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# **Revamp Your Certificate Program**

**Sunday, March 7, 2010**

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Administrators

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**2010 Great Ideas Conference  
Colorado Springs, CO**

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## Certificate Program

Education/ training program that

- designed to educate individuals on learning outcomes within a defined scope
- includes a system to ensure individuals receive a certificate only after verification of successful completion of program requirements, at minimum:
  - Achieves passing score on assessment of learner achievement of intended learning outcomes
  - Meets the minimum participation requirements (coursework, learning activities, etc.)
- doesn't result in a degree
- doesn't have ongoing requirements or renewal

Source: ASTM E2659-09 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs

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	CERTIFICATION	CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
<b>FOCUS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VERIFYING EDUCATION/TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE OBTAINED ELSEWHERE</li> <li>• Assessing CURRENT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating/training INDIVIDUALS TO ACHIEVE LOS</li> <li>• ASSESSING ATTAINMENT INTENDED LOS</li> </ul>
<b>CORE COMPONENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS</li> <li>• ASSESSMENT</li> <li>• ONGOING REQUIREMENTS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEARNING EVENT(S)</li> <li>• ASSESSMENT OF LO ATTAINMENT</li> </ul>
<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAN BE REVOKED</li> <li>• RESULTS IN A DESIGNATION AND ASSOCIATED ACRONYM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CANNOT BE REVOKED</li> <li>• NO DESIGNATION/ACRONYM OR ONES THAT DON'T STRICTLY IMPLY CERTIFICATION</li> </ul>

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	CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE/ PARTICIPATION/ COMPLETION	CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
<b>COMPONENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEARNING EVENT(S)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEARNING EVENT(S) BASED ON LOS WITHIN A DEFINED SCOPE</li> <li>• ASSESSMENT OF LO ATTAINMENT</li> <li>• OTHER REQUIREMENTS</li> </ul>
<b>EARNED CERTIFICATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VERIFIED INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATED FOR, ATTENDED AND/OR FULFILLED SOME PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VERIFIED INDIVIDUAL MET MINIMUM PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS AND DEMONSTRATED ATTAINMENT OF LOS</li> </ul>

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Quality Standards	
<i>ANSI/ASTM E2659 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs</i>	<i>ANSI/ICE 1100 Standard for Assessment-Based Certificate Programs</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are distinct standards with similarities but also key differences</li> <li>• ANSI selected the ASTM standard as the basis of its accreditation program</li> </ul>	

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Quality Standards	
<b>Certification</b>	<b>Education / Training</b>
<i>ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024 General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Personnel</i>  <i>NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs</i>	<i>ANSI/IACETI-2007 Standards for Continuing Education and Training</i>  <i>(ANSI/ISO/IEC) Learning services for non-formal education and training</i>  <i>DETC Accreditation Standards</i>

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Accreditation	Value
<b>Third party review and attestation of conformance to a standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fosters greater customer trust</li> <li>•Add prestige to a program</li> </ul>
<u>Certificate Programs</u> American National Standards Institute - <i>ANSI/ASTM E2659 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Differentiates when there are competing programs in an industry</li> <li>•Helps convince administrators or boards of the need to commit resources to maintain a high quality program</li> </ul>
<u>Education or Training Providers/ Programs</u> IACET - <i>ANSI/IACET Standard for Continuing Education and Training</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Assures the credibility of a program to potential funding sources</li> <li>•Keeping staff and leaders knowledgeable of and in line with current best practices</li> </ul>
DETC – <i>DETC Accreditation Standards</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Providing feedback for improvement of policies, procedures and operations</li> </ul>

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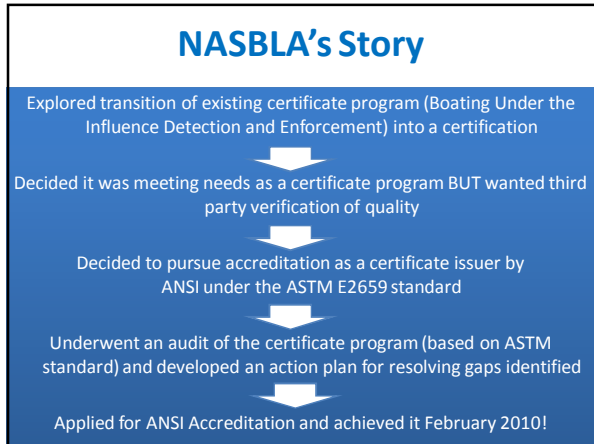
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<p><b>Quality Indicator:</b> The certificate program is guided by an appropriate and aligned system of analysis, program design, development, implementation, and evaluation (ADDIE)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NASBLA:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Had some independent policies and procedures, but no integrated plan</li> <li>•Created comprehensive document outlining the full policies and procedures of its certificate program</li> </ul>
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### ADDIE Policies and Procedures Outline

