order, AALE will notify the institution to begin developing a narrative self-study.

The narrative self-study should describe an institution's approach to providing an education which meets AALE's *Education Standards*. It should explain the ways an institution's education aims - its stated mission and objectives and any planned or anticipated changes to these - are related to its actual education programs, services, and resources. AALE's *Handbook for Accreditation* describes the procedures for undertaking and completing the self-study. Please contact us with any questions you may have regarding your institution's self-study.

	<u>Week</u>	<u>Month</u>
III. Institution completes and submits self-study to AALE	12 – 18	
IV. AALE reviews self-study and selects a site v visit team	12 – 18	
AALE site visit on campus (3-5 days)		12 – 18
Site visit team submits report to AALE		
V. <u>AALE's Council of Scholars review site visit team report</u>		18
Board of Trustees reviews all materials for final action		18

Note to Steps III and IV: AALE reviews the self-study for completeness and assembles a site visit team. AALE carefully selects distinguished scholars and administrators from institutions with profiles similar to that of the applicant institution. Using the self-study as a guide, the team makes a campus visit to evaluate that institution's instructional program. The site visit team then prepares a report detailing its findings and recommendations. A copy of this report is sent to the institution for review and correction of any factual errors. AALE submits the final version of the site visit team report to its Council of Scholars for review and recommendation.

AALE's Council of Scholars is composed of recognized scholars from private and public, as well as secular and religious institutions throughout the United States. The Board of Trustees includes distinguished scholars and administrators from the higher education community, AALE member institutions, and nationally recognized representatives of other public and private organizations. The award of Preaccreditation status by the Academy thus confers truly national recognition. For more information on AALE Council and Board members, please see the literature accompanying this Application Packet or visit the Academy's website.

Completing the Application Packet

This Application Packet contains four (4) forms:

1. An Institutional Information Form
2. An Eligibility Requirements Form
3. An Institutional Profile Form

Any person authorized by the Chief Executive Officer of an institution may complete the information requested in these forms, but the Institutional Agreement included among the Eligibility Requirements *must* be signed by *both* the Chief Executive Officer and the chairman of the institution's governing board. A letter of intent to apply for AALE Accreditation must also be submitted with the completed application.

The information requested on the Accreditation Application Form should be readily available from a small number of persons and offices. These may include the CEO, Academic Vice-President, Comptroller, Registrar, Counsel, and the office of institutional research.

Accrediting agency application processes typically concentrate on questions of fiscal responsibility and institutional resources. AALE meets and exceeds standards in these areas with its exclusive Institutional Profile Form, an innovative data collection system designed to expedite Department of Education reporting requirements. More importantly, the Institutional Profile Form allows an institution's narrative self-study to focus on questions of far greater interest to liberal arts faculty and administrators: undergraduate teaching and learning.

AALE requires supporting documentation for certain parts of the application for Accreditation; these are clearly indicated in the several forms. In many cases an institution's catalog, bulletin, or other published sources will contain the requested information. At the appropriate places in the Application Form we ask for the title(s) of the supporting documents) and the page numbers) where the relevant information can be found. *Please be sure to include copies of all documents cited in this fashion with the completed application.*

This packet contains all the forms necessary to complete the application for Accreditation. Electronic versions of these forms may also be downloaded from the AALE website (<http://Avwww.aalc.org>)

Application Fee

An application processing fee is required of all institutions applying for Accreditation by the American Academy for Liberal Education. This fee should be submitted with the completed application in the form of a check, money order or electronic wire made payable in United States dollars only to the "American Academy for Liberal Education." Applicants should contact the Academy's national offices for the current application fee.

Returning the Completed Application Packet

Please return the completed Application Packet, including all forms and required supporting documents, the signed Institutional Agreement Form, a the letter of intent - indicating agreement with the Academy's mission, and the application fee, to the following address:

**American Academy for Liberal Education
526 King St., Suite 203
Alexandria, VA 22314**

PART I. INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

1. NAME OF INSTITUTION

Address: _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Main Telephone Switchboard Number: (_____) _____ - _____

Institutional Web site Address: _____

2. NAME AND TITLE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Address: _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ - _____

E-mail Address: _____

Is the chief executive officer the presiding officer of the governing board of this institution?

