



**GUIDE TO THE ISA
(Institutional Self- Appraisal)**

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SECTION I: GUIDE TO THE INSTITUTIONAL SELF-APPRAISAL

Long term goal: Implementing sound policy into excellent procedures.

An institution seeking accreditation acknowledges and accepts the AIJS Standards for the granting of accreditation. AIJS appreciates that the institution is looking for clarification of these Standards and for practical advice and support in making sure that it can attain these Standards. AIJS will work with institutions to ensure that the qualities of administrative and educational excellence, specified in the AIJS Standards, are present and evident within the applying institution. Accreditation can only be granted when this has been clearly and objectively demonstrated.

In order to ensure that you have examined each of the Standards and have properly reflected on the degree to which they are satisfied, AIJS requires institutions to perform two inter-related exercises: (a) to undergo the process of preparing and submitting an Institutional Self-Appraisal, and (b) to host an onsite review by an AIJS site visit team. In order to prepare you for these exercises, the agency will provide clear guidelines and other resources to ensure that you are ready for the challenge of the accreditation process.

INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTER

The ideal organization should be self-evaluating. It should be continuously monitoring its own activities so as to determine whether it is meeting its goals, or even whether these goals should continue to prevail. The decision-maker should seriously consider any evidence that suggests a change in goals or programs may be appropriate. There should be no vested interest in continuing with policies that produce ineffective and possibly dysfunctional institutional outcomes.

This ISA exercise does not expect you to describe an ideal organization. Instead, AIJS anticipates an honest, earnest effort in describing your existing reality and, where helpful, the antecedents of this reality. Considering this reality, you should then describe the institution's strengths and weaknesses. If after this effort, your institution can step back and offer realistic answers to such questions as "Where do we go from here" and "How do we get there," then AIJS will consider the application process to have been successful.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SELF-APPRAISAL

A Valuable Process

Completion of an Institutional Self-Appraisal (ISA) allows the institution to critically examine and reflect upon, and if necessary to upgrade, its administrative and educational operations to comply with the spirit and letter of each of the specific Standards required for accreditation. This exercise, valuable in its own right, also prepares the institution for the second phase of the accreditation process.

AIJS requires that institutions seeking accreditation prepare an ISA. In so doing, AIJS is not looking for simply another report from the institution. Rather, in the experience of

accrediting agencies, the very process of completing a self-appraisal helps the institution to better focus on critical administrative and educational issues. By focusing on these issues, the institution is better able to define its strengths and identify its weaknesses.

Two end products result. The first is a completed ISA that is forwarded to AIJS for review and comment. The second, of equal if not more importance, is an opportunity for the institution to thoroughly review and reflect on its own policies and practices.

The ISA should be extensive and be built around the framework outlined below. It is important that all sections of the ISA are completed and that the entire document is well articulated and integrated. Some institutions may choose to use a comprehensive question and answer format while other institutions might prefer a narrative style. Regardless of format, in each section, the institution should attempt to understand the purpose of the section and demonstrate, in its responses, compliance to AIJS Standards, and present supporting documents which provide evidence of this compliance.

The ISA should contain the following chapters:

Introduction- A summary of the history, mission, objectives, strengths and areas needing attention in the institution.

Standard 1- Institution Mission and Goals

Standard 2- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Standard 3- Student Progress and Learning Outcomes

Standard 4- Facilities, Resources and Equipment

Standard 5- Recruitment, Admissions, Catalogs and Student Services

Standard 6- Student Records

Standard 7- Measures in Program Length, Objective of Degrees and Credentials

Standard 8- Faculty Qualifications and Responsibilities

Standard 9- Administration, Human Resources and Collaborative Relationships

Standard 10- Financial Practices

In each of these Standards, the institution should present its understanding of how it complies with each Standard. The institution should present cohesive responses, rather than short answers to these guiding questions. Many of these Standards require documentation that supports the narrative.

Through this preliminary self-examination, the institution can identify organizational strengths and weaknesses that have a bearing on the operations of the institution and ways in which it might respond to change. The purpose of the ISA is not merely to anticipate the questions of the site visit team but to allow participants to critically examine the institution, identify areas of strength and weakness, and report on the institution's ability to serve its constituents.

In writing the ISA, you should read each section in this Handbook to best understand what the report should contain and what it is that the site visit team will want to see demonstrated. In general, think of the Guide to the ISA as outlining what AIJS will look for when evaluating your institution's compliance to its Standards.

Obviously, you should try to ensure that you have well-considered, well-integrated policies in each of these areas and that these policies provide a structure for operations, communication and development within your institution. The site visit team will want to see that what you have set out in the ISA *actually corresponds to practice*. The team will attempt to determine the extent to which you have implemented sound policy into excellent procedures.

THE ROLE OF STANDARDS IN THE REVIEW PROCESS

In Section II of this Handbook, we consider each one of the Standards that guide the accreditation process. For each Standard we will provide the following:

- A definition of the Standard.
- Institutional Implications: what the institution is expected to consider in preparing the self-assessment for that Standard, including a set of representative questions that the task group assigned to this particular Standard may examine during the self-assessment.
- Institutional documents that should be used as exhibits to evidence compliance to the Standard. Your exhibits are not limited to documents on this list.

Start by becoming familiar with all of the Standards. A careful, complete reading of the sections that follow is essential before you start writing the ISA. Such a reading will help you identify areas of commonality or similarity between Standards; this will enable you to avoid duplicating efforts and assist you in writing a well-integrated ISA.

For each Standard examine the questions listed. To what extent can you answer each of them? Remember that it is not simply a case of supplying answers but of understanding the scope of the Standard and the considerations that need to be given in responding to each of the standards. If you believe issues or questions are either not applicable or have little significant impact on your educational goals or operational practices, explain why.

In writing the ISA, explain what your institution does and why. Explain why it is that you have decided to do things the way that you have. Be accurate in describing your practices and critical in appraising them. If you see that there is a gap between what should be and what is, or between what could be and what is, consider changing the system or the policy rather than noting the discrepancy in the ISA. Write the policies you intend to follow and the procedures that enable you to follow them. The process of working through the ISA is to allow you to review, consider and improve. Take the opportunity of making the process work to your benefit and to the benefit of the institution. During the time it takes to write the ISA and plan the site visit, you will likely have the opportunity to follow these policies. Evidence of compliance should be prepared for the site visit though it may not have been presented in the ISA.

Always consider the likely reaction to your responses by the ISA reviewers. Have them in mind when you write the report or prepare for the on-site review. Anticipate their questions. Put yourself in their position and try to see your institution from the outside, from the perspective of someone who was not previously familiar with it.

Focus: Writing the ISA

Break into working committees; choose appropriate people to head those committees, set a defined time line; understand and learn the Standards, (use AIJS support) canvas your staff and administration for information, reflect on the relationship of the Standards and your school, address that relationship, determine what might need improvement and how you intend to improve; make the changes in policy and protocol and prepare any forms needed for documentation, collect the findings of all the committees and allow time for the liaison officer to collate the results, find and organize the supporting documents and be able to print and bind the material.

SECTION II: AIJS STANDARDS

STANDARDS: INTRODUCTION

In exercising its accreditation responsibilities, AIJS looks at how effective the institution is in achieving its academic and administrative mission, as well as the level of quality and professionalism of its operations. In order to make these judgments, a framework of operational dimensions is required, as is a set of performance measurements. When evaluated, an institution worthy of being accredited will consistently score highly on all of these operational dimensions. The task of AIJS will be to determine an applicant institution's performance level on each of these operational dimensions, which it calls Standards.

In this section, the AIJS Standards will be presented. Each section consists of a definition of the Standard, followed by an interpretive explanation of that Standard. AIJS considers the Standards that it has selected as essential to the effectiveness and excellence of an educational institution.

In explaining how the site visit team will measure the extent to which these Standards are satisfied by an institution, there are behaviorally anchored statements – what a typical institution will be doing if its performance is judged unsatisfactory, satisfactory or commendable.

STANDARD 1: INSTITUTION MISSION AND GOALS

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution has a clear mission and goals. The mission defines the institution's reason for existence and the students and community it seeks to serve.

The institution's mission must clearly state that the primary purpose of the institution is to provide a postsecondary program in the field of Jewish Studies. The mission is clearly articulated and encapsulated in a mission statement that states the institution's general purpose and philosophy.

It states the institution's goals consistent with the expectations of higher education. These goals provide the direction for institutional growth, student development, and student objectives.

The mission of an institution is the driving force that sets the framework for all institutional activity. It should drive decision making, planning and allocation of resources; and should act as the benchmark to evaluate actual performance.

Articulating the mission into a Mission Statement is imperative in two regards. First, it gives a succinct and publicly disseminated statement of the institution's reason for being. It should address the institution's purpose, philosophy and approach toward its role, its constituents and its distinctive educational services. While the mission statement should

be revisited periodically, it can be taken as representing a stable statement of organizational purpose.

Secondly, the Mission Statement should allow for growth and development by pointing to a framework for setting operational objectives and determining student achievement outcomes. Both of these elements, the statement of purpose and a framework for planning, should be clearly evident within the Mission Statement. AIJS will assess both of these aspects of the school's mission statement.

Institutional Implications

In determining whether an institution has a clear, effective mission, AIJS will determine how well the mission is integrated throughout all institutional activities. Using the Mission Statement as a guide and benchmark, AIJS can assess how well an institution is accomplishing its mission.

What elements should a Mission Statement contain?

1. A Purpose Statement

The purpose statement clearly states what an institution seeks to accomplish, the reason for its existence, and the ultimate result of its work.

A typical purpose statement might include: "to transmit classic higher Torah scholarship to its student body." Another might be: "to enhance the student's knowledge of *Halacha*, or traditional Jewish law", "to promote self-awareness and character development" or "to train future teachers in a broad range of Jewish Studies."

2. An Activity Statement

This statement will present the activities or the programs that the institution provides in order to accomplish the stated purpose. For example, there are many ways to approach traditional Jewish Studies within the student body by offering a comprehensive program of studies firmly grounded in traditional Jewish texts. One might be "to deepen the knowledge of traditional Jewish law through the study of Talmudic or Biblical texts together with the classical medieval commentaries and Responsa" or "to promote self-awareness and character development through the study of classical *Mussar* or Hassidic texts and tracing their sources in the Bible and Commentaries".

A Mission Statement should drive the decision-making process in an institution and should be well known by all institutional participants. It should be communicated prominently, clearly and often – and should reverberate throughout all institutional activities, including academic, administrative, and public functions.

