



**THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION**

WASHINGTON, DC 20202

MAY 14 2004

His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor  
of St. Maarten  
Franklyn Richards  
Government of St. Maarten  
Administrative Building  
Clem Labega Square  
Phillipsburg, St. Maarten  
Netherlands Antilles

Dear Mr. Richards:

On March 8-9, 2004, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) met in Washington, D.C., to review materials from 13 countries, including the information and documentation provided by the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine (Accreditation Commission) on behalf of St. Maarten for the purpose of reassessing the comparability of St. Maarten's medical accreditation standards to those used in the United States. At the meeting, Professor O. Conor Ward, Chair of the Accreditation Commission, provided additional information on behalf of St. Maarten. His testimony was most helpful, and the NCFMEA members wish to thank him for his participation in the meeting.

I am pleased to inform you that the NCFMEA, based on the information and materials submitted and the testimony presented, reaffirmed its prior determination that the standards and processes used by the Accreditation Commission to accredit medical schools in St. Maarten are comparable to those used to accredit medical schools in the United States. This determination of comparability by the NCFMEA has a maximum duration of six years from the date of this letter, unless the Committee withdraws, extends or renews its determination prior to that date. Before expiration of the six-year period, the NCFMEA will seek to confirm that your standards and processes for accrediting medical schools in St. Maarten are still comparable to the accreditation standards applied to medical schools in the United States. If so, its previous determination of comparability will be extended for another period.

As a result of the determination of continued comparability by the NCFMEA, any medical school in St. Maarten that is accredited by the Accreditation Commission may apply to the U.S. Department of Education to participate in the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program. If a medical school's application is approved, students enrolled in the school who are either U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. may receive

FFEL loans to finance their medical education if they meet all other eligibility requirements. Medical schools that wish to participate in the FFEL program may obtain the proper application forms from the Foreign Schools Team by calling (202) 377-3168 or by writing to the following address:

Foreign Schools Team  
FSA/Schools Channel/CMO  
U.S. Department of Education  
Room 73C3  
830 First St., N.E.  
Washington, DC 20202-5340  
USA

Our understanding is that there is only one medical school located in St. Maarten at the present time and that is the American University of the Caribbean (AUC). Please note that it is not necessary for AUC, which is currently participating in the FFEL program, to contact the Foreign Schools Team at this time; the status of that school remains unchanged by the NCFMEA's decision of continued comparability.

At the March meeting, the NCFMEA also requested that St. Maarten provide a report on its accreditation activities involving its medical school(s) for review at the March 2006 meeting. Please see the enclosure for details on the information to be provided in the report.

We would appreciate receiving the requested report by December 1, 2005, so we have sufficient time to review the information prior to the March 2006 NCFMEA meeting. Please send the information to the U.S. Department of Education at the address below.

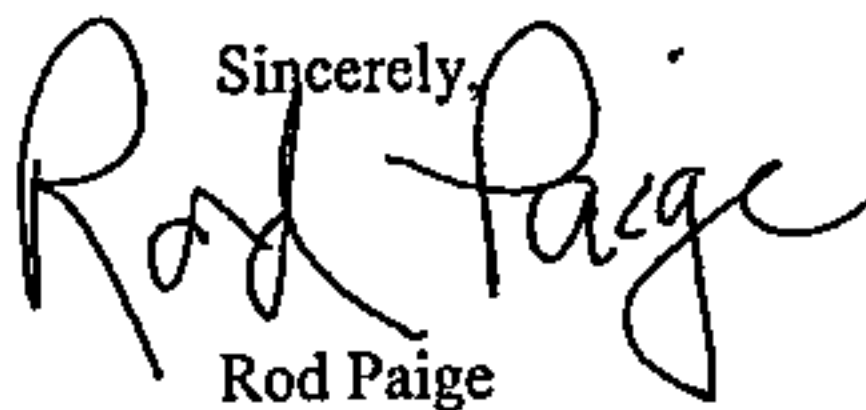
Mr. John Barth  
Director, Accreditation and State Liaison Staff  
U.S. Department of Education  
1990 K Street, N.W.— Room 7105  
Washington, DC 20006-8509  
USA

If you have any questions regarding the information requested, please feel free to contact Mr. Barth at (202) 219-7011 (telephone), (202) 219-7005 (fax), or [john.barth@ed.gov](mailto:john.barth@ed.gov) (e-mail).

