



The Evaluator

FOR YOUR INFORMATION– PROPOSED CRITERIA

ACICS has developed a new process for revising and implementing new criteria, and making necessary quality assurance revisions to procedures. A timeline has been implemented that includes time scheduled for researching possible changes, developing and proposing new language, and inviting comments from the membership.

*In this new process, ACICS will consider areas for new/ edited criteria at the **February** Policy Meeting. Those areas are researched and analyzed by staff, and presented to the Council for discussion at the **April** meeting, when Council will provide guidance to staff to continue researching the issue or draft language to revise the standard. At the **August** meeting, the language is discussed and edited as needed and is voted as proposed and sent to the field for comment. At the **December** meeting, comments from the field will be considered, additional changes made as necessary, and the language adopted as final with an effective date of July 1. This new model will streamline the implement of new criteria; allow sufficient time for members to prepare, and result in a single, yearly Accreditation Criteria revision.*

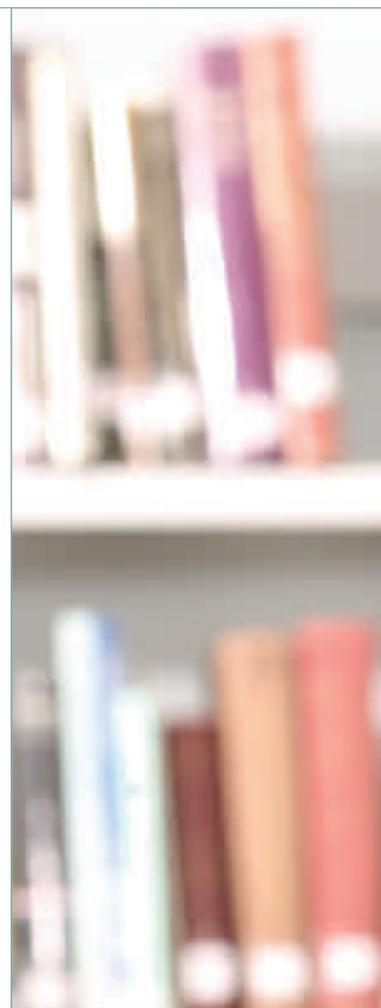
Below are the items currently being considered by the Council:

- ◆ Procedural changes to strengthen on-site evaluation of student recruitment practices.
- ◆ Basis for conducting unannounced visits.
- ◆ Ideas for a structured verification of institutional disclosures.
- ◆ Changes to the Glossary definitions of “Home Institution” and Host Institution.”
- ◆ Guidelines for the supervision and monitoring of third-party vendors, agents, or contractors engaged in referral and recruitment activities.
- ◆ Clarification of the expectations of the utilization of “community resources.”
- ◆ Clarification of faulty teaching loads for non-degree and occupational associate’s degree programs.
- ◆ Initiatives to broaden stakeholder participation in review of Council standards.
- ◆ Revision of Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) criteria language and glossary definitions.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EVALUATOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Hello everyone!

It is an honor and a pleasure to welcome you to the latest edition of the Evaluator Newsletter! I hope that you will take the time to read all of the valuable information we have for you. As always we appreciate the time and effort you put in to make our evaluation visit process the best that it can be. Your collaboration is important to us, so please do not hesitate to share your knowledge and recommendations on the visit process. With everyone’s input, we can make the ACICS review the gold standard in peer accreditation. Travel safely and thank you for your service!



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Evaluator Management Team:

Ms. Perliter Walters-Gilliam,
Associate Vice President of
Quality Enhancement &
Training

Ms. Shameka S. Erby, Assistant
Manager, Evaluator
Management

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS OF OUR TRAVEL TEAM!!



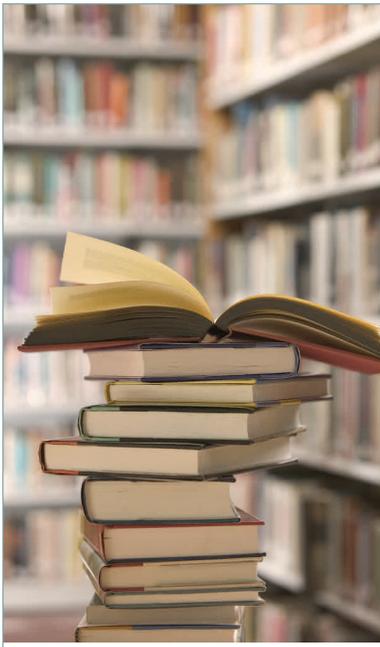
Katie Morrison has been a part of the ACICS family since January 2014. She started as our Communications Assistant and moved up the ranks to join our travel staff at the beginning of the spring cycle this year. Katie is a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill, with a degree in Elementary Education. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and running. Katie has been out this past cycle, mostly in a training capacity, but the fall cycle will be the first with Katie on her own.



Niana Moore joined the ACICS team in February 2015 and also started as our Communications Assistant. Her interest in policy and the evaluation process led her to the Accreditation and Institutional Development Department, where this will be her first cycle as a travel coordinator. Prior to ACICS, Niana was a full-time student at the University of Maryland College Park, where she majored in Studio Art and Art History. When not at work, Niana dabbles in interior design, and also enjoys photography and Netflix.