In this regard, AIJS will review the degree to which the mission statement drives the planning and decision-making process within the institution, and how the mission is translated into practice.

Questions to be asked by AIJS in assessing an institutions mission include:

- Are all members of the institution, at every level, aware and invested in the mission?
- Are the overall operations, beginning with recruitment and continuing through establishing and assessing outcomes, consistent with the mission?
- Are resources allocated wisely toward the goal of furthering the mission?
- How does the institution determine if it is succeeding in achieving the goals determined by the mission?
- Is the mission revisited periodically to determine that it is still relevant?

STANDARD 2: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution has a curriculum for each of its programs, which is consistent with the mission of the institution.

Curricula should specify educational objectives consistent with accepted standards of postsecondary education.

Curricula should state the criteria for assessing achievement. The institution has applied suitable procedures to measure student progress within each course, to assess the knowledge and skills acquired as specified in the educational objectives.

The curriculum for each degree or academic credential offered must contain at least 30 percent of its courses in the field of Jewish Studies.

The institution uses methods of delivering instruction appropriate to each program it provides. All courses and curricula offered by the institution must be consistent with classical Halacha (Jewish Law) based on the Shulchan Aruch.

The core of the effectiveness and viability of an educational system is an understanding of what content is included; what goals are to be attained; an agreement as to educational methodology; and procedures for assessing the extent to which participants are meeting these educational goals. AIJS refers to the written descriptions of the programs and courses as 'curriculum'. The curriculum should have descriptions detailing the content, objectives, learning experiences, educational outcomes and methods of evaluation of each program offered.

Institutional Implications

The institution must have a curriculum available for all of its programs and individual courses. The curriculum allows for a consistent and methodical way of describing the teaching and learning that will take place. This is achieved by providing a description of the objectives and learning outcomes that the program and individual courses are designed to address.

The curriculum outlines the learning experiences that students are expected to undertake and the methods and criteria that will be used in assessing whether the course objectives were met. A curriculum allows for careful planning of the learning environment, maintaining a balance of subject area components, attending to the needs of the students, and allocating institutional resources effectively.

A well-considered curriculum allows for planning and incremental development of the educational courses within the institution. It also provides for realistic and focused criteria for a student's success within the course or program, which in turn allows the institution to evaluate the extent to which its own mission has been realized. Well-constructed course curricula in the form of syllabi, enable students to declare: "I know what I am learning and why."

The term "curriculum" includes the entire teaching/learning process. The process takes place within a framework that has purpose, direction and goals. This means that each program within an educational institution has a clear, well-articulated curriculum. Programs should be similar in rigor to accepted practice in post-secondary education.

Courses, curricula, and degree programs will be assessed as to their level and quality to assure that they are on a post-secondary level. This includes the core Judaic studies courses as well as any other credit bearing courses offered at the institution. This assessment will consider comparison with similar institutions in terms of skills, content, academic rigor, expected outcomes and are expected to be similar to normative expectations in the higher education arena, and specifically to typical Yeshiva and Seminary programs. Additionally, the degree programs must conform to generally accepted post-secondary standards whereby an Associate degree is generally awarded after the successful completion of 60-64 credits and a Baccalaureate degree is awarded after the successful completion of 120-132 credits (five year Talmudic or Rabbinical programs should typically require the successful completion of 150-156 credits).

The length of the program and each individual course within that program requires an appropriate number of hours to earn credit. The generally accepted calculation for a credit hour is referred to as the "Carnegie Unit," wherein one credit is awarded for a three-hour cluster per week over approximately a fifteen-week period, which generally contains one hour of instructional time and presumes two hours of outside classroom work in the form of preparation, study, research, and writing.

Adjustments to this calculation, where appropriate, will be considered when the coursework is more suited to an alternative framework. For instance, in *Bais Medrash* study for Talmudic and Rabbinical subjects, *Chavrusa Study* (structured and supervised sessions with a study partner), and *Chabura studies* (several students studying in a cluster with a team leader), are the primary method of learning. Augmented by formal lectures, these sessions contain a balanced mix of joint study of primary texts, followed by research of related sources, critical textual analysis of these sources, formulating hypothesis to address seeming contradictions and inconsistencies, peer review of conclusions, and development of original presentations in a group setting. In this context, AIJS will be looking to see that there are three hours of such learning activities for each credit in the various modes.

Course syllabi should indicate how many hours per week the course meets and how many credits will be awarded for that course over the semester period. The semester schedule and calendar should reflect that calculation.

Accepted areas of study for 30% of the core curriculum (36 credits for Bachelor's Degree programs and 18 credits for Associated Degree programs) may be in areas of Biblical Studies, Talmud, Jewish Law/Legal Codes, Jewish History, Jewish Philosophy/Ethics and the Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish languages as they support the study of original source texts. This requirement supports the mission and scope of AIJS, which is to accredit institutions that primarily focus on Jewish Studies.

For the award of a non-specialized Bachelor's Degree program AIJS requires a minimum of 30 credits in general education; or its equivalent in evaluated educational outcomes from other coursework. For the award of a non-specialized Associate Degree program AIJS requires a minimum of 15 credits in general education; or its equivalent in evaluated educational outcomes from other coursework.

General education includes the study of ethics and values, diverse perspectives (humanities, social science), English and foreign language skills, communication and writing proficiency, logical reasoning and critical analysis, and computer literacy.

The remaining credits after fulfilling the general education requirements and the Jewish studies requirements for a non-specialized degree may be assigned as the institution sees appropriate. All requirements for completion of a degree or certificate must be clearly stated in the catalog. They must also be consistent with the school mission as well as meet requirements of higher education academic standards.

For highly specialized programs, offering credentials in Talmudic, Torah and Rabbinic studies, there is no specific requirement for general education. However, the degree or certificate must specify the specialty in its title. Examples: Classical Torah Studies Degree, Talmudic Law Degree, Bachelors or Associate degrees in Classical Torah Studies or Talmudic Studies.

Curriculum and its development are at the core of successful, adaptive and quality programs and courses. Well-developed, integrated curricula are central to the day-to-day teaching and instruction of the institution. Each program offered by the institution should be covered by a written description that explains its goals, learning objectives, types of educational experiences to be considered, and the learning outcomes to be used in evaluating the program. Each program will, in turn, have a cluster of associated courses.

Program and course descriptions must be published in the institution's catalog. Individual teachers and/or instructors must be aware of and follow these course descriptions and curricula and use them in planning and delivering courses. The institution will be expected to demonstrate that the curricula are subject to ongoing development. Curriculum should have the active and expert participation of those in charge of educational departments and the actual teaching of courses. The process by which curricula are designed, implemented, developed, reviewed, and revised should be clear and well known within the institution.

Faculty participation in the development and revision of curriculum should be evident.

The curriculum should identify learning goals that are to be achieved, as well as give the details of the resources a student is expected to use to achieve these goals. For instance, texts and educational sources are expected to be listed, current, and readily available to students. The student must be made aware of what measures of outcomes will be used to determine success. Learning outcomes must be defined and measured (examinations, assignments, projects, etc.). The institution must ensure that these stipulated methods of measurement conform to those identified in the course curriculum. Consistency must be monitored when different faculty members teach the same courses.

When a suitable curriculum has been established, it needs to be translated into educational activities, it needs to be implemented. This requires the planning, organizing, and coordinating of institutional resources in a manner that will allow the curriculum objectives to be effectively realized.

The faculty must be qualified pedagogically and academically to deliver the content of the curriculum. AIJS does not indicate which methods of instruction are appropriate. Institutions may use traditional lecture methods, supervised individual or group study, self-paced student learning, individual assignments, independent studies, and other recognized instructional strategies as deemed suitable by the institution. However, all methods of instruction should be appropriate to the content objectives of the course and must have substantial 'face time' learning activities. AIJS does not approve distance education at this time.

An institution's educational program extends beyond the classroom. In this context, other resources such as the Bais Medrash (traditional study hall), libraries, computers, and individual learning resources, should be available in a culturally sensitive and academically adequate manner, to support the educational process.

AIJS supports effective instruction and endorses no particular style of education. It does not prescribe specific instructional methods or approaches, nor does it insist on innovation merely for its own sake. However, AIJS does recognize that ongoing evaluations of the curriculum and instructional methods are signs of institutional vitality.

Educational offerings should have a clear relationship with the overall mission of the school and contribute to pursuit of knowledge in a spirit of increased shared universal values. Degrees and their levels should be appropriate and proportionate to the amount of content covered and the skills developed in the program. They should generally follow the established American norms of higher education. For highly specialized degrees and certificates (where external benchmarks are often not useful), the institution should clearly state the achievements expected by the completion of the program.

STANDARD 3: STUDENT PROGRESS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

This standard is comprised of three parts: a) Student outcomes (Annual Report) b) SAP c) Application of its grading procedures within coursework

An institution accredited by AIJS must develop and demonstrate student outcomes. There is a clear relationship between the student outcomes and the institution's mission. The institution is expected to review and analyze its student outcomes to ensure that they remain relevant and effective and demonstrate the institution's success with respect to student achievement in relation to its mission.

The institution must demonstrate that it has applied suitable procedures to measure student progress throughout the program(s).

The institution's current grading policies that assess the knowledge and skills attained by its students are contained in the student catalog.

As students are admitted, they begin to engage with the institution's educational system. As the student moves forward, feedback to both the institution and the student will enhance the educational experience. Feedback to the student will enable them to gauge their educational progress or lack thereof. Such information will also enable the institution to revise or adjust its curriculum content, modes of educational delivery, and evaluation methods. Feedback is also essential for the institution in setting admission criteria and marketing its program. From the students' point of view, this information is critical in gauging their progress towards their degree.

Institutions should monitor students' satisfactory academic performance both qualitatively in terms of satisfying a minimum grade average, and quantitatively in terms of progressing through the program at a satisfactory pace to complete the program. The institution should develop a satisfactory academic progress policy and that policy should address incompletes, withdrawals, course repetitions, and how they impact grade point average and total credits attempted. It should also contain provisions for students who do not meet satisfactory progress standards. In addition, there should be a process for students to appeal a determination of failure to meet satisfactory progress standards.

AIJS requires institutions to assess student learning by having specific learning objectives for each course offered as well as measures of program completion and effectiveness. It does not prescribe a specific approach or method. The institution is responsible for having in place a system that monitors the student's progress as well as gauges the learning outcomes achieved appropriate to the institutional mission.