The Executive Director of the NCFMEA, Bonnie LeBold, will contact you in the autumn of 2005 to provide information regarding the March 2006 NCFMEA meeting. In the interim, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. LeBold at (202) 219-7009 (telephone), (202) 219-7008 (fax), or [bonnie.lebold@ed.gov](mailto:bonnie.lebold@ed.gov) (e-mail).

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Thank you very much for providing information regarding your country's accreditation of its medical schools. The NCFMEA members and the U.S. Department of Education appreciate your ongoing assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,  
  
Rod Paige

Enclosure

cc: Professor O. Conor Ward, Chairman  
Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine

**Report Requested from St. Maarten and the  
Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine  
by the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education  
and Accreditation (NCFMEA)**

**Due Date:** December 1, 2005

**Submit to:** John Barth  
Director, Accreditation and State Liaison Staff  
U.S. Department of Education  
1990 K Street, N.W. – Room 7105  
Washington, DC 20006-8509  
USA

Phone: (202) 219-7011  
Fax: (202) 219-7005  
E-mail: [john.barth@ed.gov](mailto:john.barth@ed.gov)

**Content:** The NCFMEA is requesting information (and any applicable supporting documents) regarding the following:

- ***Current status of medical schools:*** A list of the medical schools currently operating in St. Maarten, indicating whether each school has gone through the accreditation process and what the outcome of that accreditation process has been (whether the school is fully accredited or provisionally accredited, whether accreditation has been terminated, etc.).
- ***Overview of accreditation activities:*** A summary of key activities involving St. Maarten medical school(s) during 2004 and 2005, such as accreditation reviews conducted, meetings held and accreditation decisions reached, and accreditation conferences or training sessions held.
- ***Laws and regulations:*** Any changes in your country's laws or regulations during 2004 and 2005 affecting the accreditation of medical school(s) in St. Maarten or any changes in your government's recognition of the Accreditation Commission to evaluate and accredit medical school(s) in your country.
- ***Standards:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2004 and 2005 in the accreditation standards that the Accreditation Commission uses to evaluate and accredit medical schools, and, if so, what those changes were in the areas listed below:
  - administration,
  - faculty,
  - curriculum,
  - admissions procedures,
  - student services,
  - methods for evaluating student achievement, and
  - facilities.
- ***Processes and procedures:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2004 and 2005 in the accreditation processes or procedures used by the Accreditation Commission for the following:

- conducting site reviews of the medical school campus and clinical clerkship sites,
  - selecting and training individuals who conduct site evaluations or who make accreditation decisions,
  - periodically reevaluating and regularly monitoring medical schools,
  - reviewing substantive changes reported by medical schools,
  - ensuring the Accreditation Commission has effective controls against the conflicts of interest and the inconsistent application of accreditation standards, and
  - ensuring that accreditation decisions are based, in part, on the evaluation of student performance after graduation from medical school.
- *Schedule of upcoming accreditation activities:* A listing of upcoming accreditation meetings and on-site visits to medical schools and clinical clerkship sites planned for 2006.

**U.S. Department of Education**



**Staff Analysis**

**St. Maarten**

**For the March 8-9, 2004 Meeting  
of the  
National Committee on Foreign Medical  
Education and Accreditation**

**U.S. Department of Education**

**Staff Analysis of the Standards for the  
Evaluation of Medical Schools Used by**

**St. Maarten**

**Prepared February 2004**

**Background**

The action before the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education Accreditation at its March 2004 meeting is a re-determination application submitted by the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine (ACCM) on behalf of the government of St. Maarten. The National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA or the Committee) periodically reviews the continued comparability of the standards used by countries to evaluate medical education. Therefore, Department staff provided a copy of the most recent NCFMEA guidelines to ACCM and requested that ACCM submit information and documentation to demonstrate its continued comparability with those guidelines. The NCFMEA provided the guidelines to ACCM because St. Maarten does not have a governmental body to conduct the accreditation activities of the one medical school in the country. Instead, it has officially designated ACCM as the entity responsible for reviewing and accrediting the American University of the Caribbean (AUC), the medical school in St. Maarten.

ACCM is also the designated accreditor for the governments of Saba and the Cayman Islands for the evaluation and accreditation of the medical schools in those countries. Presently then, the NCFMEA has made decisions that recognize ACCM's accreditation standards and procedures for medical schools in the Cayman Islands, Saba and St. Maarten as being comparable to those used in the United States.

