



PREPARING YOUR RESPONSE

Submission Format

1. The Response to the Visit Report(s) must be submitted as **one seamless Portable Document Format (.pdf) file** to the corresponding ABHES DropBox listed at [ABHES Submission Requirements](#). Instructions on how to create a seamless pdf can be found later in this document.
2. The one file should include a narrative for each citation immediately followed by the exhibits for that citation (i.e., first cited standard number and language, narrative response, and exhibits for the 1st standard, second cited standard number and language, narrative response, and exhibits for the 2nd standard, third cited standard...).
3. Please ensure that the .pdf is optimized for web and email and **has a file size limit of 50mb or less**.

Follow the general “rules” below when creating file and folder names:

- a) Use hyphens (dashes) or underscores instead of spaces to separate words in a file and in a folder name. **Do not use:** periods, commas, numbers signs (#) or other punctuation marks in a file name or folder name [other than a hyphen (-) or underscore (_)], (ex: I-100_RSP)
- b) Choose single words or short phrases and use commonly understood abbreviations. (ex: Response – RSP)

Failure to adhere to these instructions will result in the return of the submission to the institution and a late fee assessed per Appendix G of the *Accreditation Manual*.

4. The response must be labeled with the ABHES ID# for currently accredited schools or initial_name of school_city/state if an initial applicant, RSP to TYPE OF RESPONSE, and date of submission (ex: I-100_RSP_to_Visit_102020 or initial_ABC_Coll_DowntownTX_RSP_to_Visit_102020).

Presentation

Prepare the .pdf file using Adobe Acrobat 7.0 Standards (or higher version) software. Any security features in the PDF document must be disabled. **Other file formats will not be accepted.**

Responses must be professional in appearance and legible. To facilitate review, the requirements set forth below must be followed for the submission of the response.

Minimally, responses include:

1. A **cover letter** that identifies the document as the response to the Visitation Report or Commission Action letter, with specific date reference.
2. The exact wording of the cited **accreditation standard(s)** including the narrative explanation from the Evaluation Visit Report or Commission Action Letter.
3. A detailed **narrative explanation** for each cited standard that describes the institutional changes made to correct the area of noncompliance, placed in numerical order that reflects the ABHES *Accreditation Manual*.
4. **Identified exhibits*** (e.g., Exhibit 3 staff_mtg_min_32020) to support the narrative explanation using **electronic bookmarks**** placed within the document in a manner that facilitates review of the response document.

*referencing an exhibit with a number only is not sufficient identification

**A Response that includes exhibits that are not electronically bookmarked will not be accepted. Later in this document, you can see how to format bookmarks.

5. A **table of contents** for the document, which includes the electronic bookmarks.
6. Attach excel exhibits to the PDF by clicking on the paperclip on the left side of the Adobe window and adding the spreadsheet exhibits.

Part 1: Creating One Seamless PDF

Description

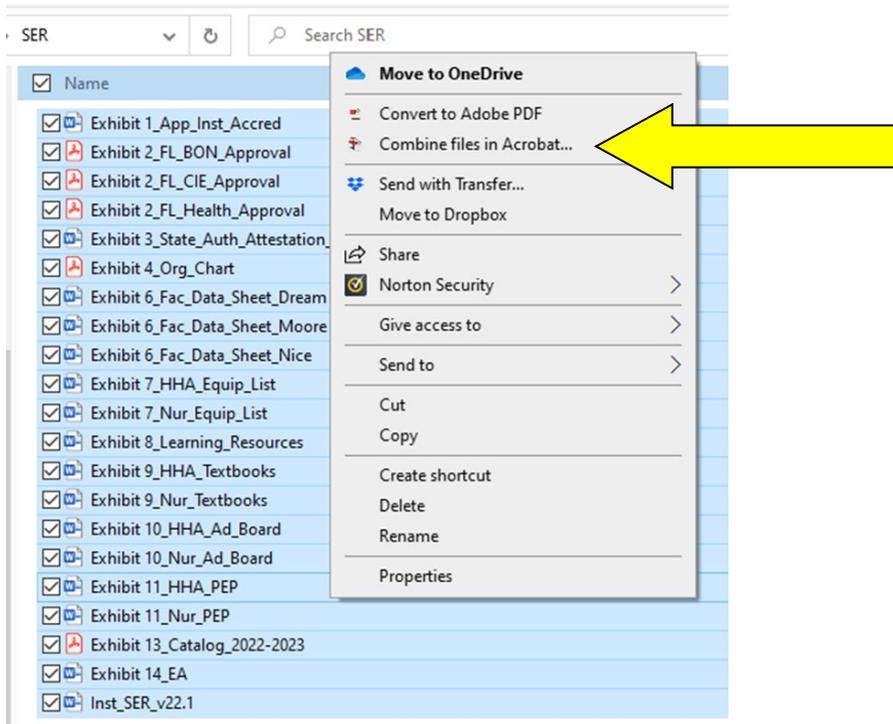
You can quickly merge multiple documents into a single PDF file, with the documents appearing in the order you choose.