The institution shall prepare and implement a plan for the systematic assessment of its learning outcomes consistent with its mission. The assessment of outcomes may include graduation/completion rates, student retention rates, transfers to a more advanced or specialized post-secondary program, subsequent enrollment in graduate institutions, career and occupational outcomes, job placement rates, indicators of subsequent employer satisfaction, and other generally accepted outcomes such as scores on

standardized tests and passage of licensing exams. Institutions should choose their own appropriate measures of student outcomes which are consistent with institutional mission and standard post-secondary institutional expectations.

AIJS will evaluate the measures used by the institution to monitor students' progress and evaluate student outcomes. AIJS site reviewers and its accrediting council will evaluate if these measures are appropriate, support the mission of the school, and are consistent with the values and quality of post-secondary education.

Institutional Implications

The institution must have clear, well-designed policies in this area. Academic standards are vital to the reputation and continued well-being of an educational institution, but they also reflect an interest and concern for the student population and the wider academic community. Under the AIJS Standards, student academic progress and outcomes must be properly recorded. Its institutions must have specific performance standards or mechanisms in which students making inadequate progress are monitored and counseled.

Student Assessment and Assessment of Outcomes

Assessment tools should include systems of grading and evaluating student learning. Student assessment is vital for evaluating various components of the academic program. In addition to its value in improving academic quality and effectiveness, it is also helpful in the areas of student recruitment, retention and completions. A systematic analysis of student assessment may indicate lack of systematic sequencing of courses, ineffective instructional methods, unrealistic expectations, or the need to offer additional preparatory coursework. The school's assessment process should be viewed by the institution as a key working instrument.

Outcome measures demonstrate to the external world that the institution's programs have value than can be described and verified. These may comprise both direct and indirect measures. Direct measures would include test success, graduation rates, job placement rates, and acceptance to other institutions of higher learning. Indirect measures may include surveys, student and faculty evaluations, and feedback by employers or supervisors of the institution's graduates. Most important is to review and analyze the outcomes data collected with an eye to implement improvements in instruction and utilize the conclusions to influence strategic planning.

AIJS will evaluate the institution's designation of outcomes as well as its commitment to assessment of student achievement and learning outcomes. It will review the validity of any direct or indirect assessment measures, and how often and how effectively the institution uses those measures to evaluate the success of the program and make effective improvements in its operations.

STANDARD 4: FACILITIES, RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution shall provide facilities and resources to support its educational activities. Instruction is conducted in safe, accessible, sanitary, and educationally suitable facilities.

The facilities and equipment are sufficient to support the institution's administration, instruction, and student performance. The institution shall provide its students and faculty with appropriate library and information services to support the mission of the institution and each program of study.

In traditional models of education, instruction takes place within a physical location. The buildings within which the educational process takes place provide not only the physical location, but also contribute to the effectiveness and adequacy of the process itself.

AIJS will examine the physical facilities of the institution that applies for accreditation. The facilities must be adequately spacious, well-lit, and ventilated. Facilities mean sites of classroom instruction, faculty and administrative office space, and any facilities used for ancillary activities of the institution. Facilities must meet standards of safety and accessibility. Technology, furniture and equipment should be adequate to facilitate the mission and educational goals of the institution.

Institutional Implications

In reviewing the physical aspects of the institution, AIJS is concerned about present and future use. The agency will want to be sure that the physical allocation of space provided currently is compatible with the delivery of the stated educational objectives in an effective manner.

Within traditional educational delivery models, the size of the facilities and number of resources must be consistent with the size of the academic population and anticipated growth. The institution must demonstrate that its facilities meet the demands from the existing academic population and that they plan responsibly for future growth.

Libraries and computer facilities, where appropriate, must also be adequate to support student learning and the institutional mission.

Facilities must be clean, safe, and properly maintained, and there must be sufficient staff and budgetary allocation to ensure that the plant and facilities are well maintained. The institution should be in compliance with all local and federal law regarding accessibility. Beyond mere compliance to the laws and regulation, AIJS will also look to see if the institution invests in proactive efforts to assist students with handicaps and disabilities to the maximum extent possible. This type of inclusive institutional culture is critical in allowing all students to fully participate in institutional activities.

STANDARD 5: RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS, CATALOGS, AND STUDENT SERVICES

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution has an admissions policy that admits students able to benefit from the programs and educational activities offered. Institutional recruitment efforts seek to identify and recruit students with the potential to achieve the program goals.

Procedures for admission and criteria for admission are clearly defined. Students admitted shall generally have a high school diploma or its equivalent. The institution will publish an

institutional catalog and academic calendars that are publicly available to interested parties.

Advertising and all forms of digital and print communication are consistent with the institution's policies and catalog and accurately portray the opportunities available at the institution.

The institution has established a transfer of credit policy and publicly discloses it in its institutional catalog or in other publicly distributed material. The transfer of credit policy includes a statement of the criteria established by the institution for the transfer of credits earned at another institution, and a list of institutions with which the institution has established an articulation agreement.

The institution should offer student support services to enable the student to enjoy a wholesome and supportive educational environment.

The institution shall establish and publish procedures used to resolve student complaints. These procedures should address all aspects of the institutional activities with particular emphasis on the operation of its academic programs. The institution should maintain a record of student complaints received and how they were resolved.

Institutional Implications

Clarity, accuracy, consistency, and full disclosure in institutional materials are essential for accreditation as an AIJS institution. However, the content of these publications is certainly not sufficient. There must be congruence between what is written and what is actually implemented in matters of admissions, counseling, and other student services. Records, documentation, and feedback will all help support and confirm that the policies that the institution has adopted are, in fact, being administered in a fair, unbiased, systematic, and legal manner. These documents will be included in the ISA as exhibits. In reviewing all areas of this Standard, site visitors will pay special attention to all published information to ensure that it is accurate and not misleading.

AIJS requires clear, well-designed policies that encompass all aspects of recruitment, admissions, student retention, student-services and alumni relations. These policies should be widely accessible to all potential applicants and clearly articulated in all of the institution's admissions and recruitment literature and catalogs.

Criteria for admission must be a well-considered process that allows the most appropriate candidates to connect with the most suitable educational programs that the institution offers. Admissions criteria must be clearly documented and freely available to potential students.

If testing is required in the admission process, it should be reasonable, have face validity, and clearly satisfy the needs of the institution and expectations of the student.

This catalog factually represents the courses and programs offered and the credentials granted upon program completion. The catalog also contains pertinent consumer information including, but not limited to:

- Costs of enrolling in each program that the institution offers
- Withdrawal and tuition refund policies
- Academic calendar
- Grading policies
- Satisfactory academic progress, and other academic policies
- Student complaint policies
- Financial aid, and student services offered by the institution
- Transfer of credits policy, including a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credits earned at another institution of higher education and a list of institutions with which the institution has established an articulation agreement

The catalog is a definitive document. It should be current, well presented, and match the information disseminated about the institution in institutional publications, official websites and public relations material. AIJS requires that all institutional advertising and publications be accurate and not misleading.

The institution should offer its students a range of support services including, but not limited to, scholarship and financial aid assistance, tutoring and remedial help, guidance and counseling, and access to health and medical services. Institutions must have policies and procedures for counseling students whose progress is inadequate and for dealing with student complaints.

If the institution offers its own residential facilities and/or in-school dining options, it must conform to relevant health and safety codes, and its costs should be clearly listed.

The institution shall spell out the steps a student may take to file a complaint. This procedure should include the following elements: the reasonable and appropriate timeframes for investigating and resolving a formal complaint; provision for the final determination of each formal complaint; and assurances that no action will be taken against the student for filing the complaint. The institution's complaint procedures must include a statement informing the student that he/she has the right to file a complaint with AIJS if the complaint was not resolved to his/her satisfaction, and must include the mailing address, phone number and website address for AIJS. The institution shall maintain adequate documentation of each formal complaint and its disposition for a period of at least five years after final disposition of the complaint.

STANDARD 6: STUDENT RECORDS

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution has an orderly and secure system of generating and storing student records. These records should conform to the generally accepted practices of accredited institutions of higher education in the United States. The institution has processes to maintain and protect confidential student records that are in compliance with prevailing law including

the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Clear record-keeping policies and organized management and maintenance of records are essential for effective administration of the institution's educational programs. Records of student progress and student achievement provide accountability for the quality and effectiveness of the educational programs and allow the student to authoritatively document his academic achievements. Accurate student account records and financial aid records ensure that funds received and disbursed from all sources for tuition are properly recorded. Clear financial records document that student charges correlate to the actual cost of providing education and demonstrate good financial stewardship.

An institution must demonstrate that its record-keeping systems are responsive to the needs of its students. They must comply with the requirements of oversight agencies that oversee federal, state, third party or any institutional financial aid programs the institution administers. The records must be maintained in an orderly manner. The institution's record-keeping should reflect the following objectives:

- To document the student's academic outcomes as well as the student's progress toward earning the institution's degree or academic credential.
- To provide important feedback on the effectiveness of the educational program.
- To serve as the basis for academic transcripts for students transferring to other institutions or applying for employment positions.
- To provide accountability and transparency in all financial activities, and to demonstrate that the institution is fiscally viable.
- To demonstrate compliance with all regulatory requirements, including financial aid programs for students.

Institutions are also required to meet their responsibilities for periodic reporting to AIJS, as well as to the state and federal agencies that oversee the institution's management capability. This will include annual reports to AIJS as well as any reports required by HEA program regulations such as IPEDS Data Collection, Student Enrollment Reporting and Campus Safety and Security reporting.

Institutional Implications

AIJS requires that educational institutions applying for accreditation have in place a comprehensive student records system.

Student records are a critical component of an accredited institution. Complete and accurate record keeping is essential for the institution, its students, and its alumni and outside agencies that may fund or oversee the institution.

The institution must have a comprehensive policy regarding student records. It is imperative that this policy is reflected in the actual operations of the institution in a consistent and accurate manner.

The institution must have a policy on how long records are to be kept. The policy should specify in what form the records are kept, and who is able to access them or request information from them. Increasingly, there are issues of security that have to be considered to ensure the integrity and authenticity of the records, especially as new and more advanced electronic systems replace older ones.

Because of the amount of records generated and the length that these documents have to be maintained, the institution must have trained personnel to deal with the record-keeping function. These individuals must be trained to operate according to procedures that ensure the accurate, timely and complete processing of student records.

Institutional staff must be able to retrieve required records. Academic records must be kept in a secure manner with controlled access to these records. There should be safeguards in place to prevent unauthorized access. Release of academic transcripts should follow established procedures.

