

TO: ACICS-Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties
FROM: Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools
DATE: September 4, 2013
SUBJECT: Final Criteria, Proposed Criteria and Other Information

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	(Please respond by Friday, November 8, 2013)	

I. **FINAL CRITERIA REVISIONS**

At its August 2013 meeting, the Council reviewed specific areas of the ACICS *Accreditation Criteria* outlined in Section I. The language contained in Section I was previously reviewed by ACICS constituents or reflects a clarification of previously approved criteria.

The Council has updated the respective sections of the *Accreditation Criteria* to reflect all final criteria revisions. To obtain a current copy of the *Accreditation Criteria*, please visit our Web site at www.acics.org. The *Accreditation Criteria* can be found in the **Publications** section of the Web site.

The following criteria were previously reviewed and, unless otherwise noted, have been accepted as **final, effective immediately** (new language is underlined, ~~deleted language is struck~~):

A. **CATALOG**

Explanation of Final Changes

The Council approved final language to eliminate redundancy; to include information on appropriate catalog addenda and initial applicants and remove dated language.

APPENDIX C Guidelines for Institutional Publications Requirements

~~This Appendix~~ ese guidelines are designed to assist institutions in complying with ~~includes~~ the Council's criteria for institutional publications, including catalogs, advertising literature, and other published documents describing the institution.

CATALOG

The Council requires all accredited institutions and all applicant institutions to publish an acceptable catalog. Accredited institutions under the same ownership or control may publish a common catalog, but it should be specific as to the faculty, programs, and student services available at each location (see "Multiple-School Catalogs" in this Appendix ~~ese Guidelines~~). All enrolled students must have access to the current catalog.

A catalog is written for many purposes and is directed toward a varied audience. The catalog becomes an announcement and a record and should be dignified in appearance. It must not be primarily a promotional publication, nor should it be directed toward a single segment of its varied audience. The catalog has been determined by the courts to be a legal document of the institution concerned.

The catalog should explain the offerings and services of an institution, but it should not glorify or extol. It should reflect the dignity and integrity of the institution it describes. The catalog must be available in hard copy, and may also be available in a read-only electronic format. The hard copy catalog must be appropriately printed and bound. The catalog may include illustrations and photographs that are pertinent to the institution.

At a minimum, the catalog must contain the following items: ~~Items 7, 8, and 16 (listing of faculty, academic calendar, and statement of tuition and fees) may be listed on a catalog supplement, provided that such supplement is printed, dated, and identified as part of the current catalog, and the catalog makes reference to the supplement. Thereafter, this supplement must be enclosed in each copy of the catalog.~~

1. A table of contents and/or an index.
2. An indication, on the front cover or on the title page, of the year or years for which the catalog is effective.
3. The names and titles of the administrators of the institution.
4. A statement of legal control which includes the names of trustees, directors, and officers of the corporation.
5. If the institution is now accredited, a statement denoting this fact (see “Statement of Accreditation” in these Guidelines).
6. A statement of the mission of the institution.
7. A listing of the full-time faculty members, showing:
 - (a) academic credentials held;
 - (b) institutions awarding the credentials; and
 - (c) the area of teaching specialization.
8. An academic calendar (calendar of events) showing beginning and ending dates of terms, quarters, or semesters; holidays; registration dates, etc.
9. The full disclosure of the institution’s admission requirements, policies, and procedures, including the basis for admissions, test requirements, advanced standing requirements, and experiential learning assessment requirements.
10. A statement of the curriculums (programs) offered, including for each:

- (a) a statement of the objective or purpose of the curriculum;
- (b) an accurate and complete listing of the courses included in each curriculum, each with a unique identifying number and title;
- (c) the credit or clock hours awarded for each subject;
- (d) the total credits or clock hours required for satisfactory completion of the curriculum;
- (e) requirements for certification, licensing, or registration in the program career field, as appropriate; and
- (f) any additional or special requirements for completion (such as practica or externships e.g., typing, shorthand).

11. A description of each course (subject) offered, including:

- (a) identifying number;
- (b) title;
- (c) credit or clock hours awarded;
- (d) a complete but concise description of the contents of the course; and
- (e) prerequisites, if any.

12. An explanation of the grading or marking system (consistent with that appearing on the student transcript).

13. A definition of the unit of credit. If credit hour, identify whether quarter or semester. (See Section [3-1-515](#) for additional information.)

14. An explanation of standards of satisfactory progress. (See Section [3-1-420](#) for additional information).

15. A description of the certificates, diplomas, and/or degrees awarded, together with a statement of the requirements to be met in each instance.

16. A statement of the tuition, fees, and all other regular and special charges.

17. A complete and accurate listing of all scholarships offered (see Section [3-1-431](#) of the *Accreditation Criteria*).

18. A statement of the institution's refund policy and formula relative to method of financial obligation. This policy must be clearly outlined and must comply with Sections [3-1-433](#) and [3-1-434](#), of the *Accreditation Criteria*.

19. A statement pertaining to the nature and extent of student services offered (e.g., counseling and placement).

20. A grievance procedure that includes the name and address of ACICS, unless the grievance procedure is published in a student handbook.

21. If the institution offers degrees, the catalog must include the following information:

(a) for occupational associate's degree programs, identification of courses that satisfy the general education requirement and an explanation of the course numbering system;

(b) for academic associate's degree programs, identification of courses that satisfy the general education and concentration requirements and an explanation of the course numbering system;

(c) for bachelor's degree programs, identification of upper-division courses and courses that satisfy the general education and concentration requirements and an explanation of the course numbering system; and

(d) for post-baccalaureate or graduate degree programs (master's and doctorate degree programs), a separate section in the catalog describing the program requirements, admissions procedures, transfer policies, graduation requirements, regulations, and course descriptions. (See Sections 3-6-800 and 3-7-800). ~~master's degree programs, an explanation of the course numbering system.~~

22. If the institution offers courses via distance education, the catalog must include the following information:

(a) a description of each mode of distance education delivery method used;

(b) the admission requirements for the courses or program(s) of study offered through distance education required only if different from the admission requirements for the residential programs;

(c) a description of tests used in determining access to distance education courses and programs, if applicable;

(d) a description of the resources and equipment the students must have to avail themselves of the instruction (including, computer requirements such as hardware

and software, internet access, access to library/college for monitoring of examinations, etc.); and

(e) the special costs and fees associated specifically with distance education (e.g., platform access fees, on-line library access fees, purchase of books on-line).

ADDENDA/SUPPLEMENT TO THE CATALOG

Listing of administrative staff and faculty, tuition and fees, and academic calendar may be included in a catalog addendum/supplement as standing items. In addition, the addendum/supplement may include other reasonable changes that occur after a catalog has been printed until the next printing. An institution is expected to update its catalog at an appropriate interval and the addendum/supplement should not be used as a substitute for meeting this expectation.

The addendum/supplement must clearly state that it is part of the catalog and must include the school name, location, and effective date for the entire document (or for individual sections if effective dates vary). The addendum must be included with each copy of the catalog.

MULTIPLE-SCHOOL CATALOGS

1. All institutions utilizing a common catalog must be of common ownership or control.
2. Pictures of the physical facilities of any of the institutions must be captioned to identify the particular institution or campus depicted.
3. Faculty and administrative staff must be listed in the catalog and be clearly identified for each institution. The administrative staff for the group of institutions also must be listed.
4. Any information contained in the catalog that is not common to all institutions in the group shall be presented in such a manner that no confusion, misunderstanding, or misrepresentation is possible.
5. The catalog must comply with the existing standards in all respects as outlined in these Guidelines.

ADVERTISING

Any advertisement or promotional literature written or provided ~~used~~ by an institution through any type of media shall be completely truthful and dignified. The material shall be presented in a manner which avoids leaving any false, misleading, or exaggerated impressions with respect to the institution, its

personnel, its courses and services, or the occupational opportunities for its graduates. An English translation for advertising that is in a language other than English must also be available.

1. All advertising and promotional literature provided ~~used~~ by an institution must clearly indicate that training or education, and not employment, is being offered.
2. All advertising and promotional literature must include the correct name of the institution. So-called “blind” advertisements are not permitted ~~considered misleading in character~~.
3. Institutions advertising to attract students ~~placing advertisements~~ in classified columns of newspapers or the equivalent on websites and the other electronic ~~other~~ publications ~~to attract students~~ must use only classifications such as “Education,” “Schools,” or “Instruction.” Headings such as “Help Wanted,” “Employment,” or “Business Opportunities” may be used only to procure employees for the institution.
4. ~~Letters of endorsement, commendation, or recommendation may be used in catalogs, sales literature, or advertising, provided prior consent is obtained and no remuneration is made for either the consent or use of the endorsement. Such letters shall be kept on file and be subject to review. Testimonial letters may be used only when they are strictly factual and portray currently correct conditions or facts~~ Testimonials used in advertising must reflect the opinions or experience of a current or prospective student or graduate of the institution. Testimonial message must be factual and portray current conditions. They cannot contain any representations that would be deceptive or could not be substantiated by the institution. The institution must maintain a written release from the individual providing the testimonial on file.
5. An institution shall not use the words “free” and “guarantee” for advertising or marketing sales promotion ~~marketing sales promotion~~ purposes in a manner that is misleading to prospective ~~prospective potential~~ or current students. A disclosure must be made for services which are funded by third parties that are offered at no cost to students.
6. An institution shall not offer monetary incentives to the general public to visit, enroll in, attend, or complete a program. ~~Further, monetary incentives for failure to be placed in a job shall not be offered as an inducement to enroll. The~~ institution cannot make guarantee or similar claims regarding job placement or salary for graduates.
7. References to financial aid availability ~~shall~~ must use ~~include~~ the phrase “for those who qualify.” Financial aid cannot be the sole subject of an advertisement.

STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION

When making public disclosure of accredited status in its catalog, the institution must include the name, address, and telephone number of ACICS.

For institutional catalogs, the fact of accreditation shall be stated only as follows:

“Accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools to award (name all applicable specific credential levels from among certificates, diplomas, associate’s degrees, bachelor’s degrees, and master’s degrees).”

~~or~~

~~*Name of institution) is a (junior college [if institution awards an academic associate’s degree] or senior college [if institution awards a bachelor’s degree]) accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools to award (name all applicable specific credential levels from among certificates, diplomas, associate’s degrees, bachelor’s degrees, and master’s degrees).*~~

Institutions may add the following statement in announcing their accreditation:

The Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools is listed as a nationally recognized accrediting agency by the United States Department of Education and is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

For publications and advertising other than catalogs, institutions that wish to state the fact of accreditation shall use either the catalog language noted above or one of the following disclosure statements:

“Accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools”;
or

“Accredited Member, ACICS”

An institution is not permitted to use such statements as “fully accredited” or “accredited” without including the name of ACICS. An institution will not use or publicize the term “accredited” unless it is in fact accredited by ACICS or another recognized agency, or it has affirmative authority under state law.