The NCFMEA first made a determination regarding ACCM's comparability in September 1997, when the Committee determined that the accreditation standards and procedures being used by ACCM to accredit AUC, then located in Montserrat, were comparable to those used in the United States. This was ACCM's first agreement with a Caribbean country to serve as its designated accreditor. When AUC was forced to relocate to St. Maarten after a volcano erupted on Montserrat, the government of St. Maarten officially designated ACCM (in December 1997) to be its authorized representative in accrediting AUC. The NCFMEA, at its March 1998 meeting, once again determined that ACCM's accreditation system, now being used in St. Maarten, was also "comparable."

ACCM submitted two documents in response to the Department's current request for information: (1) a November 26, 2003 letter that transmits ACCM's answers to the Department's questionnaire; and (2) a December 11, 2003 letter that transmits ACCM's accreditation report for AUC and the supporting documents for the report. The

accreditation report grants AUC unconditional accreditation for six years, beginning January 1, 2004.

### Summary of Findings

The Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine has been formally and officially designated by the Government of St. Maarten as the entity responsible for reviewing and accrediting the American University of the Caribbean medical school. The NCFMEA has previously reviewed ACCM's accreditation standards and processes as part of its comparability assessments of the accreditation systems used by Montserrat, St. Maarten, Belize and the Cayman Islands. Department staff has reviewed ACCM's standards and processes and concludes that the ACCM's standards and procedures for accreditation under its agreement with the government of St. Maarten remain comparable to the standards and procedures currently used to accredit medical schools in the United States. ACCM conducted several site visits at AUC in 2002 and 2003 before granting the school "full unconditional accreditation" for a six-year period.

The Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine, on behalf of St. Maarten, provided responses to the NCFMEA's questionnaire on its standards and procedures for accrediting medical schools and its accreditation report, dated December 1, 2003, for the American University of the Caribbean, located on St. Maarten.

Based on the information provided by ACCM, it appears that St. Maarten has an evaluation system that remains substantially comparable to the system used in the United States to evaluate the quality of medical education here. ACCM's accreditation report for the American University of the Caribbean demonstrates that the agency has applied its standards and procedures in conducting an accreditation review of the school before making its accreditation decision.

### Staff Analysis

The National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation is charged with determining whether the standards and procedures for accreditation used by a foreign country to accredit medical schools offering programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree are comparable to the standards and procedures for accreditation applied to M.D. programs in the United States.

In making this determination, the Committee uses the following guidelines that it has determined provide an appropriate framework for the thorough evaluation of medical schools offering programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree. The Committee wishes to make it clear that these are, in fact, guidelines and that a foreign country's review and approval process can differ substantially from these guidelines and still be determined to be comparable to the standards used in the United States, provided the foreign country can demonstrate that its standards and processes of evaluation are effective alternatives to those used in the United States.

## **PART I: The Entity Responsible for the Accreditation/Approval of Medical Schools**

**There should be a clearly designated body responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the foreign country, and that body should have clear authority to accredit/approve medical schools in the country that offer educational programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree.**

In December 1997, the government of St. Maarten, in a "Heads of Agreement" document, authorized ACCM to serve as the accrediting body for AUC for as long as the school operated on St. Maarten. The Executive Council of St. Maarten again recognized ACCM's authority to serve as the accrediting body for AUC in May 2003 in a new "resolution" signed by St. Maarten's Secretary and Lieutenant Governor. The NCFMEA formally acknowledged ACCM as the official accrediting agency of St. Maarten at its March 1998 meeting.

### **Documentation:**

**HEADS OF AGREEMENT**, signed by the Commissioner of Public Health and Education of the Island of St. Maarten and the Chairman of ACCM, dated December 9, 1997.

**RESOLUTION**, by the Executive Council of the Island Territory of St. Maarten, signed by St. Maarten's Secretary and Lieutenant Governor, dated May 20, 2003.