Regarding a student's files and records, there must be dependable procedures of safeguarding private and confidential material. There must be a system in place that allows for the release of student information conforming to current FERPA regulations, and other relevant local, state or federal laws. Students must have access to their records and know of the process whereby incorrect information can be corrected.

These provisions apply to both physical (hardcopy) documentation and all student records maintained electronically. Again, security and restricted access are key issues to be kept in mind. There should be provisions for the timely backup and restoration of records, as well a policy for their eventual disposal according to institutional and regulatory protocols.

The institution must designate appropriate institutional officials to maintain academic records, such as admission and acceptance forms documenting compliance with admission criteria, student progress records and updated academic transcripts. These individuals must be trained and knowledgeable in the requirements and practice of post-secondary academic recordkeeping.

Transcripts

Issuing transcripts is an essential service to the student and the wider community. Proper transcripts and the process for their release should conform to good practices and with all regulatory requirements. A report of academic information, such as that needed to generate transcripts should be available indefinitely.

Student Complaints

The institution has a formal complaint procedure that is publicized in its catalog or posted on its website. The complaint policy must be clear and must include procedures that students can follow to resolve any complaints they may have regarding the institution. In its complaint policy, an institution must include a statement informing the student that he/she has the right to file a complaint with AIJS if the complaint was not resolved to his/her satisfaction and must include the mailing address, phone number and website

address for AIJS. The institution maintains records regarding each formal complaint lodged by a student and its disposition, in an easy and accessible manner, for a period of at least five years after final disposition of the complaint. During an on-site review, site visitors will review the records of complaints to determine if there is a pattern of complaints in any particular area that could indicate a weakness or non-compliance, and to determine if the institution's published complaint procedures were followed.

Security of Institutional Records

The institution should have a policy in place to maintain backups of all critical institutional records. Electronic records should be backed up regularly. It is highly recommended that off-site back copies are maintained and updated regularly. Appropriate safeguards should be in place to prevent hacking and protect electronic data.

STANDARD 7: MEASURES IN PROGRAM LENGTH, OBJECTIVE OF DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS OFFERED

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution publishes a description of each degree or credential, together with the typical length of each program, including the minimum number and type of credits, and courses needed to obtain the credential or degree. The anticipated conclusion of the education experience is the satisfactory completion of the requirements of an academic credential. The institution offers credentials documenting program completion.

The institution publishes the length and increments of the academic year, i.e., semester, quarter, etc., and any established limits for program completion. The academic credits, degrees, and/or credentials are awarded in relation to the time invested and program requirements using accepted standards of postsecondary education.

Institutional Implications

AIJS recognizes that accredited institutions will award academic credentials as part of their institutional mission. Such awards recognize successful accomplishment in meeting the required educational standards of the program. The institution should describe the procedures that recognize the accomplishments of students and provide them with a recognized credential of their success.

The credentials identify the level of performance and expectations associated with particular programs. In arriving at these decisions, the general academic context should be considered, and any credential awarded should correspond appropriately to the length and intensity of educational experience. In addition, the requirements for obtaining the credential should be substantially similar to requirements in other post-secondary institutions that offer similar programs.

Credentials should be granted only after a program of well-defined and carefully considered sequence of courses has been completed. The credential must reflect the meaning, knowledge and experience gained from the required courses. It should also reflect the objectives and specific aims of the underlying academic program.

Institutions must clearly state the expected time frames and expected grade point averages for the completion of degree programs. The school must develop satisfactory progress standards. These benchmarks, as well as other degree requirements, should be publicly disclosed as institutional policies in documents that are readily available to students such as the catalog or school website. The published benchmarks for satisfactory academic progress should include provisions for students who do not meet the standards as well as an appeal process for students who have extenuating circumstances. In addition, the satisfactory academic progress policy should address matters such as withdrawals and incompletes.

Policies for Degrees and Credentials Granted

The institution must carefully regulate, monitor, and record the awarding of credentials. Considerations of fairness, equity, and impartiality should characterize the award of these credentials.

Where credential-granting power is regulated by local, state, federal, or professional bodies, the institution must have obtained such authority and may only act in accordance with the requirements of these bodies.

Credentials issued must be clearly and consistently worded. Their meaning should be clear to the recipient and all persons and entities that rely on their validity, veracity and clarity. Credentials should not make claims or promise expertise in professional areas unless such expertise has been, in fact, delivered by the institution's program and is, in fact, accepted by competent, external professional bodies.

Credentials should be awarded for successful and meritorious completion of institutional programs only. They should not be awarded as a mark of distinction, honor, in recognition of services or gratitude, or in connection with financial services or donations, unless they are clearly differentiated from those credentials that are earned. Such honorary credentials must be recognizable by their title on the credential.

STANDARD 8: FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

AIJS requires that the educational services provided by the institution's instructional personnel demonstrate professional competence to help achieve the institution's educational goals. There is a sufficient quantity of faculty members to meet the mission of the institution.

To further the mission of the institution, its academic staff members must possess the skills, competencies, and knowledge commensurate with their academic responsibilities. These qualifications are based on a combination of professional training, scholarship, experience, and classroom performance.

The faculty has input in the development and review of curricula or other avenues of

academic policy.

In order to provide and sustain a superior educational delivery system, the institution must recruit and retain highly competent and motivated faculty and administration. The finest academic program and institutional resources are of little value without competent, prepared, and qualified instructors.

In seeking AIJS accreditation, the institution affirms its commitment to the delivery of ongoing, superior education. In order to achieve this, the institution must have a core of academically and pedagogically competent instructional staff dedicated to teaching excellence.

All faculty members employed by the institution as instructors or other professional academic personnel must possess suitable educational training and qualifications for their positions. These academic personnel shall have demonstrated proficiency in the content of their teaching responsibilities, as well as the pedagogic and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to enable students to learn.

The quality and caliber of the faculty may be considered from a number of perspectives. Faculty members should demonstrate a high level of subject-area competence. In addition to subject-area competence, faculty members should be able to demonstrate a high level of pedagogic competency. This pedagogic competence will be demonstrated not only in the experience of the instructor, but in the ability to transmit the subject matter in ways that motivate students and facilitate effective learning.

Jewish Studies Faculty

Institutions applying for AIJS accreditation view Jewish Studies as more than an academic discipline or area of study. The curricula and programs of Judaic Studies and any other courses offered are essential components in the socialization of their students into a particular worldview and ethical construct that resonates with the traditions and history of the Jewish people.

This broader vision of Jewish Studies entails a deep-seated commitment to transmit the *Mesorah* (legacy) of Torah ethical values to each new generation of students and impacts the selection of instructors to those who live by or respect that *Mesorah*.

Viewed in this context, staff in this area should demonstrate exemplary qualities of scholarship, commitment, ethical and moral behavior, and overall personal conduct and deportment. While such criteria are important in any educational environment, it is essential at institutions that see their role as preparing students for a life committed to learning and its meaningful application in their daily living.

It is also important to distinguish Jewish Studies from other academic disciplines with respect to teaching credentials. Whereas in other disciplines, degrees are paramount and are a clear indicator of teacher qualification – there is even a formal convention that faculty credentials must be at least one degree above the credential offered by the program – in Jewish Studies, this is not that clear-cut, and standard academic conventions are not useful to determine degree requirements.

Traditionally, renowned Torah scholars rose to greatness by a combination of accumulating vast amounts of knowledge, and honing research and analytical skills over many years of full-time study in a variety of academic settings. Some studied in very structured programs, others learned privately with world renowned scholars, still others studied in small Chabruas (study groups). This level and type of study could be compared to post-doctoral studies. The most gifted and talented of this select group comprise the pool from which teachers and instructors on the post-secondary level are selected.

The faculty of Women's Seminaries (the common nomenclature for Women Institutions offering a core of advanced Jewish Studies) comprise of Torah scholars, as described above, and outstanding personalities who have demonstrated a unique combination of mastery of subject material, considerable teaching experience on multiple levels, a natural passion for teaching, and a proven track record of conveying Jewish Studies courses in an inspiring manner. Many have earned reputations as sought out presenters and scholars-in-residence in a variety of settings, from Torah retreats, to online, video, and CD lectures.

Institutional Implications

Job descriptions for instructional and managerial personnel should outline the requirements for the position, the tasks and roles that will be expected, and how performance will be assessed. A well-written job description helps the institution define what exactly it wants from the position candidate and how performance will be assessed. There should be a procedure in place whereby job descriptions are reviewed and revised.

The institution should maintain personnel folders on all faculty members containing job descriptions, resumes, copies of academic and professional qualifications, institutional work histories, and copies of evaluations and reviews.

The institution must demonstrate that it places value on commitment to ongoing education and professional development within its teaching faculty. AIJS will examine the extent to which staff are engaged and encouraged to engage in continuing professional education.

AIJS institutions should actively solicit and demonstrate respect for faculty input in curricular decisions. Faculty input should be evident in curriculum design and revisions.

It has been a long-valued goal in Jewish studies to create life-time learners. With regard to faculty, this is especially important, in order for them to maintain their expertise in their particular discipline. To this end, AIJS will evaluate if the faculty are seriously engaged in continuing education and professional development.

STANDARD 9: ADMINISTRATION, HUMAN RESOURCES AND COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution has administrative capacity and identifies necessary organizational positions as appropriate to the specified scale of operations and aligned with its mission. Individuals

in leadership and administrative roles are qualified by education and/or experience. The organizational positions and distribution of responsibilities are defined in the governance structure, processes, and activities. There are clear responsibilities delineated amongst the administrative members. The institution identifies potential candidates who are qualified by education and/or experience and recruits them to fill necessary positions.

The institution is capably and responsibly managed. It demonstrates its ability to submit AIJS reports and documentation requests within established deadlines.

A system is in place that measures and evaluates employee performance. This appraisal is utilized to encourage and improve employee performance and document shortcomings.

Institutional Implications

The institution must define itself structurally. It should be aware of and able to, articulate its current personnel position and recognize whether it is properly staffed in all departments and functions.

Within the institution, the quality of administrative and instructional staff is of great importance. Educational institutions should do whatever they can to hire, inspire and keep highly competent individuals to serve on their staff. The institution should have an articulated procedure for locating, identifying, and attracting capable applicants for positions. There should be a structured process of recruiting and filling vacant positions with appropriately qualified and experienced candidates. The institution should have in place a process that regularly reviews its organizational structure, positions, job descriptions and recruitment practices.