Any reference to stated authority for status as “registered,” “approved,” or “accredited” must include the name of the state extending the approval and must accurately identify the state agency. An applicant for ACICS accreditation may not disclose this fact in any manner.

For electronic media and web sites, the institution may provide a hypertext mark-up language link (“html”) to the ACICS web site when making public disclosure of its accredited status. Disclosure must be in compliance with Appendix C.

B. ACCREDITATION OF INDIVIDUAL CAMPUSES

Explanation of Final Changes

Effective January 1, 2014: The Council approved final language to introduce flexibility into the accreditation process. These changes will allow the Council to award grants of different lengths to a main campus and to its additional locations. Visits to the campuses of a multiple campus institution will be scheduled prior to the end of each of their grants and therefore may not be concurrent. The structure of the grant process described in the Criteria, including the maximum length of grants and the relationship between grants, will remain the same as it is in current practice.

1-3-202. Multiple Campus Institution. A multiple campus institution is an institution that provides educational programs at one main campus and one or more additional locations. Compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria* of the main campus and its additional locations is reviewed separately ~~but concurrently~~. Accreditation is granted to the institution at the main campus, with the specific inclusion of each of the additional locations.

2-1-700. Council Actions. Action by ACICS to accredit or renew accreditation or not to do so, or to limit or otherwise condition the grant of accreditation, is determined only following review of the self-evaluation report prepared by the applicant institution, the report of the visiting team, the response of the institution to that report, the institution's financial condition, and the recommendations (if any) of the interim reviewers. At each level of review, the number and seriousness of any deficiencies are taken into account, as well as the institution's indicated willingness and capability to overcome them. The Council may, at its discretion, direct an institution to submit a teach-out agreement, as described in [Section 2-2-303](#) of the *Accreditation Criteria*. Specific Council actions are discussed in [Title II, Chapter 3](#).

2-1-701. Maximum Length of Grants of Accreditation. The Council determines the grant lengths of each campus that is accredited by ACICS. The maximum length of an initial grant of accreditation is three years. If an institution can demonstrate a record of having been in good standing with another institutional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education, the Council may award an initial grant of up to four years. The maximum length of a renewal grant of accreditation is six years.

2-1-702. Grant Lengths of Additional Locations in Multiple Campus Institutions. The Council, at its discretion, may determine that the grant length

and/or expiration date for an additional location will not coincide with the grant length and/or expiration date for the main campus. In the event that the main campus fails to maintain its accreditation status with ACICS, the associated additional locations and campus additions are ineligible for accreditation by ACICS.

C. DISTANCE EDUCATION

Explanation of Final Changes

The Council approved final language in Appendix H to reflect current practices in distance education.

APPENDIX H Principles and Requirements ~~Guidelines~~ for Nontraditional Education

DISTANCE EDUCATION

In addition to the general standards in [Title III, Chapter 1](#), which apply to all institutions, and applicable standards in Chapters [2](#) through [6](#), the following standards apply specifically to distance education delivery methods. These principles and guidelines are designed to inform institutions of the policies of the Council and to guide institutional representatives when designing, implementing, and evaluating distance education forms of educational delivery.

Institutional Readiness

(a) Institutions must notify and receive approval from ACICS prior to using distance education as a mode of delivery (See Section [2-2-501](#)).

(b) Institutions must have a plan to implement distance education instruction. At a minimum, the plan should include the rationale, resources, course/program objectives, content, and student assessment. Institutions must integrate this plan into the ~~Institutional~~ Campus Effectiveness Plan.

(b) The instructional delivery method must be appropriate for students and the curriculum.

(c) Institutional policies and procedures should be consistently applied regardless of using procedures that are appropriate to the ~~instructional~~ mode of delivery.

(d) Institutions must designate a qualified individual to oversee the distance education activities. ~~Additionally, institutions must assign faculty who possess the technical skills to teach in a distance education environment.~~

Admissions Requirements and Enrollment

(a) Institutions must identify the admission requirements of distance education courses/program/s and how it differs from, if applicable, the on-ground admission requirements.

(b) If an on-line admissions test is required, it must be administered in a manner which verifies the student's identity. Institutions must make it clear in writing at the time of enrollment how the student's identity will be verified throughout the course and program, how the student's privacy will be protected, and if the student will be assessed any additional charges associated with the verification of student identity.

(c) Institutions must clearly and appropriately state any requirements the students must possess or have access to in order to access this mode of delivery.

(d) Institutions must provide an on-line orientation program to familiarize the student with the equipment, resources used in the distance education activities, and orient the student to the distance education learning process.

Curriculum ~~Content and Instruction~~ and Instructional Delivery

(a) Regardless of instructional delivery method, ~~the~~ the syllabi must identify the course learning objectives. Each course learning objective must support one or more program learning outcomes. ~~show that the distance education course(s) has/have the educational learning objectives and outcomes consistent with the program objectives and the credential awarded.~~ (See Glossary definition of [Syllabus](#).)

(b) The course/~~program~~ must ~~demonstrate~~ provide sufficient and appropriate opportunities for interaction between faculty and students and among students.

(c) Institutions must demonstrate to the Council that the clock or credit hours required and awarded are appropriate for the degrees and credentials offered using a thoroughly developed rationale. Credit award rationales for distance education delivery of courses or programs generally do not use the traditional lecture/laboratory/practicum formulas for credit calculations (See Section 3-1-516, Course and Program Measurement).

(d) Curriculum must be administered in a way that maintains security of access.

(e) Institutions must demonstrate that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The verification method, at the option of the institution, may include a secure login and pass code, proctored examinations, and other appropriate student authentication or verification technology.

Faculty and Instructional Support

(a) The institution must employ academically and/or experientially credentialed faculty to teach online courses appropriate to the subject matter; oversee the instruction, evaluation, and grading requirements of the distance education course/program.

(b) ~~The faculty must possess the appropriate technical skills and be adequately trained to instruct in a distance education environment; faculty orientation must be provided.~~ Faculty hired to facilitate online instruction must be properly trained to utilize the institution's learning management system for purposes of instruction, communication and assessment.

(c) ~~The faculty must be supported with the appropriate educational resources and technology to instruct using this method of delivery. Students must also be provided with the appropriate technical and academic support to successfully complete the program/course using this form of instruction. The instruction must provide an accessible and reliable learning management system and technical support to effectively facilitate online instruction and learning.~~

(d) ~~Institutions must provide evidence that there is an appropriate number of faculty for the student population involved. Institutions must be able to justify their student teacher ratio(s).~~ The institution must demonstrate that the faculty/student ratio appropriately supports faculty and student interaction, facilitation of interaction among students and interaction with curriculum content.

(e) The institution must have a faculty development plan on file that is appropriate for each individual. For further information, see Section [3-1-543](#).

Resources and Equipment

(a) The institution must demonstrate that it has adequate financial resources to support the form of delivery.

(b) ~~Instructional resources, equipment, library resources, and network connectivity, if applicable, must be readily available, accessible, and reliable.~~ The institution must demonstrate that students taking online courses have access to the same or equivalent library resources and support as students taking courses in a physical classroom.

Students and Student Services

(a) The institution must ~~provide students with a knowledge base of technology utilization.~~ orient online students to its learning management system, resources and support services, including technical support.

~~(b) Student support services available to students enrolled in online programs must be the same or equivalent to those provided to students enrolled in ground-based programs, The including but not limited to institution must provide student services such as counseling, academic advising, guidance, financial aid, and employment assistance. for students enrolled in distance education courses/programs.~~

Student Evaluation and Program Assessment

~~(a) Requirements for successful completion of distance education courses/programs must be similar to those of residential courses/programs. The course learning objectives for a course delivered online must be the same as the learning objective for the same course delivered on ground.~~

~~(b) Regardless of instructional delivery method, assessments and assignments should demonstrate student achievement of course learning objectives.~~

~~(b) Assessment of student performance and academic success should demonstrate outcomes for distance education courses/programs that are comparable to those of residential courses/programs.~~

~~The assessment may include a synthesis of portfolios, group work, applied writing, pre and posttesting, capstone courses, seminars, and on line presentations (if applicable).~~

(c) The institution must document that it conducts course/program evaluations, including assessment of student learning outcomes, student retention and placement, and student, graduate, faculty, and employer satisfaction (See Section [3-1-111](#).)

Publications

(a) The institution must fully disclose what form(s) of instruction it uses in its catalog and web site and, when appropriate, in its advertising and promotional material. The catalog disclosure must follow the requirements as described and outlined in Section [3-1-701](#) and [Appendix C, number 22](#)).

SELF-PACED INSTRUCTION

In addition to the general standards in [Title III, Chapter 1](#), which apply to all institutions, and applicable standards in Chapters [2](#) through [6](#), the following standards apply specifically to self-paced instruction delivery methods. These principles and guidelines are designed to inform institutions of the policies of the Council and to guide institutional representatives when designing, implementing, and evaluating self-paced instruction forms of educational delivery.

Institutional Readiness

1. Institutions must notify and receive approval from ACICS prior to using self-paced as a mode of delivery. (See Section [2-2-501](#).)
2. Institutions must demonstrate a shift from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered environment.
3. Institutions must employ faculty who possess the technical skills to teach in a self-paced environment.
4. The delivery method must be appropriate for students and the curriculum.

Admissions Requirements and Enrollment

Institutions must identify the admissions requirements of self-paced courses/programs.

Curriculum Content and Instruction and Delivery

~~1. The syllabi must show that the self-paced course(s) has/have the educational learning objectives and outcomes consistent with the program objectives and the credential awarded. Regardless of instructional delivery method, the syllabi must identify the course learning objectives. Each course learning objective must support one or more program learning outcomes.~~ (See Glossary definition of [Syllabus](#).)

2. Institutions must demonstrate to the Council that the clock or credit hours required and awarded are appropriate for the degrees and credentials offered using a thoroughly developed rationale. Credit award rationales for self-paced delivery of courses or programs generally do not use the traditional lecture/laboratory/practicum formulas for credit calculations. (See Section [3-1-516](#), Course and Program Measurement.)

