For Your Information

Below are items as published in the two most recent Memoranda to the Field (January and May 2013). Below are details on elements that directly affect the evaluation process. However, these, and other Criteria changes should be reviewed in entirety. Additionally, the May 2013 Memorandum will be soon be published and available for review on the Web site.

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PLACEMENT DEFINITIONS AND DOCU-MENTATION

Definition of Placement:

§The position is either included on the list of job titles published by the institution for which the program prepares students, or

§it requires the use of the skills learned in the student's program as a predominant component of the job, or

§the student attests to the benefit of the training received as a catalyst in obtaining or maintaining the position.

§Nontraditional employment includes:
• self-employment,
• contract work,
• temporary employment,
• temporary employment agency work, and
• international students in paid practical training.

§Documentation for nontraditional employment may include:
• business licenses,
• lists of clients or contracts,
• statements or attestations from graduates that such work meets their employment goals or was disclosed as employment for which the program prepares students.

Evidence of placement requirements:
• New Placement: If a placement involves a new job or promotion to a new position, evidence of the placement in the form of statements made or signed by employers or graduates is required.

• Possible Promotion: If the graduate is already employed in a field and completes a program because the credential is required for possible future promotion, documentation should include an attestation by the graduate or a copy of the company policy regarding the credential.

Length of Employment:

For graduates placed in traditional jobs, the intention is that employment will be continuing and/or sustainable.

Other Professional Development:

If graduates are already employed in a field and complete a program to improve their job skills, documentation should include an attestation of this goal by the graduate or a copy of the company policy regarding professional development requirements for maintaining a job, for a change or potential change in job duties, compensation, or title, and/or for professional enhancement.

Implementation: Program specialists, during the placement verification process, should be mindful of the above and should get additional guidance from the ACICS staff as needed.

LEARNING RESOURCES AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Explanation of Final Changes

The Council approved final language regarding library resources and services due to the advancement in online learning resources.

Sections 3-4-401 & 3-5-401

During library hours that are scheduled and posted, there shall be a trained individual on-site who is assigned to oversee and to supervise the library and to assist students with library and information services. This individual shall be competent and technologically literate to use and to aid in the use of the library technologies and resources.

Implementation: As long as there is someone onsite who is assigned to assist students, it would be fine. Availability is key—if students share that they do not know who this individual is, or they are unavailable when they are need of help, then this is still an issue. Merely being onsite with "paper-only" oversight is not compliant.

Message from the Evaluator Manager

Hello Everyone!

We are back on the road with "unique" institutions, interesting colleagues, and wonderful ACICS staff!

Besides these excitements, there have been a number of regulatory/compliance changes that require our attention and implementation.

Additionally, a number of areas need reinforcement and have been included here for your information. With the passage of time, some fundamental evaluation principles and guidelines may have gotten lost or forgotten. The intent is to remind us all of the protocol so we can ensure quality and consistency.

The evaluator management team has a new member, Ms. Shameka Erby, who has already been working diligently with many of you. She is focused on recruitment and emergency visit assignments so your cooperation is appreciated.

We look forward to working with you this cycle—be safe out there!

Involvement in ACICS Policy and Procedure Review

The evaluator role in the accreditation process is indisputably critical. You are responsible for ensuring and enhancing educational quality at institutions through an objective , expert vintage point.

Hence, your input is being solicited in the review of Council **proposed criteria changes** as well as the review of various projects that directly affect the evaluation process. To this end, a copy of the current *Memo to the Field* will be attached to this newsletter with the intent of not only educating you on Council decisions but requesting your feedback on specific items that you believe warrant evaluator perspective. If you are also interested in serving on focus groups in the future, please con-

New Travel Team Member—Chinita Obi

My name is Chinita Obi and I am pleased to join the team here at ACICS as an accreditation coordinator.

At a time when education in general is being held to high scrutiny and a greater level of accountability, I found it particularly important to gain exposure in the for-profit/independent sector. Joining ACICS fulfills a desire that I have to engage in education by ensuring that schools are upholding standards of quality that will lead to those outcomes for students.

I look forward to working with you all and hope to make a contribution to the mission of ACICS, the member institutions, and the students who are investing their time and resources into gaining an education at our schools that they will apply to a career.

New Evaluator Team Member
Shameka Erby

Hello Evaluators! I am pleased to be working with you and to learn another facet of our review process here at ACICS. I have been with the organization for over six years now in a variety of capacities– some of our member evaluators may remember me from my days in applications. I am responsible for strengthening our pool through recruitment efforts and assisting in review and training for new evaluators. I will try my best to help you with any questions you may have and smooth your introduction to the process. As my job is one that is primarily in-office, you may not see me out on the road– but I am always here to help– and I wish you all the best!