Derrick Ware is the newest member of the travel team, having just started his tenure at ACICS this past June. His experience includes business development and also technical writing for government contractors. When not working, Derrick enjoys bowling, and spending time with his family, more specifically cementing his title as Best Uncle Ever. Though this will be his first full cycle, Derrick was able to observe some visits in the spring, so he's ready to hit the ground running.



REPORT CARDS

To provide feedback to all evaluators, including chairs, report cards will be prepared at the end of the year and include both staff and institutional reviews.

This feedback is intended to improve the process and not criticize the service of evaluators. Any areas in need of improvement will be addressed on an individual basis.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE ON IRC?

The Intermediate Review Committee (IRC) convenes at the end of every travel cycle and is the second level of our three-tier review for schools who have had evaluation visits. This committee, which is comprised of our long-standing evaluators, examines both the evaluation team's report and the school's response, and makes a recommendation to our Council.

IRC is a critical step in our process and we are always looking for new additions to our pool. IRC members are selected based on their number of years actively participating in visits, and/or producing institutional responses for Council consideration. Participants must also have excellent written and verbal communication skills, and a knowledge of ACICS *Criteria*.

If you're interested, or know someone who may be a good fit, please contact Mr. Ian Harazduk, Senior Manager of Compliance, at iharazduk@acics.org for an application.

REPORT TEMPLATES

New report templates 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.

The Report Writing and Editing Guidelines 2014, Sample Team Report, 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.

To be better aligned with the new policy development and implementation process, the report templates will be revised once a year, starting in 2015, to minimize confusion.

Revisions to the templates, including questions, formatting, and other areas are routinely done to improve the evaluation process. Your feedback is always welcomed and can be sent directly to Mr. Ian Harazduk at iharazduk@acics.org.

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD MAKE A GOOD TEAM CHAIR?

Our team chairs are seasoned evaluators who have demonstrated exceptional skills in leadership, professionalism, writing, editing, and accreditation knowledge. Do you know someone who would be a good fit? Recommend them to us! Send an e-mail to evaluatormanager@acics.org with your chair recommendations!

Training will be in November 2015.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Visit Protocols

- ◇ **Visit Solicitation is strictly prohibited!!!!** You should not be contacting travel staff to communicate your availability. Openings/ changes in your schedule should only be communicated to the evaluator management staff at evaluatormanager@acics.org. Possible sanctions for visit solicitation include limited visit participation and removal from the active pool.
- ◇ **Do not** consent to visits until you have done the appropriate due diligence in verifying your availability with all concerned parties (employer, spouse, etc.). This helps to minimize cancellations. If you need more time before saying yes, inform the coordinator so that they can take the appropriate action.
- ◇ When you are asked on, and consent to, a visit, please await the coordinator's instructions **before** booking the appropriate travel arrangements.
- ◇ Travel should **only** be booked through Concur, our online travel and reimbursement system. There should be no travel purchased outside of the system without the expressed and documented permission of the staff coordinator.

Vetting For Additional Areas

If you feel that you have gained supplementary experience in an additional field, and want that field added to your list of approved programs, please contact us at evaluatormanager@acics.org. There must be substantive evidence of at least five years of academic and/or experiential preparation to have the field added to your list of approved program specialties.

New Evaluation Procedures and Guidelines

The Evaluator Management group has been working diligently to update and edit the existing procedures and guidelines. As you know the *Evaluation Procedures and Guidelines* manual is a step-by-step review of the entire visit process. It's a great tool for the occasional question, or to sharpen your skills. Our **new** guidelines contain updated information on file and CAR review, Concur requirements, updated interview questions, and a sample report to make report writing easier. Please check Evaluator Resources on our website for the soon-to-be-released publication.



CONCUR CORNER

Travel Policy Reminders

Hotels: The hotel costs should be covered by the evaluator and submitted as an out-of-pocket expense. Coordinators will cover hotel costs **only** if asked.

Flight Changes: Changes to your travel arrangements can only be made with the approval of the coordinator managing the visit. If you change your travel arrangements without permission, you may be liable for any extra costs.

Tips: There is a **maximum** of \$20 per visit that can be reimbursed for cash tips.

Driving to Visits: Evaluators cannot drive to and from visits without coordinator permission. If you wish to drive to a visit, you must submit a flight/train cost comparison to verify that driving **is as or less cost** effective. Approval is required **PRIOR** to driving. Failure to do so may result in a delay or denial of your mileage reimbursement.

Expense Reports: Do not submit your out-of-pocket expenses on the same report as your corporate-sponsored travel. Out-of-pocket expenses must be on a separate report.

Individual Meals: Please be mindful of restaurant choices and meal costs when dining on your own. Extravagant meals are prohibited and may not be reimbursed.

WHAT AM I DOING WRONG?

COMMON CONCUR ERRORS

DID YOU REMEMBER...

