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April 19th, 2023

Patricia Sherman, FAIA, Chair
New Hampshire Real Estate Appraisers Board
Office of Professional Licensure and Certification
7 Eagle Square
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Proposed Rule Amendment: Rab 400

Ms. Sherman,

ASA writes to express its concurrence with and support of the views expressed by MBREA in the enclosed letter. By aligning New Hampshire's requirements for synchronous online education with the Appraiser Qualification Board's requirements, the state's appraisers will be afforded the opportunity to attend and gain credit from a wide variety of educational offerings from a range of providers.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss our views further, please contact John D. Russell, JD, Strategic Partnership Officer for ASA at jrussell@appraisers.org or by phone at 703-733-2103.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Johnnie White'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Johnnie White, CEO/EVP

April 18, 2023

Patricia C. Sherman, FAIA, Chair
New Hampshire Real Estate Appraisers Board
Office of Professional Licensure and Certification
7 Eagle Square
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Proposed Rule Amendment: Rab 400

Dear Chair Sherman,

The Massachusetts Board of Real Estate Appraisers (MBREA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments relative to proposed amendments to Rab 400.

We are writing as an education provider that services appraisers who are credentialed in the six New England states. Post COVID, we learned that appraisers became accustomed to the online delivery of education, and in many instances, prefer the convenience and scheduling of online offerings. In the past two years MBREA has successfully offered at least 92 synchronous education classes and we feel strongly that the quality of synchronous education is equal to in-person offerings.

Appraiser Qualification Board (AQB Criteria) vs. Rab 403.08

The increased, successful use of synchronous education was addressed by the AQB in the most recent edition of the [Real Property Qualification Criteria](#) effective January 1, 2022. Our comments pertain to changes we believe should be made to the distance education approval criteria of Rab 403.08.

Rab 403. 08 is **inconsistent** with the AQB criteria for distance education, specifically by not conforming to Section III D. relating to the approval of synchronous distance education. Section III. D. reads

“D. Distance education is defined as any education process based on the geographical separation of student and instructor. Components of distance education include synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid. In synchronous educational offerings, the instructor and students interact simultaneously online, similar to a phone call, video chat or live webinar, or web-based meeting. In asynchronous educational offerings, the instructor and student interaction is non-simultaneous; the students progress at their own pace and follow a structured course content and quiz/exam schedule. Hybrid courses, also known as blended courses, are learning environments that allow for both in-person and online (synchronous, or asynchronous) interaction.

*Synchronous courses provide for instruction and interaction substantially the same as on-site classroom courses. **Synchronous courses meet class hour requirements if they comply with requirements III.A and III.B.**” (Emphasis added)*

Sections III. A. and III. B. are the generic education criteria for all appraiser education.

Synchronous Education vs. Asynchronous Education

There are large differences in the education experience between synchronous and asynchronous instruction. The AQB delineated a difference between synchronous and asynchronous education by recognizing the different processes used to deliver the education to students. As stated in D. above:

- “In synchronous educational offerings, the instructor and students interact simultaneously online, similar to a phone call, video chat or live webinar, or web-based meeting.”
- “Synchronous courses provide for instruction and interaction substantially the same as on-site classroom courses.”
- “Synchronous courses meet class hour requirements if they comply with requirements III.A and III.B.”
- “In asynchronous educational offerings, the instructor and student interaction is non-simultaneous; the students progress at their own pace and follow a structured course content and quiz/exam schedule.”

The AQB differentiated between the acceptability of synchronous and asynchronous distance education by requiring **asynchronous** to meet additional requirements, such as AQB approval and approval of the delivery mechanism. No such requirements were imposed on the approval of **synchronous** distance education.

Suggested Language Amendment to Rab 403.08

The MBREA is requesting that the New Hampshire Real Estate Appraisers Board further amend Rab 403.08 by adopting the AQB’s criteria for the synchronous delivery of education by removing the requirement for AQB and delivery mechanism approvals. Our suggested language is as follows:

Rab 403.08 Additional Standards for Approval of Distance Education Courses.

(a) A distance education course provider shall not seek board approval of an asynchronous course pursuant to Rab 403.07 until the distance education course has been approved by the AQB Course Approval Program and the course design and delivery method has been approved by an organization authorized by the AQB to provide such approval. ~~Distance education courses that are currently approved by the board but not by the AQB shall continue to be accepted for credit only until such approval expires.~~ A synchronous course shall be approved by the board if it satisfies the requirements of Rab 403.07. Synchronous course approval does not require AQB Course Approval or course delivery and design approval.

The MBREA and other education providers offer a variety of classes, including the 7-hour USPAP Update via Zoom. Appraisers can use these hours in all the New England states except New Hampshire, as the course does not meet the current requirements of Rab 403.08 (no AQB and/or IDECC approval). When the education provider uses a platform such as Zoom, GoToMeeting, etc., the adoption of the AQB criteria for synchronous delivery of education will enable appraisers licensed in multiple states to use hours earned for license renewal in New Hampshire.

Here are three examples of upcoming synchronous education programs which are currently unacceptable to New Hampshire. Since the AQB no longer requires AQB and delivery mechanism approvals, we will not be seeking New Hampshire approvals due to the time and expense of obtaining them and the three classes will offer CE credit in only five New England states unless New Hampshire adopts the 2022 criteria

- First is a 3-hour Zoom seminar entitled “Appraisal Bias: Behind the Headlines”. It features national and local experts who will be discussing one of the most pressing topics facing the appraisal profession.
- The second class is a 7-hour class, “Non-Lending Appraisal Assignments”, which will also be presented utilizing the Zoom platform.
- The 2023 New England Appraisers Expo will be a synchronous event. The Expo is the most well attended program by New England appraisers, many of whom hold credentials in multiple states, including New Hampshire.

The MBREA feels strongly that appraisers licensed in New Hampshire should gain the same opportunity to attend as many unique, relevant, and topical education offerings taught by regional and nationally recognized speakers as their peers in other states. This will happen if New Hampshire adopts the AQB criteria for synchronous education.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or wish to discuss our comments further. I may be reached at (617) 830-4530 or steve@mbrea.org.

Sincerely,


Stephen E. Sousa
Executive Vice President