Method

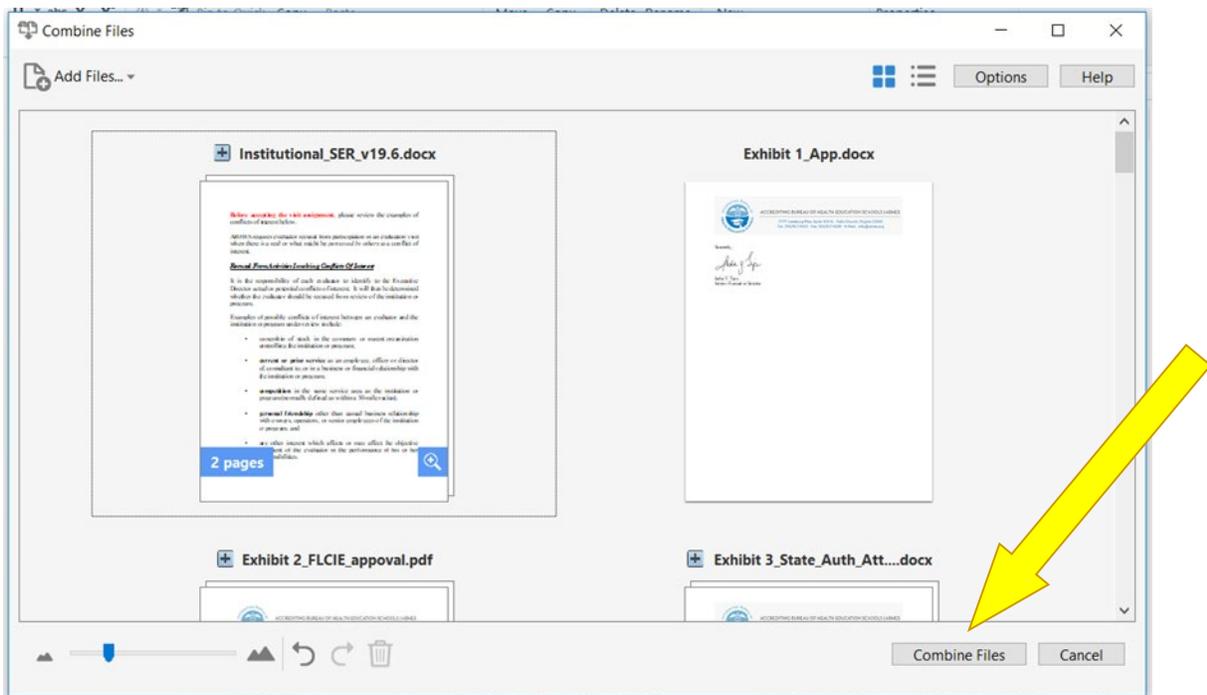
Combining multiple documents into one PDF file (Shown using Adobe® Acrobat Pro XI®)

Step 1. Prepare the documents – Make sure you’ve made final edits and saved the files you want to combine as a pdf.

Step 2. Combine Files into a Single PDF – Select your SER pdf and required word and PDF exhibits in your File Explorer, right click, and select “Combine files in Acrobat...”



Step 3. Choose the order you want the files to be inserted into the SER pdf binder by dragging and moving. Select Combine Files to merge them in the order selected.