In recruiting efforts, and indeed with all human resource management practices, the institution should be able to demonstrate that it has a consistent policy of non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity that it is in compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.

There should be job descriptions for administrative staff. The job description clearly outlines the requirements for the position, the tasks and roles that will be expected, and how performance will be assessed. The institution should develop a set of operational standards that allow it to determine the degree to which actual performance corresponds to performance expectations.

The institution must maintain sufficient support staff to assist each department with its responsibilities. Cost-effective technology should be employed to make operations smooth and efficient. Many administrative functions within a higher education institution require specialized training, as well as ongoing professional development, as the practice of the profession changes. With technological advances, changes in laws and regulations, and evolving 'good practices', higher education administrators must constantly strive for excellence by adjusting and improving existing policies and procedures. Membership in professional peer organizations, attendance at external and internal training events, subscriptions and reading of professional literature and periodicals, can all be valuable tools to keep administrators current and professional. Institutions should encourage and support these activities.

An institution should maintain a current organizational chart, identifying the various

functions performed within the school, the relationship between these functions, and the governance process – lines of authority, communication, and accountability.

There should be an emphasis on strong internal communications. Such exchanges can be both formal and informal. Stronger interpersonal relationships will assist the institution in improving teamwork, cohesiveness, and allegiance to a common vision.

Ensuring that the right people know the right information at the right time is basic to a well-run institution. Each department must have an effective method of communicating both within its division and with other departments. Face-to-face meetings and written memorandums are examples of methods of communication that can be used effectively towards this goal.

To further its mission, the institution will typically need to interact with various elements that are part of its external environment. The role and effectiveness of the institution vis-à-vis its community, or relevant publics, will depend, in great measure, on the extent to which the institution has created, nurtured and developed a positive and constructive relationship with that community.

Likewise, relationships with the parents of students, feeder institutions whose graduates attend the institution, alumni, various sectors of the community, employers of the school's graduates, the broader higher educational community and local governmental agencies all constitute relevant publics that the institution relates to in implementing its mission and educational objectives. These relevant publics, or "stakeholders", for their part, will also attempt to influence the institution in the furtherance of their particular interests. A strong, mission-focused administration will be alert to and blend the interests of all the stakeholders to lead an institution dedicated to the success of its mission and its students.

STANDARD 10: FINANCIAL PRACTICES

Definition

This is the Standard as defined by AIJS:

The institution shall possess the financial resources necessary to fulfill its mission and educational objectives. The institution shall demonstrate institutional financial stability. The institution should have a proper accounting system and competent and trained financial staff familiar with financial management, record keeping, and internal control procedures. Roles and responsibilities shall be clear and understood. The institution must ensure that all funds and monetary instruments are accounted for, monitored, and properly safeguarded.

The institution carries out its program responsibilities under Title IV in a responsible fashion based on compliance audits, program reviews, loan default rates, and other information the Department of Education may have provided.

Institutional Implications

In addition to the institution's delivery of educational services, the institution must be able to demonstrate professional competence in its dealings with the financial aspects necessary for effectively carrying out its mission. They should be qualified to handle finances by demonstrating competency in higher education good financial practices. This includes its

financial dealings with its students, employees and suppliers and other key economic players including providers of student financial assistance programs.

The institution must have in place professional and competent staff familiar with basic management and accounting principles as well as internal control standards. Staff must ensure that the assets and resources of the institution are safeguarded. They must devise and implement an adequate system of financial procedures to ensure that the financial objectives of the institution are being met.

A standard institutional accounting system is imperative to ensure that financial information has been properly and consistently recorded. An appropriate system of controls must be in place to ensure the integrity of the accounting and financial record.

An external, independent audit should be conducted on a regular basis and reviewed by designated parties such as the institution's board of governors or directors. Particular care must be taken into account for federal or state monies, restricted funds, grants, and other specially designated funds.

In preparation for an initial accrediting review, the institution shall provide AIJS with recently audited financial statements, generally completed within the last year, as well as financial data for a period that includes the previous two fiscal years. Audited financial statements for the most recently completed fiscal year are also necessary for re-accreditation. If the last audit is older than twelve months, a more current financial statement should be provided. If an institution is composed of a secondary or other non-post-secondary components, a schedule containing only the post-secondary component should be provided along with the institution-wide audit.

Designated institutional staff should be responsible for developing and implementing all financial policies and practices. These staff members should be professionally qualified and should be required to be up to date with applicable legal, administrative, and governmental regulations.

The institution should set tuition and related fees with the following considerations: the type, quality, and length of the educational programs provided, the institutions actual costs, the institutional mission, competitive environment, communities, and economic background from which the institution draws its students.

Tuition payments should be posted in a timely and accurate manner. The institution must maintain and publish a fair and equitable tuition refund policy and have procedures to ensure that refunds are disbursed in a timely manner.

If the institution participates in federal governmental financial aid for its students, it must demonstrate competency in administering student financial assistance programs in full compliance with all applicable regulations and program requirements. This includes proper training and ongoing professional development.

The institution shall properly document its compliance with federal requirements for HEA programs. This will include actions resulting from findings in financial or compliance audits, program reviews, the most recent student loan default data, and any other information requested by the U.S. Department of Education.

Any institution found to have a high student loan default rate, as defined by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid, must develop a corrective action plan to address the high default rate. The institution must also demonstrate that it has effectively resolved any area of deficiency identified in audits, program reviews, and any other information provided by the Department to AIJS.

SECTION III: DETAILED QUESTIONS TO USE FOR PREPARATION OF THE ISA

The forthcoming pages contain the questions which will provide the structure of your ISA report. As you compile your information and write the report, please bear in mind the following:

- Your ISA should include responses to all of the questions included here. You may find it helpful to write your report in question/answer format, however, a narrative format is equally acceptable.
- Responses should be thought out, well-developed statements that provide a comprehensive picture of your institution. Try to expand, not to parrot.
- If your institution operates multiple programs and/or multiple locations, be sure to discuss all of them throughout the ISA.
- Required attachments are listed at the end of each standard. A comprehensive checklist is appended at the end of the document for your convenience. Other types of supporting documentation should be attached whenever relevant, even if not included on the requirements list.

Once complete, the final ISA and attachments must be submitted to the AIJS via email to cstern@theaijs.com. Please submit in both Word and PDF versions.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions. Queries may be submitted by phone at 732-363-7330, or via email at cstern@theaijs.com.

Standard 1

Institution Mission and Goals

1A. Background

Describe your institution's background and history.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Who were the initial founders?*
- *Why was the institution founded?*
- *Why has your institution chosen this particular location?*
- *How has your institution grown and/or changed in the years since its founding?*

1B. Mission

Describe your institution's mission and goals.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *What are your institution's aims and goals?*
- *What is your institution's educational philosophy?*
- *What clientele do you service, and how do you meet their specific needs?*
- *How would you define a successful graduate?*
- *What makes your institution unique?*
- *Include evidence that your mission reflects the same values as AIJS (ie. adherence to Halacha as defined in the Shulchan Aruch).*

1C. Mission Statement

List your institution's mission statement (including purpose statement and activity statement).

- *List your institution's mission statement, structured as per AIJS guidelines; see [AIJS Standards](#), page 3. (NO extraneous information.)*

1D. Supportive Activities

Briefly describe the activities/programs that the institution provides to accomplish its stated purpose.

- *Your response may include brief descriptions of curriculum structure, school policy, extracurricular programs, or any other unique facets designed to support your mission.*

1E. Governance

Describe how the mission drives decision-making throughout the institution.

Your response should demonstrate how the mission governs school operations and should include examples of how your system of priorities impacts decisions. Consider discussing implications regarding some or all of the following:

- *Expansion, growth and development*
- *Faculty appointments and policies*
- *Budget, acquisitions and expenditures*
- *Curriculum*
- *Recruitment and admissions*
- *Student programs and policies*

- *Outcomes assessments*

1F. Communication of Mission

Describe how the mission is communicated.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Where can your institution's mission statement be found?*
- *How is the institution's mission communicated within the institution?*
- *Who are your major stakeholders, and how is the mission communicated to them?*
- *How can you tell that all members of your organization – students, faculty, administration, board – are aware of and “on board with” your mission?*

1G. Review of Mission

Describe how the mission is reviewed periodically.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Describe the process that your institution undergoes to review its mission statement to see if it is still relevant or needs to be tweaked or revised. Who participates in the review and possible revisions?*
- *In the process of reviewing the mission, what activities have you implemented in order to better achieve your mission?*

1H. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions with regard to your mission?*
- *How is your institution changing to meet the needs of a changing world?*
- *Moving forward, what can you do better?*
- *How do you know that you are succeeding in accomplishing your mission?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Required Attachments:

1.1 Certificate of Incorporation

1.2 Long range plans, if applicable to this ISA

Standard 2

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment - Yeshivos

2A. Curriculum Overview

Briefly describe your academic program.

Your response should include the following:

- **Brief Program Description**
 - *Provide a brief description of the departments and types of courses offered. Indicate the amount of credits required for each credential, and the typical number of years during which they are earned.*

2B. Curriculum Structure

Provide a detailed description of your unique curriculum and methodology.

Your response should answer the following areas:

- *Provide a detailed description of your academic program(s). Each educational program must have a complete description and curriculum as well as a description of the individual courses.*
- *How are program requirements organized? Show a sequential progression and explain how the progression provides increasing, cumulative mastery of subject matter leading to an academic credential.*
- *Describe the methods of delivering instruction for the various courses offered and explain how the modes of delivery are appropriate for each program.*
- *What makes your academic program(s) unique? (eg. unique approach to Talmud study, specialized faculty, unique courses, etc.)*
- *How is the curriculum of the program(s) aligned with your mission?*

2C. Quality Control

Provide evidence that all course curricula provide high quality education on a postsecondary level.

Your response should answer the following questions:

- *What criteria are used to measure that all courses are on a postsecondary level? Give examples of different expectations for courses at different academic levels.*
- *Describe what students will be able to do better after completion than before they took the course or series of courses.*
- *Give examples of the increasing expectations required of students as they progress through the academic levels.*

2D. Schedule

Describe the daily and yearly schedule. Indicate how the schedules support credit hour assignments.

Your response should answer the following questions:

- *What is the relationship between credits earned and hours of instruction?*
- *Describe a few examples of courses offered and their corresponding credit assignments.*
- *Provide an academic calendar and course schedule that supports the credit hour assignment.*

2E. Change

Describe how the curriculum may be changed or modified to meet current needs or requests.