Yes _____ **No** _____

3. NAME AND TITLE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

Address: _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code**

Telephone: (____) ____ - _____

E-mail Address: _____

4. NAME AND TITLE OF PRESIDING OFFICER OF GOVERNING BOARD

Address: _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code**

Telephone: (____) ____ - _____

E-mail Address: _____

5. NAME AND TITLE OF INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION LIAISON

Address: _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code**

Telephone: (____) ____ - _____

E-mail Address: _____

6. INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL

Public _____ **Please specify system:** _____

Private ____ Independent ____ Is this institution for profit ____ or non-profit ____ ?

Religious ____ Describe affiliation: _____

7. **ENROLLMENT**

Undergraduate FTE ____ Undergraduate headcount _____ Total _____

Graduate FTE ____ Graduate headcount _____ Total _____

8. **OPERATION**

Year institution founded _____ Years in continuous operation _____

PART II. AALE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All institutions applying for Accreditation or Preaccreditation must meet AALE's eligibility requirements. As indicated below, these requirements can be addressed by providing the information and documentation requested in the eligibility requirements form (page 9 below).

A. Institutional Agreements and Administrative Structure

1. The institution must attest to:

a) its commitment and intent to comply with the criteria of the Academy, either current or as these may be modified hereafter, consistent with the policies and procedures of the Academy;

b) its understanding and agreement that the Academy may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or member of the public that may request such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding its membership status with the Academy;

c) its agreement to disclose to the Academy, at anytime, all such information as the Academy may require to carry out its evaluating and accrediting functions; and

d) its agreement to refrain from making any promotional use of its application for Accreditation or Preaccreditation prior to the actual granting of an accreditation status.

Eligibility requirement (A.1) should be addressed by completing item (A.1), the Institutional Agreement included in the eligibility requirements form.

2. The institution has a charter and formal authority from the appropriate government agency to confer degrees, certificates, or diplomas in the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates.

Eligibility requirement (A.2) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (A.2) of the eligibility requirements form.

3. The institution has an active, policy-making governing board of at least five members, which has the authority and duty to ensure that the institution achieves its mission. The presiding officer of the board, along with a majority of the other voting members, must have no conflicting contractual, employment, personal, or family financial interests in the institution.

Eligibility requirement (A.3) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (A.3) of the eligibility requirements form.

4. The institution has a chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is to the institution. The chief executive officer cannot be the presiding officer of the board.

Eligibility requirement (A.4) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (A.4) of the eligibility requirements form.

5. The institution agrees to disclose to the Academy its current and past accreditation status with any of its institutional or program accreditors, including any adverse actions taken against the institution by any of those accreditors.

Eligibility requirement (A.5) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (A.5) of the eligibility requirements form.

B. Mission and Published Information

6. The institution has a clearly defined, published mission statement that includes a commitment to liberal education and is appropriate to an institution of higher learning.

Eligibility requirement (B.6) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (B.6) of the eligibility requirements form.

7. The institution has clear, accurate, and current published information describing its general education requirements and programs.

Eligibility requirement (B.7) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (B.7) of the eligibility requirements form.

8. The institution has clear, accurate, and current published materials accurately describing:

- a. Degree programs.
- b. Major and minor programs.
- c. Tuition, fees, and refund amounts and policies.
- d. Academic admissions and retention policies.
- e. Policies and procedures directly affecting students.
- f. Policies and procedures directly affecting faculty, administrators, and other personnel.
- g. Academic credentials of faculty and administrators.

Eligibility requirement (B.8) may be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (B.8) of the eligibility requirements form.

Operations, Learning Resources, and Student Services

- 9. The institution must be in regular operation and have students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs at the time of the site evaluation visit.

Eligibility requirement (C.9) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (C.9) of the eligibility requirements form.

- 10. The institution owns or ensures access to adequate learning resources and appropriate services in support of its courses, majors and other academic programs, degrees offered, and student services.

Eligibility requirement (C.10) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (C.10) of the eligibility requirements form.