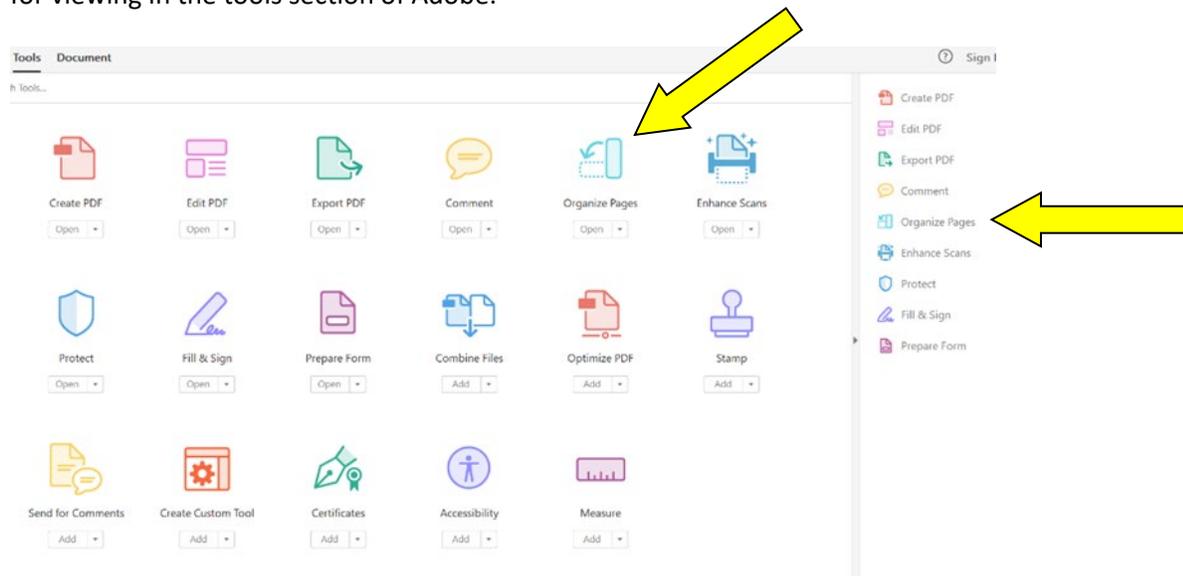


Step 4. Save the SER – the SER name should include:

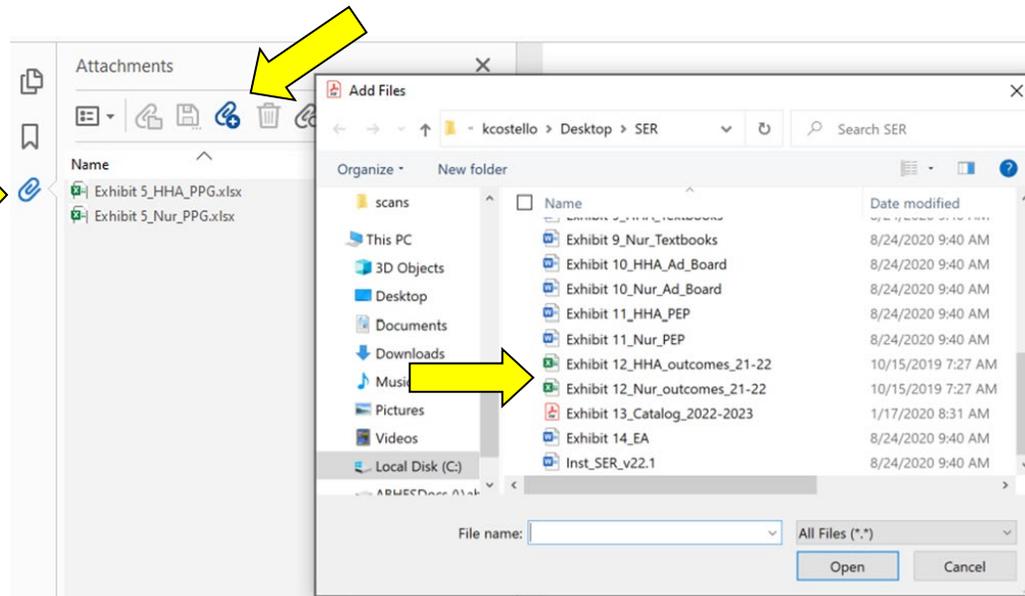
- (1) ABHES ID number (Renewal Applicants Only)
- (2) Institution name (Initial Applicants Only) and City/State
- (3) title "SER"
- (4) the date of submission (EX: 52022)