Your response should answer the following questions:

- What would cause the curriculum to be changed or modified?
- Who is involved in this process?
- Provide examples of revisions (to the curriculum, method of instruction or schedule) which were implemented recently. Describe the people and process involved in implementing these changes.

2F. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions with regard to your curriculum or methods of instruction?
- Are your students and faculty satisfied with what you provide in this area? How do you know?
- Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?

Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.

Attachments:

- 2.1 Sample course syllabi

Note: In satisfying this standard, you will be required to provide the following additional supportive documents. These documents may be submitted with Standard 5 as part of your school catalog OR submitted separately here as attachments to Standard 2.

- 2.2 Program description(s)
- 2.3 Course Map OR Sample Curriculum
- 2.4 Course listings
- 2.5 Daily schedule
- 2.6 Academic calendar
- 2.7 Grading and assessment policies

Standard 2

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment - Seminaries

2A. Curriculum Overview

Briefly describe your academic program.

Your response should include the following:

- **Brief Program Description**
 - *Provide a brief description of the departments and types of courses offered. Indicate the amount of credits required for each credential, and the typical number of years during which they are earned.*
- **Jewish Studies Requirement**
 - *Indicate the number and/or percentage of credits required specifically in Jewish Studies. (Note that AIJS requires all curricula to include a minimum 30% of Jewish Studies courses for each credential offered.)*
 - *Describe how Jewish Studies courses are consistent with traditional approaches to Jewish Studies, and with classic Halacha (Jewish Law) based on the Shulchan Aruch.*
- **General Studies Requirement**
 - *If awarding standard degrees, indicate the number of course credits required for each degree. (Note that AIJS requires a minimum of 30 credits in general education for standard degrees.)*
 - *Indicate the type of courses offered (eg. English and foreign language skills, communication and writing proficiency, etc.)*

2B. Curriculum Structure

Provide a detailed description of your curriculum and methodology.

Your response should answer the following areas:

- *Provide a detailed description of your academic program(s). Each educational program must have a complete description and curriculum as well as a description of the individual courses.*
- *How are program requirements organized? Explain how the progression provides increasing, cumulative mastery of subject matter leading to an academic credential.*
- *Describe the methods of delivering instruction for the various courses offered and explain how the modes of delivery are appropriate for each program.*
- *What makes your academic program(s) unique? (eg. specialized faculty, unique courses, etc.)*
- *How is the curriculum of the program(s) aligned with your mission?*

2C. Quality Control

Provide evidence that all course curricula provide instruction on a postsecondary level.

Your response should answer the following questions:

- *What criteria are used to measure that all courses are on a postsecondary level?*
- *Give examples of learning objectives and performance standards regarding student achievement for each course.*
- *Describe what students will be able to do better after completion than before they took the course or series of courses.*

2D. Schedule

Describe the daily and yearly schedule. Indicate how the schedules support credit hour assignments.

Your response should answer the following questions:

- What is the relationship between credits earned and hours of instruction?
- Describe a few examples of courses offered and their corresponding credit assignments.
- Provide an academic calendar and course schedule that supports the credit hour assignment.

2E. Change

Describe how the curriculum may be changed or modified to meet current needs or requests.

Your response should answer the following questions:

- What would cause the curriculum to be changed or modified?
- Who is involved in this process?
- Provide examples of revisions (to the curriculum, method of instruction or schedule) which were implemented recently. Describe the people and process involved in implementing these changes.

2F. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions with regard to your curriculum or methods of instruction?
- Are your students and faculty satisfied with what you provide in this area? How do you know?
- Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?
- Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.

Attachments:

- 2.1 Sample course syllabi
- 2.2 Performance standards

Note: In satisfying this standard, you will be required to demonstrate the following additional supportive documents. These documents may be submitted with Standard 5 as part of your school catalog OR submitted separately here as attachments to Standard 2.

- 2.3 Program description(s)
- 2.4 Course Map OR Sample Curriculum
- 2.5 Course listings
- 2.6 Daily schedule
- 2.7 Academic calendar
- 2.8 Grading and assessment policies

Standard 3

Student Progress and Learning Outcomes

3A. Student Assessment

Describe procedures for student assessment.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *What assessment methods do you use to assess student progress? (e.g. written exams, oral exams, student presentations, capstone projects etc.)*
- *How and when are these assessments administered, and by whom?*

3B. Satisfactory Progress

Describe procedures for monitoring student progress, as well as procedures/services for students who are falling below standard.

- *Who monitors student progress (e.g. appropriate academic progress, satisfactory grade point average, etc.) and how?*
- *How are students informed of the consequences of not meeting satisfactory academic progress standards?*
- *What procedures or services does the institution have in place to assist students with improving their academic progress?*
- *What are the policies governing attendance? What is the procedure to enforce these policies?*

3C. Institutional Outcomes: Qualitative

Describe the outcomes that demonstrate the success of your educational program(s) in narrative form.

Your response should answer the following questions:

- *How do you know that your institution is succeeding in its educational goals for the individual student?*
- *In setting performance standards, how does your institution take into account the standards of similar institutions? Cite examples.*
- *How do you know that your institution is succeeding in accomplishing its overarching goals in the institution as a whole?*

3D. Institutional Outcomes: Quantitative

Provide quantitative data illustrating institutional outcomes and measures of success. (Refer to AIJS Outcomes and Benchmarks for benchmark requirements.)

Your response should include the following:

- *A minimum of three years' worth of data in two or more of the following areas, presented in chart/graph form:*
 - *Acceptance to graduate or professional programs*
 - *Acceptance to advanced programs*
 - *Completion/graduate rates*
 - *Combined completion and transfer to other postsecondary institutions*
 - *Employment in positions related to field of study*
 - *Retention rates*

- *A brief explanation discussing each set of data provided*
- *Description of how the outcomes provided reflect the institution's mission*

3E. Outcomes: Review and Change

Describe how your institution monitors outcomes and revises policies and programs accordingly.

Your response should address the following:

- *Provide evidence that your institution monitors, reviews and assesses outcomes.*
- *Discuss how the institution uses the results of the assessment to institute or revise policies or other aspects of the program(s). Cite examples.*

3F. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions with regard to your student assessments or learning outcomes?*
- *Are you satisfied that you are accomplishing your institutional mission, both in an individual and overarching sense?*
- *Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Attachments

- 3.1 Sample student work (*Seminaries mandatory; Yeshivos optional*)
- 3.2 Institutional Outcomes data with listings of students and relevant dates and information
- 3.3 SAP Sample Reports, illustrating how SAP is monitored
- 3.4 Institutional publications (eg. *kuntreisim*) – *Optional*
-

Note: In satisfying this standard, you will be required to demonstrate your institution's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policies. These policies may be submitted with Standard 5 as part of your school catalog OR submitted separately here as an attachment to Standard 3.

- 3.5 SAP policy

Standard 4

Facilities, Resources and Equipment

4A. Campus and Facilities

Describe the facilities and demonstrate how they lend themselves to a positive learning experience.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *List the address(es) of your operation (including auxiliary buildings such as administrative offices, faculty housing etc.).*
- *Are the facilities owned or leased? If the facilities are leased, describe the leasing arrangements.*
- *Describe the facilities, including study hall, classrooms, offices, dormitories, dining facilities, recreational areas, storage areas, and restrooms.*
- *Describe the facility's basic systems, such as lighting, heating and cooling.*
- *Is the campus handicapped accessible? Describe the arrangements to assist handicapped students to the maximum extent possible.*
- *What are the parking options for students, faculty, staff and visitors? Is the institution accessible by public transportation?*

4B. Library

Describe the library and related services.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *What library facilities are available? Include a description of the number and types of books and research materials available, as well as the physical premises in which they are housed.*
- *How do the types of books and research materials relate to the areas of instruction in your institution?*
- *What is the procedure and budget for new acquisitions?*
- *Who maintains the library and how?*
- *Does your institution use computers for instructional purposes? If so, are the computer facilities adequate for instructional needs? Is there tech support? Is it adequate?*

4C. Maintenance and Supplies

Describe the maintenance and management of facilities and supplies.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Who is responsible for maintenance of the facilities, and what do his/her duties entail?*
- *Is there in-house maintenance staff and/or a service contract for outside maintenance workers?*
- *Describe the processes or procedures that are enforced to ensure a clean and well-maintained environment.*
- *Who is responsible for purchasing supplies, and what do his/her duties entail?*
- *Is there a chain of command regarding maintenance and/or purchasing, and if so, how does it operate?*

4D. Food Services

Describe the food service arrangements.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *What meals and snacks do you provide?*
- *Who is responsible for food preparation?*
- *Is food preparation done in-house and/or outsourced? Why?*
- *How do you ensure student satisfaction in this area?*

4E. Safety and Security

Describe safety and security measures on campus.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Who is responsible for campus security?*
- *How is campus security dealt with? Discuss campus security procedures.*
- *Describe the measures instituted to ensure compliance with local health, fire and safety codes.*
- *What additional measures has your institution taken to ensure campus safety and security (eg. Installation of security features on campus, regular walkthroughs, etc.)?*

4F. Recent Expansion and Change

Describe how your facilities and/or equipment have been improved over recent years.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Were there any major changes to your facilities over the past two years (eg. expansion, construction, etc.)?*
- *Why were these changes implemented?*
- *Who were the people and what was the process involved in completing these improvements?*
- *Were there any major equipment purchases over the past two years? If so, describe/discuss them.*

4G. Future Expansion and Change

Describe future plans for the campus and facilities.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Are the current facilities adequate for the current level of operation and student body?*
- *What are the options for campus expansion?*
- *Are there plans for campus expansion? If so, describe. Provide details, including timeframes, sources of funding and manpower.*

4H. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions with regard to your facilities, resources or equipment?*
- *Are your students and faculty satisfied with what you provide in this area? How do you know?*

- *Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: Other than the changes noted in part 4F above, have there been any new developments (since the submission of your previous ISA) related to this standard? Include a description of those changes.*

Attachments

- 4.1 Site map
- 4.2 Copy of leasing arrangement, if applicable
- 4.3 Annual security report

Standard 5

Recruitment, Admissions, Catalogs and Student Services

5A. Recruitment

Describe your recruitment strategies and procedures.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *What type of student are you trying to attract?*
- *What is your primary source of students? If there is no single primary source, describe the various sources.*
- *Do you have any agreements (verbal or tacit) with feeder institutions to serve as a source of students for your program? If so, describe them.*
- *How does your institution build relationships with educational institutions from which you receive students? Describe any plans you might have to increase the number of feeder schools.*
- *What recruitment tactics do you employ?*
- *Who is responsible for recruitment?*
- *Do you place advertisements? If so, do they reflect your institution accurately?*

5B. Admissions

Describe your admissions policies and procedures.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *What are your requirements for admission? Include academic as well as personal requirements.*
- *Does the institutional material clearly describe the admissions policy? Are admissions criteria made known to prospective applicants?*
- *What is the admissions process? Describe all facets (eg. entrance exam, background research, forms, etc.)*
- *Who is responsible for each part of the process?*

5C. Residential Services

Describe the services available for student residents.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *What dormitory or residential accommodations are available for students?*
- *What support services are available for students who do not reside on campus?*
- *What special programs or services do you provide to make student life pleasant and enjoyable?*

5D. Academic Support

Describe the academic support services available.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *How are students made aware of the school's academic and grading policies?*
- *What academic counseling or support is available to the student? Is it accessible, affordable, and widely publicized?*
- *What procedures and support are utilized to assist students who have not evidenced satisfactory academic progress (for example: remedial classes, tutors)?*

- *What academic accommodations are available for students who have special physical and/or educational needs?*

5E. Medical Support

Describe the medical services and support available to students on or near campus.

