

# ACS Certification Project

A History:  
2005-2012

## 2005 (Louisville conference)

- “ Kathy Guidi and Laurie Greenberg hold discussion session at ACS
- “ 39 people attend ad-hoc follow up session over lunch; this is unprecedented in ACS history.



# 2006 (Portland conference)

- “ Conference panel discussion with committee members
- “ Continued discussion of
  - . subject areas
  - . possible funding sources outside of ACS
- “ Comparative research on other similar programs
- “ Committee proposes market feasibility study

# 2007 (Burlington conference)

- “ Committee learned about industry standards for certification programs:
  - . Validity, Reliability, and Defensibility.
  - . Must be firmly rooted in tasks rather than knowledge.
- “ Mission statement created
  - . *"The mission of the Cheese Professional Certification project of the ACS is to support artisan cheesemaking by developing a Certification Program and by fostering cheese education."*
- “ Initial budget of \$100K+ outlined
- “ Committee structure outlined with subcommittees and deliverables
- “ Initial market feasibility survey sent, results positive

# 2008 (Chicago conference)

- “ 30 minute business meeting presentation
  - . survey results
  - . plan for moving forward with exam development
- “ Group of 30 Subject Matter Experts participate in a brainstorming session at conference to outline areas to be covered in exam.

## 2009 (Austin conference)

- “ Follow up, expanded market research study,
- “ Business case study developed
- “ RFP issued for exam program; proposals all assume existence of
  - . Body of Knowledge document,
  - . Jobs Analysis study
- “ ACS puts hold on all major projects in December for a 5-month period as it transitions from FSA to self-management

## 2010 (Seattle conference)

- “ New Executive Director, Education and Outreach Manager position approved, hired mid-2011s
- “ Mini-proposals for Jobs Analysis study solicited and reviewed.
- “ 15 Subject Matter Experts draft initial Body of Knowledge outline

# 2011 (Montreal conference)

- “ Presentation to Board :Approved
- “ First sponsors are secured
- “ Exam Specifications developed
- “ 15 Experts draft 250 exam questions
- “ Handbook, application form, candidate database infrastructure published
- “ Searchable database of Educational Programs posted to ACS website
- “ 1<sup>st</sup> exam announced in October for August 1, 2012
- “ Staff launches monthly Certification Newsletter