<p><b>Program Analysis, Design and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs Analysis</li> <li>Program Scope, Purpose, Target Audience, ILOs and Term of Validity</li> <li>Curriculum Design and Development</li> <li>Assessment Design and Development</li> <li>Passing Scores</li> </ul> <p><b>Program Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication to Stakeholders</li> <li>Identity and Test Security</li> <li>Consistency of Course and Exam Delivery</li> <li>Test Feedback</li> <li>Scoring</li> <li>Results</li> <li>Requests for Special Medical Accommodations</li> <li>Complaints</li> <li>Appeals</li> <li>Certificates</li> </ul>	<p><b>Program Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation Scope</li> <li>Evaluation Report and Recommendations</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Quality Indicator:</b> A representative and balanced oversight group of primary stakeholders approve the CP's purpose, LOs, and ADDIE</p>	<p><b>NASBLA:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Had an advisory committee but not representative of stakeholders</li><li>•Now is representative all stakeholders</li></ul>
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<p><i>The International Nonprofit Society Certificate in Non-profit Marketing</i></p> <p>According to written documentation, the goals of the certificate program are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prepare individuals to direct marketing efforts of non-profit organizations</li><li>2. Help employers identify knowledgeable individuals for hiring/promotion</li></ol> <p>The oversight group is made up of 8 non-profit marketers from across the U.S.</p> <p><b>Any concerns?</b></p>
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<p><b>Quality Indicator:</b> Processes in place to assure program purpose, LOs, coursework and assessments are in alignment</p>	<p><b>NASBLA:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Had a solid course, instructor's manual, post-tests (one written, one performance) but needed to refine the LOs and insure alignment of LOs - instruction - tests</li></ul>
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**2.9 Document Control**  
**2.9.1 Scope of Document Control:** NASBLA shall maintain a document control system to control the creation, approval, revision and re-approval, distribution and prevention of use of obsolete material by any individual associated with the NASBLA certificate programs.

**2.9.2 Master List and Controlled Document Maintenance:** NASBLA shall maintain a master list of controlled documents. The master list and all controlled documents shall be maintained by the NASBLA Training Director, both electronically and in print. Should the electronic and print versions differ, the electronic version shall be the ultimate source.

Outdated electronic versions of controlled documents shall be moved to an "Obsolete" folder and shall be kept there in accordance with the record control policy. Course instructors shall be provided with the master list. Electronic versions of some documents may be provided to course instructors but shall not be altered for use in the course without the written approval of the NASBLA Training Director.

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**2.9.3 Changes to Controlled Documents:** Substantive changes to controlled documents shall require approval of the Advisory Panel. Administrative changes to documents may be approved and made by the Training Director. Administrative changes include rearranging information inside the document, correction of spelling and other typographical errors, changes to design and formatting, and addition or removal of supporting information. The Training Director shall have the authority to decide if a requested change is administrative or substantive.

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***The International Nonprofit Society  
Certificate in Non-profit Marketing***

To control documents, INS has a policy that requires:

- 1) All staff must use the Microsoft Word® insert feature to add the document name, date and document creator to the footer of all documents.
- 2) All documents must kept on the shared drive under the Certificate in Non-profit Marketing folder.

**Is this a quality document control system?  
Why or why not?**

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**Quality Indicator: Have records control system.**

Records control: process addressing which and how records are kept, by whom, for how long, and how they are disposed.

**NASBLA:**

- Had general policy for all association records but didn't specifically address education/training records
- Now has a formalized policy

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**2.10 Records Control**

**2.10.1 Scope of Records Control System:** NASBLA shall maintain a record control system to demonstrate that program policies and procedures have been fulfilled effectively. The records shall be identified, managed, and disposed of in a manner designed to ensure integrity of the program and confidentiality of the information.

**2.10.2 Record Control Schedule**  
The records shall be kept according to the following schedule.

RECORD TYPE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
Student Registration Information	Permanently
Class Roster	2 years
Student Pre-Test Results	7 years
Student Final Knowledge Exam Results	7 years
Student Final Practical Exam Results	7 years
Student Certificate: Issue Date and Term of Validity	11 years
Evaluations / Surveys	7 years
Contracts / Agreements	7 years
Advisory Panel Meeting Notes	7 years
Audit Reports	7 years
Evaluation Reports	7 years
Controlled Document Versions	7 years
Personnel Training Records	7 years

**2.10.3 Record Storage:** Electronic records shall be maintained by either the NASBLA Office Manager or the NASBLA Training Director. Paper records shall be boxed and stored for the life of the document.

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**Quality Indicator:** Policies and procedures are understood and implemented and in compliance with (the standard or guidelines you espouse to follow – e.g., ASTM E2659). When problems found, corrective and preventive actions are approved by management and implemented by appropriate personnel

Internal Audit: First-party review of the CI's policies and procedures to ensure adherence to the standard's requirements.