3. Institutions must demonstrate compliance with applicable federal and state regulations.

Faculty and Instructional Support

1. The institution must employ academically and/or experientially credentialed faculty to oversee the ~~instruction, evaluation, and grading requirements of the self-paced course/program.~~

2. The faculty must be adequately trained to instruct in a self-paced environment.

3. The faculty must be supported with the appropriate education resources and technology to facilitate self-paced instruction. ~~to instruct using this method of delivery.~~

~~4. Institutions must provide evidence that there is an appropriate number of faculty for the student population involved. The institution must demonstrate that the student/teacher ratio appropriately supports faculty and student interaction, facilitation of interaction among students and facilitation of student interaction with curriculum content.~~

Resources and Equipment

~~Instructional resources and equipment must be readily available, accessible, and reliable. The institution must provide an accessible and reliable learning management system and technical support to effectively facilitate online instruction and learning.~~

Students and Student Services

~~The institution must provide students with a knowledge-based of technology utilization.~~

~~(a) The institution must orient online students to its learning management system, resources and support services, including technical support.~~

~~(b) Student support services available to students enrolled in self-paced programs must be the same or equivalent to those provided to students enrolled in ground-based programs, including but not limited to student services such as counseling, academic advising, financial aid, and employment assistance.~~

Student Evaluation and Program Assessment

~~The institution must implement an assessment plan that measures attainment of core competencies for the course/program and measurable objectives for each course.~~

~~(a) The course learning objectives for a self-paced course must be the same as the learning objectives for the same course delivered on ground.~~

~~(b) Regardless of instructional delivery method, assessments and assignments should demonstrate student achievement of course learning objectives.~~

Publications

The institution must fully disclose what form(s) of instruction it uses in its catalog and web site and, when appropriate, in its advertising and promotional material. The catalog disclosure must follow the requirements as described and outlined in Section [3-1-701](#) and [Appendix C, number 22](#).

D. ACCREDITATION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Explanation of Final Changes

The Council approved final language to address international institutions that seek an accreditation status with ACICS.

3-1-541. Faculty Preparation. Preparation of faculty members shall be academically and experientially appropriate to the subject matter they teach. Faculty members shall be competent to teach the subject matter offered and shall have reasonable latitude in their choice of teaching methods. U.S. based institutions must provide evidence that all faculty members are graduates of institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the United States Department of Education. Faculty who are graduates from institutions outside the United States must be graduates of institutions recognized by their respective governments as institutions of higher education or ~~and~~ be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE) or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine the equivalency of the credentials awarded by institutions in the United States. ~~and their~~ Transcripts, in languages other than English, must be translated into English.

APPENDIX D Standards of Satisfactory Progress

An essential element in providing appropriate instruction and support services to students is monitoring their satisfactory academic progress (SAP). The Council requires all institutions to develop a policy of satisfactory academic progress that measures whether students are maintaining satisfactory academic progress in their educational program. ~~The policy must contain all of the elements required by the Council and federal regulations. The Council expects institutions to publish those standards for students enrolled in the institution's educational program(s). The Council also expects institutions to monitor whether a student meets the minimum qualitative and quantitative components of the standards.~~

Institutions located outside the United States, which serve students not participating in the U. S. Title IV student financial assistance programs, are required to publish in the catalog an SAP policy and systematically monitor academic progress of their students. At a minimum, the SAP policy must address the following elements: (a) minimum qualitative standards, such as a grade point average, which must be achieved by the end of each academic year or at 50% of the normal program length if the program is less than one academic year; (b) maximum time frame in which the educational objectives must be successfully completed; (c) a rationale if the maximum time frame for program completion exceeds 150% of the normal program length; (d) institutional procedures for a systematic monitoring of each student's progress in meeting the SAP policy; (e) a description of actions that must be taken by the institution if the student fails to make satisfactory academic progress; and (f) a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.0 or C or equivalent that must be achieved by each student upon graduation.

~~Each of these requirements must be strictly observed:~~

The Council has determined that the institutional policy must include the following requirements, which are consistent with the regulations specified by the U.S. Department of Education for student eligibility for receiving Federal Title IV financial assistance.

1. The institution has written standards and a schedule of satisfactory academic progress for all students, which are published in the catalog and in appropriate institutional literature, and are consistently applied to all students.
2. The institution strictly adheres to its published standards of satisfactory academic progress, monitors whether a student meets the minimum qualitative and quantitative components of the standards, and notifies students when satisfactory academic progress is not being made.
3. The standards of satisfactory academic progress provide for minimum qualitative standards, such as a grade point average or completion of work projects, which can be measured against a norm.
4. The policy defines a maximum time frame, not to exceed 150% of the normal program length, as defined by the institution, for all programs, in which the educational objective must be successfully completed (e.g., number of academic years, credit hours attempted, clock hours completed, months/weeks, terms or modules, etc. as appropriate), as opposed to simply setting a time limit on eligibility for Title IV financial aid.
5. The institution has provisions for an evaluation point at least by the end of each academic year (or at 50% of the normal program length if the program is one academic year or less) that determine whether the student has met the qualitative and quantitative components of the standards.
6. The institution has provisions for utilizing and publishing a schedule designating the minimum percentage or amount of work that a student must successfully complete at the end of each increment to complete the educational program within the maximum time frame.
7. The institution has provisions for determining at the end of each increment whether the student has met the qualitative and quantitative components of the standards. The qualitative and quantitative standards must be cumulative and must include all periods of the student's enrollment regardless of whether or not the student receives federal financial aid.
8. The institution's policies define the effect on satisfactory academic progress of course withdrawals, incomplete grades, repeated courses, and non-punitive grades. The institution's policies define the effect of non-credit or remedial courses on satisfactory academic progress.
9. The institution has provisions for an evaluation at the end of the second academic year and at the end of each subsequent academic year(s) where the student must have a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.0 on a scale of 4.0, C, or its equivalent, or has academic standing consistent with the institution's requirements for graduation. A student receiving federal financial aid who does not meet the CGPA standards at the end of the second year will no longer be eligible for financial aid, may not be placed on probation, and must be dismissed, unless the student wishes to continue

without being eligible for federal financial aid. However, a student not meeting the CGPA standards at the end of the second year may remain as an enrolled student who is eligible for federal financial aid if there are documented mitigating circumstances (i.e., death in the family, sickness of the student, etc.).

10. If the institution places students on warning, or on probation, as defined in sections 11 and 12 below, the institution's policy must describe these statuses.

11. An institution that evaluates academic progress at the end of each payment period may assign warning status to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress. A student may be assigned to warning status without an appeal or other action by the student. For institutions awarding U.S. Department of Education Federal Financial Aid, a ~~A~~ student on warning may continue to receive assistance under federal financial aid programs for one payment period despite a determination that the student is not making satisfactory academic progress.

12. The institution must have an appeal process for students who do not meet the requirements of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy. When an institution grants a student's appeal for mitigating circumstances, the student will be placed on probation for a specified period of time and considered to be making regular satisfactory progress. ~~the student's eligibility for financial aid will be reinstated.~~ While a student is on probation, the institution may require the student to fulfill specific terms and conditions such as taking a reduced course load or enrolling in specific courses. ~~At the end of one payment period on probation, the student must meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards or meet the requirements of the academic plan developed by the institution and the student to qualify for further federal financial aid funds. A student placed in an extended enrollment status is not eligible for financial aid.~~

If a student is not making satisfactory academic progress, the institution may place the student in an extended enrollment status. ~~A student placed in an extended enrollment status is not eligible for financial aid.~~ However, all credits attempted count toward the 150% of the normal program length even if the student is on extended enrollment. Grades may be replaced if that is the institution's written policy. At the discretion of the institution, a student with an approved appeal who exceeds one and one-half times the standard time frame as defined by the institution either as a regular student or in an extended enrollment status may receive the original academic credential for which he or she enrolled, provided that there are no additional financial obligations to the student.

For institutions awarding U.S. Department of Education Federal Financial Aid Only: A student on probation will have their eligibility for financial aid reinstated. A student on probation may receive federal financial aid funds for one payment period. At the end of one payment period on probation, the student must meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards or meet the requirements of the academic plan developed by the institution and the student to qualify for further federal financial aid funds. A student placed in an extended enrollment status is not eligible for financial aid.

13. The institution must have clearly defined procedures for re-establishing satisfactory academic progress.

14. The institution has rules for students who change programs, as well as for students who seek to earn additional credentials. For instance, an institution may have a policy that for a student who changes programs it will include in the determination of a student's satisfactory academic progress standing the credits attempted and grades earned that count toward the student's new program of study. Such a policy must be part of the institution's written policy.

15. The institution must have a policy that addresses the implications of transfer of credit on satisfactory academic progress.

16. The institution has provisions that the student must have a minimum CGPA of 2.0, C, for undergraduate programs and 3.0, B for graduate programs or their equivalent upon graduation ~~from all programs.~~

3-1-411. Admissions. The admissions policy shall conform to the institution's mission, shall be publicly stated, and shall be administered as written. The following minimums apply:

(a) The requirements for students admitted to programs leading to a certificate, diploma, or degree shall include graduation from high school or its equivalent, or demonstration of the student's ability to complete the program, as provided for by governing laws ~~ability to benefit from the training offered. Such ability to benefit determination shall include, at a minimum, the administration of a test approved by the U.S. Department of Education and academic and career advising.~~

2-1-403. Evaluation of Separately Accredited Programs. If, in compliance with Section 3-1-515, an attestation and documentation have been provided to ACICS that a program at an institution has been separately accredited by a specialized accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation, or, for foreign institutions, the government or appropriately recognized organization providing specialized accreditation, ACICS at its sole discretion may accept those documents as evidence that the accredited program meets an acceptable level of quality.

3-1-515. Specialized Accreditation. If a program is accredited by a specialized accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or, for foreign institutions, the government or appropriately recognized organization providing specialized accreditation, the Chief Executive Officer of the institution shall attest to ACICS and provide documentation that it is in compliance with the standards of the specialized accreditor.

3-4-400 – Library, Instructional Resources, and Technology

3-4-401. Staff. A professionally trained individual shall supervise and manage library and instructional resources, facilitate their integration into all phases of the institution's curricular and educational offerings, and assist students in their use. A professionally trained individual is one who holds a bachelor's or master's degree in library or information science or a comparable program, or state certification to work as a librarian, where applicable-, or, for foreign institutions, who holds a bachelor's or master's degree recognized as appropriate for the position by its government or higher education authority. The institution must provide evidence that the degree is from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. If the degree is from an institution outside of the United States, the institution must be recognized by its government as an institution of higher education or ~~and the transcript must be translated into English and~~ be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE) or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine the equivalency of the degree to degrees awarded by institutions in the United States. Transcripts, in languages other than English, must be translated into English.