# 2012 (Raleigh conference)

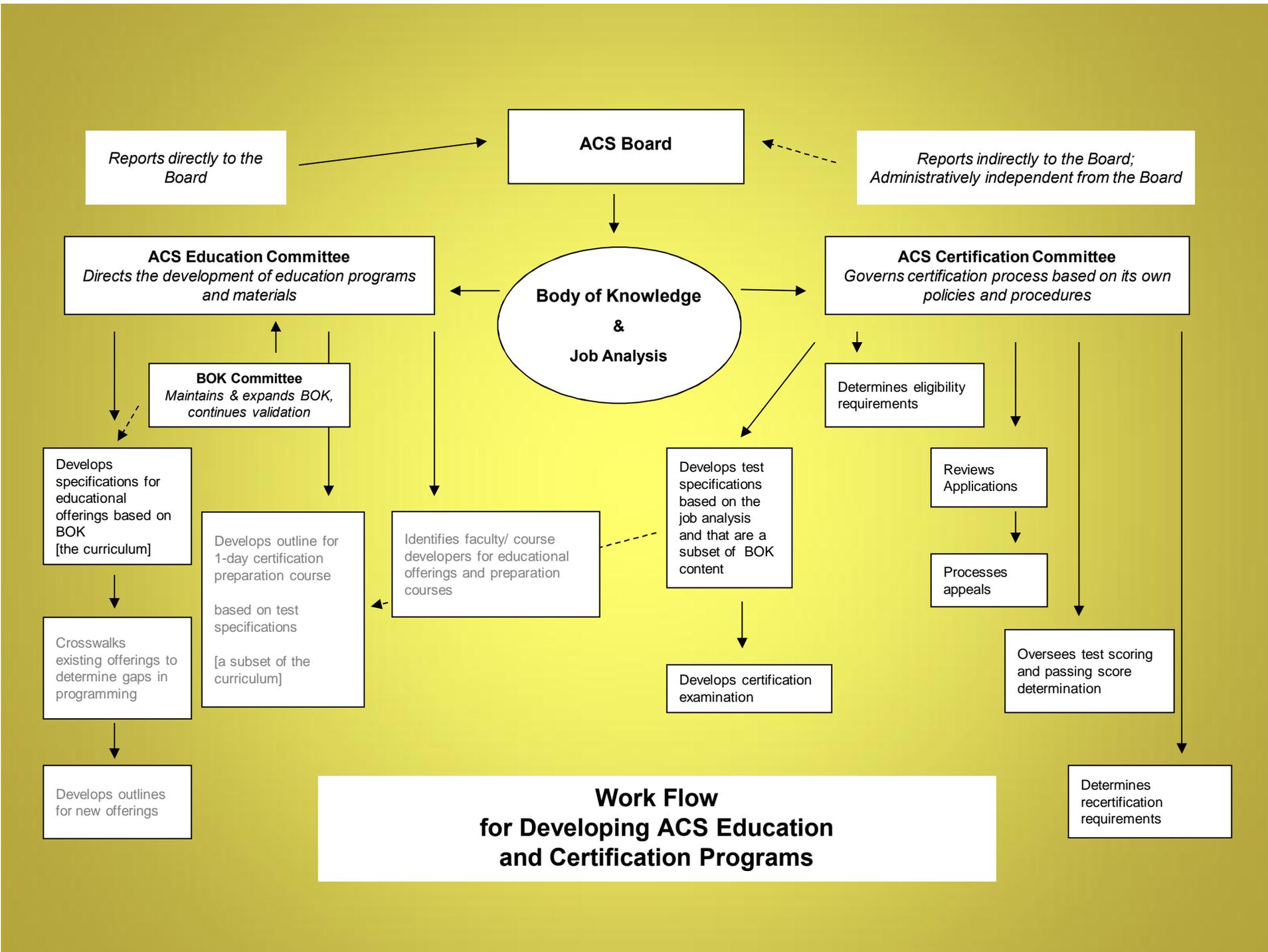
- “ Nearly 200 applications received, Exam completely full in January, 2 months prior to application deadline
- “ Team of 18 Subject Matter Experts conducts Raw Item Review.
- “ Team of 3 SME’s research and provide documentation for exam questions
- “ Governance structure and Code of Conduct drafted
- “ 150-question exam compiled according to exam specs, team of 13 SME’s assembled to review draft exam
- “ Applications for 2013 exam begin to arrive and be approved