**NASBLA:**

- Had no audit process
- Consultant audit of the program served as the first internal audit
- Now has an audit form to use for future audits
- May use other certificate issuer staff for audits

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<p><b>Quality Indicator: Have complaints and appeals systems in place to ensure fair treatment and for quality improvement.</b></p> <p>Complaint – request for corrective action</p> <p>Appeal - request for reconsideration of adverse decision</p>	<p><b>NASBLA:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Had never received appeals</li><li>•Had no documented processes</li><li>•Now has documented processes</li></ul>
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**Complaint or Appeal?**

“Could you please resend a certificate to me? The first one received has my name spelled wrong.” →

“Regarding my recent failing test results, I request a retest opportunity because the testing room was extremely loud due to construction and it disrupted my concentration.” →

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**Advice**

- Be purposeful in program design
- Consider standards / accreditation options at start-up
- Conduct an audit (by self or other)
- If you hire a consultant for an audit:
  - Contract only for the audit first (not audit and redesign)
  - Be clear on what is the basis of the audit (opinion versus a standard)

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## Advice

- Audit and redesign takes time and resources
- Needs to be one individual that takes the lead (and management needs to understand this will be the SOLE focus for a period of time)
- Don't underestimate the time it takes to put an accreditation application together...but an organized application is worth the time invested

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## Contact Information

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# Resources

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## Standards, Guidance and Accreditation for Education and Training

ADEC Guiding Principles for Distance Learning. American Distance Education Consortium. [www.adec.edu](http://www.adec.edu)

ANSI/IACET 1-2007 Standard for Continuing Education and Training. International Association for Continuing Education and Training. [www.iacet.org](http://www.iacet.org)

ANSI/ASTM E2659-09 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs. ASTM International. [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)

DETC Accreditation Standards. Distance Education Training Council. [www.detc.org](http://www.detc.org).

DETC Accreditation Checklist: [www.detc.org](http://www.detc.org)

(ANSI/ISO/IEC) Learning services for non-formal education and training. Not yet published. Will be available through [www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org).

IACET Authorized Provider Program. International Association for Continuing Education and Training. [www.iacet.org](http://www.iacet.org)

## Standards, Guidance and Accreditation for Credentialing

ANSI/ASTM E2659-09 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs. ASTM International. [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)

ANSI/ICE 1100: Standards for Assessment Based Certificate Programs. [www.credentialingexcellence.org](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org)

ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024 Conformity Assessment-General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons. International Standard available through American National Standards Institute. [www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org)

Accreditation of Certification Programs, American National Standards Institute. [www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org) (Click Accreditation Programs, Certification).

NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. National Commission for Certifying Agencies. [www.credentialingexcellence.org](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org)

Note: The revised Core Competencies in Association Professional Development (ASAE & The Center) will have a chapter by Rops on “The Role of Credentialing in Association Education.” Available August 2010.

# About Chris Moore

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Chris Moore joined the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in 1996 and serves the organization as training director. His primary responsibility is serving as the association's primary training coordinator, which includes the management and execution of the accident investigator training program and the boating under the influence training program. Chris also serves as staff member of several committees.

Before becoming training director, Chris worked as a research assistant for NASBLA. In this position, his duties included meeting planning, exhibition management, publication production, grant writing, surveys and special projects as assigned by the association.

Chris was born and raised in Ohio, and earned his B.A. in political science from Georgetown College in 1998. Chris worked for twelve years as a quality engineer for automotive parts producers prior to his current job. Chris used to enjoy boating, but his constant exposure to reports of accidents, BUI arrests and fatalities has dampened his enthusiasm a bit.

# About Mickie Rops, CAE

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Since 1997 Mickie has been helping organizations make the right credentialing decisions. Much of her consulting work is in educating organizations on credentialing options and guiding them in the decision as to which credentialing program, if any, is the right fit for the challenges they face. She also conducts audits of full programs or program components to make recommendations for improvement, and she researches and writes background papers to inform decision-making.



Mickie is a dedicated volunteer and leader for ASAE & The Center for Association Leadership, ASTM International, and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Mickie is an ANSI lead assessor for assessing compliance with the *ISO/IEC 17024:2003 General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons* standard and the ANSI accreditation of personnel certification programs. She also serves as the lead technical advisor for ASTM International on the American National Standard *ASTM E2659-09 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs* which is the standard on which the ANSI Certificate Accreditation Program is based.

Mickie's blog *Beyond Certification* ([www.msrops.com](http://www.msrops.com)) was the first blog for the credentialing community and was named by Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide as one of the 10 most influential blogs for the association community. Her publications include: *Identifying and Using a Field's Body of Knowledge*, the credentialing chapter in the book, *Core Competencies in Professional Development*, *The Certification Toolkit*, *Considering Certification? Your Guide to Making the Decision* and *Certification Simplified: A Primer for Volunteer Leaders and Staff of Personnel Certification Programs*.

As a former association staff executive, Mickie directed several high-profile professional certification and self-assessment programs, managed a national association's professional development efforts for over 75,000 members, and facilitated strategy sessions for national and regional associations. Mickie holds a masters' in adult and continuing education and the Certified Association Executive credential.

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