## **PART II: Accreditation/Approval Standards**

**The entity within the foreign country that is responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the country and has authority to accredit/approve medical schools should have standards comparable to the following:**

### **1. Mission and Objectives**

**(a) The educational mission of the medical school must serve the general public interest, and its educational objectives must support the mission. The medical school's educational program must be appropriate in light of the mission and objectives of the school.**

**(b) An essential objective of a program of medical education leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree must be to prepare graduates to enter and complete graduate medical education, qualify for licensure, provide competent medical care, and have the educational background necessary for continued learning.**

Element 1 of the Commission's Elements (ACCM's standards) establishes the Commission's requirements for the educational mission, goals and objectives of a medical school:

- (3) Seeks to sponsor a program that fulfills or exceeds requirements to achieve accreditation.
- (4) Graduates only individuals who have acquired a critical amount of knowledge and skills to advance and complete postgraduate training.
- (5) Seeks to graduate only individuals who are able to secure licensure, provide quality patient care, and who have the capacity to keep his medical knowledge current through self-learning after he completes his training."

The Protocol requires the team to summarize in its report the educational goals of the medical school and to comment on whether they are appropriate for the school, whether they have been achieved, whether the faculty and students are familiar with the goals, and whether the college is contemplating any major effort to enhance its ability to reach its goals.

The ACCM Accreditation Report reflects that the agency reviewed the USMLE Step 1 results to evaluate the extent to which the institution is accomplishing its educational goal of preparing students to enter the medical profession.

Documentation:

Elements, pp. 2-3.

Profile, Element 1, Educational Goals: I. Objectives, Items 1-4.

Protocol, pp. 17-18 and 31.

American University of the Caribbean, ACCM Accreditation Report, December 1, 2003, pp. 1-2.

## 2. Governance

(a) The medical school must be legally authorized to provide a program of medical education in the country in which it is located.

(b) There must be an appropriate accountability of the management of the medical school to an ultimate responsible authority external to and independent of the institution's administration. The external authority must have sufficient understanding of the medical program to develop policies in the interest of both the medical school and the public.

Element 2 establishes the Commission's requirement regarding the legal authorization of the medical school:

"The institution shall be organized as a government-supported or a private independent entity which offers degree programs beyond the baccalaureate level. The institution shall also be licensed by the appropriate governmental or regulatory authority to offer courses of instruction leading to award of the M.D. degree."

With respect to the legal authorization of the medical school, the Profile requires a medical school to give the date of its charter by state/provincial government, together with the type of charter (not for-profit or commercial/for-profit). The Protocol requires the team to report whether the medical school is licensed by the appropriate governmental or regulatory authority to offer courses of instruction in medicine and to award the M.D. degree.

Element 2, Corporate Organization, establishes the Commission's requirements for governance as follows:

"The institution shall be governed by an independent and voluntary board of trustees. The board shall be recognized as the highest authoritative body of the institution...In consultation with the chief academic officer, divisional heads, and representatives of the faculty, the board shall govern the institution by:

- (1) Establishing broad institutional policies.
- (2) Providing institutional direction.
- (3) Securing financial resources.
- (4) Selecting the chief executive officer, the chief academic officer, and their deputies.
- (5) Overseeing the management's performance of its duties and responsibilities."

Element 2 also provides direction on the selection and term of board members, as well as on conditions that disqualify an individual to serve on the board.

The Commission's Profile requires medical schools to provide basic information on the composition of the school's board of trustees or equivalent governing body, including the names and business or profession of each member. If there is a separate board for the medical school, then the school must provide the information for both the principal governing body of the institution and that of the medical school.

The Commission's Protocol requires the on-site inspection team to review minutes of the board of trustees "for evidence that it governs the [medical school] by:

- (1) Establishing broad institutional policies.
- (2) Providing institutional direction.
- (3) Securing financial resources.
- (4) Selecting the chief executive officer.

- (5) Assisting in the selection of other officers of the college.
- (6) Overseeing the management's performance of its duties and responsibilities."

The team also must examine whether the board members are free of conflicting interest with the medical school and independent of the administration. Finally, the team must examine the institution's by-laws and codes of regulations for evidence that the duties and responsibilities of the key administrative and academic officers, the faculty, and faculty committees are outlined in these documents.

The Protocol requires the team to report specifically on each of these areas of governance, in particular whether board members serve without conflicts of interest with the medical school and independent of the administration and whether the board properly exercises its authority in overseeing the administration's performance of its duties and responsibilities.

ACCM's implementation of these requirements is reflected in its Accreditation Report.

Documentation:

Elements, pp. 3-4.

Profile, Element 2, Corporate Organization: II/III. Governance and Administration, C. Governing Body, Items 5 and 6.