1. THE ITEMIZED RECEIPTS FOR ALL MEALS (EVEN HOTEL DINING)?
2. THE AUTHORIZATION E-MAIL FOR YOUR EXTRA HOTEL NIGHT OR RENTAL CAR?
3. THE ELECTRONIC DIRECTIONS SHOWING TOTAL MILEAGE (THESE SHOULD BE SUBMITTED EVERY TIME, EVEN IF YOU'VE SUBMITTED THEM WITH PREVIOUS REIMBURSEMENTS)?
4. TO PROCESS AND SUBMIT THE REPORT FOR THE AIRFARE (IT'S NOT AN OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSE, BUT MUST STILL BE SUBMITTED IN CONCUR)?
5. TO ALLOCATE PROPERLY IF YOU TRAVEL TO MULTIPLE VISITS ON A SINGLE AIR/ TRAIN RESERVATION?
6. TO ADD YOUR HONORARIUM TO THE EXPENSE REPORT?

*Because life happens, and cancellation may be necessary, ACICS needs to account for all the financial resources being assigned to cover flights on behalf of evaluators. To this end, ACICS will be tracking all outstanding tickets issued and their subsequent use for future visits. **Any ticket that is used for purposes other than ACICS business will result in a negative action, as this will constitute non-compliance with the published Travel Policy.***

AREAS OF NEED

ACICS is currently looking for evaluators in the following fields:

- Animal Training
- Building Trades (HVAC, Welding, Electrical, etc.)
- Oil Field Operator
- Industrial Design and Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology
- Automotive Repair and Mechanics Technology
- Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine
- Special Operations (clearance needed)
- Electrolysis

If you know someone you can recommend for these fields, please contact us!

Emergency Contact Information

In the case of an emergency, it is important that ACICS has a contact on file to share/obtain information. Please log into your account to update your information if you have not yet done so. This task could be life saving and you are worth it!

Licensing and Certification!

If you are currently vetted in a field for which you are licensed/ certified, and federal or state laws require renewal of said licensure/ certification, please send current proof of that renewal to evaluatormanager@acics.org. We will add the appropriate information to your account.



CRITERIA CHANGE

The following has visit evaluation implications and will be discussed at the required pre-visit meeting. Please get additional guidance from the ACICS staff coordinator.

General education– Glossary

In April 2014 the Council approved final language that clarified the expectations of the distribution of general education requirements in Academic Associate's and Bachelor's degree programs. Previously, the Glossary definition of general education did not clearly state each discipline HAD to be included in the distribution of coursework for program completion. Hence, it was possible for a graduate to complete coursework in the social sciences and humanities without any Math or Natural Science. The revised language now mandates that the distribution must include all three: humanities, social sciences, and mathematics and the natural sciences. While final at that time, the revision went into effect on July 1, 2015 to give institutions time to bring themselves into compliance with the new requirements.

Effect: *The Education Activities specialist will need to assess that the degreed programs (academic associate's and bachelor's) have the minimum number of required general education hours and that the coursework includes all three disciplines. Definitions for the disciplines are also included in the Glossary of the Accreditation Criteria for guidance. If a program or programs do not include all three areas, this will be a finding that requires additional information sent to the Council. This additional information may include the submission of a non-substantive or substantive application.*

Training

STUDENT RELATIONS

The SR training manual will be e-mailed to all active SR specialists as well as for those evaluators who did not meet the expectations of the initial assessment. All specialists will have an opportunity to submit questions for additional clarification on specific areas covered in the manual. Subsequently, webinar sessions will be scheduled to facilitate focused discussion on those areas that were identified. For those who no longer have the designation, there will be an opportunity to retest once the manual has been reviewed and session held. Please ensure that e-mail addresses are functional as all communication will be through that medium.

Additionally, evidence of continuous exposure to, and knowledge of, US Department of Education regulations and requirements of the areas covered in the Student Relations section of the report will need to be submitted to ACICS, at least on an annual basis for monitoring.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

ACICS has expanded its footprint in the distance education mode of delivery as new and exciting innovations continue to keep that environment dynamic and ever-changing. The industry continues to evolve with additional requirements, concerns over security, and quality. It is imperative that the vetted pool of DE experts can evidence continued exposure to these components to appropriately evaluate the quality of delivery, oversight, and development at the membership. To this end, training will be scheduled via Webinar, for all Distance Education evaluators who will also need to evidence the following: third party distance education training; curriculum development of online courses; and online teaching experience. All three criteria are required.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC/RETIRED EVALUATORS

The continuous development of the evaluators is important to ACICS as it evidences currency in the field and strengthens the quality of the evaluation process. This is particularly true for evaluators who are designated as public (not affiliated with an ACICS school) or who have retired from the industry. To better support our evaluators and serve the membership, a short survey will be used to evaluate our effectiveness in this area so we can take steps to improve. Your participation is appreciated.

In Memoriam...

Dear Evaluators:

This year, our ranks have been saddened with the passing of three of our longtime evaluators:

Burt Kaliski—June 17, 2015

Scott Rhude—May 17, 2015

Jim Godell—March 6, 2015

These gentlemen were intelligent, kind, and loved by many who have served alongside them in various capacities. Their service to uphold the standards of accreditation and quality education will always be remembered. ACICS extends its heartfelt sympathies to the family and loved ones.

