

Accreditation in the Geosciences AGI's Response

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Role of the American Geological Institute

- Geological Society of America commissioned a second survey regarding accreditation
- After the survey, AGI received a formal request from the Geological Society of America to **facilitate** the next steps
- AGI is compelled to respond to this request

AGI's Response to GSA

- **Any move towards accreditation will be disruptive and historic for the profession**
- **The survey instrument and results need to be independently analyzed**
- **Need to define the issue this is addressing**
- **Identify the major concerns**

The issue it is addressing?

- **Ensuring department survivals**
- **Reestablish rigor in the curriculum**
- **Square the degrees with the jobs**
- **Enable accountability on campus**
- **Bolster the status of geoscience in society**
- **Are we at threat of being regulated?**

Decoupling from Licensure?

- **Licensure is in the interest for public health and safety**
- **Licensure is a State issue, and for geology, very uneven**
- **Technical fields with program accreditation usually have a licensure end-point**
- **Is an accreditation effort separable from licensure?**

Broaden Exemplars

- **Is accreditation for departments or people?**
 - Defined by goals of effort

- **Is it accreditation or review?**
 - Strict ABET approach vs. looser “review” style approach

Accreditation Stakeholders

- **GSA canvassed primarily their membership**
 - Dominantly academic
 - Reasonable minority of licensed professionals
- **Omitted major academic, industry and government leadership**
 - Is it valued?
- **Omitted populations that have experienced grandfathering of licensure**

Stakeholder Response

- **Effort only works if ALL stakeholders agree**
 - Fundamentally self-regulation
- **Define the secondary impacts**
 - Can one divorce accreditation from issues of licensure
 - If licensure is key, why not use current vehicles?
- **Risk/benefit analysis of potential pathways**

Business Models

- **Performing the analysis of accreditation potential**
 - Who pays for the process?
 - Who assumes liability for results?
- **How is a decision made to move forward?**
 - Empowerment of what organization?
- **How would an accreditation program be supported?**

Broad Community Discussion

- **Ensure all stakeholders interact in a common forum**
- **Enable the establishment of an authority to make a go/no-go decision**
- **Evaluate the potential level of cooperation in a go-forward situation**
- **Opportunity to establish and disseminate example models**
 - **ABET on one end**
 - **A lot of other models**

Next Step

- **AGI will act with a commitment and support to lead the study**
- **Determining if there is energy for even broaching the subject formally**
 - **Informal response from societies is extremely mixed**
 - **Substantial unsolicited input from community to-date**
 - **Uncertain of impact on licensure efforts if discussion opens publicly**