Protocol, pp. 18 and 31.

American University of the Caribbean, ACCM Accreditation Report, December 1, 2003, pp. 2-3.

### **3. Administration**

- (a) The administration of the medical school must be effective and appropriate in light of the school's mission and objectives.
  - (i) There must be sufficient administrative personnel to ensure the effective administration of admissions, student affairs, academic affairs, hospital and other health facility relationships, business and planning, and other administrative functions that the medical school performs.
  - (ii) The chief academic officer of the medical school must have sufficient authority provided by the institution to administer the educational program. That individual must also have ready access to the university president or other university official charged with final responsibility for the school, and to other university officials as are necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the chief academic officer's office.

- (iii) In affiliated institutions, the medical school's department heads and senior clinical faculty members must have authority consistent with their responsibility for the instruction of students.**

Element 3 establishes the Commission's requirements regarding administration:

**"The institution shall design an administrative structure so that each division is able to perform its unique responsibilities efficiently. The design and size of the administration shall also be of sufficient magnitude for the size of the student body and the scope of the program."**

Also, Element 2 establishes that the institution's by-laws and codes of regulation delineate the roles, duties, and responsibilities of the chief, associate, and assistant administrative officers; the chief academic officer and his deputies; and the faculty.

The Commission's Profile requires the medical school to provide various types of information concerning the administration of the school, including the organizational structure, the relationship of the principal administrative positions in the medical school to each other and to the university administration, the management of the various departments that support the medical school, the school's strategic plan, etc. If the medical school has geographically separated programs, the Commission requires the school to provide information on the administration of those programs as well. The Inspection Report provides evidence that the site evaluators reviewed the school's administration.

The Commission's Protocol requires the on-site Inspection team to meet with key members of the medical school's administration to ascertain the effectiveness of the school's management. For example, the team must meet with the deputy academic officer for curriculum, the chairperson of the curriculum committee, and selected course directors to discuss the management of the curriculum. The team must also meet with admissions personnel to review the medical school's admissions policies and practices. Finally, the team must meet with selected student affairs personnel to determine the extent and quality of the student services provided. If the school has satellite health facilities, the team must meet with officials at those facilities to determine the effectiveness of the administration of those facilities and the comparability of the services provided to those at the main facility.

In its report, the team must describe the administrative structure of the school and comment on whether the design of the administration fosters effective and efficient implementation of the educational objectives of the school and whether the administration is accessible to students.

The Commission's Profile requests information on faculty by-laws (if any). Finally, it requests information on the major permanent medical school faculty committees (names, number of members, who appoints the committee, to whom the committee reports, whether the committee is advisory and/or decision-making, etc).

ACCM's implementation of these requirements is reflected in its Accreditation Report.

Documentation:

Elements, Element 2 and 3, pp. 3-6.

Profile, Element 3, Medical School Governance/Administration, E. Items 12-24.

Protocol, pp. 16, 31-32.

American University of the Caribbean, ACCM Accreditation Report, December 1, 2003, pp. 2-4.

- (b) The chief academic official of the medical school must be qualified by education and experience to provide leadership in medical education.**

Element 3 states the following with respect to the chief academic official of the medical school:

"The chief academic officer - who must hold a M.D. degree - shall possess adequate qualifications and experience in medical education, research, and patient care to lead and to supervise the educational program of the institution."

The Commission's Profile requires the medical school to describe the selection process for the dean, to provide a job description for the position showing the reporting relationship between the dean and other administrative positions, and to describe the administrative style of the dean.

The Commission's Protocol requires the on-site inspection team to report on the qualifications of the chief academic officer and comment on how well that individual has led the college and carried out his/her responsibilities. It must also report on the most recent performance review of the chief academic officer.

ACCM's implementation of these requirements is reflected in its Accreditation Report.

Documentation:

Elements, p. 5.

Profile, Element 3, Medical School Governance/Administration, E. Items 12-24.

Protocol, pp. 16, 31-32.

American University of the Caribbean, ACCM Accreditation Report, December 1, 2003, pp. 3-4.

- (c) The medical school may determine the administrative structure that best suits its mission and objectives, but that structure must ensure that the faculty is appropriately involved in decisions related to –**

**(i) Admissions**

**(ii) Hiring, retention, promotion, and discipline of faculty; and**

- (iii) All phases of the curriculum, including the clinical education portion;**

With regard to the role of faculty in admissions, Element 6 states:

"Upon consultation with the administration, a faculty committee on admissions shall define the size and characteristics of the student body." The committee shall also "define the institution's requirements for admission and make final decisions on the students admitted to the program."