- 11. For each field in which a major is offered for a degree there is at least one full-time, competent faculty member with responsibility for oversight and coordination.

Eligibility requirement (C.11) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (C.11) of the eligibility requirements form.

Financial Resources and Auditing

- 12. The institution has established a financial base adequate to support activities consistent with its mission.

Eligibility requirement (D.12) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (D.12) of the eligibility requirements form.

- 13. The institution has a cohort default rate under the FFEL, Direct Loan, and Federal Pell Grant programs less than twenty-five percent (25%) and makes available the previous two years of default rates as calculated by the U.S. Department of Education ("The Department") or by the institution using the Department's instructions as well as correspondence with the Department related to its review of the institution's default rate.

Eligibility requirement (D.13) should be addressed by providing the information and/or documentation requested in item (D.13) of the eligibility requirements form.

14. The institution must complete accurately the Institutional Profile Form included with the application.

Eligibility requirement (D.14) should be addressed by completing the Institutional Profile Form included with the eligibility requirements.

E. Eligibility Documents

15. All institutions applying for Accreditation or Preaccreditation must submit the eligibility documents specified below.
 - a. Evidence of degree-granting authority.
 - b. Copies of the Articles of Incorporation and/or the legal charter.
 - c. Current copy of the course catalog.
 - d. Current copy of the faculty/staff handbook.
 - e. Current copy of the student handbook.
 - f. Copies of the two most recent externally audited financial statements, including management letters.

In place of an audited financial statement, newly established institutions may submit special reports that include either statements of positive assurance by independent certified public accountants or an appropriate governmental auditing agency as to the material accuracy of current funds, expenditure classifications and amounts in accordance with generally accepted principles of institutional accounting, and the current fund balance sheet. Institutions must also demonstrate financial responsibility in accordance with United States Department of Education Regulations. All accounting practices and financial statements must conform to nationally recognized standards, such as those required by NACUBO and AICPA.

Eligibility requirement (E.15) should be addressed by providing the documents requested here and in item (E.15) of the eligibility requirements form.

AALE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FORM

A.1 INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT

Institutions seeking membership with the American Academy for Liberal Education are required to complete this agreement, which attests to the institution's intent to comply with AALE's Education Standards and the criteria for Accreditation as specified in AALE's *Handbook for Accreditation*.

The institution also agrees to disclose any information which the Academy may request in order to administer its evaluating and accrediting functions.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for Accreditation or Preaccreditation by the American Academy for Liberal Education

_____ (name of institution)

Does hereby agree to abide by the following conditions:

The institution is committed to and intends to adhere to the criteria of the American Academy for Liberal Education, either current or as these may be modified hereafter, consistent with the policy and procedures of the Academy.

The Institution understands and agrees that the American Academy for Liberal Education, at its discretion, may make known to any agency or member of the public that may request such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the status with the Academy.

The Institution agrees to disclose to the American Academy for Liberal Education any and all such information as the Academy may require to carry out its evaluation and accrediting functions.

The institution agrees to refrain from making any promotional use of its application for Accreditation or Preaccreditation prior to the actual granting of status.

Name, signature, date CEO

Name, signature, date Chairman

A.2 DEGREE GRANTING AUTHORITY

Is the institution chartered with formal authority from the appropriate government agency to confer degrees, certificates, or diplomas in the jurisdiction in which the institution operates?

Yes ____ No ____ Date chartered: _____

Name and address of the agency conferring degree granting authority:

Degrees the institution is empowered to confer by this authority:

Legal name of chartered institution if different from name publicly used:

A3 GOVERNING BOARD

Does the institution have an active policy-making governing board of at least five (5) members, which has the authority and duty to ensure that the institution achieves its mission?

Yes ____ No ____

Name of governing board:

How many members does the board have at this date?

(voting members) _____ (non-voting members) _____

What is the maximum number of members the board may have? _____

Does the presiding member of the board have a contractual, employment, personal or family, or financial interest in the institution?

Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please specify on an attached sheet.

Does a majority of the voting members of the governing board have contractual, employment, personal or family, or financial interests in the institution?

Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please specify on an attached sheet.

A4 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Does the Institution have a chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is to the institution?

Yes ____ No ____

Is the CEO also the presiding officer of the institution's governing board? Yes _____ No ____

A5 ACCREDITATION

1. Has the institution ever been accredited by a Department of Education recognized accreditor for Title IV purposes? Yes _____ No ____ (If not, proceed to item A.5.2)

i. Indicate which agency and date of last renewal:

ii. Is this accreditation current _____ or has it lapsed _____?

iii. Has this agency ever taken any adverse action against the institution (e.g., notices or probations)? If so, please describe each action (attach a separate sheet if necessary):

2. Please list any and all accrediting agencies currently accrediting your institution or any of its programs (attach a separate sheet if necessary):

<u>Accrediting agency</u>	<u>Institution/program accredited</u>	<u>Date of last renewal</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

The information requested in eligibility requirements B.6 through E.1 below will most often be found in an institution's catalog, handbooks, bulletins, and other public documents. Please provide the title of the supporting document and the page numbers) where the relevant information can be found. After the first full citation of a document, feel free to abbreviate.

Please include copies of all documents cited in this fashion with the completed application.

B.6 MISSION STATEMENT

Does the institution have a clearly defined and published mission statement that includes a commitment to liberal education and that is appropriate to an institution of higher learning?

Yes _____ No _____

Please provide title(s) and page numbers) of the published document containing the full text of institution's mission statement:

B.7 GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Does the institution have clearly defined and published information describing its general education requirements and programs?

Yes _____ No _____

Please provide title(s) and page number(s) of the published document(s) that describes the institution's general education requirements and programs:

B.8 PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

Do the institution's published materials clearly and accurately describe:

a. Degree Programs?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
b. Major and minor Programs?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
c. Tuition, fees, and refund amounts and policies?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
d. Academic admissions and retention policies?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
e. Policies and procedures directly affecting students?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
f. Policies and procedures directly affecting faculty, administrators, and other personnel?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
g. Academic credentials of faculty and administrators?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>

Please provide title(s) and page number(s) of the published document(s) containing the statements of the institutional programs and policies listed above:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

C.9 OPERATION

Is the institution currently in operation? Yes _____ No _____

For how many years has the institution been in continuous operation?

Does the institution currently have students enrolled in its baccalaureate degree program? Yes ___ No _____

C.10 LEARNING RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Does the institution own or ensure access to adequate learning resources and appropriate services h support of:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| a. Individual courses offered? | Yes ___ No _____ |
| b. Academic majors and programs offered? | Yes ___ No _____ |
| c. Degrees offered? | Yes ___ No _____ |
| d. Student services? | Yes ___ No _____ |

Please provide title(s) and page numbers) of the published document(s) that describe the learning resources and other services listed above:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

C.11 FACULTY OVERSIGHT AND COORDINATION

Is there at least one full-time faculty member with responsibility for oversight and coordination each major field or discipline? Yes _____ No _____

D.12 FINANCIAL BASE

Has the institution established a financial base adequate to support activities consistent with its mission and educational objectives? Yes ___ No _____

Please elaborate on a separate page.

D.13 STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT RATE

Is the institution's current cohort default rate under the FFEL, Direct Loan, and Federal Pell Grant programs more than twenty-five percent (25%)? Yes _____ No _____. If yes, please elaborate:

Is the institutions cohort default rate for either of the two previous years more than twenty-five percent? Yes _____ No _____. If yes, please elaborate:

D. 14 INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE FORM

Does the institution agree to complete accurately the Institutional Profile Form included with this application? Yes ____ No ____

D.15 ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS

All institutions applying for Accreditation or Preaccreditation must submit the eligibility documents specified below.

- 1. Evidence of degree-granting authority.**
- 2. Copies of the Articles of Incorporation and/or the legal charter.**
- 3. Current copy of the course catalogue.**
- 4. Current copy of the faculty/staff handbook.**
- 5. Current copy of the student handbook.**
- 6. Copies of the two most recent externally audited financial statements. The most recent of these statements must have been made within one year of the accreditation site team visit.**