

# The AWARE Webinar will begin momentarily.

Have questions? Submit them using the dialogue box below. If we don't get to your question during the Q&A portion, we'll reach out to you via email.

We'll keep the dialogue going on Twitter using the hashtag #ACICSaccredits. Follow us on Twitter @ACICSaccredits.





ACCREDITING COUNCIL FOR  
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

# Online Public Forum & AWARE Webinar

May 17, 2013

ACICS Webinar **Announcing, Relating & Explaining**  
The April and May 2013 *Memorandum to the Field*



# Today's Presenters

- **Albert C. Gray, Ph.D.**, President and CEO
- **Thomas Wickenden, Ph.D.**, Executive Vice President
- **Anthony Bieda, M.B.A.**, Vice President, External Affairs
- **Susan Greer, M.B.A.**, Associate Vice President, Operations
- **Terron King, M.S.**, Manager, Policy & Institutional Review
- **Sarah Frazier**, Assistant Manager, Institutional Review and Finance



# Outline

- **Welcome**
- **Topic I: *Changes to the Accreditation Criteria***
  - Presentation of final and proposed revisions
- **Topic II: *Placement Verification Program***
- **Topic III: *Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement***



# Welcome



**Albert C. Gray, Ph.D.**  
President and CEO  
ACICS





# ACCREDITING COUNCIL FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

Available at [www.ACICS.org](http://www.ACICS.org)

To view the Memo:

> Council Actions

>> Memorandum to the Field

>>> 2013, April and May

The screenshot shows the ACICS website interface. At the top, there is a search bar and links for 'Create an Account', 'Login', and 'Sitemap'. The main header features the ACICS logo and the full name of the organization. Below the header is a navigation menu with items: Home, About Us, Accreditation, Council Actions, Students, Evaluators, Events/Workshops, and News. The 'Council Actions' menu is expanded, showing a list of items: Council Actions, Memorandum to the Field, New Grant Schedule, Institutions Invited to Apply, Institution Closings, Accreditation Conditioned, and Voluntary Withdrawal. The 'Memorandum to the Field' page is displayed, featuring a photo of a group of people in a classroom setting. The page content includes the title 'Memorandum to the Field', a breadcrumb trail 'Home > Council Actions', and a description: 'After each Council meeting, ACICS staff will publish a memorandum to ACICS-accredited institutions and other interested parties which includes final criteria changes, proposed criteria changes, and general information for the membership on a number of topics.' Below the text, there is a list of dates for 2013: January, March, and April. Social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are also visible.



# TOPIC I: Changes to the Criteria

## Criteria Effective Immediately

- Campus Accountability Report**
- Unannounced Visits**
- Satisfactory Academic Progress**
- English as a Second Language Programs**



# TOPIC I: Changes to the Criteria

## Criteria Effective Immediately

- Disclosure and Notification
- Eligibility Requirements
- Application Processes
- Learning Resources and Service Requirements
- Bylaws





# Campus Accountability Reports- *Final Revisions*

- 2-1-801. Annual Accountability Reports.
- ✓ The deadline for the Campus Accountability Report has been extended to **November 1<sup>st</sup>** to provide more time for students who graduate toward the end of the reporting period, to take exams, if required, and find employment.



# Unannounced Visits- *Final Revisions*

- Appendix B
- ✓ Amendments were made to eliminate dated terminology and the use of the library as a possible location for a visiting team.



# Standards of Satisfactory Progress- Final *Revisions*

- Appendix D

- ✓ Amendments were made to eliminate redundancy and to incorporate a minimum CGPA for graduate programs.



**PLEASE NOTE:** These changes were made based upon feedback given from the systematic review. The Council eliminated language regarding evaluation at 50% of the normal program length if the program is one academic year or less.



# Requirements for English as a Second Language- Final Revision

- Appendix F

- ✓ Amendments were made to reflect that the information detailed in this section is required versus a guideline.



# Guidelines on Disclosure and Notification – Final Revisions

- Appendix G

- ✓ Amendments were made to remove dated language.



