



The Evaluator

FOR YOUR INFORMATION— FINAL CRITERIA

Below are the items that were sent to the field for comment in September 2015 and have been voted as final. Effective dates may vary and will affect the evaluation process differently. Please refer to the published [January 2016 Memorandum to the Field](#) and listen to the free [AWARE webinar](#) for additional information.

COUNCIL ACTION PROCESS (Effective January 1, 2016)

*The Council has changed the language and terminology for compliance actions. The modifications streamline Council actions as to when an institution is determined to be out of compliance with Council standards. A **Compliance Warning** will be issued if the Council determines that an institution is found out of compliance. A show-cause directive will be issued if Council determines that an institution is unlikely to become in compliance within the maximum timeframe. The institution will be provided procedural guarantees that allow them to respond to the written areas of noncompliance.*

Revisions to the Accreditation Criteria necessary to ensure procedural consistency have also been made throughout the applicable criteria.

No direct effect on the evaluation process.

BRANCH AND LEARNING SITE PROCEDURES (Effective January 1, 2016)

The Council modified current language related to the approval of branch campuses and learning sites to be compatible with current ACICS procedures. Please reference the Memorandum to the Field for details.

No direct effect on the evaluation process.

FACULTY ASSIGNMENTS AT THE DOCTORAL LEVEL (Effective January 1, 2016)

The Council has clarified current language related to the faculty assignments at the doctoral level. Specifically, faculty teaching at this level must have doctoral or professional degree related to the courses taught and must maintain current professional certification, where applicable. In addition, the institution must demonstrate that faculty members are engaged in scholarly research and that faculty members are encouraged to publish in professional journals. For adjunct faculty, research connected with their primary professional connections will apply. (Section 3-7-502)

Effect on Evaluation Visit: *The program specialist will need to ensure that faculty members do not only have the appropriate qualifications in their respective field, but also specifically related to the courses taught. In addition, the specialist will need to ensure that if professional certification is applicable in the field, the faculty member must have current professional certification. Finally, the specialist will now be reviewing that the institution now ensures that its faculty are engaged in practical and scholarly research. The requirement that the institution must encourage its doctoral faculty to publish in professional journals has not changed.*

A MESSAGE FROM THE EVALUATOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Happy New Year!

It is an honor and a pleasure to welcome you to the latest edition of the Evaluator Newsletter! 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 for improvement and enhancement. At the heart of the quality in accreditation is the peer review process. Travel safely and thank you again for your service!

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Evaluator Management Team:

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

Ms. Frenika Rivers
Accreditation and Institutional
Support Coordinator

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM!!



Cathy Kouko has been a part of the ACICS family since July 2013. She started as a Program Analyst and recently joined our travel staff in the fall. Cathy holds a BSc in Hotel and Restaurant Management. In her spare time, she loves to read, watch movies, and cook.

Linda Lundberg joined the ACICS team in September of 2012 as a Program Analyst. Her editing experience and work in higher education brings much to her new position as the Accreditation Content Editor. Linda holds a BA in English from Columbia Union College, a MA from Andrews University, and has completed Doctoral work at the University of Maryland.



Frenika has been with the ACICS family for a little over two years as an Accreditation Coordinator. Frenika has a bachelor's in urban economic development from Eastern University and a master's in Theology from Wesley Theological Seminary. While she loved being on the road with each of you, she is excited to be in her current role, helping with the evaluator management process. Her spare time is spent entertaining her five-month old and sneaking in naps.



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 and former commissioners, 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 strong knowledge of ACICS criteria. Given the expected level of institutional review and assessment, only applicants with significant applicable experience will be considered.

If you're interested in serving in this capacity, please contact Mr. Ian Harazduk, Senior Manager of Policy & Compliance at iharazduk@acics.org for an application.

REPORT TEMPLATES

Please note that the new report templates dated JANUARY 2016 reflect the new changes in the *Accreditation Criteria*. Report templates are revised once a year, to minimize confusion.

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 2015, 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.

Revisions to the templates, including questions, formatting, and other areas are routinely done to improve the evaluation process. Your feedback is always welcomed and appreciated and can be sent directly to Ms. Linda Lundberg at llundberg@acics.org

NOTE FROM OUR REPORT EDITOR:

If you have recommendations for the campus that you wish to include in the report, please place these at the end of the report under General Comments, rather than within the body of the report. The team chair will then combine all recommendations under the Recommendations section, at the end of the report.