Element 8 addresses the role of faculty in hiring of faculty:

"The recruitment and selection of faculty – as well as all other academic policies of the institution – shall be the result of the collective efforts of the chief academic officer, department heads, faculty representatives, and the administration. "

Element 4 addresses the role of the faculty in determining the curriculum as follows:

"A curriculum committee of faculty members shall be responsible for developing and evaluating a curriculum that provides a general medical education so that its graduates are prepared to pursue further training at the graduate level. The management of the curriculum shall involve the participation of the faculty and the administration in an integrated manner."

The Commission's Profile requires medical schools to list all faculty by department, providing the year appointed, the highest degree(s) held, and where the degree was obtained. It also requests information on faculty by-laws (if any). Finally, it requests information on the major permanent medical school faculty committees (names, number of members, who appoints the committee, to whom the committee reports, whether the committee is advisory and/or decision-making, etc).

ACCM's implementation of these requirements is reflected in its Accreditation Report.

Documentation:

Elements, pp. 7, 15, 19.

Profile, Element 6, Admissions; Element 4, Curriculum, B; Design and Management, Item 4; Element 6, Admissions, Committee A. Item 1.

Protocol, pp. 18-21.

American University of the Caribbean, ACCM Accreditation Report, December 1, 2003, pp. 4-7; 8; 9-10.

- (d) If some components of the educational program are conducted at sites that are geographically separated from the main campus of the medical school, the school must have appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that –**

- (i) **The educational experiences at all geographically separated sites are comparable in quality to those at the main campus; and**
- (ii) **There is consistency in student evaluations at all sites.**

Element 3 addresses the comparability of the education experience at geographically separated sites:

**"The chief academic officer shall ensure that the students at satellite health care facilities receive the same curricular material, same quality of education and the same standard of student evaluation found at the parent campus. To achieve this goal and to implement the academic policies of the institution, the dean shall appoint -- at each satellite health care facility -- an assistant dean (who reports directly to the dean), departmental faculty (who reports to their respective divisional heads), and administrative personnel (who report directly to his supervisor at the parent campus)."**

The Commission's Profile requires the medical school, if it has geographically separated programs, to provide information on the administration of those programs as well.

The Commission's Protocol requires the on-site inspection team to meet with officials at the school's satellite health facilities to determine the effectiveness of the administration of those facilities and the comparability of the services provided to those at the main facility.

AUC's educational program has no geographically separated sites; all educational activities are conducted on the school's one campus on St. Maarten.

Documentation:

Elements, pp. 5-6.

Profile, Element 3, Medical School Governance/Administration; F. Geographically Separated Programs, Item 15.

Protocol, pp. 18-19, 32.

#### **4. Educational Program**

- (a) ***Duration:* The program of education leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree must include at least 130 weeks of instruction, scheduled over a minimum of four calendar years.**

The Commission requires the length of the medical program to be no less than 150 weeks and offered over four academic years.

The Commission's Profile requires the medical school to report the total number of weeks (excluding vacations and holidays) required to complete studies for the M.D.

degree. These must be broken out into the number of weeks in each year (period, term, unit, etc.).

The Commission's Protocol requires the on-site inspection team to report on the length of the curriculum and to outline the curriculum with respect to the type of courses offered in freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior year, including the number of hours of instruction for each subject taught.

The Accreditation Report cites the AUC catalogue, which lists the required courses and a description of each. ACCM noted in the "Annual Survey" that the courses were as follows:

First Year 48 weeks; Second Year 32 weeks; Third Year 42 weeks; Fourth Year 30 weeks. Total: 152 weeks.

Documentation:

Elements, p. 7.

Profile, Element 4, Curriculum, Educational Program, A. Duration. Item 1-2.

Protocol, pp. 20-24, 32-33.

American University of the Caribbean, ACCM Accreditation Report, December 1, 2003.