# Minimum Eligibility Requirements – Final Revisions

- Section 1-2-100. Minimum Eligibility Requirements
  - ✓ Amendments were made to the minimum eligibility requirements to allow distance education institutions to be considered on a case by case basis provided they require a residential component.



# Application Process— Final Revisions

- Sections 2-2-101, 2-2-102, 2-2-201, 2-2-202, 2-2-501, 2-2-502, 2-2-504, 2-2-506, 3-1-513
- ✓ Amendments were made to eliminate conflicts with current procedures contained in the sections of the Criteria above.



# Learning Resources and Service Requirements- *Final Revisions*

- *Sections 3-4-401 and 3-5-401*
- ✓ Amendments were made regarding library resources and services due to the advancement in online learning resources.





# Bylaws- *Final Revisions*

- *Appendix A*

✓ The title of Executive Director and CEO was changed to President and CEO.



**PLEASE NOTE:** The duties and authorities of this position remain unchanged.



# TOPIC I: Changes to the Criteria

## Proposed Criteria Revisions

- Catalog- Appendix C**
- Accreditation of Individual Campuses**
- Distance Education**
- Accreditation of International Institutions**
- General Education Requirements**



# Catalog

## *Proposed Revisions*

- Appendix C
- ✓ Amendments were made to eliminate redundancy to include information on appropriate catalog addenda and initial applicants and remove dated language.



# Accreditation of Individual Campuses- Proposed *Revisions*

- Sections 1-3-202, 2-1-700, 2-1-701, 2-1-702
- ✓ Amendments were made to allow the Council to award grants of different lengths to individual campuses based on merit within an institution.



**PLEASE NOTE:** All additional locations remain accredited under the accreditation of the main campus. The deferral of any campus within the institution does not affect the accreditation status of any other campus.



# Distance Education- Proposed *Revisions*

- Appendix H
- ✓ Amendments were made to reflect current practices in distance education.



# Accreditation of International Institutions- Proposed Revisions

- Sections 3-1-541, 3-1-411, 2-1-403, 3-1-515, 3-4-401, 3-5-401, 3-6-701, 3-7-700, 3-7-701 and Appendix D
- ✓ Amendments were made to address the unique geographic, political and legal environments of international institutions that seek accreditation with ACICS.



**PLEASE NOTE:** The proposed amendments cover the areas of faculty preparation, standards of satisfactory progress, admissions, evaluation of separately accredited programs, specialized accreditation, library, instructional resources and technology.



# General Education Requirements— Proposed Revisions

- Section 3-3-202

- ✓ Amendments were made to appropriately address education requirements for occupational associate's degree programs.



**PLEASE NOTE:** This change is being proposed to meet the requirement of a maximum of 15 semester hours of general education for occupational associate's degree programs.



# Final Proposed Criteria Revisions

## Questions?

## Comments?

Please type in any questions or comments you might have! **NOTE:** You can also use the comment form at the back of the Memorandum to the Field to send in comments.





# TOPIC II: Placement Verification Program

## PROGRESS REPORT

- ✓ In January 2012, the Council decided to strengthen the verification of job placement data to help address a crisis of confidence in career education and accreditation, and to provide institutions with an independent means to support their student achievement disclosures.
- ✓ In December 2012, based upon a pilot study involving external contractors, the Council determined that an expanded verification program was feasible.



# Placement Verification Program

- ✓ In December 2012, the Council also approved a broader definition of placement as a position that is either
  - ✓ Included on the list of job titles published by the institution for which the program prepares students, or
  - ✓ 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.



# Placement Verification Program

- ✓ In April 2013, the Council decided to provide independent verification of job placement data by utilizing ACICS resources rather than 3<sup>rd</sup> party verifiers.
- ✓ ACICS also encourages internal or external verification by members, and some may wish to use outside contractors for this purpose.



# Placement Verification Program

- ✓ With the assistance of an advisory committee of member institutions, ACICS has begun to design and develop a verification unit to supplement the current efforts of visit teams.
- ✓ The draft work plan includes:
  - ✓ Design and implementation
  - ✓ Beta testing and standards development
  - ✓ Training and scale-up



# Placement Verification Program

- ✓ Future reports to the Council and members will cover topics such as:
  - ✓ Data submission formats and protocols
  - ✓ Frequency and intervals for verification of campus data
  - ✓ Procedures for call center verification and reconciling of differences
  - ✓ Site-visit verification of back-up documentation



# TOPIC III: Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

The Council reviewed and approved a set of mitigating circumstances that will be considered beginning with the 2013 Campus Accountability Report (CAR).