Examples: I-888_SER_112022
ABC_Coll_MiamiFL_SER_52022

Step 5. Organize the pages so that any blank pages are deleted and all pages are oriented the best way for viewing in the tools section of Adobe.



Step 6. Attach excel exhibits to the PDF by clicking on the paperclip on the left side of the Adobe window and adding the spreadsheet exhibits.



Part 2: Bookmarking

The intent of this technique is to make it possible for reviewers to quickly locate and navigate to content and exhibits using bookmarks. Bookmarks provide an overview of the document and act as a clickable table of contents

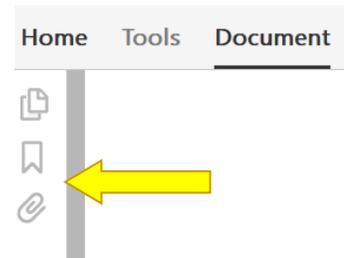
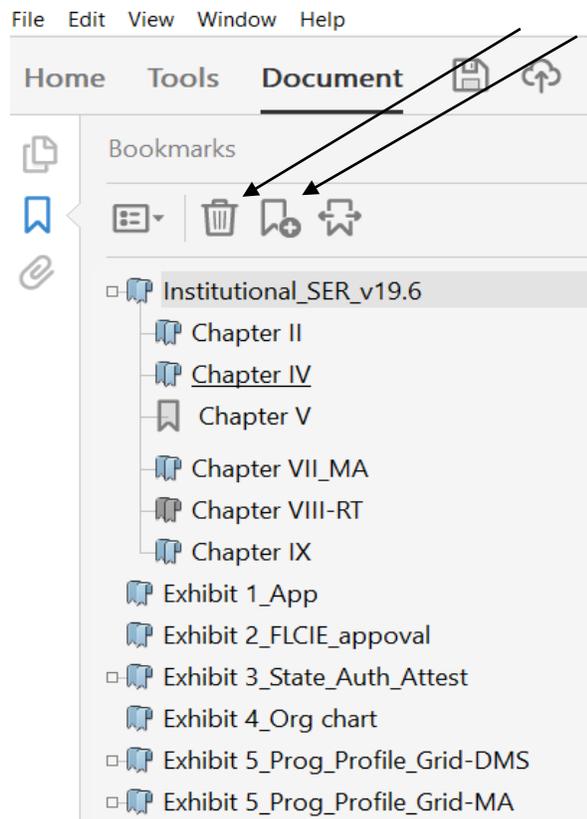
Method

Creating bookmarks

Step 1. Open the SER packet created in Part 1. By combining the files in that manner, bookmarks will automatically be created for each document.

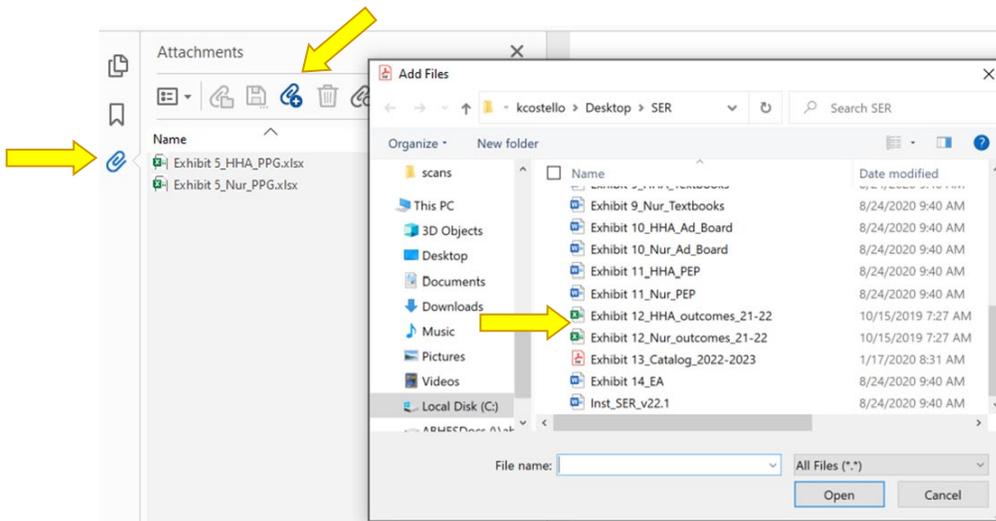
Step 2. To edit bookmarks, open the bookmark pane by clicking here:

