

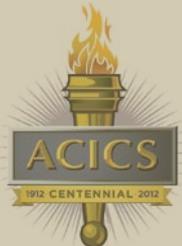


ACCREDITING COUNCIL FOR  
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

# Online Public Forum & AWARE Webinar

January 13, 2012

ACICS Webinar **Announcing, Relating & Explaining**  
The December 2011 *Memorandum to the Field*



# Session #2

## Student Homework

### Discussion Outline:

1. Evaluation of Programs for Purposes of Awarding Federal Financial Aid\* & Course and Program Measurement\*\*
2. Institutional/Campus Policies and Procedures
3. Course Syllabi
4. Implementation in 2012
5. Questions and Discussion

\* NOTE: Criteria Section 2-2-503

\*\* NOTE: Criteria Section 3-1-516 (Memo, page 8)



# Student Homework

- What we – as your accreditor – want for students:
  - ✓ To understand the expected, weekly time spent on homework
  - ✓ To learn to use power tools for time management
  - ✓ To use study skills to improve learning productivity
- We've instituted a number of new standards in our Accreditation Criteria to meet these goals.
- These new standards will be required for your school, and the school will be required to meet or exceed them.



**For Consideration**

What can ACICS, colleges, students and others do to help students succeed?

How can the proposed procedures for implementing the new homework requirements in 2012 be improved?



# Student Homework

**Current Criteria:** Course and Program Measurement, Glossary & Appendix G (Section 3-1-516)

**Proposed Criteria:** Evaluation of Programs for Purposes of Awarding Federal Financial Aid\* (Section 2-2-503)

## OVERVIEW OF NEW CRITERIA

### 1. Campus must :

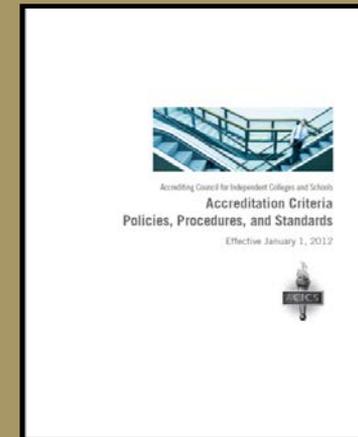
- Use new federal definitions of credit hour
- Have written policies and procedures

### 2. Homework must:

- Be described in each course syllabus
- Conform to commonly accepted practice

### 3. ACICS must:

- Review reliability and accuracy of credit
- Address deficiencies and notify USDE of systemic/significant noncompliance



\*NOTE: From pp. 8-10, *Memo to the Field*

To view online, go to [www.ACICS.org](http://www.ACICS.org) > Council Actions > 2011



# Student Homework



## CREDIT HOUR

The federal government's definition\* of a credit hour\*\* is:

*“[An] amount of work represented in **intended learning outcomes** and verified by **evidence of student achievement** that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates...*



No less than  
**1 hour** of  
classroom or direct  
faculty instruction



A minimum of  
**2 hours** of  
out-of-class  
student work

*Each week for 15 weeks (for a semester or trimester) or 10-12 weeks (for a quarter) or an equivalent amount of work*

NOTE: As defined in 34 CFR 600.2 and referred to in Section 2-2-503

5 NOTE: Definition applies only to Associate and Bachelor Degree Programs, not clock hour programs or clock-to-credit programs.



# Student Homework



## CREDIT HOUR (continued)

The federal government's definition of a credit hour is:

*"[An] institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates... at least an equivalent amount of work\* for other academic activities, including **laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit.**"*

*ACICS defines these equivalencies for semester/trimester or quarter credit:\*\**



Studio Work,  
Lab, Clinical  
**= 2 hours**



Internship,  
Practica  
**= 3 hours**

\*NOTE: Equivalent to the work described on the previous slide of 1 hour of lecture class plus 2 hours of homework.

\*\*NOTE: Homework may be assigned, but no specific number of hours is required or will be evaluated.



# Student Homework



## CREDIT HOUR (continued)

The federal government's definition of a credit hour is:

*"[An] institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates... at least an equivalent amount of work for other academic activities, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and **other academic work leading to the award of credit.**"*

ACICS defines the equivalencies for **online courses**:



**Class work** consists of learning materials equivalent in content to what would be covered during a class.

**Homework** consists of the same work as what would be assigned outside of class or its equivalent.

**Online teaching/student activity** hours should equal the sum of out-of-class work PLUS instructional hours.



# Student Homework



## CREDIT HOUR (continued)

ACICS reviews credit allocation for homework assignments for:

1. All credit hour programs
2. Programs that convert clock to credit hours, AND have included some hours of out-of-class work

## ACICS EVALUATORS – CHECKING AND ENFORCING THE NEW STANDARDS

ACICS on-site evaluation teams for initial and new grants will:

- Review the allocation of credit hours to lectures, labs, and practica, etc.
- Review the allocation of credit for homework through **policies, procedures and their application through course syllabi.**



# Student Homework



## WRITTEN POLICIES

Written policies describing the allocation of credit must be published and made available to students and the public. If applicable for allocation of federal financial aid, the policies must refer to, include, or summarize:

- ✓ The federal definition of a **credit hour**, if applicable
- ✓ The ACICS minimum interpretation of **credit hour equivalencies**
- ✓ The federal **clock-to-credit hour conversion ratios**
- ✓ The federal definition of **clock hour programs**, if applicable
- ✓ **Relevant state policies**, if applicable
- ✓ The ACICS **academic credit hour definition**



# Student Homework



## WRITTEN PROCEDURES

Written procedures for implementing the policies must be published and made available on request, and include the following information:

- ✓ The administrative procedures utilized in each program to develop the curriculum, and to select instructional materials, lecture topics, lab/clinical/studio activities, and **out-of-class assignments**.
- ✓ **A schedule of classes**, including the number of class hours for each course and the amount of time scheduled for each class hour.\*
- ✓ Procedures to ensure that the number of in-class and out-of class work hours will meet or exceed federal regulations, **including vacation, holidays, cancellations of classes, etc.**\*



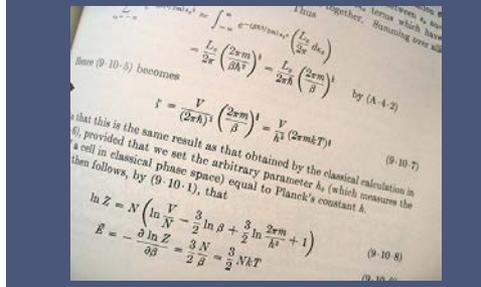
# Student Homework



## WRITTEN PROCEDURES (continued)

A description of the procedures utilized in each program... to select homework assignments, i.e.

### Publisher-provided Exercises



### Faculty Committee Recommendations



- Program leadership recommendations/review
- Internal or external research on student learning outcomes
- Etc.



# Student Homework



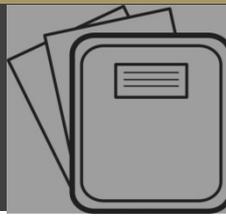
## COURSE SYLLABI

In using the federal definition of a credit hour, the campus must have a policy and it must be outlined in the syllabus, describing:

- “[An] amount of work”
  - **Student work must be assigned and described.**
- “[Represented] in intended learning outcomes”
  - **The learning outcomes of the assignment must be relevant to course objectives and either self-evident (e.g., the same as program objectives) or stated.**
- “[Verified] by evidence of student achievement”
  - **The assignments must be graded, with several copies of each graded assignment or faculty grade book retained for documentation.**



# Student Homework



## COURSE SYLLABI (continued)

In using the federal definition of a credit hour, the campus must have a policy and it must be outlined in the syllabus, describing:



Not less than **1 hour** of classroom or direct faculty instruction



A minimum of **2 hours** of out-of-class student work

Each week for 15/10-12 weeks or an equivalent amount of work\*



**Colleges are encouraged to work with employers to come up with innovative, student-centered class work**

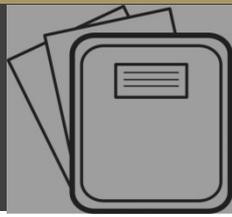


**Faculty are encouraged to come up with innovative, student-centered homework**

*THEREFORE:* Colleges proposing class schedules or work assignments that do not conform to common practice, with respect to hours of work, should provide evidence of comparable learning outcomes.



# Student Homework



## COURSE SYLLABI (continued)

In using the federal definition of a credit hour, the campus must have a policy and it must be outlined in the syllabus, describing:

**If I'm a student, taking a full-time course load is like having a full-time job!**

**12-15 class hours + 24-30 hours of homework = 36-45 hours of work each week**



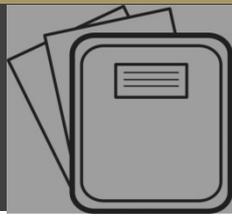
**For Consideration**

How should **colleges** document this workload?

How should **students** manage this workload?



# Student Homework



## COURSE SYLLABI (continued)

In using the federal definition of a credit hour, the campus must have a policy and it must be outlined in the syllabus, describing:

### Students & Colleges – Partnering for Mutual Success

#### FOR STUDENTS:

Students shouldn't take a full load if they can't go to class and finish their homework.

Students should be taught effective time management and study techniques.

Students should be encouraged to increase learning productivity by making use of available tutoring and other resources.

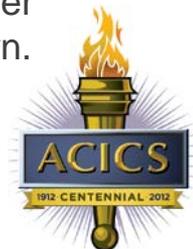


#### FOR COLLEGES:

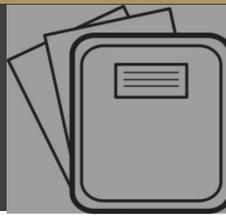
Colleges are required to tell students what the expectations are for a full course load.

Colleges are advised to teach time management and study techniques.

Colleges could provide tutoring and other resources to students to help them learn.