5F. Guidance and Counseling

Describe the guidance and counseling services available to students who seek assistance in facing personal challenges.

5G. Financial Aid

Describe the financial assistance provided to students, including Title IV, institutional scholarships or other forms of aid.

5H. Student Satisfaction

Describe the complaint process and response procedures.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Does your institution ask for student feedback, comments or suggestions? How do you do this? Describe actions taken on the basis of this feedback.*
- *What are the procedures for students to express dissatisfaction or request improvements?*
- *Describe one or two case studies of complaints and their manner of resolution. How do they reflect school policy in terms of how they were handled by the administration?*
- *What is the process for recognizing and dealing with the phenomena of multiple complaints in one particular area or regarding one particular staff member? Are there any examples of any action taken on the basis of this process?*

5I. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions with regard to your recruitment, admissions, catalog and/or student services?*
- *Are your students and faculty satisfied with what you provide in this area? How do you know?*
- *Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Note: The school catalog (and/or similar publications, including student handbooks, guides, supplements etc.) must be provided as part of this standard. Included in the catalog (or similar publications) should be:

- **Admissions policy**
- **Complaint policy**
- **Credentials offered**
- **Credential requirements**

- **FERPA policy**
- **Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) policy**
- **Tuition policy and rates**
- **Transfer of credit policy**
- **Refund policy**
- **Withdrawal policy**

The school catalog should also include the following (if not submitted separately in Standard 2):

- **Program description(s)**
- **Course Map or Sample Curriculum**
- **Course listings**
- **Text listings**
- **Institutional calendar**
- **Daily schedule**
- **Grade point system and policies**

Attachments

- 5.1 Catalog, including supplements (and/or similar publications)

Standard 6

Student Records

6A. Provide a list of staff members involved in record keeping, including job descriptions.

6B. Security

Describe how student records are secured.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *How are student records secured against fire and water damage, theft, misplacement or loss?*
- *How are electronic records protected against loss or unauthorized access?*
- *What is the institutional policy regarding unauthorized access to student records? How are these safeguards implemented? Describe staff members' awareness of these safeguards.*

6C. Academic Records

Describe your academic record keeping policies and procedures.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Which staff members are responsible for recording and maintaining student records?*
- *What is the process for collecting and recording student grades?*
- *What is the procedure for issuing a student transcript?*
- *How is confidentiality of information ensured?*
- *For how long are academic records retained?*

6D. Student Financial Records

Describe your student financial record keeping policies and procedures.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Where are records of student finances stored and who has access to those records?*
- *Are financial records stored separately from other files?*
- *Who maintains and/or updates the student financial records?*
- *What system do you use to ensure that records are complete and accurate?*

6E. Complaints Records

Describe the process and filing of records of complaints.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Which staff members are responsible for filing records of complaints?*
- *Where are complaints and complaint resolutions stored?*
- *For how long are complaint records retained?*

6F. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions with regard to your record keeping policies?*
- *Are you satisfied with what you provide in this area? How do you know?*

- *Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Note: As part of this standard, you will be required to demonstrate student files. Each student's permanent record must include ALL of the following:

- 1. Record of Admission to institution**
- 2. Documentation of high school graduation or equivalent**
- 3. Program and course registration**
- 4. Record of all courses completed**
- 5. Academic time period (term/semester/quarter) when each course was taken**
- 6. Grades for each course**
- 7. GPA for each term and cumulative GPA.**

Attachments

- 6.1 Sample admission and registration forms
- 6.2 Sample grading sheet
- 6.3 Sample cumulative transcript
- 6.4 Two sample complaint forms, including resolutions
- 6.5 Sample tuition card
- 6.6 Sample student file

Standard 7

Measures in Program Length, Objective of Degrees and Credentials Offered

7A. State Authorization (or Exemption) to Offer Postsecondary Education

- *Has the institution received state authorization to provide post-secondary education in the state?*
- *Is this authorization a result of licensure, or is it based on exemption from licensure?*

7B. Credentials

Describe the credentials offered by the institution.

Your response should address the following:

- *Describe the credentials granted at the completion of each program offered by the institution.*
- *Explain the consistency between the institutional mission and the credentials granted.*

7C. Program Length and Comparative Standards

Compare your program requirements to those of similar programs at other institutions.

Your response should include the following:

- *Describe how the standards required to earn a credential at your institution are comparable to those of similar postsecondary institutions.*
- *Describe how the program lengths correspond to the credentials offered, and how they are similar to or different from those of other similar post-secondary institutions.*

7D. Access to Further Training

Provide examples of any of the credentials awarded that enabled access to higher training and education.

7E. Findings

Assess your level of satisfaction regarding the degrees and credentials offered at your institution.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Are your students satisfied with the credentials offered?*
- *Are you considering adding or changing the level or type of credential that your institution offers? If so, describe the considerations involved.*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Attachments

- 7.1 State authorization to provide post-secondary education in the state in which it is located
- 7.2 Sample credential(s) (Include Associate and/or Bachelor degrees, as applicable.)

Standard 8

Faculty Qualifications and Responsibilities

8A. Faculty Qualifications

Describe the qualifications required of your faculty.

Your response should address the following questions:

- *What qualifications (educational, professional and personal) do you require of your staff (senior level, mid-level, junior level)?*
- *Describe the vetting process for new staff members.*
- *Describe how the instructors reflect the mission of the school.*

8B. Faculty Listing

List the faculty members at your institution, including synopses of qualifications and experience.

Your response should include the following:

- *Listing of primary faculty members*
- *Synopsis of each listed individual's degrees, credentials and resume*
- *Evidence that instructors hired are appropriate for their teaching responsibilities*

8C. Governance

Describe the role of faculty with regard to policy formulation and implementation.

Your response should incorporate the following:

- *In what ways are faculty involved in designing academic and institutional policies?*
- *Give examples of the roles that faculty play(ed) in the formation of your institution's policies.*
- *Give examples of how faculty members are involved in revising and updating the course curriculum.*
- *Give examples of student interaction with faculty demonstrating how student suggestions are incorporated into institutional decisions.*

8D. Evaluation and Growth

Describe your institution's approach towards professional growth and faculty evaluation.

Your response should address the following questions:

- *How do course instructors demonstrate subject competence and pedagogical skill?*
- *How does the institution encourage faculty development and growth?*
- *How often are instructors evaluated? What is the evaluation process?*
- *Who in the institution is responsible for faculty evaluation? How does he/she carry out this role?*

8E. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions concerning your faculty, whether with regard to selection, evaluation, performance or any other arena?*

- *Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Note: In satisfying this standard, you will be required to demonstrate personnel folders for faculty members. Each personnel folder must include the following:

- 1. Resume**
- 2. Job description**
- 3. Faculty evaluation**

Required Attachments

- 8.1 Sample personnel folder
- 8.2 Faculty responsibilities form

Standard 9

Administration, Human Resources and Collaborative Relationships

9A. Organizational Structure

Describe the organizational structure of your institution.

Your response should include the following:

- *Listing of the people and positions involved in your organizational structure (eg. members of board, members of administration, etc.)*
- *Description of the role of each person listed on the organizational chart*
- *Description of the lines of authority (ie. who accepts direction from whom)*

9B. Board of Directors

Describe your Board of Directors and their impact and involvement.

Your response should address the following questions:

- *Who are the members of the Board of Directors? Include short synopses of credentials and experience. Discuss how and/or why each one agreed to serve on the board.*
- *How often does the Board meet?*
- *What are Board members' roles and responsibilities? Describe their involvement in institutional policies and decisions. Give specific examples.*

9C. Administrative Personnel

Describe the administrative personnel involved in your organization, as well as the policies and procedures related to them.

Your response should address the following areas:

- **Onboarding**
 - *How does the institution attract candidates for new positions? Describe the process.*
 - *Who makes decisions regarding hiring administrative personnel? On what basis? Discuss an example of hiring.*
 - *How are new employees oriented to the organizational culture of the institution?*
- **Communication**
 - *What communication channels do administrative personnel utilize to communicate amongst one another (eg. formal meetings, electronic communication, phone calls, etc.)? Do they feel it is effective?*
 - *Describe the relationship and division of roles between the different offices (eg. financial aid, registrar, business office, maintenance). Describe the coordination between them.*
- **Effectiveness**
 - *Does the administrative staff feel that there is adequate support staff for the size and scope of the institutional activities?*
 - *Are there staffing or responsibility changes that they might suggest if the budget would allow?*

- **Evaluation**
 - *What is the system in place for measuring individual performance?*
 - *How does your institution provide feedback on individual performance?*
 - *Are job requirements periodically revised to reflect changes in job responsibilities? Can your institution describe at least one such case?*
 - *How does your institution handle poor employee performance? Discuss an example, if applicable.*
- **Grievances**
 - *What is the procedure for employee complaints and grievances?*
 - *How is it implemented?*

9D. Alumni

Describe the relationship between the institution and its alumni.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Does the institution maintain a list/database of graduates? If so, for what purpose? If not, why not?*
- *Is there an alumni association or group? If so, describe the group and its leadership.*
- *What services (eg. events, visits back at the host school, etc.) are provided for alumni which promote long-term connection and support?*
- *Is there an alumni newspaper or publication? If so, describe it. How often is it published, and by whom?*
- *Do alumni contribute to the fundraising efforts? If so, how? How are they recruited?*

9E. Community

Describe the institution's relationship with the community, both locally as well as within the broader confines of the Jewish community.