3-5-400 – Library, Instructional Resources, and Technology

3-5-401. Staff. A professionally trained individual shall supervise and manage library and instructional resources, facilitate their integration into all phases of the institution's curricular and educational offerings, and assist students in their use. A professionally trained individual is one who holds a bachelor's or master's degree in library or information science or a comparable program, or state certification to work as a librarian, where applicable-, or, for foreign institutions, who holds a bachelor's or master's degree recognized as appropriate for the position by its government or higher education authority. The institution must provide evidence that the degree is from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. If the degree is from an institution outside of the United States, the institution must be recognized by its government as an institution of higher education or ~~and the transcript must be translated into English and~~ be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE) or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine the equivalency of the degree to degrees awarded by institutions in the United States. Transcripts, in languages other than English, must be translated into English.

3-6-700 – Library, Instructional Resources, and Technology

3-6-701. Staff. A professionally trained individual shall supervise and manage library and instructional resources, facilitate their integration into all phases of the institution's curricular and educational offerings, and assist students in their use. A professionally trained individual is one with special qualifications to aid students in research and who holds a M.L.S. degree or the equivalent, or, for foreign institutions, who holds a master's

~~degree recognized as appropriate for the position by its government or higher education authority with special qualifications to aid students in research.~~ The institution must provide evidence that the degree is from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. If the degree is from an institution outside of the United States, the institution must be recognized by its government as an institution of higher education or ~~and the transcript must be translated into English and~~ be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE) or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine the equivalency of the degree to degrees awarded by institutions in the United States. Transcripts, in languages other than English, must be translated into English.

3-7-700 – Library, Instructional Resources, and Technology

3-7-701. Staff. A professionally trained individual shall supervise and manage library and instructional resources, facilitate their integration into all phases of the institution’s curricular and educational offerings, and assist students in their use. A professionally trained individual is one with special qualifications to aid students in research and who holds a M.L.S. degree or the equivalent, or, for foreign institutions, who holds a master’s degree recognized as appropriate for the position by its government or higher education authority ~~with special qualifications to aid students in research.~~ The institution must provide evidence that the degree is from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. If the degree is from an institution outside of the United States, the institution must be recognized by its government as an institution of higher education or ~~and the transcript must be translated into English and~~ be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE) or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine the equivalency of the degree to degrees awarded by institutions in the United States. Transcripts, in languages other than English, must be translated into English.

E. GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Explanation of Final Changes

The Council approved final language to appropriately address education requirements for occupational associate’s degree programs.

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the general standards in [Chapter 1](#), which apply to all institutions, the following standards apply specifically to institutions offering occupational associate’s degree programs. Occupational associate’s degree programs are those programs which award associate’s degrees that contain ~~less than~~ a maximum of 15 semester hours, 22.5 quarter hours, or the equivalent of general education.

3-3-202. Education Requirements. The minimum number of credits required for the occupational associate’s degree shall be 60 semester hours, 90 quarter hours,

or 1800 clock hours, normally earned over a period of four semesters, six quarters, or the equivalent. Transfer and award of credit may be granted for appropriate work at other institutions.

There shall be a minimum of 10 semester hours, 15 quarter hours, and a maximum of 15 semester hours, 22.5 quarter hours, or their equivalent in general education or applied general education courses. The catalog must identify the courses that satisfy the general education requirements, and it must provide an explanation of the course numbering system.

The Council's expectations for general education and applied general education are outlined in the Glossary section.

F. BYLAWS

Explanation of Final Changes

The Council approved final language to allow a commissioner that is elected to the Office of Chair-Elect in the final year of their term to be extended for an additional year for service as the Chair of the Council.

ARTICLE IV

Elections, Terms, Vacancies, Removal, Resignations, and Compensation

Section 1–Elections. Elections shall be held annually, in years when elected positions must be filled, for the selection of persons each of whom shall serve as elected commissioners on the Council and the Board. No person shall serve as a member of the Council and not of the Board, nor shall any person other than the President serve as a member of the Board and not of the Council.

Section 2–Eligibility. Any person employed by a member in good standing and meeting other eligibility criteria is eligible to run for Council and Board membership provided that person has been registered pursuant to these Bylaws with the Board of Directors by the ownership of a member institution. That person must be identified as the “Designated Delegate” of that member. Each main and additional location is entitled to one Designated Delegate. Such designation also authorizes that person to be the voting representative of the member on all ACICS matters requiring a vote of the members. Changes of Designated Delegate shall be made in writing fifteen (15) days prior to the date of any scheduled election which becomes the record date for determining eligibility to vote. Results of elections shall be certified by the Executive Committee.

Section 3–Voting Procedures. Specific election procedures concerning candidate qualifications, deadlines for registration, dates and methods of balloting and absentee balloting shall be developed by the Board and may vary from election to

election. Electronic voting, properly secured, shall be allowed. The following general procedures shall apply to all voting:

- (a) there shall be at least two candidates nominated for each elective position by the Nominating Committee;
- (b) nominations by petition for each elective position will be permitted if such petition (i) is received at least 45 days prior to the date of the election, (ii) contains the names and signatures of Designated Delegates representing at least ten percent of the institutions that are members of ACICS, (iii) demonstrates that the petitioner satisfies the eligibility requirements contained in Section 2 of this Article, and (iv) meets any other procedural requirements which may be established by the Board;
- (c) every member, if properly registered and current with financial obligations, shall have the opportunity to vote;
- (d) proxy voting is not permitted in elections;
- (e) no more than one person from any institution or group of institutions commonly owned, may serve at any one time on the Council;
- (f) voting on behalf of multiple members under common ownership and control by one Designated Delegate may be permitted on membership-wide matters. The multiple members represented by one Designated Delegate must be recorded with the Secretary prior to the vote, and the multiple members represented by a single Designated Delegate shall count toward a quorum;
- (g) only the Designated Delegate of each member is eligible to vote;
- (h) voting shall be by secret ballot, which includes secure electronic balloting;
- (i) a majority vote, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws, shall decide all non-candidate matters; and
- (j) a plurality vote shall decide all candidate elections.

Section 4–Assumption of Office. New commissioners shall assume office on January 1 of the calendar year following election or appointment, unless otherwise provided for by the Council. Incumbent commissioners will remain in office until new commissioners are seated.

Section 5–Terms. Term of service as a commissioner shall be five years, except that a person elected or appointed to fill a term of less than two and one-half years is entitled to submit for nomination and election or appointment to a full term.

Upon completion of a commissioner's term, the commissioner shall not be eligible to serve another term through election or appointment until three (3) years have elapsed. A commissioner who is elected to the Office of Chair-Elect in the final year of that commissioner's term shall have that term extended for one year to allow service as the Chair of the Council to be fulfilled.

Section 6–Vacancies. Where a vacancy exists, the Nominating Committee shall review and make recommendations to the Council for its consideration.

Section 7–Resignations. Resignation from service as a commissioner and Director may be voluntarily tendered at any time. The resignation becomes effective upon receipt of written notice by the Chair of the Board and Council or the President. Automatic tendering of resignation is required under the following circumstances or conditions:

- (a) denial, suspension, or revocation of accreditation at the institution with which affiliated;
- (b) cessation or announced cessation of operations at such institution;
- (c) filing for reorganization or bankruptcy by such institution or its parent corporation;
- (d) debarment by the U.S. Department of Education from employment at any institution participating in federal student funding programs;
- (e) indictment for a criminal offense;
- (f) change of control or ownership at the institution with which affiliated;
- (g) failure of such institution to meet its financial obligations to ACICS which results in loss of membership;
- (h) change in employment status (other than internal); and
- (i) change in Designated Delegate status.

Not all of the foregoing necessarily will result in acceptance of resignation but must be considered by the Council before service can continue.

Section 8–Removal. A commissioner may also be removed by not less than a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council for breach of any code, canons, or tenets of ethics formally adopted pursuant to these Bylaws.

Section 9–Compensation. Commissioners shall serve without compensation. Public representatives shall receive honoraria for service in such amounts as the

Board shall fix. Commissioners, as well as members of committees, if so provided in advance, shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in performance of authorized duties.

II. PROPOSED CRITERIA REVISIONS

At its August 2013 meeting, the Council reviewed the specific areas of the ACICS *Accreditation Criteria* outlined in Section II and approved the revisions as **proposed** (new language is underlined, deleted language is struck). **Public comment on these revisions is requested on the Comment Form provided at the end of this memorandum.**

A. Campus and Institutional Effectiveness Plans

Explanation of Proposed Changes

The Council proposes to modify language to include all plans that may be required of a campus and/or institution.

3-1-111 Campus and Institutional Effectiveness Plans. Each campus shall have on file a Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP). A main and its additional locations may share aspects of an CEP, such as the mission, but each main and additional location is expected to have its own plan for effectiveness that describes the characteristics of the programs offered and of the student population, describes what type of data will be used for assessment, identifies outcomes, and states how continuous improvement will be made to improve or enhance outcomes at the campus. A centrally controlled institution must also submit a consolidated Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) containing information and data on the institution as a whole. The IEP of a centrally controlled institution is due on or before ~~September 15~~ October 31 annually. If required by ACICS, a CEP or IEP must include as an attachment the following: a distance education plan, program improvement plan, campus improvement plan, institutional improvement plan, cohort default improvement plan and/or financial improvement plan.

B. Title II, Chapter 2 – Institutional Changes

Explanation of Proposed Changes

The Council proposes to modify language to address substantive and non-substantive changes to an institution as defined by the Department of Education. These changes are primarily specific to the substantive changes to an institution as a result of implementing a program of study that is at a higher credential level, out of scope, or being delivered through a non-traditional delivery method.

CHAPTER 2 INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

INTRODUCTION

Approval by ACICS is required before substantive changes are implemented, and institutions should notify ACICS of other significant changes. The material in this chapter explains the evaluation procedures that ACICS will follow for approving substantive and non substantive changes.

~~The Council shall be notified immediately of substantive changes at an institution, including changes in its mission or objectives, management, ownership, control, educational programs, mode of delivery, name, geographic location, and state or local authority to operate, any of which may result in a comprehensive review by the Council.~~

2-2-100 – ADDITIONAL CAMPUS ACTIVITY SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES

2-2-101. *Initiation of Additional Campus Activity List of Substantive Changes.* The following institutional changes will be considered substantive and require Council approval before they can be included in the institution's scope of accreditation.