- ✓ Enhanced standards for campus and program student outcomes will be applied in 2013.
- ✓ Now campuses may also submit information about circumstances under which they believe the campus should be granted a waiver from a standard.



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

A campus or program requesting a waiver must also upload documentation including:

- ✓ an improvement plan demonstrating continuous improvement.

These circumstances apply to the compliance standards at the

- ✓ campus and
- ✓ program levels



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

These circumstances include the following:

- ✓ Retention, Placement & Licensure waivers
- ✓ “Other” mitigating circumstances
- ✓ Sufficiency of service measures
- ✓ A waiver from the relevant standard will be considered for any campus or program which can demonstrate any of the following circumstances.



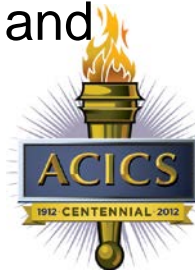


# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

A Retention Waiver will be considered if:

More than 50% of total enrollment during the CAR reporting period demonstrates at least three of the following traits:

- ✓ Delayed enrollment after high school graduation (at least 25 years old)
- ✓ Lacking a high school diploma (admission with a GED or ATB)
- ✓ Enrolling on a part-time basis
- ✓ Financially independent
- ✓ Working full-time (at least 35 hours) while enrolled
- ✓ Having dependents (usually children younger than age 19), and
- ✓ Being a single parent



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

A Retention Waiver will be considered if:

- ✓ The students who withdrew during the reporting period ending June 30 and returned to the campus or program on or before November 1 would have raised the retention rate above the compliance standard, if they had not been counted as withdrawals.



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

A Placement Waiver will be considered if:

- ✓ 30% or more of its graduates reported in the CAR had less than six months between the date of their graduation or the receipt of a license required for employment and the reporting date for placements of November 1.
- ✓ In addition, the improvement plan for any subsequent submission must document that the placement of all students from the previous year is above the ACICS compliance standard.



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

Licensure Pass Rate Waiver – The Council is still considering adjustments in the definition of the licensure pass rate data and standard, so

- ✓ No licensure waiver is proposed at this time for any specific mitigating circumstance.
- ✓ However, institutions may request that a waiver from the Licensure Pass Rate Standard be considered based upon “other mitigating circumstances,” as described below.



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

A Retention, Placement, or Licensure Pass Rate Waiver will be considered if:

- ✓ The three-year average, weighted for enrollment, of the retention, placement or licensure pass rate is above the corresponding compliance standard.



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

A Retention, Placement, or Licensure Pass Rate Waiver will be considered for a program, if:

- ✓ It is separately accredited by a specialized, programmatic accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and that the accreditor has its own standard for retention (or completion or graduation), placement (or employment), or licensure pass rate.



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

Other Mitigating Circumstance – A waiver from the Retention, Placement, or Licensure Pass Rate Compliance Standard will be considered for any campus or program which can demonstrate that

- ✓ Some other circumstance over which the administration has no control has brought the respective student achievement rate below the ACICS compliance standard.



# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

Sufficiency of Service – For campuses submitting the same mitigating circumstance for more than one year, the campus must demonstrate that

- ✓ Its operating budget ratios fall within one standard deviation of the average (mean) value of these ratios for other ACICS-accredited institutions in the same range of educational revenues.
- ✓ If a ratio falls outside of one standard deviation from the mean, the campus must explain why the resources devoted to this service should be considered sufficient.





# Mitigating Circumstances for Student Achievement

These operating ratios are all derived from the Annual Financial Report (AFR) and include:

- ✓ Instructional salaries
- ✓ Instructional expenses
- ✓ Student recruitment
- ✓ Depreciation of equipment
- ✓ Occupancy expenses
- ✓ Administrative expenses
- ✓ Student personnel services





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# Other Information

## Questions?

## Comments?

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