

Evaluator Newsletter

Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools

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Welcome the New ACICS Evaluator Manager



Susan Greer
ACICS Evaluator Manager
Policy and Accreditation Systems

As several of you may already know, Ms. Susan Greer has served as the Evaluator Manager for ACICS since mid-September 2007. This position comes with many exciting responsibilities and opportunities. She has communicated with several of you over the past few months but has not been formally introduced.

Susan came to ACICS from an ACICS-accredited school in Missouri where she served as the Compliance Director. She has taught at the college level, worked in the business environment for several years and was fortunate to have been selected as a member of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) team formed to train the airport passenger screeners following 9/11. She holds a Master of Business Administration degree and has completed

master-level courses in Education. Susan obtained her degrees as an adult raising two boys and working full-time, so one could say she has experience in multitasking. In addition, she enjoys technology and is skilled in the MS Office applications such as Excel, Word, Access and Project Management.

As Evaluator Manager, Susan's role is to strengthen our evaluator program and to support one of our most important resources – our evaluators! Among her tasks and responsibilities are:

- Recruiting new evaluators and supporting existing evaluators

- Coordinating the Evaluator Training Workshops
- Working closely with the staff to ensure evaluators are set up in our network so they can submit timely reimbursements
- Working with the accounting department to resolve reimbursement issues quickly
- Working closely with management to ensure compliance with our policies and procedures and to develop new policies to ensure the highest quality evaluator program possible.

Susan is pleased to be a part of the ACICS family and proud to have the opportunity to work

with so many talented and educated individuals. Please remember Susan is your first line of support for any issues or concerns. You may contact her at sgreer@acics.org. She will be contacting you also from time-to-time with procedural changes or improvements. Together we can achieve a world-class evaluator program!

Internship/Externship Agreements

To reduce confusion during site visits, the Council has developed a clarification on the following section of the *Accreditation Criteria* in regards to practica, externships, and internships.

3-1-513 (a)

...For practica, externships, and internships, institutions are required to develop a written and

mutually signed agreement that outlines the arrangement between the institution and the practicum site, including specific learning objectives, course requirements, and evaluation criteria...

Institutions are still required to maintain signed agreements with

all externship sites, and, should they so choose, they can include the student in said agreements. Because externships are considered courses, however in both their billing and the awarding of credit, syllabi for practicum courses are an acceptable agreement between the institution and the student.

Reimbursement Help is on the Way

The Evaluator Manager, Susan Greer, will be assisting the accounting department with evaluator expense reimbursements. We have achieved a great deal since migrating from a paper-laden process. In 2007 we reimbursed 60.2% of all expenses within ten days of submission. As with any new system, we had a few glitches. Two in particular, in January and February, caused extensive delays. We have worked through these hiccups and are confident we will improve our turn-around time in 2008. I am sure with your assistance and that of the accounting staff, we will develop a streamlined process that will benefit everyone involved.

Helpful Reminders and Suggestions

There is a three-step process that must take place before an evaluator is granted access to the Business Portal (BP):

1. you must be associated with a visit (this is the responsibility of the ACICS staff member coordinating the visit)
2. you must be connected to our network (our IT department can help with this), and
3. you must be set up in the BP (our accounting department can help with this).

If you continue to have problems, please contact the Evaluator Manager to help coordinate this process.

Instructions for the BP can be found on our web site at <http://www.acics.org>. Click on the ACICS Business Portal link under HOT TOPICS, then click on the Business Portal Instructions link.

As complicated as this process may seem, it is a one-time set-up. Once an evaluator has traveled and submit-

ted a reimbursement, there is not the need to repeat steps 2 and 3.

Delay in Reimbursement Check?

ACICS recently hired Piere Martin-Williams as Staff Accountant. Piere, Trina Green and Susan Greer are all working towards processing reimbursements within 15 business days. You can help by remembering to do the following:

1. Be sure to hit the "COMPLETE" button in the BP when you have submitted all expenses. This triggers the process. If needed, please review the BP instructions on our web site.

2. Be sure you have notified Susan Greer of any change in your primary mailing address. Unless ACICS is informed to the contrary, the system automatically defaults to an evaluator's institution's address. If you change locations, your checks may still be going to an outdated address. Please take a minute to verify your current contact information with that appearing on any ACICS visit correspondence or with the staff member coordinating the visit. You may also email the Evaluator Manager with any corrections to ensure the records are updated. Susan's email address is as follows: sgreer@acics.org.

Reimbursement Doesn't Match Amount Requested

ACICS has business accounting guidelines set by the IRS which we are obligated to follow. Our policies and procedures for Evaluator Reimbursements can be found at the main web site ([acics.org](http://www.acics.org)). Click on the Business

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Email Etiquette: Before You Hit Send!