*The recommendations are seen **ONLY** by the campus and intended to provide feedback on enhancements that can be made to positively affect educational activities.*



CONSTANT 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.
- ◇ Flight arrangements should be made for arrival to attend the **REQUIRED** pre-travel meeting the evening prior to the visit and to depart **AFTER 7:00 p.m.** unless otherwise instructed or approved by your staff coordinator. In order to ensure a thorough review that gives the campus the opportunity to provide sufficient information, two full days are needed and expected by the campus.
- ◇ Travel should **only** be booked through COncur, ACICS' 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. Changes made to flight arrangements which incur additional costs, without the expressed approval of the staff coordinator, may be counted as a personal expense to the evaluator.

Vetting For Additional Areas

If you feel that you have gained experience or a credential in an additional field, and would like that field added to your list of approved programs, please contact us at evaluatormanager@acics.org with a **narrative on the request, an updated resume, and any documentation to support your request**. 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.

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!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION– FINAL CRITERIA CONTINUED

UNANNOUNCED VISITS (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council may, at its discretion, decide to direct an institution to host an unannounced visit at any time. The Council determined that there is a need for a policy, which would allow for the review of an institution without prior notice. (Section 2-1-805)

No effect on the evaluation process.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council has clarified the intent of this criterion by specifying the expectations of using a variety of activities in every program which should focus on student enrichment and career opportunities. (Section 3-1-512(c))

Effect on Evaluation Visit: Program specialist will review documentation to evidence that more than one type of activity is being utilized and that these activities are geared towards student enrichment and career opportunities.

TEACHING LOADS (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council revised the language that currently limits the teaching load of faculty at the non-degree and occupational associate's degree level to language that is consistent with degree programs. The expectation of reasonableness remains and should take into account and be justified by various academic factors. (Sections 3-2-101 & 3-3-303)

Effect on Evaluation Visit: At the non-degree and occupational associate's degree credential levels, evaluators will make a qualitative judgement on that teaching loads are appropriate (aligned with the other credentials) as opposed to the fixed 32-hour requirement currently in effect.

FACULTY ASSIGNMENTS - APPLIED GENERAL EDUCATION (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council clarified its intent for general education teaching faculty at the non-degree level. This revision is consistent with the academic preparation requirements of applied general education faculty and standard general education faculty at the degree levels. This revision also includes the acceptance of completed doctoral coursework as qualifying credit hours to teach. (Sections 3-2-104 & 3-3-302)

Effect on Evaluation Visit: If the non-degree program includes general education courses – not the norm but possible – then the requirements to qualify faculty to teach applied and traditional general education should be met.

GLOSSARY OF DEFINITIONS (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council modified the language by removing dated terminology and clarifying the definitions of **Laboratory, Lecture, and In-service Training.**

Effect on Evaluation Visit: There has been some confusion on what types of activities constitute in-service training so Educational Activities specialists will need to be mindful of the revision in order to be consistent with the interpretation.

FACULTY PREPARATION (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council revised the listing of acceptable agencies for the evaluation of foreign credentials to also include the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO).

Effect on Evaluation Visit: At the non-degree and occupational associate's degree credential levels, evaluators will now have to determine that teaching loads are appropriate (aligned with the other credentials) as opposed to the fixed 32-hour requirement currently in effect.

ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council clarified its meaning related to the monitoring of admissions and recruitment. The modifications clarify that the Council requires these activities to be supervised by the institution. In addition, the institution may never delegate these activities to anyone whose economic incentives are to recruit prospects through means that are unethical or subject to public criticism or to admit ill-prepared applicants. (Section 3-1-410)

Effect on Evaluation Visit: At the non-degree and occupational associate's degree credential levels, evaluators will now have to determine that teaching loads are appropriate (aligned with the other credentials) as opposed to the fixed 32-hour requirement currently in effect.

CAMPUS EFFECTIVENESS PLAN (Effective July 1, 2016)

The Council revised the current language in a number of areas including the deletion of "institutional effectiveness" since each and every campus should have its own plan; deletion of the language referring to "centrally controlled institution" since this structure has not been implemented by ACICS; and revision of the list of elements to be evaluated to include "level of student satisfaction." The "graduation rates [when available]" language has been temporarily deleted so the Council may issue further clarification. The revised language encourages campuses to include additional measures in their plan such as graduation rates, cohort default rates, and matrices of financial stability. To provide additional clarity in its intent, the Council also extensively revised the glossary definitions that relate directly to the Campus Effectiveness Plan and added a definition for "student satisfaction." (Sections 3-1-110, 3-1-111, 3-1-112, 3-1-113 & Glossary)

Effect on Evaluation Visit: In their review, team chairs will include an assessment of the campus's evaluation of the LEVEL of student satisfaction, similar to levels of graduate and employer satisfaction. While graduation rate is no longer a required element, it may be included as other indicators of campus effectiveness like cohort default rates and financial stability. However, the same level of evaluation is required if these measures are included. Additionally, the definitions have been revised to help campuses and teams understand the Council's intent, particularly in the area of outcomes (student learning versus campus-wide).