# Student Homework



## COURSE SYLLABI (continued)

In using the federal definition of a credit hour, the campus must have a policy and it must be outlined in the syllabus, describing:

### Class Schedule

JANUARY 2012						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Syllabus must include or refer to a **schedule of classes** for the course, including the amount of time scheduled for each class.



### Time in Class

A 50 minute lecture class period will be considered a **reasonable** approximation to one hour, since it conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

### Amount of Homework



Syllabus should state the **number of hours** students are expected to spend on homework assignments each week.

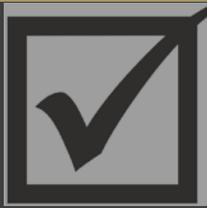


### Grading

Syllabus should describe how student achievement in doing **homework will be graded.**



# Student Homework



## RELIABILITY AND ACCURACY

ACICS on-site visit team evaluators will examine the reliability and accuracy with which federal definitions and campus procedures are implemented by:

- ✓ Reviewing written credit policies for each program – *for accuracy*
- ✓ Reviewing procedures for awarding credit – *for reliability*
- ✓ Reviewing the syllabus for each course in each program – *for conformity or comparability with commonly accepted practice*
- ✓ Reviewing examples of graded assignments for each type of assignment and grading method – *for evaluation of student achievement*
- ✓ Interviewing faculty and students – *for effectiveness of out-of-class assignments in achieving intended learning outcomes*



# Student Homework



## CONFORMITY WITH COMMONLY ACCEPTED PRACTICE

To ensure that homework assignments for courses in each program “*conform to commonly accepted practice in higher education,*” program evaluators will:

- Review a sample of homework assignments and compare the **learning objective, teaching method and time required** with what they know to be commonly accepted practice in the field.
- **Review evidence** that any innovative assignments result in learning outcomes that are generally comparable with those resulting from commonly accepted practice in the field.



# Student Homework

## ADDRESS DEFICIENCIES

ACICS will address deficiencies in the accuracy and reliability with which credit is assigned to courses and programs through:

- The normal practice of citing campuses for lack of compliance in team reports, and deferrals and negative actions by Council

### OR, IF A COLLEGE HAS PRACTICED

Systemic Noncompliance  
(across programs)



Significant Noncompliance  
(within a program)



ACICS notifies



# Student Homework

## Implementation Plan For Review of Homework

<b>Continual Basis</b>	<b>Winter 2012</b>	<b>Spring 2012</b>	<b>July 2012</b>
Current Clock-to-Credit Hour Conversion, Substantive and Non-Substantive Change and New Program Applications	ACICS Advisory and Evaluator Training to be Published	Review by ACICS Visit Team and Council to Begin	Colleges Covered by “Good Faith” Efforts Ends, and at this Time, all Procedures will be Fully Implemented



# Student Homework

## QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. How can the proposed procedures for implementing the new homework requirements be improved?
2. What can ACICS, colleges, students and others do to help students succeed in meeting the new homework requirements? Examples may include:
  - **Understanding the expected, weekly time on task** for the program in which they are enrolled
  - Learning to use power tools for **managing available time**
  - **Using study skills** to improve learning productivity



# Other Council Updates

## REMINDER

The December 2011 Memorandum to the Field also covers:

- Final changes to Criteria sections for SAP, Enrollment Agreements & Transfer of Credit Standards for Doctoral Programs
- Schedule of Upcoming Workshops and Webinars





ACCREDITING COUNCIL FOR  
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

# Thank You for Participating.

Slides from this webinar are now available under the  
Event tab at [www.acics.org](http://www.acics.org)

For additional information, please contact:

Tom Wickenden, Deputy Executive Director  
[twickenden@acics.org](mailto:twickenden@acics.org)



# APPENDIX



# Student Homework



## CREDIT HOUR – CONVERSION FORMULA\*

Degree programs of less than two years in length, and non-degree programs that are not fully transferrable to degree programs of at least two years in length, are eligible **to convert clock hours to credit hours**, as follows:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \mathbf{30 \text{ hours}} & \approx & \mathbf{1 \text{ semester,}} & + & \mathbf{7.5 \text{ hours}} & = & \mathbf{37.5 \text{ hours}^{**}} \\ \text{of instruction} & & \text{trimester} & & \text{of either instruction,} & & \text{of work} \\ & \text{May be} & \text{Credit Hour} & \text{With the} & \text{student work or both} & \text{For a} & \\ & \text{converted} & & \text{addition} & & \text{total of} & \\ & \text{to} & & \text{of} & & \text{at least} & \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \mathbf{20 \text{ hours}} & \approx & \mathbf{1 \text{ quarter}} & + & \mathbf{5 \text{ hours}} & = & \mathbf{25 \text{ hours}^{**}} \\ \text{of instruction} & & \text{Credit Hour} & & \text{of either instruction,} & & \text{of work} \\ & \text{May be} & & \text{With the} & \text{student work or both} & \text{For a} & \\ & \text{converted} & & \text{addition} & & \text{total of} & \\ & \text{to} & & \text{of} & & \text{at least} & \end{array}$$



\*NOTE: Defined in 34 CFR 688.8(l)

\*\*NOTE: No equivalencies included.