- (a) Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution as described in Standard 2-2-103
- (b) Any change in the legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution as described in Section 2-2-400
- (c) The addition of programs that are considered to be out-of-scope. Programs considered out-of-scope are those that represent a significant departure from existing programs that were offered when the agency last evaluated the institution as described in Standard 2-2-105
- (d) The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure from the existing delivery method utilized when the agency last evaluated the institution as described in Standard 2-2-106
- (e) The addition of programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution's current scope of accreditation as described in Standard 2-2-107
- (f) A change from clock hours to credit hours as described in Standard 2-2-108
- (g) 25% or greater increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program as described in Standard 2-2-109
- (h) The acquisition of any other institution or any program or location of another institution
- (i) The addition of a permanent location at a site at which the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that has

ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study

- (j) The entering into a contract under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the Title IV, HEA programs offers more than 25 percent of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs as described in Standard 2-2-505
- (k) The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program as described in Standard 2-2-104

2-2-102. Effect of Extensive Substantive Changes. The Council shall conduct a comprehensive on-site evaluation of the institution if substantive changes that have been made or are proposed are sufficiently extensive that the institution's capacity to maintain compliance with accreditation standards requires an immediate assessment. Substantive changes are defined by Council as "extensive" when the types and/ or number of changes are so substantial that the nature and scope of the accredited institution will no longer be the same since last evaluated and in its place a new institution has evolved.

2-2-103. Change of Institutional Mission. It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from the Council prior to implementing any change in the mission or objectives of the institution.

2-2-101 2-2-104. Initiation of Additional Campus Activity. An additional activity includes any ongoing instructional activity offered at a site away from the main facility of an institution. Activity at a site that meets the Council's definition of an "Additional Location" is described in Section 1-3-100, Classification of Campuses. Activity at a site that does not meet the definition of an Additional Location is referred to below as a "Campus Addition." Reporting requirements are as follows:

- (a) *Additional Location.* It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from ACICS of the intention to initiate an additional location before the location begins classes. If approved, activity must be initiated at the additional location within one year of the proposed start date. An additional location must be approved by the Council before advertising, recruiting, and enrollment may take place. Failure to secure approval from ACICS prior to the initiation of an additional location may call into question the accreditation of the institution.

The institution shall provide, on Council forms, the rationale for initiation of the additional location and other information about the educational programs, credentials to be awarded, faculty, learning resources, physical and financial resources, strength in supporting fields, admission and graduation requirements, compliance with state law and authority to operate, number of students, and administrative arrangements. An acceptable catalog which identifies the additional location also shall be included as part of the application.

The Council will monitor the number of additional location applications submitted for each main campus and main campuses under common ownership based on a demonstration of sound administrative and financial capabilities. The Council reserves the right to limit the number of additional locations based on its review of demonstrated administrative and financial capabilities.

Any institution which (1) is required to submit a financial improvement plan to the Financial Review Committee, or which (2) is under a deferral action by the Council must request and receive prior permission from ACICS for the initiation of any additional locations. An institution under a show-cause directive, a negative action, or in a probation status will not receive approval from ACICS for the initiation of any additional location while the action is in effect.

- (b) *Campus Addition.* It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from ACICS prior to initiation of any new educational activity which is under the direct control of the on-site administration of a main campus or additional location and at a site that is apart from the primary location of that campus. In addition, if that activity involves 50% or more of an academic program, the campus addition must be approved by the Council before advertising, recruiting, and enrollment may take place. If approved, activity must be initiated at the campus addition within one year of the proposed start date. The institution shall provide, on Council forms, the location of the activity, its educational purpose, the programs offered, the number of students involved, and any additional information ACICS may request. A catalog for the campus which identifies the campus addition also shall be included as part of the application.

Any institution which has a campus that (1) is under review by the Financial Review Committee of ACICS, (2) shows either a net loss or a negative net worth on its most recent financial report, (3) is required to report placement and/or retention data to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, or (4) is under a deferral action by the Council must request and receive prior permission from ACICS for the initiation of any additional campus activity at which 50% or more of an academic program is provided. An institution under a show-cause directive, a negative action, or in a probation status will not receive approval for the initiation of any such additional campus activity while the action is in effect.

2-2-105. Addition of Programs Out of Scope. It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from the Council of the intention to initiate the addition of programs that represent a significant departure or are out of scope from existing educational programs that were offered when the agency last evaluated the institution.

The institution or campus must initiate the approval process through the submission of a new program application and required documents for Council review and approval before being included in the institution's scope of accreditation.

2-2-106. Initiation of Distance Education (Online) or New Instructional Delivery Method. It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from the Council of the intention to initiate online delivery if all courses and programs within the institution are currently approved for residential or face-to-face instructional delivery method. Any significant change in instructional delivery method requires prior Council approval.

The institution or campus must initiate the approval process through the submission of a new program application and required documentation information for Council review and approval before being included into the institution's current scope of accreditation.

2-2-107. Expansion of Program Offerings to Higher Credential Level. It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from the Council of the intention to initiate a program at a higher credential level.

The institution or campus must initiate the approval process through the submission of a new program application and required documentation for Council review and approval before being included into the institution's scope of accreditation.

2-2-108. Initiation of Change from clock to credit hour offering. It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from the Council of the intention to initiate a change from clock to credit hours in its program offering through the submission of an application and required documentation.

2-2-109. Increasing the number of clock or credit hours. It is the responsibility of the institution to secure approval from the Council of the intention to initiate an increase of 25 percent or greater in the number of clock or credit hours awarded. If the percentage is less than 25 percent but results in a change in the credential level, the credential level will be evaluated to be within the institution's scope of accreditation.

The institution or campus must initiate the approval process through the submission of a new program application and required documentation for Council review and approval before being included into the institution's scope of accreditation.

2-2-102. 2-2-110. Evaluation, of Additional Campus Activity Approval and Monitoring of Substantive Change Activity. All activity for which approval is sought will be evaluated by ACICS before approval is granted. Following is a description of those evaluations.

- (a) *Additional Location.* Initial inclusion of an additional location within the scope of the accreditation of the institution may be granted by the Executive Director upon receipt of all required information. An institution proposing the initiation of a new location must follow the procedures as outlined by the Council and disclosed on its Web site. A new location must receive initial inclusion before advertising, recruiting, or enrolling students at the proposed location. The Council

reserves the right to require a preliminary visit to any potential additional location prior to the granting of initial inclusion.

An additional location that is granted initial inclusion by the Executive Director will be required to undergo a verification visit within six months after the initial class start date. Following this visit, the Council may require the additional location to submit additional information to satisfy areas of concern identified during the evaluation.

A decision regarding the final inclusion of an additional location will be made by the Council in full session following a visit by an evaluation team. Prior to the final inclusion visit, the chief on-site administrator of the location will be required to attend an Accreditation Workshop and to submit additional documentation as outlined and disclosed on the ACICS Web site. The evaluation will normally be scheduled for twelve to eighteen months after the initial class start date and will be conducted by a team of evaluators determined by the size of the institution, the type and number of programs being offered, and other special circumstances. Identification of significant deficiencies during the verification or final inclusion visits can result in an immediate show-cause directive to the institution.

Only after a determination of acceptability, either at the initial or final inclusion level, and notification to the institution of the decision, may the institution consider an additional location to be included within the scope of the institution's grant of accreditation. If approval is withheld, the withholding may be treated as a deferral or a denial, based on circumstances, and the institution may exercise its due process rights as outlined in Title II, Chapter 3.

- (b) *Campus Addition.* The Executive Director is authorized to evaluate and approve additions to a main or additional locations that are apart from the primary location of that campus. Educational activities at a campus addition are eligible to be evaluated for inclusion within the scope of the accreditation of the managing campus provided that the campus addition has been established to meet a specific educational need or condition and is authorized by the appropriate governmental education authority, if applicable.

The managing campus proposing the initiation of a campus addition must submit a Campus Addition Application. The managing campus must assure the Council that the educational activities at the campus addition complement the overall objectives of the institution. Based on its review of the application materials, ACICS may (1) grant final inclusion of the campus addition or (2) deny the application.

A campus addition that is granted final inclusion by the Executive Director will be required to undergo a verification visit within six months after the initial class start date if 50% or more of a program will be offered at the site. Following this visit, the Council may require the institution to submit additional information to satisfy areas of concern identified during the evaluation.

All additions to the campuses of an institution are evaluated during an institution's regular evaluation for a renewal of accreditation.

- (c) New Programs of Study. Changes to an institution's scope of accreditation resulting from the proposed initiation of a new program of study, must be approved by the Council following a comprehensive review of supporting materials specific to the substantive change. Only upon approval of the substantive change to the institution's scope of accreditation is the institution or campus authorized to advertise, recruit and enroll students for the new program.

To further monitor the institution or campus which initiated the substantive change to the institution's scope of accreditation, an on-site evaluation visit will be conducted as directed by the Council.

Following this visit, the Council may require the institution to submit additional information to satisfy areas of concern identified during the evaluation.

2-2-120 – INITIATION AND EVALUATION OF CHANGES WITHIN CURRENT SCOPE

All programs and delivery methods must be within the institution's scope of accreditation and receive ACICS approval before recruiting or enrolling students. Programs offered by the institution are appropriately evaluated during the institution's initial grant of accreditation and renewal of accreditation evaluations.

The initiation of a new program, or a change in the overall objective of a currently approved program or in the credential level of an existing program requires approval prior to implementation. The initiation of courses and programs offered via an online modality also requires approval prior to implementation. An application form and any additional documentation specified by ACICS must be submitted. Programs that have not started within one year of the proposed start date and programs that have been inactive for at least three years must be surrendered as defined in Section 2-2-505. Termination of Programs. Institutions or campuses must have demonstrated compliance with ACICS standards at a lower credential level before requesting a new program at a higher credential level.

Any institution or campus on interim reporting to the Financial Review Committee may be required to obtain prior permission from ACICS for the initiation of any new program. Any institution or campus under a compliance warning, a show-cause directive, a negative action, or in a probation status must obtain prior approval to apply for a new program. Additionally, any institution or campus subject to a comprehensive on-site evaluation as a result of extensive substantive changes must obtain prior permission from ACICS for the initiation of any new program.

2-2-121. Changes to Existing Programs. Changes to existing or currently approved programs fall under (a) extensive changes and (b) non-substantive changes.

- (a) Extensive Changes. An extensive change to existing program application process must be initiated and approval received prior to implementation. Failure to do so will result in a show-cause action for offering an unapproved program. The following changes will be considered substantive changes to the institution's scope of accreditation and require approval per Section 2-2-100 Substantive Changes:
 - i. A 25% increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of an existing program.
 - ii. a change from clock hours to credit hours
- (b) Non-substantive Changes. These include minor changes to existing programs which do not substantially alter the scope, objectives and nature of the programs as described in Standard 2-2-151.

