

Tuesday, February 17, 2026



Hosted by Jacksonville University
Jacksonville, Florida

Accreditation Development Series Description:

For the 2026 Annual Meeting, AABI will host the second **Accreditation Development Series** focusing on different aspects of the accreditation process. These sessions will help prepare institutional representatives of programs in candidacy for initial accreditation or reaffirmation, as well as those considering beginning the process, for what is expected. Topics will include discussions on the following:

Criterion 3.6: Modernized Facilities for the Future of Aviation Education

Moderators: Chas Ellis & Mike McLean, JLG Architects; James Birdsong, Auburn University; and Jeremy Roesler, University of North Dakota

Join this session to learn concrete strategies for updating existing infrastructure or building new spaces that support aviation education and training. Explore principles of student-centered design, classroom and lab layouts that promote active learning and efficient pre/post-briefing spaces. Hear practical approaches to designing and realizing new spaces. The panel will also cover fundraising ideas from capital campaigns through donor engagement. This session will help you prioritize investments that maximize teaching effectiveness and accreditation readiness.

Criterion 3.5: Attracting and Supporting Faculty and Staff

Moderators: Tony Foster, University of Dubuque; Chaminda Prelis, Middle Tennessee State University; and Hatice Kucukonal, Ozyegin University

This session explores proven strategies for recruiting, retaining and developing high-quality aviation faculty in alignment with AABI Criterion 3.5. Attendees will examine effective recruiting practices, workload and compensation considerations, promotion and tenure alignment and targeted professional development approaches that support faculty success. The panel will also highlight ways to cultivate strong industry partnerships that enhance faculty expertise and expand professional growth opportunities. Participants will leave with actionable ideas to strengthen their faculty cadre, improve work climate and meet accreditation expectations.

Criterion 3.9: Effective Industry Relations to Improve Program Outcomes

Moderators: Gail Avendano, Southern Illinois University; Stanley Adams, Air Line Pilots Association, International; John Robbins, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; and Matt Tuohy, Jacksonville University

This session explores effective industry advisory boards and practical industry partnership strategies to strengthen AABI program curriculum. Learn how to form an advisory board, keep members engaged and use industry input to shape curriculum and assessment. Panelists will present ideas for engaging industry partners and utilizing industry experts for both programmatic changes and meaningful engagement. Attendees will leave with ideas for launching or revitalizing an advisory board, techniques for sustaining industry engagement and guidance on compiling the documentation required for AABI self-study reports.

Criterion 3.7 or 3.11: Leveraging University Services to Assist in the Continuous Assessment and Improvement of Programs

Moderators: Will Miller, Rebecca Gibbons & Laura Thompson, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; Cindy Lewis, Dave Cohen & Mike Petroski, Lynn University

Panel examines how aviation program leaders' partner with centralized university assessment and accreditation offices to streamline assessment planning and accreditation preparation. Speakers will share best practices for coordinating learning outcomes, data collection, assessment reporting and evidence archiving. Attendees will learn strategies to leverage institutional analytics, assessment staff expertise and accreditation liaisons to strengthen continuous improvement. Practical tools and ideas will be provided for immediate implementation and scalability.

Criterion 3.11: Maximizing the Use of Flight Data in the Assessment Process for Continuous Improvement

Moderators: Kathryn Boutwell, Flight Schedule Pro; Nicholas Cataldi, Middle Georgia State University; Ed Hardick, Talon Systems, LL; and Raymond Thompson, Western Michigan University

Collegiate aviation programs increasingly rely on flight training data to build rigorous continuous assessment and quality assurance systems. This panel will explore methods for capturing flight training metrics, correlating performance with instructor evaluations and using trend analysis to identify competency gaps. Speakers will demonstrate dashboards, reporting tools and data rich processing that promote learning and overall assessment of the program. Attendees will learn practical steps to integrate flight data into accreditation documentation, align learning outcomes to training and create improvement cycles that strengthen programmatic evidence that support continuous improvement.

Criteria 3.1: Supporting Student Success in AABI Programs

Moderators: April Millaway-Axton, The University of Oklahoma; Stephen Belt, Saint Louis University; and Adon Clark, Middle Georgia State University

As aviation student demographics change, institutions must adapt support strategies to ensure retention, graduation and career readiness of their students. This panel explores best practices aligned with AABI criteria, emphasizing proactive academic advising, inclusive student services and career development strategies. Panelists will share data-driven approaches to advising that foster persistence and timely completion and discuss how tailored support services contribute to post graduation success. Attendees will gain insights into scalable models that meet diverse student needs while maintaining rigorous program standards.

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