Evaluator Recruitment—Your Continued Help

We continue to solicit evaluators reaching out to colleagues in their professional associations, organizations, and networks to encourage participation in the ACICS evaluator process. Share my email address, pwgilliam@acics.org, and I will gladly follow up. We have an urgent need in the following areas:

Wind Turbine Technician	Occupational Therapy Assistant
Computer Technician	Physical Therapy Assistant
Solar/Wind/Renewable Energy Tech	Cardiovascular Sonography
Environmental Technology	Respiratory Therapy
HVAC/Electrician	Dental Assisting/Hygiene
Machine Tool Technology/Machinist	Anesthesia Technology
Animal and Equine Science	Gerontology Assistant
Electrocardiograph Technician	Dialysis Technology
Medical Laboratory Technician	Building/Property Maintenance and Management
Divinity/Biblical Studies	
Golf Management	Health and Fitness Specialist
Nursing Education	

If you are not currently approved to evaluate any of the above areas but believe you have the required academic and experiential qualifications, please forward an updated resume with a note to evaluatormanager@acics.org for additional review.

If you know of professionals in the above fields who would be interested in serving or would be very effective in serving, please encourage them to apply by visiting http://www.acics.org/evaluators.

ACICS Welcomes New Chairs!

A critical part of the comprehensive evaluation team, the ACICS team chair is tasked with providing leadership to the independent evaluation team during an institutional evaluation for reaccreditation, additional location inclusion, or initial accreditation.

The following individuals have recently undergone chair training and are in the process of completing the on-site mentoring program for new chairs:

Mr. Wyman Dickey	Ms. Michelle Edwards
Dr. Darlene Minore	Dr. Thomas Mosley
Dr. Richard Murphree	Dr. Gine Thomes-Cotter

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Applications are now being accepted and reviewed on a continuous basis until September 30th. Late applications will not be considered. Applicants will be notified, via email, of the status of their application. Please visit http://www.acics.org/evaluators/content.aspx?id=4519 for more information and to access the application packet.

Intermediate Review Committee (IRC) Participation

An ACICS IRC participant is tasked with reviewing materials from an on site evaluation visit, including the team report and institutional response, and providing a recommendation action to the ACICS Council. Hence, the IRC has a very important role and includes seasoned evaluators, former commissioners, new chairs, and individuals involved in the preparation of institutional responses.

An application process has been established to ensure consistency and quality in the review process. Information and the application will soon be available on the evaluator web page.

For additional questions on eligibility and application, please email Mr. Ian Harazduk, Manager of Compliance at iharazduk@acics.org. Thank you for your interest!

Report Templates - Spring 2013 Version & Report Writing and Editing

New report templates for the full team report (Additional Location Inclusion, Initial Grant, and New Grant) that reflect the new changes in the *Accreditation Criteria* and the addition of appropriate questions, have been uploaded to the Report Templates page on the ACICS Web site. Evaluators are responsible for downloading this version prior to **each** team visit to ensure that the current report is being used for the evaluation.

Revisions have been made throughout the templates but questions have been added to the following sections:

SR—Credit Hour Allocation for Financial Aid

ED - CAR data verification for programs with specialized accreditation (moved from section 4)

    - Addition of questions on Agreements for Unaccredited Entities, International Institutions, Other institutions.

The *Report Writing and Editing Guidelines 2013,* along with other materials, can be found on the Report Templates web page and evaluators are expected to **follow them. Consistent non-compliance with the writing expectations may result in visit assignment restrictions or other action.**

Development of Evaluator Training

ACICS recognizes the value of training and keeping its team of expert volunteers abreast with changes in the industry that impact the quality of the evaluation. Hence, plans are underway to develop refresher training courses on the overall, and more efficient, evaluator responsibilities as well as focused training for each role (relations with students, educational activities, team leads).

Evaluators may be asked to participate in these training as part of their development to remain an active volunteer. The intent is to establish a standard of consistent quality across all teams. If you are any recommendations for training, please feel free to share with us for consideration as we explore this exciting addition to the process.

Evaluator Reimbursement

A reimbursement policy has always been in place to monitor and guide evaluators on ACICS' expectations on the submission process. Significant revisions have been and should be reviewed. The document is available on the **Evaluator Resources** web page under the Evaluator Tab of the ACICS web site. Worthy of note are the following:

- Only alcohol, maximum of 2, consumed at dinner will be reimbursed.

- Additional tipping (double tipping) and tips above 20% will not be reimbursed.

