PREPARING THE INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

Upon receipt of an evaluation team report, the institution is invited to respond before the Council takes action on the application for accreditation. This document provides guidelines for preparing the response.

FORMAT

Visit Response

Your response should pertain to the area of non-compliance notated in the report. The enclosed document, "Preparing the Institutional Response" provides suggestions for developing your response. Please include information on any significant changes that have taken place at the institution since the site visit.

We look forward to receiving your response to this report. You will be notified in writing of the Council's decision following its next meeting.

Web-Based Submission of Campus Response

ACICS has implemented a Web-based submission process for all visit responses. The campus response to areas of non-compliance (citation, or "cite") must be uploaded under the application ID number associated with the visit (this will be provided on the cover page of the team report). Each area of non- compliance must include a narrative and supporting documentation (if applicable). If supporting documentation covers more than one area of non-compliance, the campus is required to duplicate the documentation and upload it to each area of non-compliance. Submission of a current catalog need only be uploaded once and only if referenced in the response.

Process

Once the campus logs on to the ACICS membership Web site, go to the In Process Applications link, select the application name and ID. The tasks created for responses to a visit will be displayed. Select a *Response* task and upload the corresponding document(s).

IMPORTANT: Document Labels

Each response document **must** include the task in the file name.
> Example: the file name for a document submitted to satisfy Response:
> **Cite 1 Narrative** task could be ***Cite 1 Narrative [document name]***.

If a campus needs to submit multiple pieces of information to support one citation response, this information must be combined into one document prior to uploading. Note: The capacity size for each upload tasks is 20MB (20,000KB), if this combined document exceed this limit, please contact Ian Harazduk at iharazduk@acics.org noting the following regarding the response: application ID, citation upload number(s), size of the document(s). This procedure is consistent with the method used to submit multiple syllabi and faculty and administrative staff summary sheets.

Response Tasks

Below is the format for *Response* tasks. Each visit type will have a standard amount of visit *Response* tasks. Upload your responses in sequential order, beginning with "Response: Cite 1…" and ignore tasks that exceed your visit response requirement.

> Response: Cite 1 Narrative
> Response: Cite 1 Supporting Document(s)
> Response: Cite 2 Narrative
> Response: Cite 2 Supporting Document(s)
> Response: Cite 3 Narrative
> Response: Cite 3 Supporting Document(s)
> Response: Cite 4 Narrative
> Response: Cite 4 Supporting Document(s)

Responses should be professional in appearance. The responses should be paginated and well-organized to ensure a complete and sufficient review.

CONTENT

It is important to prepare a response that clearly identifies institutional changes and includes documentation to support the institution's explanation. *Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in the deferral or denial of the institution's application.*

When areas of noncompliance and/or concerns are identified, the campus must provide the Council with documented evidence of their correction. Examples of documentation include the following:

- Copies of official transcripts;
- Completed forms (i.e., counseling, refund calculation, library sign-in/sign-out forms, student acknowledgement of receipt of catalog, or information about campus);
- Minutes of meetings held since the visit or last Council review (i.e., faculty, staff, advisory board);
- Refund calculation sheets, canceled checks, account cards, and last day of attendance determination sheets;
- Roster of all students who graduated that includes entries such as employment status, name of program, graduation date, home telephone number, and, if employed, the place of employment, job title, placement category (i.e., in field, in a related field,

> out of field), and employer telephone number;
> - Continuing education grade reports or certificates of attendance at professional conferences or trade shows;
> - Photographs, invoices, and delivering receipts to evidence the acquisition of equipment, books, or materials.

Note: Documents should not include any personal information (i.e. bank account numbers, social security numbers, etc.).

These are just a few examples of documentation considered acceptable by the Council. Responses will vary depending on the findings of the team and/or Council. Please note that in a majority of all areas of non-compliance, submission of supporting documentation will be necessary in to order to sufficiently evidence that the campus is in compliance and that the citation has been remediated.

If you need assistance in preparing the response, contact the ACICS staff representative who coordinated the visit to your campus.

RESPONDING TO THE TEAM REPORT

Read the entire report carefully. The response must address each area of noncompliance identified on the summary page. If the campus deems it necessary to respond to areas of the report outside of this summary page, please contact the ACICS coordinator conducting the visit or Ian Harazduk at iharazduk@acics.org. In addition, the campus may respond and provide information about any areas in the team report in which the campus disagrees.

COUNCIL ACTION AFTER REVIEW OF THE RESPONSE

A response received in a timely manner prior to the Council meeting will be reviewed at that meeting. The response due date will be provided on the cover page of the team report. If the Council does not feel that the response is complete, sufficiently detailed, or properly documented, a decision on the application normally will be deferred pending receipt of additional information. The deferral letter from the Council will list specific information that must be submitted to answer the Council's concerns. The campus may submit additional items not requested by the Council if it believes the materials further support the campus' compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria*. The format used to respond to the action letter from the council should follow the guidelines identified in responding to an evaluation team report.

All questions about responding to the Council should be directed to the ACICS staff representative who coordinated the on-site evaluation visit.