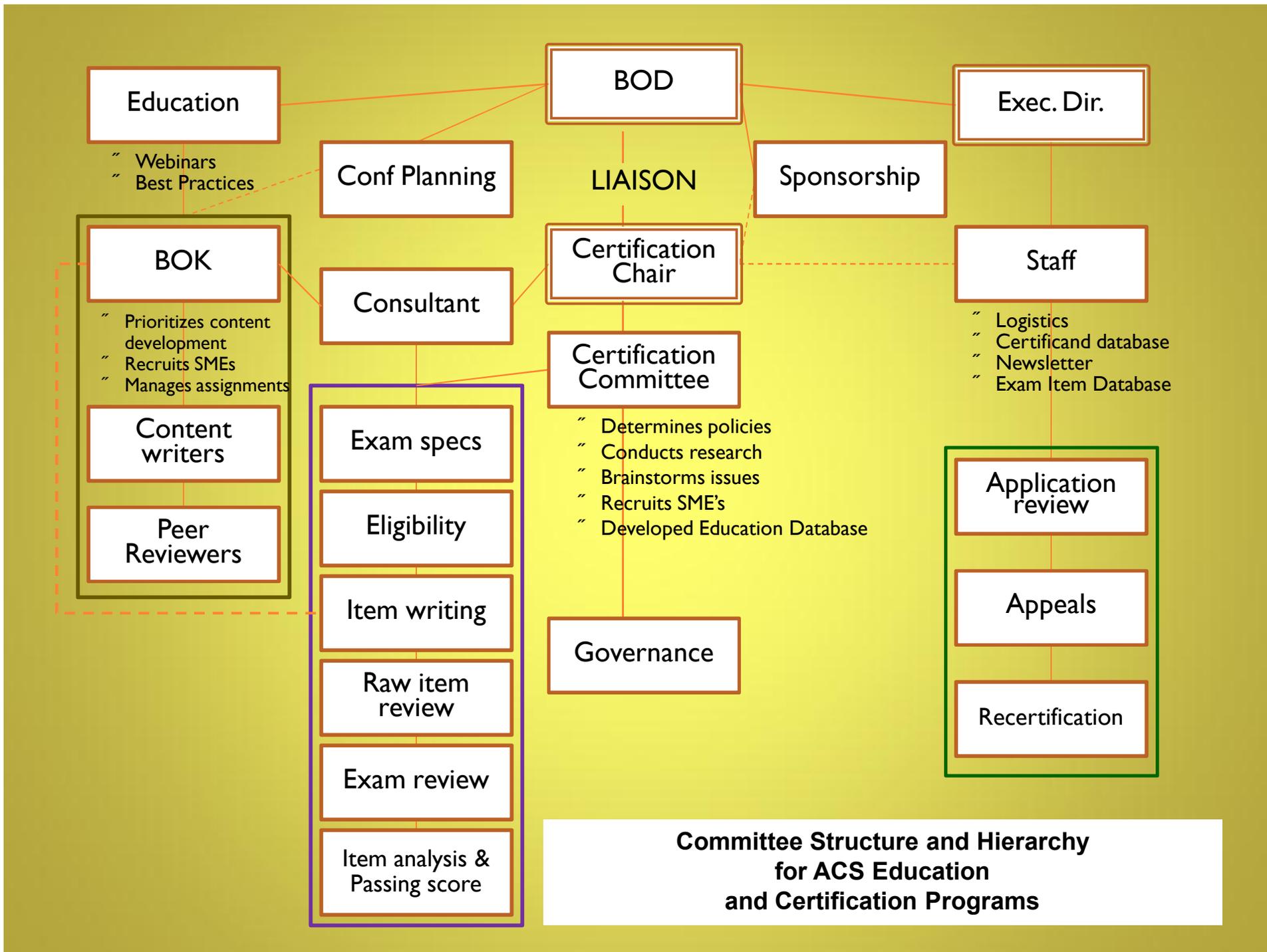
This week:

- “ Initial exam offered on August 4, 2012 at conference
- “ Team of 22 SME’s assembled for Item Writing Workshop at conference
- “ Team of 8 SME’s assembled for Item Analysis Review and Passing Score Study

# Next Steps

- “ Initial class of ACS Certified Cheese Professionals announced in early September
- “ Final wrap-up and reports to Board by end of September
- “ Continued development of the Body of Knowledge
- “ Review of new set of raw exam items in late fall; rotation of new questions into exam for 2013 prepared.
- “ 2013: Exam in Madison Wisconsin on July 31
- “ 2014: expand to 3 exams/year, associated with different industry events
- “ 2015: first opportunity to renew certification





# ACS Member Advisors/Subject Matter Experts

Andy Hatch	Greg O'Neill	Lindsey Schecter	Priscilla Knowlton
Anne Saxelby	Heather Schubert	Louis Risoli	Ray Bair
Bill Stephenson	Hervé Mons	Lynne Devereaux	Rich Morillo
Bob Wills	Ivan Larcher	Marc Druart	Robert Aguilera
Brian Keyser	Jacques Williams	Margaret Morris	Ron Tanner
Cameron Smith	Jane Carter	Mark Goldman	Ruth Flore
Carlos Yescas	Janet Fletcher	Mark Johnson	Sara Hill
Caroline Hostettler	Jeanne Rodier	Matt Benson	Sara Vivenzio
Cathy Strange	Jeff Jirick	Matt Jennings	Sasha Davies
Cheryl Sullivan	Jeff Roberts	Max McCalman	Shelli Morton
Christine Hyatt	Jill Basch	Meghan Mullaney	Steve Ehlers
Dan Strongin	Jodie Wische	Michael Kalish	Steve Rosenberg
Daphne Zepos	Judy Creighton	Michael Ritchey	Sue Conley
David Gremmels	Juliana Uruburu	Misti Greene	Sue Sturman
David Grotenstein	Kate Arding	Nancy Clark	Suzanne Wolcott
David Leonhardi	Kathleen Shannon-Finn	Nancy Radke	Taylor Cocalis
David Lockwood	Kathy Guidi	Olivia Janse	Tim Smith
David Sturman	Ken Skrovon	Pat Ford	Tom VanVoorhees
Dean Sommer	Kurt Dammeier	Paula Lambert	Waldemar Albrecht
Dick Roe	Larry Krams	Pav Cherny	Zeke Ferguson
Eliza Burnes	Laura Werlin	Peg Smith	Zoe Brickley
Emilio Mignucci	Laure Dubouloz	Peter Dixon	
Eric Meredith	Lee Smith	Peter Kindell	