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, and accreditation knowledge. They also have considerable administrative experience to facilitate an understanding and evaluation of campus effectiveness. Knowledge and experience in the evaluation process is critical so significant time in the field is needed.

Do you know someone who would be a good fit? Do you think you would be a good fit? Applications, which are available on our web site, are currently being accepted.

Training will be in November 2016.

New Evaluation Procedures and Guidelines (Pink Book)

The Evaluation Procedures and Guidelines manual is a step-by-step review of the entire visit process. It is also 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 click here [Evaluator Resources](#) to access the new publication which is also on our web site.

AREAS OF NEED

ACICS is currently looking for evaluators in following fields:

- ◆ Aviation
- ◆ Building Trades (HVAC, Welding, Electrical, etc.)
- ◆ Oil Field Operator
- ◆ Embryonic Technician
- ◆ Automotive Repair and Mechanics Technology
- ◆ Substance Abuse Counselor
- ◆ Special Operations (clearance needed)
- ◆ Electrolysis
- ◆ Electro Neuro Diagnostic Technologist

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 www.acics.org/evaluators.

Systematic Review Advisory Committee (SRAC)

If you currently serve as a faculty member at, or you are an employer of graduates from, an ACICS-accredited institution, please consider serving on the SRAC, a committee designed to garner input from critical stakeholders on the development of policies and procedures. To share your interest, please send a short bio of your relevant designation (employer or faculty member) to SRAC@acics.org.

Thank you!

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.

As a reminder, only individuals who hold active licensure/certification in these fields will be able to evaluate them. We will add the appropriate information to your account.

EVALUATOR DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AND 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 has been sent to evaluate our effectiveness in this area so we can take steps to improve. Appropriate professional development activities would include subscription to relevant publications and listservs; membership and participation in professional associations; and involvement in book reviews, institutional reviews and compliance, and other such activities.

If you have not received the email, please access the survey here: www.surveymonkey.com/r/PrfDevPub. Your participation is appreciated.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES (ED)

Procedural enhancements to the evaluation process has necessitated the reassignment of tasks from the Student Relations to the Educational Activities (ED) specialist. This recent change includes the completion of the report questions that relate to career services activities (report questions 5.54–5.47). As such, the educational activities specialist will be expected to interview the individual responsible for career services and confirm, through documentation, the student services as well as the extracurricular educational activities offered. Previously, the ED specialist has been asked to conduct placement verification and program improvement planning reviews for programs which hold specialized accreditation.

Given these additional expectations, as well as the needed critical review of general education coursework, faculty qualifications, and overall quality of educational activities beyond the scope of the program specialists, ACICS will be reviewing all evaluators holding this designation for accuracy and appropriateness. Additional training and/or re-designation may be warranted. As a reminder, ED specialist must have evidence of administrative oversight of faculty and general education course reviews.

STUDENT RELATIONS (SR)

Ongoing concern with our ability to accurately evaluate the recruitment and financial aid practices at campuses has translated in procedural changes that affect the SR role during visits. The intent, consistent with ACICS's philosophy on assurance and enhancement, is to verify through interviews and observations (as practical) that these practices are ethical and aligned with the institution's mission.

The SR specialist must now conduct a staff meeting for the Admissions and Financial Aid representatives. This is expected to be a joint meeting that will only include those individuals that do not have supervisory responsibility (similar to the faculty meeting). The preferred method is for the team chair to communicate this new procedure to the campus during their pre-visit introductions, and have the campus set up a time for the meeting to occur. However, if this appointment was not set up in advance of the visit, the SR or chair will need to share this during the on-site introductions. The campus may require time to confirm the availability of all the representatives. Because files will need to be pulled during the first few hours of the visit, this is a recommended time for the completion of this task.

General questions for this interview are outlined in the Evaluator Procedures and Guidelines (Pink Book) but additional guidance may be provided as needed. There are no particular report questions that have been added to capture any information from this meeting. However, the interviews will assist in answering other questions throughout the report and any information worthy of note should be included in the relevant segment of the report.

ALL EVALUATORS

To ensure that the relevant experiences and professional achievements are recorded in our database and that all evaluators have a recently signed Independent Contractor Agreement (ICA), please email a current resume (2016) and a newly signed ICA to evaluatormanager@acics.org. We need confirmation that all current evaluators are aware of the Canons of Ethical Responsibility, which is included with the ICA. It is also important for us to record the changes to your evaluator designations of Academic, Administrative, Public and Member. A copy of the ICA template can be found here: <http://www.acics.org/evaluators/content.aspx?id=1486> Step 2.