Your response should address the following:

- *Describe the relationship of your institution with its neighbors and the broader community.*
- *Are your institution's facilities available to and used by the community? If so, how?*
- *Are there adult education classes, lecture series, or similar efforts sponsored by the institution?*
- *Describe how your faculty members and/or students contribute to the community.*

9F. Other Institutions

Describe the institution's relationship with other institutions.

Your response should address the following:

- **Destination institutions**
 - *Does your institution have any formal or informal understandings with other institutions that serve as a destination after program completion?*
 - *If so, what is the nature of this arrangement?*
- **Other organizations**
 - *What are the cooperative relationships with other institutions and organizations in the community that enhance your institution's educational programs?*

9G. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions concerning your board, human resources or community relations?*
- *Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Note: In satisfying this standard, you will be required to demonstrate personnel folders for employees. Each personnel folder must include the following:

- 1. Resume**
- 2. Job description**

Required Attachments

- 9.1 Organizational Chart
- 9.2 Sample administrative personnel folder

Standard 10

Financial Practices

10A. Financial Overview

Provide a brief snapshot of the institution's overall financial picture, utilizing figures from the two most recent fiscal years. Include primary income and expenses, as well as a brief description of each item included. (A table may be helpful.)

10B. Significant Changes

Describe any significant changes in your financial outlook.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- Are there issues in either of the two most recent financial statements that might impact your institution's ability to continue in operation?
- Are there any unusual items on the financial statements? If so, how can they be explained?

10C. Income and Fundraising

Describe your various sources of income.

Your response should address the following subjects:

- **Fundraising and Donations**
 - What are your primary sources of donation income? Describe them.
 - What fundraising strategies and events do you employ? Describe them.
 - Who is responsible for fundraising and donation collections?
- **Tuition**
 - Is tuition comparable to similar institutions?
 - Are there considerations of community and student needs incorporated into determining overall tuition?
 - On what basis are students offered scholarships? Who decides?
 - Who handles your tuition collection? What is being done to ensure effective collections?
- **Title IV**
 - Is your institution eligible for and/or receiving federal or state student aid?
 - How does your institution ensure compliance? Does your institution employ a trained Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) and/or contract with an outside consultant for student financial aid administration and compliance?
 - Has the institution ever been under review by state or federal student aid offices?

10D. Expenses and Budgeting

Describe your expenses, as well as your policies for budgeting and control.

Your response should address the following questions:

- What is your institution's budgeting process? Which personnel are involved in this process? How does the process work?
- Who decides priorities and provides authorization regarding expenses? Who controls spending, and how?

10E. Financial Control

Describe the individuals and processes involved in overseeing your financial operation.

Your response should address the following questions:

- *Who oversees your entire financial picture? What measures does he/she take to monitor finances and implement change?*
- *Does the institution have a designated and qualified Chief Financial Officer (CFO)?*
- *Describe the system of internal controls at your school in terms of fund management for incoming and outgoing funds.*
- *Have the internal control policies been reviewed by a CPA?*
- *Have any recommendations regarding internal control been made and implemented?*

10F. Findings

Describe what you have discovered upon completion of this Standard.

Your response should include answers to the following questions:

- *Has the process of Institutional Self Appraisal led you to any new conclusions concerning your income, expenses, financial management or financial outlook?*
- *Moving forward, what can you do better? What are your plans for implementing those improvements?*
- *Institutions applying for reaccreditation: What changes have taken place in this area since the submission of your previous ISA, and why? Provide a detailed description.*

Required Attachments

10.1 Financial audits for the two most recently completed fiscal years

10.2 IPEDS finance survey (most recently submitted) (*Title IV participating institutions*)

Section IV: Attachments Checklist

Standard 1

- 1.3 Certificate of Incorporation
- 1.4 Long range plans (if applicable to this ISA)

Standard 2

- 2.1 Sample course syllabi
- 2.2 Performance standards (Seminaries only)
 - Additionally, if not included in catalog:*
 - 2.3 Program description(s)
 - 2.4 Course Map OR Sample Curriculum
 - 2.5 Course listings
 - 2.6 Daily schedule
 - 2.7 Academic calendar
 - 2.8 Grading and assessment policies

Standard 3

- 3.1 Sample student work (Seminaries mandatory; Yeshivos optional)
- 3.2 Institutional outcomes data with listings of students and relevant dates and information
- 3.3 SAP sample reports
- 3.4 Institutional publications (optional)
 - Additionally, if not included in catalog:*
 - 3.5 SAP policy

Standard 4

- 4.1 Site map
- 4.2 Copy of leasing arrangement, if applicable
- 4.3 Annual security report

Standard 5

5.1 School catalog and supplements (and/or similar publications), including all of the following:

- Admissions policy
- Complaint policy
- Credentials offered
- Credential requirements
- FERPA policy
- Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) policy
- Tuition policy and rates
- Transfer of credit policy
- Refund policy
- Withdrawal policy

Additionally, if not submitted in Standard 2:

- Program description(s)
- Course Map or Sample Curriculum
- Course listings
- Text listings
- Institutional calendar

- Daily schedule
- Grade point system and grading policies

Standard 6

- 6.1 Sample admission and registration forms
- 6.2 Sample grading sheet
- 6.3 Sample cumulative transcript
- 6.4 Two sample complaint forms, including resolutions
- 6.5 Sample tuition card
- 6.6 Sample student file, including:
 - Record of Admission to institution
 - Documentation of high school graduation or equivalent
 - Program and course registration
 - Record of all courses completed
 - Academic time period (term/semester/quarter) when each course was taken
 - Grades for each course
 - GPA for each term and cumulative GPA

Standard 7

7.1 State authorization to provide post-secondary education in the state in which it is located

7.2 Sample credential(s) (*Associate and/or Bachelor degrees, as applicable*)

Standard 8

8.1 Sample personnel folder, including:

- Resume
- Job description
- Faculty evaluation

8.2 Faculty responsibilities form

Standard 9

9.1 Organizational Chart

9.2 Sample administrative personnel folder, including:

- Resume
- Job description

Standard 10

10.1 Financial audits for the two most recently completed fiscal years

10.2 IPEDS finance reports (*Title IV participating institutions*)

SECTION V: ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT

After the ISA has been completed, it must be submitted to AIJS. AIJS reviews the document and sends the institution comments and feedback. The institution has the opportunity to respond to the comments and resubmit the document. Then AIJS can accept the document, reject it, or may ask for supplementary documentation, explanations, or supporting materials. Once the ISA has been formally accepted by AIJS, an evaluation committee, or site visit team, will be appointed, and a site visit will be scheduled to the institution. The purpose of this visit is for knowledgeable evaluators, representing different aspects of higher Jewish, general education, and other professionals committed to excellence, to review the operations of the institution. Their review will be based on the comparison of the institution's own self-study to their first-hand observations and discussions with the key individuals on-site. The site visit team will conduct a careful review of the institution and assess the degree to which the institution satisfies each of the AIJS Standards. In order to discharge their duties properly, the site visit team members must be fully prepared for the on-site visit, and thoroughly familiar with the provisions of this Guide to the ISA and the Site Visitors Manual.

THE SITE VISIT TEAM

The second phase of the accreditation process is an on-site review by an AIJS site visit team. ***Section III of this Handbook provides important guidelines for working most effectively with the site visit team. Therefore, Section III should be carefully reviewed before the site visit takes place.***

The site visit team will review day-to-day operations at the institution to see how they comply with the designated Standards. While the ISA considers the institution's thoughts and reflections on these Standards, the site visit team will be concerned that these thoughts are, in fact, backed by a well-developed system of administrative and educational policies, practices and operations.

The AIJS site visit team will consider the Standards below. You should bear in mind that AIJS sees its role as one that provides a catalyst for growth and educational development within an institution of higher education. The Standards that it uses for assessment are regarded as essential components for academic quality and educational vigor -- not simply as abstract notions or as chores that have to be addressed.

SELECTION OF THE SITE VISITORS

Members of the site visit team are selected on the basis of their experience, expertise, and commitment to quality in Jewish Studies education. These teams will generally consist of three to five individuals with professional competence in such areas as academics, institutional administration, finance, and student services. The critical element which guides the selection of the team is that they have demonstrated a commitment to quality in the field of post-secondary Jewish Studies. Any conflict of interest must be avoided when choosing site visitors. AIJS site visit teams are selected on the basis of individual members' expertise and capacity to objectively evaluate a candidate institution on the basis of its own

stated mission and the presented Standards. In the case of institutions that offer, in addition to their core Judaic Studies curriculum, other professional studies, AIJS will supplement the site visit team with experts or practitioners specific to that field. Prior to the site visit, AIJS will identify and appoint the members of the site visit teams. The names of the proposed site visitors, along with their institutional affiliations, will be shared with the institution prior to the scheduled visit. The institution may raise an objection to AIJS concerning a proposed visitor, citing a possible conflict of interest or other disqualifying reason. The final choice of site visit team members remains with AIJS.

THE SITE VISIT

The site visit of the institution is one of the important sources of information used by AIJS in determining compliance with its Standards for accreditation. The site visit provides an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of data provided in the ISA, and to resolve any questions or concerns resulting from a careful analysis of the institution's ISA. The site visitors will spend significant time in the institution reviewing documents and the conditions under which they are recorded, stored and saved, observing classes, touring the facilities, and interviewing members of the administration, faculty, students, Board and community members as well as other stakeholders in the institution such as employers of graduates of the institution. The site visitors will have scheduled time during the visit to meet as a team, compare notes and assess the institution's compliance to each of the AIJS Standards. The information and insights provided by the site visit team are important in formulating fair, impartial, and informed decisions on accreditation.

SITE VISIT REPORT

The chair of the site visit team submits a written report of the site visit to the agency, along with the completed score sheet for each of the ten standards. This report includes the site visit team's observations and recommendations regarding each of the ten Accreditation Standards. The observations in the report must be supported by factual information. The site visit report indicates the program's strengths and limitations and provides explanatory information. The agency forwards a copy of the site visit report to the institution within 45 days of the site visit. The institution is given the opportunity to respond in writing within 14 days of receipt of the site visit report before it is submitted to the EAC for an accrediting decision. The EAC is given a copy of any institutional response to the site visit report to review and consider when making an accreditation decision.