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The Concord Cheese Shop

Culture Magazine  
Susie Wyshak

Saxelby Cheesemongers  
Trevor Tondro Photography

EXAM SUPPORTERS

Beecher's Handmade Cheese    Burgerville    Cellars at Jasper Hill    Fromartherie Incorporated  
Sweet Home Farm c/o Alyce Birchenough    Vilitis and Co, Inc.    Bruce Vandenberg  
Debbie Byrne    Laura Werlin    Rachel Riggs    Sadie E. Kendall    Sasha Davies  
Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread & Wine    Sue Sturman    Susan Buhler    Zoe Brickley

Dr. Gerald Rosen

Knapp International

# BASIC TESTING CONCEPTS

- “ Certification: A process, usually voluntary, whereby an individual obtains a credential attesting to education and/or length of practice and/or job or practice-related knowledge of an occupation, profession, or specialty area within an occupation or profession.
- “ Certification Test: An achievement test measuring job or practice-related knowledge in an occupation, profession, or specialty area within an occupation or profession.
- “ Note: From a psychometric perspective there is no difference between licensure and certification tests. Both are referred to as credentialing examinations.

# CERTIFICATION BASICS

- “ Griggs vs. Duke Power, 1971 Supreme Court decision required that all hiring and promotion requirements bear a reasonable relationship to the job. Extended by the State of California to apply to credentialing examinations.
- “ To be legally defensible and eligible for accreditation, certification examinations must only assess the knowledge, skills or both required for competent practice.
- “ A Job Analysis (practice analysis, job-task analysis) is performed to determine or define the practice-based knowledge and skills underlying job performance. Job Analysis is the breakdown of a job, occupation, practice, or specialty area within an occupation or practice into its constituent elements (tasks, knowledge and skill). Job analysis is the basis of test specifications development for credentialing examinations.

# CERTIFICATION BASICS

- “ Test specifications: A document that defines the content of an examination. Test specifications documents are also known as test blueprints and test content outlines. They specify the content (knowledge, skills or both) to be assessed and the extent to which they will be assessed.
- “ For written examinations, item (question) writing follows test specifications development. Questions addressing test specifications content areas are written and assembled into an item bank. Each question must be linked to the test specifications. Most written examinations consist of four-option, multiple-choice questions. Careful and thorough item review by subject-matter experts ensures the clarity and accuracy of the questions.

# ACCREDITATION

- “ The NCCA accreditation process consists a documentary review. Programs seeking accreditation must not only act in accordance with the standards, they must thoroughly document all actions to which the standards pertain.
- “ Perhaps the most important document that must be submitted with an accreditation application is the Policy and Procedures (P&P) manual. The P&P manual is essentially the operating manual for the certification program. It addresses, among other things, committees, eligibility requirements, applications, examinations, continuing education, recertification, confidentiality and non-disclosure, disciplinary actions, appeals, etc.

Jane Bauer

ACS Education and Outreach  
Manager

# Application Process...making it smooth

- “ Understand the eligibility requirements.
- “ <http://www.cheesesociety.org/certification-eligibility-criteria/>
- “ Fill out entire application and pay \$35 application fee, can't process without both complete



### APPLICATION – ACS CERTIFIED CHEESE PROFESSIONAL™ EXAM

*The information you provide on this application form is subject to verification. Please complete the entire application before submitting it; incomplete applications may be delayed or rejected.*

ACS Login ID (email address): \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_

*I am applying:*

As a non-ACS member    As an ACS Individual Member

As an ACS Small Business or Corporate Member\*

\*Please include member company's name: \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION**

	<i>School</i>	<i>City and State</i>	<i>Graduation Date mm/dd/yyyy</i>	<i>Degree and Major</i>
<i>High School or GED</i>				N/A
<i>Degree from accredited college or university</i>				

