Accreditation Criteria Changes

The following criteria have been recently reviewed and have been accepted by the Council: (The underlined portions are newly added language and the struck through portions are deleted language).

A. USDE Regulations on Misrepresentation

3-1-500 – Educational Activities. …For institutions offering programs in which state certification, licensing, or registration is mandatory in order to become employed in a specific career field, curriculums must contain the necessary course work to afford students the opportunity to obtain the minimum skills and competencies in order to become certified, licensed, or registered in that career field.

Where accreditation of a program by a specialized or programmatic accreditor is required for students to obtain entry-level employment in the state where the institution is licensed, the institution must obtain such accreditation in a timely manner.

The institution must provide and document notification to students as to **(a)** which programs hold specialized or programmatic accreditation;

(b) whether successful completion of a program qualifies a student to receive, apply to take, or take licensure exams in the state where the institution is located. For on-line programs, this information must be provided for all states from which the institution enrolls students; and **(c)** any other requirements that are generally required for employment.

The institution shall assess the curriculum and/or the need for specialized accreditation and update it as needed to reflect current requirements for employment.

B. Faculty Development

Section 3-1-543. *Faculty Development.* Institutions are required to establish faculty development plans including both in-service and/or professional growth activities to enhance faculty expertise. There shall be documented evidence on an annual basis of these development plans and their implementation. For those faculty who are trained in teaching methodology on the postsecondary level and who possess limited related outside employment, the plan should concentrate on content update, e.g., new software, equipment, techniques, etc. For those faculty who are practitioners trained in content rather than teaching methodology, the plan should concentrate on curriculum concepts, new theories and techniques of instruction, and new educational media. Institutions are responsible for demonstrating that these plans are appropriate given each faculty member's training, education, and related work experience and that they provide the proper mix of in-service training and/or professional growth based on the academic and experiential background of the faculty.

C. Written Arrangements to Provide Educational Programs

2-2-505. *Contracts or Agreements with Accredited Institutions Consortium Agreements.* 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 agreement permits an institution to arrange for a portion of its approved program to be delivered by another accredited institution. in the consortium. 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 consortium 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 have has been approved by that institution's accrediting agency…

(c) At least 25% More than 50% of the program must be delivered by the institution that awards the academic credential.

Please review the *Memo to the Field* posted on our Web site for further information on these changes and all other final or proposed changes to the *Accreditation Criteria*.

Welcome Note

Dear colleagues,

My name is Perliter Walter-Gilliam; my position with ACICS is the Manager, Institutional Development. I have been given the honor to serve as your liaison at ACICS; and I would like to take the opportunity to introduce myself and personally thank you for your continued service to the agency. Being that there are more than 900 active evaluators, I have only worked with about 2.5% of the group – so I think the introduction is warranted. I have been with ACICS for a little more than four years—beginning as an accreditation coordinator. While I still continue to facilitate some evaluation visits, I am also tasked with the management of other functions so I do not have the opportunity to work with as many new evaluators as before. As the manager of (new) institutional development, I work very intimately with potential and initial applicants; the facilitation and content management of the Accreditation, Deferral and Initial Applicant Workshops; and most recently, the training and development of accreditation coordinators and other travel staff.

To strengthen this mutually-beneficial relationship and to evaluate ACICS' effectiveness, I will be sending an electronic "Evaluator Satisfaction Survey" for your candid feedback. Additional information will be provided at the time of transmission. Finally, I am available via e-mail at pwgilliam@acics.org or telephone (202) 336-6769 if you have any questions, concerns, or comments. Again, thank you for your contribution to the accreditation process and I look forward to seeing you in the field!

Accreditation Criteria Changes

D. Transfer of Credit **(This is proposed language that has not been made final.)**

3-1-413. *Transfer of Credit.* An institution shall evaluate and consider awarding proper academic credit for credits earned at institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the United States Department of Education. The institution shall establish and adhere to a systematic method for evaluating and awarding academic credit for those courses that satisfy current program course requirements. Written policies and procedures must clearly outline the process by which transfer of academic credit is awarded. The institution shall make public its policies on transfer of credit, including a statement of the criteria established by the institution by which a determination is made with regard to accepting credits from another institution and a list of institutions with which the institution has established articulation agreements.

