



## Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board Bureau canadien d'agrément en foresterie

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

The full curriculum requirements<sup>1</sup> for accreditation of a forestry program are made up of three broad groups of study - foundational, core forestry and complementary. Short descriptions are provided here for guidance. The reader is directed to Section 3.3 of the *Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board Policy Statement, November 24, 2008 (modified September 12, 2014)* for a more complete description.

#### **Foundational Studies**

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

#### **Core Forestry Studies**

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

#### **Complementary Studies**

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

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

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

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

## **Principle**

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

## **Relevant components**

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

It is not required that each forestry program cover all items of a standard's relevant components. Rather, the list is intended as a guide to instructors. It is required that the subject matter covered will be delivered in sufficient depth and breadth that a graduate will be able to achieve the Standard's Demonstrable Competencies, at an entry level of professional practice.

## **Demonstrable competency**

*A Demonstrable Competency is an essential measurement point.*

A graduate shall be able to demonstrate entry-level competence in each of the Demonstrable Competencies of a standard and shall be able to do so in a manner that corresponds accurately with the "learning outcomes" levels of Appendix "A" of these Standards (Bloom's Taxonomy, as adapted) prescribed by each Competency's action verb.

Each Demonstrable Competency of a standard is accompanied by a sub-set of Performance Indicators.

## **Performance indicators**

*Performance Indicators are measurables, based on Bloom's Taxonomy (adapted), describing activities typical of those a graduate will be able to undertake with respect to the overlying Demonstrable Competency.*

It is not mandatory that each Performance Indicator in a sub-set be addressed by a candidate forestry program. Rather, they are intended to provide context and guidance to instructors and schools as to abilities which would, *in toto*, lead to satisfying the requirements of the associated Demonstrable Competency.

When appropriate, a school may make a case for introducing new performance indicators that it believes reflect the achievement of the relevant Demonstrable Competency. Indicators so added must be clearly identified and stated in a Questionnaire response, should employ the action verbs found in the adapted Bloom's Taxonomy table of Appendix "A" of these Standards and should be fully responded to in the completion of the Questionnaire Appendix tables.

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

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