- Written approval from the staff coordinator is needed, and should be submitted with the expense reports, for the following: airfare in excess of $1000; additional hotel nights; and car rental.

- For meal and beverage purchases only which are under $10, a receipt is no longer necessary. However, an explanation for the expense must include the purpose of the expense, the amount and date.

In addition, the following have been identified as top issues with the submission process. Please take note to expedite the approval:

- Receipts were not taped at all but simply stuffed into an enveloped and submitted. These will be returned.

- Concur report was not included in the submission.

- Receipts were stapled to the page instead of taped

- Receipts were taped on top each other or amounts paid were not visible.

- The incorrect visit project was selected.

- (Itemized) Receipts were missing.

- Expenses were not submitted via Concur.

- Mileage reports were missing

- Report calculations had to be adjusted

- Not all receipts that were sent in were included in the completed expense report (from Concur)

- Duplicate submissions (airfare)

- Reimbursement policy was not followed (i.e. rental car with insurance, airfare with insurance, first class airfare purchase, expensing of non-visit related items).

- Missing flight comparison when round trip is over 400 miles when personal auto has been used. ACICS will only reimburse up to the airfare amount in these cases.

- Report was not eligible—too dark or too light.

As a reminder, expenses **MUST** be itemized and submitted using the Concur expense reimbursement tool. Access to Concur is obtained by logging on through ACICS and clicking LINK TO CONCUR.

*Failure to provide adequate documentation of expenses will void ACICS' reimbursement responsibilities. It is also strongly recommended that evaluators set up **Direct Deposit** to expedite the reimbursement process. Forms are available on the web site.*

Out-of-class Work Review —Additional Guidance

In the fall 2012 travel cycle, general guidance was provided to evaluation teams concerning the review of "out-of-class" work at institutions which award Title IV funding. Confusion remains on the expectations of this review and additional guidance is provided below:

QUESTION: Does the homework requirement apply to all classes?
ANSWER: The homework requirement applies only to lecture classes, not to lab (studio or clinics) or practica (internships or externships).

QUESTION: What details should the syllabus contain about out-of-class work?
ANSWER: The syllabus should describe the specific work involved, when it is due, how much time the student is expected to spend completing the work (for every one hour of lecture, two hours of homework is expected), and, if it not self-evident, the intended learning objective of the work and how it will be graded.

QUESTION: If a reading assignment is a component of out-of-class work, must it be graded or otherwise explicitly evaluated to count?
ANSWER: There must be evidence that the intended learning outcome of the reading assignment has been evaluated in some manner. Reading by itself is not sufficient. If a reading assignment is on a topic that is also covered during class, and there is an evaluation that covers the result of the two together, then this should be made clear in the grade book or copies of the evaluation. If the reading assignment covers different material from the class, then the evaluation should also cover this material.

QUESTION: How is it to be determined how long "out of class" assignments will take...for example, studying a chapter, writing a paper...?
ANSWER: The syllabus should indicate how long the student is expected to spend on the assignment in order to achieve the intended learning outcomes (and therefore receive a satisfactory grade). The accuracy and reliability of that judgment is evaluated by the visiting team on the basis of whether the assignments comply with commonly accepted practice in higher education.

QUESTION: What documentation is required to evidence the evaluation of homework?
ANSWER: A grade book will suffice and can be accessed during interviews. There is no need to request or insist on copies of graded assignments from actual students.
no need to request or insist on copies of graded assignments from actual students.

QUESTION: In the online space, how are you going to differentiate "in class" versus "out of class" when the vast majority of the work, even homework, is potentially being completed in the learning management system?

ANSWER: The "out of class" assignments would be those that would raise the student's total expected time to the equivalent of 1 in plus 2 out for each credit.

QUESTION: What sorts of activities would qualify as classroom or direct faculty instruction within the structure of an online course?
ANSWER: Activities intended to achieve the same learning objectives as a comparable on-ground course.

QUESTION: How will evaluators determine that 2 hours of out of class work have been completed for each hour of class time?
ANSWER: By reviewing the grading of homework and by interviewing faculty and students. The grading of homework should demonstrate that student who spend the expected amount of time have achieved the required learning and the amount of time to achieve the required learning should be what is expected as a common practice in higher education . Faculty and students should be satisfied that students are generally spending enough time on homework to accomplish the intended learning outcomes

Additional Guidance:
Clock hour programs—no homework requirement

Clock-to-credit hour programs—Minimum hours of homework per course, including lecture and lab, must be approved by ACICS. Schools should have our Clock-to-Credit Hour Profile approval letter and show evidence of the corresponding profile (academic credit analysis) which they submitted to indicate the total minimum hours per course of out-side class activity.