Today's environment is quite different from ten years ago. Email is here to stay! It is not uncommon to work in environments where 60-100 emails a day is considered light activ-

ity. Not everyone has that workload, but often times we don't know who does and who doesn't. Therefore, it is acceptable email etiquette to limit your distribution lists and to make sure your email content is appropriate for everyone. There is a helpful website on email etiquette at: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/outlook/HA012054101033.aspx>. A few tips all of us can remember are:

1. Do not use your mass distribution list of all evaluators you have traveled with to forward jokes. Some jokes should remain between friends and may not be business appropriate.
2. Do not email commissioners or board members on an issue or concern until you have followed

the chain of command. The Evaluator Manager, Susan Greer, is your first point of contact for issues or concerns regarding the evaluator program or process. By copying commissioners and/or board members it takes time from their busy schedules and does not achieve the goal you may have intended.



Fact Finders not Consultants

Please keep in mind that the evaluator's role in the accreditation process is to report facts on institutions during the team visit. Evaluators are not to give institutions any advice to prevent citations; nor are they to act as consultants while on visits or following visits. Any issues which may be fixed while on-site must be brought to the immediate attention of the ACICS staff member and/or the team chair. They will address any concerns the team has with the on-site administrator.

Detailed Report Comments

While conducting site visits, please remember to include remarks that acknowledge the positive efforts demonstrated by our institutions. This information should be placed at the end of each section of the team report under, "Comments".

If there is an area of non-compliance noted in your section of the report, please ensure that you include a detailed synopsis of the problem. The more detail provided, the easier it will be for the institution to generate a response that appropriately addresses the area of non-compliance. In addition, more detail will allow Council to determine whether the area of non-compliance has been satisfied by the response the institution has provided.

Staff Review of Evaluators

From this winter travel cycle forward, in an effort to systematically measure evaluator performance and, in turn, shape our training procedures, coordinators will be submitting reviews of all team members.

Managing Growth

As ACICS grows in the field of accreditation, so must our evaluator program and the available pool of educated, talented and experienced evaluators. Many of you have faithfully served as evaluators for several years, and your dedication is appreciated.

In 2008, one of our goals is to increase our evaluator pool. In order to accomplish this we must make a conscious effort to reach out to those who have attended our Evaluator Training Workshops but have not been called to serve. The greater our pool of experienced and trained evaluators, the less likely we will experience a shortage of evaluators in a particular field, contribute to travel "burn-out" or over-use individual evaluators. This will continue to support our recognition as a leader in the industry.

Reimbursements

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Portal link on the right side, and then access the Guidelines for Travel Reimbursement document linked in the third paragraph.

Within these guidelines are rules on substantiation (receipts), documentation of entertainment, meals, lodging and tips. In an effort to simplify the reimbursement guidelines, we have created a list of DOs and DON'Ts for expense reporting. If you wish to have a copy, please contact your coordinator. If you ever have a question about what is appropriate and what is not, please ask your coordinator or the Evaluator Manager for approval before assuming the expense.

It is important to remember that we have a fiduciary responsibility to our institutions. If you ask yourself this simple question before assuming an expense, it may guide you through the decision – "If I were paying for this expense, would I do it?" For example, if you are tipping a doorman for carrying your bags to the elevator, would you tip \$30 or \$5?

Honorarium Receipt Form

ACICS has recently implemented the use of a new form that all of our evaluators will review and submit for each site visit reimbursement. The name of this form is the Honorarium Receipt Form.

For full team visits, the chair will be responsible for completing the Honorarium Receipt Form for each evaluator on that particular site visit. Upon completion, the chair will review verbally with evaluators

individually and then e-mail each evaluator a copy of their Receipt Form for their records.

Finally, each evaluator must submit this form with their reimbursement receipts to the attention of Ms. Piere Martin-Williams, Staff Accountant, Finance and Administration.

Here To Help You ~ ACICS Travel Team Members



Jeff Benson
Accreditation Coordinator



Augustus Mays
Assistant Manager



Terasita Edwards
Coordinator



Kimberlee Moore
Assistant Manager



Joseph Gurubatham
*Director of
Campus Development*



Dyanna Pooley
Senior Manager



Jennifer Gwatkin
Accreditation Coordinator



Katy Reyers
Accreditation Coordinator



Jocelyn Harris
Senior Coordinator



Earline Simons-Bullock
Executive Assistant



Robert Henderickson
Accreditation Coordinator



Loren Truschel
Assistant Manager-



Chimere Jones
Senior Coordinator



Perliter Walters-Gilliam
Accreditation Coordinator



Terron King
Senior Coordinator