2-2-103. 2-2-122. Substantial Changes to Nonmain Campus Operations. Prior notification to ACICS is required when an institution decides to make substantial changes to the operation of a nonmain-campus. Notice shall be made in writing to the Executive Director, who is authorized to act on behalf of ACICS in approving such changes.

Failure to notify and receive approval prior to substantial change of activity may call into question the accreditation of the institution, and further evaluation may be required.

2-2-151. Non-Substantive Program Changes. Institutions and campuses are required to notify the Council of all non-substantive changes to existing programs. Changes in the program name, clock/contact hours, credits awarded or program length will be disclosed to the public via the ACICS Web site. The following non-substantive changes will be acknowledged:

- (a) Less than 25% change in existing contact hours; credits awarded, curriculum content (courses offered), or program length of a currently approved program within a twelve month period.
- (b) A change in the name of an existing program that does not change the overall objective of the program.
- (c) A change from semester to quarter credit hours or vice versa.

2-2-152. Non-Substantive Changes to Campus Operations. As a condition for maintaining its accreditation status, the institution is expected to keep ACICS fully informed of changes affecting campus operations, including but not limited to, change in campus leadership, expansion of campus space, major change in marketing and recruitment strategies, potential release of major press releases, and potential legal issues affecting the campus.

2-2-200 – REDESIGNATION OF CAMPUSES

2-2-201. *Additional Location-to-Main Campus Reclassification.* An additional location is eligible for evaluation as the freestanding main campus of a separately accredited, single campus institution only if it has been operating as an approved location for at least two years. Additional locations seeking main campus status must submit the appropriate application, audited financial statements certified by an independent certified public accountant for the institution's most recent fiscal year, and undergo an on-site evaluation visit. The visit will not occur until audited financial statements are received.

2-2-202. *Reassignment and Consolidation of Campuses.* Institutions seeking to reassign the classification of a campus or campuses or to consolidate groups of campuses must submit the appropriate application and documentation, including the rationale to the Council. The Council will consider the institution's requested grant expiration date for the newly formed group of campuses and assign modified or full-team evaluation visits as necessary to bring the grant lengths of the various groups of campuses into alignment. The scope and timing of these visits will be based on the length of the grant of accreditation for each group being reassigned or consolidated, as well as a review of determining factors such as retention and placement rates, reporting status, complaints and adverse and any other pertinent information. No campus will be given an extension of its current grant longer than one year for purposes of the consolidation, and new campuses moving through the additional location inclusion process will be visited as part of that process, regardless of the consolidation proposal. The Council reserves the right to assign an on-site evaluation visit at either the main campus or additional locations at any time as it deems necessary.

2-2-203. *Designation of Centrally Controlled Institution.* An institution may apply for classification as a centrally controlled institution by submitting an application and attachments on forms provided by the Council. Upon review of these materials, an evaluation visit will be conducted at one or more administrative sites and designated campuses to verify the information submitted and assess the eligibility of the institution for this classification. A full report will be submitted to the Council for review and approval.

2-2-300 – CLOSING OF A CAMPUS

In all instances of termination of activity at either main or nonmain campuses, ACICS must be assured that provision is made for presently enrolled students to complete the program of instruction for which they have enrolled, either at that institution or at another acceptable institution. In addition, ACICS must be assured that student academic transcripts are safely stored and protected and that the transcripts will be accessible to students and alumni indefinitely. ACICS and the appropriate regulatory agency must be notified of the arrangements made in this regard.

2-2-301. Closing of a Main Campus. An institution is required to notify ACICS as far in advance as possible when it plans to cease operation. It must complete the appropriate forms describing its plans for teaching out its students and for storing and servicing its records and other information necessary for effecting the cessation of operations as smoothly as possible. The institution's grant of accreditation will be revoked as of the effective date of closing.

When ACICS receives information from any source that an institution has ceased to operate, it shall immediately take steps to verify the information. If the Council believes that the institution, in fact, has ceased operations, the grant of accreditation is summarily suspended. Such action is authorized without prior notice or hearing and with immediate public notice.

The institution shall be notified of the summary suspension in writing at its address of record. Within 10 days after receipt of the suspension notice, the institution may petition ACICS for an expedited determination of whether such suspension should be withdrawn. If no petition is filed within 10 days, the suspension automatically shall become a revocation effective as of the date of notice of suspension.

2-2-302. Closing of a Nonmain Campus. An institution is required to notify ACICS as far in advance as possible when it plans to close a nonmain campus. It must complete the appropriate forms describing its plans for teaching out its students and for storing and servicing its records and other information necessary for effecting the cessation of operations as smoothly as possible. The nonmain campus will cease to be included in the institution's grant of accreditation as of the effective date of the closing.

2-2-303. Teach-out. The Council may direct a currently accredited institutions to provide a school closure plan or a formal teach-out agreement in response to adverse information, high cohort default rate(s), low retention and/or placement rate(s), financial instability, or other concerns that may call into question the institution's ability to continue to serve the educational needs and objectives of its students or to continue as an on-going concern. If an institution closes or announces its intent to close, the Council will work to the extent feasible with the U.S. Department of Education and the appropriate state regulatory agencies to ensure that students are given reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional charge. An institution that closes without completing its contractual training obligations to students must refund all unearned revenue. Should an institution enter into a teach-out agreement with another accredited institution, the signed agreement must be submitted to and approved by the Council prior to implementation. In addition to general information on the institutions entering into the teach-out agreement, the agreement must demonstrate that:

- (a) students will be provided, without additional charge, all of the instruction promised but not yet provided by the closing institution; and

- (b) the teach-out institution is geographically proximate to the closing institution or otherwise can provide students with reasonable access to its programs and services, and that it has the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and is reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that provided by the closing institution.

2-2-400 – OWNERSHIP OR CONTROL

The Council at all times must know who is in control of an accredited institution. The transfer of ownership or a change in the control of an institution is a substantial change that must be reported to the Council. In addition, any institution or owning corporation that is contemplating a transaction that may result in a change of ownership or control must notify the Council at least 15 days prior to consummating the proposed change. Failure to provide this notification in a timely manner may result in a delay processing the application. Transactions that constitute a change of ownership or control vary depending on the structure of the entity that owns or controls the institution.

Accredited institutions are owned or controlled by one of several types of corporations, by a limited partnership with a corporate general partner, or by a limited liability company, each of which is defined in the following subsections. In cases where the entity that directly owns or controls the institution is a subsidiary of another entity, the Council requires information on and monitors the ownership of the controlling entity, the parent entity, and any entities in the chain between those two.

- (a) *Privately held corporation.* A privately held corporation is one that operates for profit in which one or more stockholders own the voting stock of the corporation. The stock is marketable, but a majority of the voting stock is not traded on public markets overseen by governmental agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission in the United States. The control of a privately held corporation is vested in those in control of a majority of the voting stock of the corporation.
- (b) *Publicly traded corporation.* A publicly traded corporation is one that operates for profit in which a majority of the voting stock is traded on public markets overseen by governmental agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission in the United States. The control of a publicly traded corporation is vested in the voting members of the board of directors of the corporation.
- (c) *Not-for-profit corporation.* A not-for-profit corporation is one that has been determined by a governmental agency to be tax exempt for reasons the same as or similar to those set forth in Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States. The control of a not-for-profit corporation is vested in the voting members of the board of directors of the corporation.

- (d) *Limited partnership with corporate general partner.* A limited partnership is one that is organized in accordance with the partnership laws of its home jurisdiction. The control of the limited partnership is vested in the general partner, which must be a corporation as defined in subsection (a), (b), or (c) above.
- (e) *Limited liability company.* A limited liability company is one that has been granted a certificate of approval under the laws of the state corporation office or other appropriate regulatory body in its home jurisdiction. A limited liability company may or may not issue certificates of ownership. The control of a limited liability company is vested in the members, whose ownership interests are defined in the limited liability company operating agreement or other such governing document, who are in control of a majority of the direct or beneficial ownership interest in the company.

2-2-401. *Change of Ownership or Control.* A change of ownership or control generally means that a transaction has occurred whereby a new person, combination of persons, or entity can exercise control of a corporation or limited liability company as described in Section 2-2-400. The following subsections outline the typical changes of ownership or control of the three types of corporations that own accredited institutions, including corporate general partners in limited partnerships, and limited liability companies. Transactions other than those outlined below, however, may constitute a change of ownership or control, and the Council reserves the right in its discretion to make the determination of whether a change of ownership or control has occurred in all cases. Institutions, therefore, must keep the Council informed of all substantive changes in the ownership of stock and the composition of the board of directors.

In addition to the transactions outlined below, any change from one type of entity to another as defined in Section 2-2-400 constitutes a change of ownership or control. Institutions also are reminded that nonmain campuses cannot be bought or sold independently of their main campus.

- (a) *Privately held corporation.* A change of ownership or control of a privately held corporation occurs as a result of any of the following transactions:
 - i. the transfer of 50% or more of the total outstanding voting stock from one party or parties to another party or parties;
 - ii. a transfer of voting stock that results in the ownership of 50% or more of the total outstanding voting stock by any party other than any previous owner of 50% or more of the total outstanding voting stock;
 - iii. a transfer of voting stock whereby a stockholder's ownership of outstanding voting stock decreases from more than 50% to 50% or less, or from 50% to less than 50%; or
 - iv. any other transaction whereby a stockholder or group of stockholders who previously could not exercise control of the

corporation as described in Section 2-2-400(a) now can exercise control.

- (b) *Publicly traded corporation.* A change of ownership or control of a publicly traded corporation occurs as a result of any of the following transactions or events:
- i. the change of 50% or more of the voting members of the board of directors in any rolling, 12-month period;
 - ii. a change in the number of voting members of the board of directors in any rolling, 12-month period that will allow a group of directors to exercise control who could not exercise control before the change;
 - iii. the acquisition of outstanding voting shares by any entity whereby that entity owns 50% or more of the total outstanding voting shares; or
 - iv. any other transaction that is deemed by an appropriate governmental agency to constitute a change of control, including but not limited to a transaction that requires the corporation to file Form 8-K with the Securities and Exchange Commission of the United States.
- (c) *Not-for-profit corporation.* A change of control of a not-for-profit corporation occurs as a result of any of the following occurrences:
- i. the change of 50% or more of the voting members of the board of directors in any rolling, 12-month period; or (ii) a change in the number of voting members of the board of directors in any rolling, 12-month period that will allow a group of directors to exercise control who could not exercise control before the change.
- (d) *Limited partnership with corporate general partner.* A change of ownership or control of a limited partnership with a corporate general partner occurs when the corporate general partner has undergone a change of ownership or control as defined in subsection (a), (b), or (c) above.
- (e) *Limited liability company.* A change of ownership or control of a limited liability company occurs as a result of any of the following transactions members to another member or members;
- i. a transfer of direct or beneficial ownership interest that results in the holding of 50% or more of the total direct or beneficial ownership interest by any member other than any previous member who owned 50% or more of the total direct or beneficial ownership interest;
 - ii. a transfer of direct or beneficial ownership interest whereby a member's direct or beneficial ownership interest decreases from more than 50% to 50% or less, or from 50% to less than 50%; or
 - iii. any other transaction whereby a member or group of members who previously could not exercise control of the company as described in Section 2- 2- 400(e) now can exercise control.