In addition, the institution must provide and document notification to students as to these articulation agreements and the transferability of the credits in the programs that are offered.

The updated *Accreditation Criteria* is available on the Web site. The subsequent version of *The Evaluator* will include criteria accepted as final and effective before September 1, 2011. Please review the Memorandum to the Field posted on our Web site to gather further explanation on all changes to the Criteria. For any questions, you may contact a member of the travel staff, or Ms. Terron King at tking@acics.org.

New Accreditation Coordinator

"Growing up in a family full of teachers, the importance of education was instilled upon me from an early age. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work for an organization that ensures the highest standards for students. I look forward to working alongside the evaluator team and utilizing my passion for education in a field that directly impacts students."

Justin Mack
Accreditation Coordinator

Report Templates Revisited

By Billie Joy Langston

As the spring 2011 travel cycle begins, we announce the revision of all ACICS report templates. Although designed and formatted as a checklist, the newly revised templates have a new flair—more narrative. You will find additional questions added to the template requiring narrative answers. We believe this will provide more substance to the report which will offer the institution, the Intermediate Review Committee (IRC), and the Council a clearer picture of the unique qualities and circumstances of our institutions. Reports represent the culmination of the team review process, in addition to serving as the historical record of each evaluation visit. As writers of evaluation reports, evaluators have a significant role to capture, document, and memorialize their observations, in addition to validating what is presented in the institution's Self-Study/Branch Application.

Unlike the standard checklist questions requiring a Yes/No/N/A response, the narrative will require descriptive language to depict a particular issue relative to its corresponding criteria. Narratives must be written in full sentences and in a concise, factual manner with as much detail as possible. If there are extenuating circumstances that need to be expanded upon, you should make every effort to synthesize the information so that the reader can follow and understand the picture you are trying to portray. Well written reports will convey the story of the visit.

Evaluators are required to download the revised templates from the ACICS Web site in advance of the visit. Also, it will be extremely beneficial to familiarize oneself with new questions in your respective report. While on-site, take the necessary time to study the template before attempting to answer the questions. This will allow you to have a clear understanding of what is expected from the outset instead of waiting until the first visit day concludes. Staff coordinators are available to assist you, and don't hesitate to ask them for clarification or additional information.

After the report is written, extra time will be needed to thoroughly edit the report before the read through. This will contribute to a shorter

> *"Through the written word, members of our evaluator pool have another opportunity to make our accreditation process highly credible…"*

reading period and less final edits to be made by the chair after the visit. Team chairs are reminded of their responsibility to review and edit the ENTIRE REPORT after compiling the individual reports to produce the final document. In addition, team chairs must remove all "If No..." language if there are no corresponding areas of non-compliance or if the space is not used for additional comments or narrative.

The Council seeks to continue its efforts to produce quality reports that reflect the professionalism of the career education industry. Through the written word, members of our evaluator pool have another opportunity to make our accreditation process highly credible by those who may think otherwise. A quality product can always stand on its own merit.

We appreciate the time and attention you give to write reports that represent our agency well in the academic and educational arena. We welcome your comments/enhancements on the revised templates as they are utilized during the spring 2011 cycle. These comments will be reviewed following each cycle to ensure that the most accurate templates are available to our teams before the subsequent cycle begins.

Evaluators of the Year

ACICS appreciates our entire professional peer evaluators for the dedication and service provided to the Council and its mission. ACICS celebrates excellence in peer evaluation by recognizing and honoring the outstanding chair, student relations, and overall evaluator for 2011.

Chair of Year	Student Relations of Year	Evaluator of the Year
Lonnie Echternacht	Judith Anderson-Kotts	William McPherson

Those recognized reflect the endorsements and accolades of their peer evaluators, site team chairs, and ACICS staff. The Evaluators of the Year will be recognized at the ACICS Annual Meeting. The three honored guests will be invited to the meeting to receive a formal appreciation for their diligent and inspiring efforts.