**(b) *Curricular Content:*** The medical school's curriculum must provide students with general professional education, i.e. the knowledge and skills necessary to become a qualified physician. At a minimum, the curriculum must provide education in the following:

**(i) The sciences basic to medicine, including--**

**(A) The contemporary content of those expanded disciplines that have traditionally been titled anatomy, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology and Immunology, pathology, pharmacology and therapeutics, and preventive medicine; and**

**(B) Laboratory or other practical exercises that facilitate the ability to make accurate quantitative observations of biomedical phenomena and critical analyses of data.**

**(ii) A variety of clinical subjects, including at least the core subjects of internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, surgery, and psychiatry and, preferably, family medicine.**

**Note 1: Medical schools that do not require clinical experience in one or another of the above disciplines must ensure that their students possess the knowledge and clinical abilities to enter any field of graduate medical education.**

**Note 2: Clinical instruction must cover all organ systems and include aspects of acute, chronic, continuing, preventive, and rehabilitative care.**

Element 4 states in general that "the program shall provide a general and broad learning in the principal medical disciplines." With regard to basic science, Element 4 states that the curriculum "shall allow students to acquire - through didactic and practical instruction - current understanding and advances in the biomedical science disciplines representing anatomy, histology, physiology, biochemistry, psychology, medical ethics, neuroscience, bio-statistics, microbiology, immunology, pathology, pharmacology, and preventive medicine."

The Commission's Profile requires the medical school to describe in depth the content of its educational program, including a listing of each content area together with the number of hours for each teaching/learning method (lecture, conference, lab, other). It requires the school to identify the percentage of time in the basic and clinical sciences that consists of department/division courses, interdisciplinary courses, and other courses. It asks the school to indicate when the last major revision of its curriculum took place and what that revision entailed. It also asks the school to identify where in the curriculum students acquire specific clinical skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Finally, for each required course in the curriculum, the school must complete a form providing detailed information on the faculty teaching the course; the number of hours spent in lecture, lab, conference, etc.; course evaluation methods; textbooks; etc.

The Commission's Protocol requires the on-site inspection team to review overall curricular objectives, course objectives, course content, laboratory exercises, the types and number of patients available for teaching purposes, the clinical skills students are required to master, etc. The team is also required to observe lectures and labs in a variety of basic and clinical sciences.

The on-site evaluation team's report must address the content and structure of the curriculum, the effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting the medical school's educational goals, the role of the curriculum committee in overseeing the curriculum, etc.

ACCM's evaluation of the curriculum is reported in the Accreditation Report.

Documentation:

Elements, pp. 7-8.

Profile, Element 4, Curriculum .

Protocol, pp. 20-24, 32-38.

American University of the Caribbean, ACCM Accreditation Report, December 1, 2003, pp. 4-7.

**Note 3: The medical school's program of clinical instruction must be designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills,**

**attitudes, and behaviors necessary for further training in the practice of medicine.**

**Note 4: Instruction and experience in patient care must be provided in both ambulatory and hospital settings.**

**Note 5: Each required clinical clerkship (or equivalent) must allow the student to undertake thorough study of a series of selected patients having the major and common types of disease problems represented in the clerkship**

Element 4 states that the clinical program "shall be oriented towards primary care.... The curriculum shall also provide instruction in current understanding and advances in the fundamental diagnosis, treatment, management, prevention, and rehabilitation of major and commonly occurring, acute, and chronic diseases. They shall be presented in an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach in areas of:

- (1) Internal medicine of not less than 12 weeks.
- (2) Surgery of not less than 12 weeks.
- (3) Pediatrics of not less than 6 weeks.
- (4) Obstetrics and gynecology of not less than 6 weeks.
- (5) Psychiatry of not less than 6 weeks.
- (6) Family medicine of not less than 4 weeks - whether offered as a separate course or integrated into the five major clinical disciplines identified in paragraphs (1) through (5) above.
- (7) Clinical electives of not less than 26 weeks."

ACCM's evaluation of the curriculum is reflected in the Accreditation Report.

Element 4 states that "in designing clerkships, the curriculum committee shall require all clinical instruction be carried out in both inpatient and outpatient settings. There shall be adequate daily patient census representing a broad range of commonly occurring diseases available for students to study." All instruction must provide an adequate number of hours of lectures, conferences, faculty teaching rounds, and resident rounds each week. It must also provide an adequate number of new and existing patients each week. There must also be adequate faculty review and critique of students' workups and presentations of patients, and patient logs must be maintained to monitor the number and variety of patients seen by the students.

The Commission requires each medical school to provide proper oversight of the learning experience of clinical students, which is defined in the Elements, and requires