Step 3. Review in the bookmark pane to rearrange, delete, rename, create new, and edit as needed.



Part 3: Attaching Excel:

Attach excel exhibits to the PDF by clicking on the paperclip on the left side of the Adobe window and adding the spreadsheet exhibits.



PLEASE SEE THE SAMPLE RESPONSE FOLLOWING THESE INSTRUCTIONS.

Documentation is Critical

Documentation to support the institution's or program's explanations and to demonstrate that the institution or program is in compliance with the accreditation standard(s) cited is required. Failure to provide adequate documentation to evidence correction of each deficiency may result in a deferral or denial of the institution's or program's application, or the issuance of a show-cause directive or withdrawal of the current grant of accreditation.

Submissions to validate the response narrative(s) may include documents such as the following examples:

- Evidence of faculty professional growth
- Student surveys and analysis indicating increased satisfaction
- Record of graduate placements
- Minutes of meetings held since the on-site evaluation (i.e., faculty, staff, advisory board)

The required documentation will depend on the specific reason the accreditation standard was cited as a violation.

Important Note: Always resubmit any documentation that you request be reviewed again when responding to a Commission Action letter and make the fact that this is a resubmission known in the narrative. Do not request the Commission reference the documentation that was included in a previously submitted response.

March 5, 2020

Ms. India Tips
Executive Director
ABHES
7777 Leesburg Pike, Suite 314N
Falls Church, VA22043

Re: I-555-01 ABC College – Falls Church, VA
Response to February 12-13, 2020 Visit Reports

Dear Ms. Tips:

Following this letter is ABC College's response to the accreditation standards cited in the ABHES visit reports for the on-site evaluation conducted February 12-13, 2020.

Sincerely,

Penelope Brown
Executive Director

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Cited Accreditation Standards

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SAMPLE

RESPONSE TO RENEWAL VISIT

ABC College – Falls Church Campus

IV.J.2. CITATION

IV.J.2. An institution has a written emergency preparedness plan that is available to all students and staff.

The emergency preparedness plan includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Evacuation
- iii. Lockdown (if the danger is a threat to students on campus)
- iv. Communications (means of communicating with staff, students, and family members during, and immediately post, incident)
- v. Media (designated persons who may address the media and what information, minimally, that will be released)
- vi. Training (method and timeframe for orienting staff and students)

Compliance Rating: Meets Standard Violates Standard Not Applicable

Method of Assessment: The institution does not have a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan in place.

IV.J.2. RESPONSE

The lack of a written emergency preparedness plan (one document) for our institution was an oversight. We are grateful to the ABHES evaluation team for bringing this matter to our attention. Although we had written policies and procedures that addressed emergency evacuation and communication during emergencies, and what steps to follow if there was a sudden threat to students on campus, we admittedly did not have all these policies and procedures collectively in one streamlined, comprehensive document. The institution now has the Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) (**EXHIBIT 1**) that includes all the requirements. We are confident the Plan provides a sound and effective strategy to follow in case of emergency. The Plan is available for reference at the Reception desk in our lobby and has been placed on the instructor's desk in every classroom and is available as well in the student and faculty lounges. The Plan will now be provided to new staff and new students during their required orientations. **EXHIBIT 2** provides copies of the updated Student Orientation Agenda with the EPP noted as agenda item #5. The institution has not onboarded new faculty to document their orientation to the plan, but at the most recent staff meeting, the EPP was disseminated and discussed, per **EXHIBIT 3**.