A change of ownership or control also occurs when ownership or control of the primary assets of an institution or the authority to operate an institution is transferred from the controlling corporation, limited partnership, or limited liability company to another corporation, limited partnership, or limited liability company. A change of ownership or control, however, has not occurred when there is a transfer of assets among wholly owned subsidiary corporations or between a wholly owned subsidiary corporation and its parent corporation; a transfer of assets from a subsidiary corporation to its parent corporation where the parent corporation owns a majority of the outstanding stock of the subsidiary corporation; or a transfer of assets among subsidiary corporations where the common parent owns a majority of the outstanding stock of the subsidiary corporations.

The Council, for purposes of determining ownership or control, views married couples as a single entity, and it views closely related family groups as a single entity in most cases where all of the present and future relevant stockholders actively participate in the management of the corporation. No change of ownership occurs when stock is transferred to a close family member by operation of law or inheritance upon the death of one of the stockholders.

2-2-402. *Contingent Sales.* The Council will not grant reinstatement of accreditation after a change of ownership or control if the sale of the stock or assets triggering the change of ownership is contingent on approval of the transaction by the Council. If the transaction is rescinded as a result of a condition subsequent to the change of ownership or control of an institution, then the previous owner must apply to the Council for reinstatement.

2-2-403. *Change of Ownership or Control Review Procedures.* The following procedures govern the Council's review of changes of ownership or control:

(a) *Automatic Discontinuation.* Any change of ownership or control results in the immediate and automatic discontinuation of an institution's grant of accreditation. The grant of accreditation may be reinstated only upon application to and approval by the Council. Because the discontinuation results without action or prior approval on the part of the Council, this change in status does not constitute withdrawal of accreditation and is not a negative action.

(b) *Reinstatement.* After the grant of accreditation has been discontinued, it may be reinstated at the discretion of the Council at such time and according to terms and conditions that it has established or may establish in the future. Those terms and conditions are set forth in policy statements issued to the field and in the change of ownership application document that institutions must file to initiate the reinstatement process. When the Council is not in session, the Financial Review Committee is authorized to grant a temporary reinstatement of the grant of accreditation for a period sufficient to

permit the Council to review and consider the application and all required supporting documentation.

The Council will conduct a site visit at any institution that has undergone a change of ownership or control within six months of the effective date of the change. The Council will not consider the final reinstatement of an institution's grant of accreditation until this visit has been conducted. In addition, the Council may require the new owner(s) or the chief on-site administrator to attend an Accreditation Workshop before the final reinstatement of an institution's grant of accreditation will be considered.

- (c) *Effect.* Until either temporary or final reinstatement of the grant of accreditation is granted, the accreditation of the institution remains in abeyance. If approval of the application for reinstatement is withheld, the matter will be treated procedurally as a deferral or denial, as the case may be. (See Title II, Chapter 3, Council Actions, for further information.)

2-2-500 – PROGRAMS OF STUDY REGULATIONS

~~**2-2-501. Initiation and Evaluation of New Programs.** The Council must be notified prior to the start of all new programs. All new programs and modes of delivery must be initiated within one year of the planned start date. A new program must be approved by the Council before an institution or campus advertises, recruits, or enrolls students in the proposed program. The initiation of a new program process is required for any program of study never before offered on the campus whether delivered via residential, distance education, or hybrid. The institution or campus must submit an application and supporting documentation as outlined on the ACICS Web site. Where specified, information must be submitted on Council forms. Additions or deletions of courses included in a program of study that change the overall objective of a currently approved program, require the initiation of a new program application process. The submission of a Campus Accountability Report or catalog identifying a new program does not constitute appropriate notification to the Council.~~

~~Substantive changes to existing programs require the initiation of a substantive change to an existing program process. The submission of a Campus Accountability Report or catalog identifying program changes does not constitute appropriate notification to the Council. The following are changes to an existing program that would require the institution to submit a substantive change to an existing program application process:~~

- ~~(a) any change of 25% or more in existing contact hours, credit awarded, curriculum content (courses offered), or program length of a currently approved program;~~

~~(b) a change in academic measurement from clock hours to credit hours or vice versa, or a change from quarter to semester credit hours or vice versa; or~~

~~(c) any additions or deletions of courses offered that do not change the overall objective of a currently approved program.~~

~~An institution proposing new programs must assure ACICS that the programs conform to the stated mission of the institution and its current program offerings. The Council reserves the right when reviewing new programs to review the entire institution.~~

~~If a new program complements the general and occupational objectives upon which the institution previously has been evaluated and accredited, and the program is being presented to the public and students as it was presented to ACICS, ordinarily no further evaluation will be required at the time of approval. However, all program offerings of an institution are appropriately evaluated during an institution's initial grant of accreditation and renewal of accreditation evaluations.~~

~~If a new program is determined to be "out of scope" and is substantially different in course content, general or occupational objective, or in promotional description from other programs offered by the institution, ACICS may direct that a visit be conducted before granting final inclusion.~~

~~If, as a result of any new program visit, ACICS determines that the overall quality of an institution is being diminished, the institution may be scheduled for a full reevaluation.~~

~~**2-2-502. Initiation and Evaluation of New Programs at Higher Credential Levels than Previously Offered.** An institution or campus that intends to offer its first new program at a higher credential than it previously has awarded must submit additional materials and undergo evaluation beyond those procedures outlined in Section 2-2-501 above. In addition to the initiation of a new program application process, the institution must submit a detailed transition plan describing how it is or intends to come into compliance with the requirements for this new credential as described in the applicable chapter of Title III of the *Accreditation Criteria*.~~

~~The New Program Application and transition plan will be reviewed by the Council. Any institution on quarterly reporting to the Financial Review Committee may be required to obtain prior permission from ACICS for the initiation of its first new program at a higher credential. If the application and plan are determined to be complete, an institution will be granted approval to advertise, recruit, and enroll for the program(s) and a readiness visit will be scheduled within six months of the initial start date of the program. The purpose of the readiness visit will be to assess the institution's initial capacity and compliance with the Accreditation Criteria for the higher credential.~~

~~The readiness visit report and the institution's response to the report will be reviewed by the Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting. If the Council determines that the transition plan is appropriate and that the institution is~~

~~sufficiently prepared to offer the new credential, it will grant the institution initial inclusion for the new program. The Council will provide the institution in the initial inclusion notice with a timetable for the submission of periodic progress reports and for a credential inclusion site visit once the program has a sufficient enrollment and/or a sufficient number of graduates. Final inclusion of the new program will be granted by the Council only after the credential inclusion visit has been conducted.~~

~~Subsequent new programs at the new credential level will be evaluated by the Council using the new program procedures described in Section 2-2-501 above.~~

~~An institution may not submit an application for a new program at a higher credential when approval of final inclusion of a program at a lower credential level is pending. Institutions or campuses requesting to offer a new program at a higher credential more than one level above the current credential level, must first submit a request to the Council. The Council reserves the right to require a preliminary visit to the campus prior to the granting of such a request.~~

~~2-2-503~~ **2-2-501**. *Evaluation of Programs for Purposes of Federal Financial Aid*. As part of its evaluation of an institution for initial accreditation or renewal of accreditation, ACICS will review the institution's policies and procedures for determining credit hour assignments for purposes of awarding federal financial aid. ACICS will evaluate the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours, as defined in 34 CFR 600.2 and in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), to courses and programs and will determine whether this assignment conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

- (a) Credit Hours for Credit Hour Programs. The evaluation of credit hour programs, as defined in 34 CFR 668.8(k), for purposes of financial aid is based on the following federal definition of a credit hour:

Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k), 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 not less than—(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

- (b) Credit Hours for Programs that are neither Credit Hour nor Clock Hour Programs. Clock hour programs as defined in 34 CFR 668.8(k)(2) may not assign credit hours for the purpose of awarding

federal financial aid. However, undergraduate 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 (with at least two graduates) at the same institution are eligible to convert clock hours to credit hours for purposes of awarding federal financial aid. In doing so, these programs may seek to combine a minimum number of hours in a range of hours of student work outside of class with a required minimum number hours of instruction alone to meet or exceed a total number of clock hours of instruction. The evaluation of these clock-to-credit hour programs is based upon the following federal conversion formulas:

The institution's student work outside of class combined with the clock hours of instruction meet or exceed the following numeric requirements:

- i. A semester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction;
- ii. A trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction; and
- iii. A quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction; and The clock hours of instruction alone meet or exceed the following numeric requirements:
 - (A) A semester hour must include at least 30 clock hours of instruction;
 - (B) A trimester hour must include at least 30 clock hours of instruction; and
 - (C) A quarter hour must include a least 20 hours of instruction.

~~2-2-504 Changes to Programs.~~ (Reassigned to other sections of the Accreditation Criteria)

~~(a) Substantive Changes. Institutions must apply for approval from ACICS for any of the following changes to a program prior to their implementation or the revised program will be considered an unapproved program. Failure to do so will result in a show cause action for offering an unapproved program or unapproved mode of delivery. Institutions must submit the appropriate form and supporting documentation for the following:~~

- ~~(i) the offering of a program at a higher education credential than currently approved for;~~
- ~~(ii) any changes an increase of 25% or more in existing contact hours, credit awarded, curriculum content (courses offered), or program length of a currently awarded program;~~
- ~~(iii) a change from clock to credit hours or vice versa, or a change from quarter to semester credit hours or vice versa;~~

(iv) a change in the overall objective of the program;

(v) the initiation of an on-line delivery format of a program of study;

Changes, as noted in (v) above require the submission and approval of the appropriate application. An institution with initial approval to offer programs via online delivery may offer only programs or courses included in the application until final approval by the Council. If the institution wishes to offer additional programs on-line before final inclusion by the Council, it must separately obtain approval for each program. If the institution adds, deletes, or modifies on-line courses before final inclusion by the Council of online delivery, it must separately obtain approval for each program. Institutions with no prior online final inclusion, that plan to offer 100% of a program online, must first submit a request to the Director of Campus Development for a preliminary assessment of the institution's plans and capacity.