Crafting a Citation

Continually striving for consistency and clarity in the visit evaluation process, it is critical to capture the essence of an area of noncompliance that gives the institution sufficient information to rectify and respond and the subsequent review levels (IRC and Council) guidance on the expectations for deficiency correction.

To this end, the following guidance is meant to serve as a reiteration of guidance provided by the ACICS staff member and report writing guidelines. Citations should be written in the following format:

(Section x-x-xxx): Statement of non-compliance. Details on violation of standard based on observations, document review, and interviews. [Details on corrective measure that must be taken.]

Examples:
(Section 3-1-531(a)): Instructional equipment is not sufficient for the program. Through interviews with students, student questionnaire responses, and observation of laboratory equipment, the Network Administration program does not have sufficient instructional equipment to complete the program objectives. Specifically, there was no "Wireless Network" hardware available for students such as wireless access points, routers, and interface network cards. The objectives of the program state that students will receive training in order to seek CompTIA A+, Net+, Linux+, Security+, Convergence+, MCITP, and Cisco CCNA certifications. These certifications have strong wireless components, therefore, students need hands on administrative access to wireless networking devices.

(Section 3-1-511): A qualified individual is not assigned to administer the Medical Assisting program. As noted above, Ms. Arissa Brumant holds degrees in Management and Higher Education Administration but lacks the necessary academic and experiential credentials in the field of Medical Assisting. She has no certifications and worked in a medical office only in an administrative capacity. She was unable to demonstrate curricula and practical competency in the field.

Proposed Criteria—Feedback Needed

Please review the changes proposed by the Council and complete Comment Forms. Your participation in this process is critical. Feel free to send these directly to me for inclusion in Council discussions.

CATALOG—APPENDIX C

The Council proposes to modify language to eliminate redundancy; to include information on appropriate catalog addenda and remove dated language.

**ACCREDITATION OF INDIVIDUAL CAMPUSES
(Sections 1-3-202, 2-1-700, 2-1-701, and 2-1-702)**

The Council proposes to modify language in the Criteria 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.

DISTANCE EDUCATION — APPENDIX H

The Council proposes to modify language in Appendix H to reflect current practices in distance education.

**ACCREDITATION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
(Sections 2-1-403, 3-1-411, 3-1-515, 3-1-541, 3-4-401, 3-5-401, 3-6-701, 3-7-701, and Appendix D)**

The Council proposes to modify language in several areas of the Criteria to address internationally accredited institutions.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (Occupational Associate's Degrees (Section 3-3-202)

The Council proposes to modify language in the Criteria to appropriately address education requirements for occupational associate's degree programs.

Evaluator Training Workshop Participants

Clifford Kettemborough	Barbara Rector	Jillian Webb	Kathy Elson	Laurie Vang
Teresa Gary	Stephanie Brown	Michael Patton	Elizabeth Ashy	Jennifer Putman
Al Nikroo	Pat Talbert	Heather Hughes	Kim Gillespie	Richard Mallow
LaShondra Peebles	L. Bethea	Rosemarie Scaringella	Veronica Redmyer	Theresa Tuttle
Adil Salik	Susan Yale	George Mikluscak	Eileen Brasser	Donald Tilley
Debra Golden	Robin Smith	Jennifer Williams	Sara Fowdy	David Fritz
Lynn Mizanin	Emanuel Geymont	Ernest Johnson	Mary Moorhouse	Elizabeth Konikoff
Scott Burrell	Niel Scott	Shanda Giles	Chanda Prater	Larry Brueck
Allan Goldberg	Moema Shortridge	Rochelle Redding	Deborah Rosenburg	Shane Clem
Della Khoury	Crystal Warner	Yolanda Staff	Loren Truschel	Michael Tang
Jeffrey Pilz	Anthony Wilson	Amye Melton	Sheri Delozier	Corie Haylett
Tiffany Garrick	Jodianne Ellis	Michael Rager	Charlie Hardiman	Carol Topaz
Brian Lee	Jolynn Rudman	Laurie Schroder	Patricia Schlotter	Todd Pearson
Charles Carothers	Terry Mayo	Tim Ferguson	Gary Myers	Jennifer Williams
Tamara Rozhon	Elayne Zinbarg	Michael Covington	Vennetta McCray	Ernest Johnson
Ellis Murtha	Melinda Christopher	Charlene Truss	Carla Page-Campbell	Sue Coleman
Emma Carter	Anthony Wilson	Danika Bowen		