Evaluator Specialty Areas

ACICS Evaluators now have the ability to review the specialty areas they have been vetted to review. Once you have logged in to your account through the ACICS Web site (www.acics.org), go to MY AC-CREDITED PROGRAMS. Those of you affiliated with member institutions will know that this tab was designed for institutions. It has been a great benefit for schools to verify their current approved program listing. Once the screen was made available for schools, ACICS decided evaluators could benefit from it as well. It is worth noting that only the specialty fields appear; we do not have the ability to display the areas of expertise (SR, ED, DE, SP). In addition, the page captures information specific to an institution's program; therefore, evaluators have to ignore all fields other than the CIP and CIP Title. The program status is not relevant to an evaluator and should be ignored. (For an example of the listing, please see the image to the right.)

We trust you have logged on and taken a look at your specialty areas. If not, please the find time to review this information and contact the evaluatormanger@acics.org with any updates. To facilitate any changes to your specialty program listing, an updated resume will be required.

My Accreditation Information

App. Id	CIP Program	Program Description	CIP Level	Staff Approval Date	Exp. Date	Program Status
0	51.0708	Medical Transcription	03			ACTIVE
0	51.0710	Medical Office Assistant	03			ACTIVE
0	51.0713	Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder	03			ACTIVE
0	51.0714	Medical Insurance Specialist/Medical Biller	03			ACTIVE
0	51.0716	Medical Administrative Assistant	03			ACTIVE
0	51.0801	Medical/Clinical Assistant	03			ACTIVE
0	51.0904	Emergency Medical Technology	03			ACTIVE

Six Visits Per Cycle Maximum

As all evaluators know, ACICS implemented a maximum number of visits per cycle in which any one evaluator is allowed to participate. The maximum is 6 (six) separate visits per cycle. Adhering to this policy involves mutual responsibility from the ACICS travel staff team as well as the evaluators. Travel staff members are tasked with monitoring evaluator usage so as not to request an evaluator that has met the maximum. We also ask evaluators to take the initiative since multiple travel staff members may be contacting evaluators simultaneously. Therefore, evaluators shall not accept participation on any visits once they have reached the maximum of six visits for that cycle. Evaluators may be moved inactive for the following cycle if they accept more than six visits per cycle. Any exceptions to this policy must be granted by Ms. Perliter Walters-Gilliam, Manager, Institutional Development.

Combination Visits

ACICS routinely combines visits (e.g. New Grants and New Programs) into one trip. There is a benefit for the institution and the ACICS staff since these "combined visits" lessen the burden on logistics and visit preparation as well as save money. With that said, it should be noted that these visits, though happening concurrently, should be treated as separate entities. It is the responsibility of ACICS staff along with the evaluators conducting these visits and the chair, if applicable, overseeing these visits to understand this concept. This means that New Grant and New Program visits occurring at the same time should each receive their own report (with its own summary page and its own recommendations) which will subsequently produce separate orange sheets, separate letters with their own citations to remediate, and ultimately separate actions.

Reimbursement Policy Update

ACICS appreciates evaluators using coupons or discounts when traveling on ACICS business. However, it must be noted that in these circumstances evaluators will not be reimbursed for the original cost before the discount was applied. ACICS policy allows evaluators to be reimbursed in full for only the amount of money in which they spent on a particular item.

Junk/Spam E-mail

Please make sure that your e-mail addresses have the capacity to accept e-mail communication from ACICS. It may be necessary to contact the IT department at your organization to set the proper security. Also please remember to frequent your Spam/Junk folder to ensure that you are not missing any important e-mails from ACICS staff or anyone else.

Stories from the Road

The Evaluator is pleased to once again bring you our "Stories from the Road" segment.

Snowy, Stormy Weather
By Billie Joy Langston

Lena Horne was a famed Renaissance woman known for her fabulous rendition of *Stormy Weather*. While her lifetime credits didn't include accreditation site visits, it would be interesting to know if Chicago was the city that inspired the lyrics of this song and Ms. Horne's incredible love for singing it.

The 2011 Chicago blizzard was certainly one for the record books that could give "stormy weather" a new meaning. The snow fell in torrents at two-to-three inches per hour. Snow thunder filled the air like an unwanted tornado. Everything became immobile. Jets parked on the tarmac. No luggage carts and handlers zipped out to load planes. The fabled town of Chicago just shut down for 24 hours. Remarkably, the city rebounded quickly. Within a -day period, roads were plowed and you'd never know there had been a blizzard of such great magnitude.