(b) ~~Non-Substantive Changes.~~ Institutions must submit for staff review and acknowledgement the following changes to programs:

(i) ~~any change of less than 25% in existing contact hours; credit awarded, curriculum content (courses offered), or program length of a currently approved program; or~~

(ii) ~~a change in the name of an existing program that does not change the overall objective of the program.~~

(iii) ~~planned termination of an approved program.~~

2-2-505 2-2-502. Program Compliance Warning. When the Council determines that a program at a campus of the institution has fallen below the compliance standard for retention, placement, or licensure pass rates, the institution will be provided in writing with a warning regarding the alleged deficiency. The warning will note that the program will have to come into compliance by meeting or exceeding the program-level standard prior to the expiration of the established timeframe or be taught out and discontinued or otherwise conditioned.

A program compliance warning is not a negative or conditioning action and is therefore not appealable. Rather, it is issued as an official notification to an institution that a program provided by the institution is out of compliance with agency standards. Following receipt of a program compliance warning, the institution must bring itself into compliance within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3, or the institution will be subject to adverse action in the form of withdrawal of approval for inclusion of the program within the institution's grant of accreditation. The time frames may be extended at the sole discretion of the Council for good cause, including evidence that there has been significant improvement in the deficient area(s) and the applicable time frame does not provide sufficient time to demonstrate full compliance, e.g., significant improvement in retention, placement or licensure pass rates.

~~2-2-506~~ **2-2-503. Termination of Programs.** The withdrawal of approval for a program following the issuance of a program compliance warning or a decision by an institution to terminate any program voluntarily must be appropriately communicated to all interested publics. These publics include, but are not limited to, students, governmental agencies, the local community, and ACICS.

All institutions subject to the withdrawal of approval for a program or who voluntarily terminate an approved program will be directed to submit a program termination plan that conforms to the following requirements. New students may not be enrolled in any program which cannot be completed prior to the termination date for which public notice has been given. Moreover, the institution is obligated to continue to offer appropriate courses, including prerequisites, so that currently enrolled students will be able to complete the program and receive the credential which was their designated educational objective. For this purpose, the period of time need not extend beyond sufficient time for students already enrolled and maintaining normal academic progress to complete the program.

Council-directed withdrawal of approval for a program conditions the institution's grant of accreditation with respect to the inclusion of the program and therefore is appealable to the Council. Due to the limited nature and narrow scope of the withdrawal of program approval, the appeal to the Council may be in writing only.

To maintain approval, an institution must demonstrate active enrollment in each program of study. If an approved program is inactive for at least three years, the program will be considered discontinued and will be removed from the institution's list of approved programs. To reinstate the program, the institution must initiate a new program application process. Programs that have not started within one year of the proposed start date will be surrendered. To reinstate the program, the institution must initiate a new program application process. Requests to extend a new program's proposed start date beyond one year of the initial date must be submitted to the Executive Director.

~~2-2-507~~ **2-2-504. Contracts or Agreements with Accredited Institutions.** A written arrangement between one institution eligible to participate in HEA Title IV financial aid programs and another eligible institution or with a consortium of such institutions permits an institution to arrange for a portion of its approved program to be delivered by another accredited institution. Contracts or consortium agreements describing these arrangements must be in writing and must be disclosed in the catalog. Institutions are advised that specific state and federal regulations may apply.

- (a) The entire consortium agreement must be submitted to and approved by the Council prior to the institution's participation in the arrangement. The institution seeking approval of such an agreement must submit documentation that demonstrates that the other institution or the members of the consortium that will deliver instruction hold

institutional accreditation from an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and that the portion of the program to be delivered by any other institution has been approved by that institution's accrediting agency.

- (b) The consortium agreement must identify how the curriculum and instruction will be monitored, how curriculum revisions will be undertaken, and how student grievances will be addressed. The institution seeking approval of a consortium agreement must acknowledge in writing that it retains ultimate responsibility for the delivery of its programs and the satisfaction of its students.
- (c) More than 50% of the program must be delivered by the institution that awards the academic credential.

~~2-2-508~~ **2-2-505**. *Contracts with Unaccredited Institutions or Entities*. An institution may enter into a contract with an unaccredited institution or entity for the delivery of up to 25% of a program of study. The institution must submit the contract and provide the following information to ACICS for review and approval prior to the initiation of the contract:

- (a) a full catalog description of the program and the services to be provided by the contractor;
- (b) a systematic plan for administrative and student evaluations of instructors provided by the contractor;
- (c) evidence of the qualifications of faculty to teach the contracted courses;
- (d) a description of the instructional facilities provided by the contractor; and
- (e) plans for the completion of the program should the contractor fail to provide contracted services.

~~2-2-509~~ **2-2-506**. *Articulation Agreements with Secondary Schools*. An institution may enter into an articulation agreement with a secondary school to transfer credit for courses taken at the secondary level that are equal to courses offered in a postsecondary institution. Articulation agreements must be in writing, periodically reviewed, signed, and dated. The institution must maintain a file consisting of the following: (1) a Letter of Intent to Articulate signed by both institutions specifying the numbers and titles of courses to be articulated, (2) a written description of the standards for acceptable transfer of credit, and (3) a comparison of the course objectives of the secondary and postsecondary courses(s) with signed approvals of both institutions. These credits appear on both the secondary and postsecondary transcripts.

~~2-2-510~~ **2-2-507**. *International Partnership Agreements*. An ACICS-accredited institution may enter into an international partnership agreement with an institution of higher education in a geographic location other than that of the

United States or its territories. At least 25% of the program must be delivered by the institution that awards the academic credential.

The ACICS-accredited institution must submit an international partnership agreement to the Council and provide the following information to ACICS for review and approval prior to the initiation of the partnership agreement:

- (a) evidence provided by the institution or agency that the international partner and the programs to be delivered are recognized by an educational approval agency equivalent to an accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education;
- (b) a full catalog description of the program and the services to be provided through the partnership agreement;
- (c) a plan which describes recruitment, admission, standards of satisfactory academic progress;
- (d) a plan which describes student financial relations, including tuition and fees, and refund policies;
- (e) a description of the program(s) of study or courses offered;
- (f) a systematic plan for administration and student evaluations of instructors provided by in the partnership agreement;
- (g) evidence of the qualifications of faculty to teach;
- (h) a description of the instructional facilities at the international site;
- (i) a plan for the completion of the program(s) should the international partner fail to provide agreed upon services;
- (j) a plan for the safety and security of students, faculty, and staff.
- (k) specify which programs or portions are to be delivered via distance education and how the institutions will monitor growth.

III. FOR INFORMATION ONLY

A. COHORT DEFAULT RATES

As a result of the most recent reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act 2008, changes were made to the time frames used to calculate institutions' cohort default rates (CDR). In the past, the U.S. Department of Education has used a two-year time frame in its calculation. However, under the new provisions an institution's CDR is calculated as the percentage of the borrowers in the cohort who default before the end of the second fiscal year

following the fiscal year in which the borrowers entered repayment. This represents a one year extension of the current default monitoring period. The FY 2009 cohort (borrowers who entered repayment between October 1, 2008 and September 30, 2009) will be the first CDR calculation using the new standard. Thus, an institution's FY 2009 three-year CDR will be the percentage of its borrowers who were included in the 2009 cohort who subsequently default on or before September 30, 2011. Draft rates will be provided to institutions in February of 2012 with official rates released in September of 2012. For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at www.FSADataCenter.ed.gov.

In anticipation of having to comply with the new three-year cohort default standard, the Council reviewed options and strategies to help ACICS institutions remain in compliance. The Council has requested all institutions with cohort default rates approaching thresholds of non-compliance to submit Default Improvement Plans this spring. Institutions are also encouraged to review the informational resources and default prevention and management strategies available from ACICS and the U.S. Department of Education. The Council will closely monitor CDR rate changes, and continue to develop and deliver resources on default prevention. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Sarah Frazier sfrazier@acics.org.

B. ACICS WEB SITE

Please visit the ACICS Web site. It continues to be revised and updated based on Council activities. The site contains revised and detailed information about accreditation, accredited institutions, applications, publications, workshops and special events. New features are now available.

NOTE: All institutions were mailed eight digit IDs and passwords to access the new ACICS website. The information was sent via U.S. postal mail and addressed to the campus director or president of each institution. The institution and corporate username (unless changed by the account holder) is the eight-digit ID. This ID should be used on all future correspondence to and from ACICS. If you have questions about your ID code or our new website, please send an email to ebiz@acics.org.

C. 2013 WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

RENEWAL ACCREDITATION WORKSHOP		
Renewal Accreditation Workshop	October 8, 2013	Pasadena, CA
Renewal Accreditation Workshop	October 24, 2013	Indiana
EVALUATOR WEBINAR		
Evaluator Webinar	September 27, 2013	On-Line

INITIAL ACCREDITATION WORKSHOP		
Initial Accreditation Workshop	October 7, 2013	Pasadena, CA

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Council encourages institutions to provide feedback regarding Council operations and procedures. Comments on the proposed *Criteria* revisions are due by **Friday, November 8, 2013**.

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

ACICS has given high priority to promoting and defending ACICS accreditation, and the quality of education delivered by member institutions. Schools play an important role acting as the eyes and ears of ACICS: that is, looking and listening for opportunities to promote ACICS accreditation, and to correct misinformation that may lead to negative perceptions and attitudes among policy makers, the post-secondary education community and the general public. As you identify those opportunities in communities where you operate, please let us know about them. Send an email to Mr. Quentin Dean at qdean@acics.org and let him know the source of the information and when it appeared.

F. ACICS AWARE WEBINARS

The AWARE webinar will be held on **Wednesday, September 18, 2013**. If there are any topics of interest in addition to those in this memorandum that you would like to be addressed during the webinar, please send an email to Ms. Terron King at tking@acics.org.

IV. COMMENT FORM – PROPOSED CRITERIA REVISIONS

ACICS ID Code: _____ Date: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____

Please check (as appropriate):

Proposed *Accreditation Criteria* revisions:

- Campus and Institutional Effectiveness Plans

Accept as Written Modify (please explain)

- Title II, Chapter 2-Institutional Changes

Accept as Written Modify (please explain)

Prepared by: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Please respond by Friday, November 8, 2013 to:

Ms. Terron King
Manager of Policy & Institutional Review
Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools
750 First Street, NE, Suite 980
Washington, DC 20002-4241
Fax (202) 842-2593
fieldcomments@acics.org