Exhibit 1 – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

RISK ASSESSMENT

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EVACUATION PLAN (ALSO SEE DIAGRAM ON PAGE 2)

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INCLEMENT WEATHER PROTOCOL

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LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

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COMMUNICATION PLAN

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MEDIA PROTOCOL

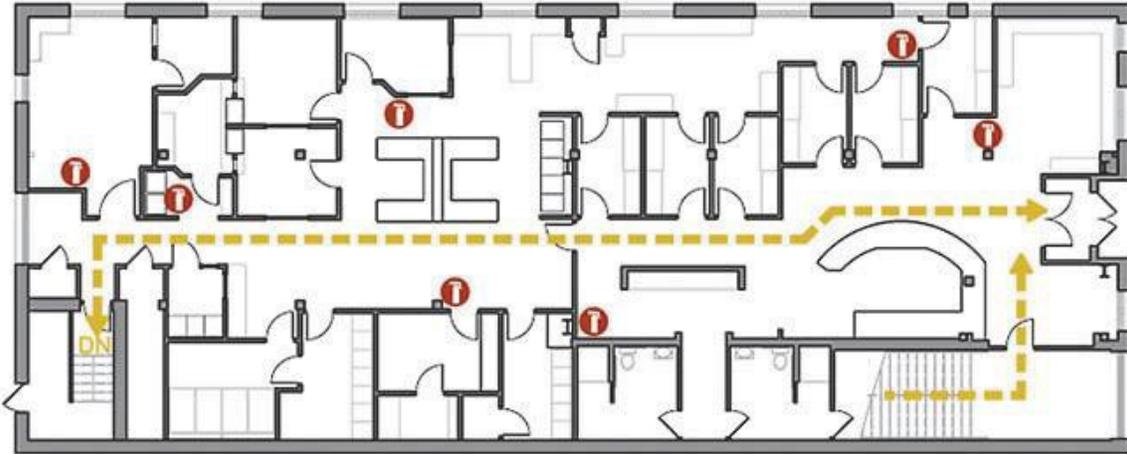
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TRAINING PROCEDURES

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EMERGENCY PLAN

600 ALABAMA STREET
GROUND FLOOR



--- EXIT PATH

→ EXIT

i FIRE EXTINGUISHER

POLICE, FIRE, AMBULANCE: **911**

BUILDING MANAGEMENT: (415) 401-9200

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:
PROCEED TO STAIRWELL AND AWAIT HELP



SAM

Exhibit 2 – STUDENT ORIENTATION AGENDA

1. Fusce aliquet pede non pede. Suspendisse dapibus lorem pellentesque magna. Integer nulla.
2. Donec blandit feugiat ligula. Donec hendrerit, felis et imperdiet euismod, purus ipsum pretium metus, in lacinia nulla nisl eget sapien.
3. Proin nec augue. Quisque aliquam tempor magna.
4. Maecenas porttitor congue massa.
5. Emergency Preparedness Plan: Discussion of plan and location as well as hand out provided.

Exhibit 3 – March 2, 2020 Staff Meeting Minutes

Staff Meeting – March 2, 2020

Attendees: Liam, Noah, William, James, Logan, Benjamin, Mason, Elijah, Oliver, Jacob, Lucas, Emma, Olivia, Ava, Isabella, Sophia, Charlotte, Mia, Amelia, Harper, Evelyn

General Topics

1. Emergency Preparedness Plan: Discussion of plan and location as well as hand out provided.
2. Donec blandit feugiat ligula. Donec hendrerit, felis et imperdiet euismod, purus ipsum pretium metus, in lacinia nulla nisl eget sapien.
3. Donec blandit feugiat ligula. Donec hendrerit, felis et imperdiet euismod, purus ipsum pretium metus, in lacinia nulla nisl eget sapien.

On-Going Project Updates

1. Proin nec augue. Quisque aliquam tempor magna.
2. Maecenas porttitor congue massa.

Unfinished Business

1. Proin nec augue. Quisque aliquam tempor magna.
2. Maecenas porttitor congue massa.

Program-specific break outs (see separate faculty meeting minutes)