Snowy, stormy Chicago, during the winter 2011 travel cycle; it wasn't my kind of town.

Isn't it Ironic
By Bizzy Fain

As frequent flyers, we are unfortunately familiar with Murphy's Law. So it shouldn't be a surprise that my second team driver, the chair of the team, was unable to start his car in the parking lot of the school. What makes this event stand out from others is the fact that my second driver prefers not to drive on visits, and hasn't in quite some time.

The scene: After the first day of a visit in the Wisconsin winter, my chair and I scamper outside to pull the cars around for the team. I pull mine around to the curb, the heat on full blast, and wait for my chair. And wait. And wait a little longer. Then I shuffle through the snow, across the parking lot, to find my chair struggling to start his car. I take over assuming he might not be familiar with the technology of today's vehicles. But my youthful arrogance when it comes to the new-fangled was no benefit; the key would just not turn. The Jeep, in all its wisdom, was telling us to "step on brake and push button." After stepping on every brake and pushing every button, we decided to go inside for help. An hour later, after many

unsuccessful attempts from every other person on the team, volunteers from the school (including a Jeep owner), and the AAA employee we called, we were in the same situation as before. Finally surrendering, we all squished into one minivan, and headed off to dinner. As we left the second day, and then the third, the Jeep continued to sit still piled under snow with the key dangling in the ignition. All I could think is 'I'm never asking that chair to drive again.'

This article relies on submissions from staff and evaluators. If you wish, please share one of your "stories from the road" with our Evaluator Management Team for possible inclusion in the next newsletter. Please send any submissions to iharazduk@acics.org.

Chair Training Attendees

ACICS acknowledges the following new chairs that attended ACICS Chair Training at our office in Washington, D.C. on November 19, 2010. Thank you all for taking on this vital role in the accreditation process.

Tanya Cummings	Jan Gordon	Tim Peterson	Scott Rhude
Tami Erickson	Karan Krna	Rafael Ramirez-Rivera	Gine Thomes-Cotter

For those interested in becoming a chair, please review the qualifications and the application process which can be found on the ACICS Web site. Applications for this year will be accepted until August 18, 2011.

Evaluator Training Workshop Participants

ACICS has successfully completed two more online Evaluator Training Workshops. The workshop consists of three pre-recorded modules and one live two-hour webinar. The live webinar is reserved for new evaluators who have completed the first three modules and is by invitation only. Please remember that the three pre-recorded sessions may be viewed by any and all evaluators. They are divided into separate sections that consist of 1) ACICS overview; 2) visit responsibilities; and 3) visit activities and exercises. Please take a gander at these modules on the ACICS Website under the **Events/Workshops** tab and the **Webinars** link. ACICS would also like to acknowledge the following new evaluators. These individuals attended an Evaluator Training Workshop since our last issue. Thank you.

Laura Alfano	Stephen Dillon	Debbi Howard	Mario Novo	Laurna Taylor
Candace Bates	Stephanie Etter	Scott Kruse	Rohullah Nowaid	Lena West
David Borofsky	Thomas Evans	Folorunso Ladipo	Shannon Okeefe	Stacey White
Rebecca Buegel	Diane Gaffney	Leslie Lamb	Rochelle Redding	Jessica Wickiewicz
Behzad Bundeali	Charles Gibbons	Dayton Loyd	Keven Robinson	Louise Wilcox
Mary Callaghan	Charles Harvey	Michael McLeland	Jessica Sanders	Angela Woodson
Jason Deitz	Lisa Hawthorne	Chastity Miller	Brian Spaziani	Brad Yeager
Zillery Delgado	Adriene Hobdy	Cathy Montuoro	Jeffrey Tackett	Malcolm Youngren

The Evaluator staff thanks all those who provide editorial and contextual feedback. We would like to pay special thanks to those who have contributed articles for this issue. The Evaluator is primarily maintained by Ian Harazduk, Senior Accreditation Coordinator, any questions or concerns about the publication may be directed to him at iharazduk@acics.org or (202) 336-6795.