**CHEESE-RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE**

	<i>Employer name and address</i>	<i>Dates mm/dd/yyyy</i>	<i>Position/Title</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Manager's Name</i>	<i>Hours worked directly related to cheese</i>
<i>Employer 1</i>		Start:  End:				
<i>Employer 2</i>		Start:  End:				

**CHEESE-RELATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*Professional development includes engaging in activities in the cheese profession (other than work experience reported above) that demonstrate professional knowledge or commitment. Professional development must have been completed within the past 6 years.*

<i>Description</i>	<i>Company or Institution</i>	<i>City/State</i>	<i>Dates mm/dd/yyyy</i>	<i>Hours directly related to cheese</i>
			Start:  End:	
			Start:  End:	
			Start:  End:	
			<b>TOTAL HOURS:</b>	



- I further understand that the ACS Certification is issued by ACS of Denver, CO and is good for a period of 3 years. I understand that I maintain my certification in good standing by complying with any and all mark usage regulations, and all other recertification requirements as incorporated in ACS bylaws and instituted by the ACS Officers and/or Board of Trustees.
- I understand that I can be disqualified from taking or completing the examination, or from receiving examination scores, if ACS determines through either proctor observation or statistical analysis that I have engaged in collaborative, disruptive, or other inappropriate behavior during administration of the examination.
- I agree that I shall only use ACS trademarks and other intellectual property in accordance with policies developed by ACS and agree to cease using such intellectual property upon expiration, suspension, resignation, or termination of my certification.
- I understand and agree that ACS makes no claims or warranties regarding my competence, and I agree not to misrepresent my certification status or meaning in any manner that suggests otherwise. I hereby irrevocably assign to ACS all right, title, and interest in and to this application.
- I agree to release and hold harmless individually and collectively the officers, directors, members, employees, and agents of ACS and the American Cheese Society (ACS) for any decision, action, or omission in connection with this application or the examination; for the failure of ACS to grant certification; or for the revocation of certification.
- I hereby authorize ACS to make inquiries regarding my fitness for certification and authorize any persons or entities contacted by ACS to respond to such inquiries and provide copies of any relevant and non-confidential information to ACS.
- I understand that I may appeal any decision by ACS or its proctors. I understand that failing the exam is not grounds for an appeal.
- I have read the application and the Certified Cheese Professional™ Exam Handbook. The information I submit on this application is complete and correct. I believe that I am in compliance with all eligibility requirements set forth by ACS for the Certified Cheese Professional™ Exam.

I agree to the terms of the Agreement, Waiver and Release.

I have paid my application fee of \$35 on the ACS website ([www.acs.thebce.org/pay](http://www.acs.thebce.org/pay)) or I have provided my application fee payment information below:

- My check, PAYABLE TO ACS, is enclosed.
- Please charge my: Visa, MasterCard, American Express\*

Total: \$35.00 Account: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV#: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please mail, fax, or email the completed form to the attention of Jane Bauer:***

**American Cheese Society  
2696 S. Colorado Boulevard, Suite 570  
Denver, CO 80222  
(p) 720-328-2788 • (f) 720-328-2786 • [certification@cheesesociety.org](mailto:certification@cheesesociety.org)**

# Okay, you are accepted, now what?

” Check out these resources

- . ACS videos and webinars
- . Body of Knowledge
- . Bibliography
- . Attend classes
- . Organize study group

” Don't forget to pay your exam fee

” Pay attention to the emails you receive from ACS and ExamSoft!!!!

# Getting Close to Exam Time

If using your own computer- register with ExamSoft and download Mock Exam

- . Tests your computer for compatibility
- . Gives you an idea of what test looks like

Or... order a rental computer

*Don't wait until the last minute...or you won't be taking the exam*

# Exam Day

- “ Arrive early
- “ Pay attention to directions!
- “ Relax
- “ Take Exam
- “ Review your answers
- “ Celebrate!

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The Concord Cheese Shop

Susie Wyshak

Trevor Tondro Photography

EXAM SUPPORTERS

Beecher's Handmade Cheese	Burgerville	Cellars at Jasper Hill	Fromartherie Incorporated
Sweet Home Farm c/o Alyce Birchenough	Vilutis and Co, Inc.	Bruce Vandenberg	
Debbie Byrne	Laura Werlin	Rachel Riggs	Sadie E. Kendall
Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread & Wine	Sue Sturman	Susan Buhler	Zoe Brickley