ACICS
Self-Study
Procedures and Guidelines

This document explains all procedures and includes all necessary forms for institutions applying to the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) for an initial grant of accreditation (including branch-to-freestanding) and a new grant of accreditation (reevaluation).

PHILOSOPHY OF ACCREDITATION

The accreditation of a postsecondary institution is an expression of confidence in the institution's integrity, performance, and ability to improve. It also means that the institution has clearly defined its reason for existence and has developed institutional objectives that are educationally sound. Accreditation, therefore, signifies that the institution meets the standards of quality, which are indices of its standing within the educational community. It is expected that an institution attaining accredited status will continuously review its mission in relation to its operations.

APPLICANTS FOR AN INITIAL GRANT *(including branch-to-freestanding)*

Seeking Initial Accreditation

ACICS works in collaboration with applicant institutions toward meeting ACICS criteria and attaining an accreditation status. Unlike many accrediting agencies, there is no pre-candidacy or candidacy status with ACICS. The entire process may take from nine months to 18 months, depending upon the ability of the institution to comply with ACICS standards.

Once an institution receives an "Invitation to Apply" for ACICS' Initial Accreditation, it is critical that they begin the review of the self-study narrative document to determine those areas that will require significant investment of time and resources.

Seeking Reclassification of an Additional Location to a Main

The application procedures for additional locations-to freestanding accreditation are similar to those for initial applicants, except that a resource visit may not be conducted prior to preparation of the self-study. An Application for Accreditation, audited financial statements certified by an independent certified public account for the institution's most recent fiscal year must be reviewed by the staff prior to the scheduling of an evaluation visit. A non-main campus seeking to be reclassified as a main campus must meet all minimum eligibility requirements.

An institution considering applying for reclassification from an additional location to a main campus should review the United States Department of Education procedures for eligibility and recertification for Title IV funding, if applicable.

APPLICANTS FOR A NEW GRANT

ACICS is committed to collaborating with the institution in effecting a smooth and deliberate path toward meeting ACICS criteria and maintaining an accreditation status. The new grant process may take from nine months (if there are absolutely no areas of non-compliance) to 24 months.

To initiate a new grant (reevaluation) process, an institution must purchase an application and upload the self-study and required documents **three months** prior to the institution's assigned visit cycle (as indicated in the grant expiration letter that is sent out approximately one year prior to the current grant's date of expiration), in accordance with Section 2-1-300 of the ACICS *Accreditation Criteria*. Although ACICS practice is to notify institutions approximately 12 months prior to their grant of expiration, it is the responsibility of the institution to initiate the new grant (reevaluation) process.

Additional information regarding the New Grant (Reevaluation) of Accreditation process can be found at www.acics.org / Accreditation / Accreditation Process.

This document explains all procedures and includes all necessary forms for institutions applying to the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) for an initial grant of accreditation (including branch-to-freestanding) and a new grant of accreditation (reevaluation).

SCHEDULE OF FEES

Please visit the most current fee schedule at www.acics.org / Accreditation / Schedule of Fees. Initiation of an application process requires institutions to logon to their member account and purchase the required application. The preferred method of payment is through a credit card transaction; however ACICS does accept payment via check. When the application process is initiated via a manual check, institutions must schedule for a week to two week process time before the institution will have the ability to upload the required application and supporting documents.

ACICS no longer accepts manual (paper) application submissions.

SELF-STUDY DOCUMENT

Planning for the Self-Study

The self-study is the most important part of the process of accreditation and must be considered a major effort of the institution. It is not an endeavor that can be completed hastily. It requires time and careful planning. The self-study provides the institution with the opportunity to engage in a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of its operation. Essentially, the self-evaluation process forms the basis for the improvement of the educational effectiveness of the institution. Indeed, if the institutional self-study is done well, it can be used by the institution in both short- and long-term planning as part of the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) (previously referred to as the Institutional Effectiveness Plan – IEP).

Non-main Locations

Institutions that operate branch campuses (previously referred to as additional locations) must prepare and submit a separate self-study for the main campus and each branch. Please note that this requirement does not apply to those non-main campuses designated by the Council as learning sites. Information regarding learning sites should be incorporated into the self-study for the main or branch campus responsible for administering them.

Organizing Prior to Preparation of the Self-Study

Proper organization for the self-study is essential. Although the exact organizational plan will vary from campus to campus, the following suggestions may be helpful:

1. Select an appropriate member of the staff to direct the preparation of the self-study.
2. Involve all members of the faculty, administration, and governing board in the discussions of the self-study. Consideration should be given to involving student and graduate representatives in the self-study process. It is important that all members of the administration, faculty, governing board, and student body understand and appreciate the importance of the self-study and its value to the institution.
3. Establish a coordinating committee to work with the self-study director to make suggestions and to edit the final report.
4. Establish subcommittees to prepare specific sections of the self-study.
5. Adopt a reasonable time schedule and enforce it.

The Self-Study Questions

The self-study questions are based on the standards contained in the *Accreditation Criteria*. Institutions are encouraged to review the Evaluation Standards identified in Title III carefully before commencing with the self-study. The self-study questions are designed to elicit a thorough analysis of the institution.

The narrative report should be prepared in clear and concise language and should respond to all of the questions asked. There is no required format for the narrative report, but it is advisable to follow the questions closely in its preparation. It is suggested that the narrative be limited to 100 pages in length.

Exhibits may be included at the end of the narrative report. Exhibits should be provided only if they are essential to the team's review and preparation prior to the visit. Information that can be reviewed during the visit should be provided in the team meeting room.

A copy of the questions is included at the end of this document for your information.

Submitting the Self-Study

Guidelines for submitting a New Grant (Reevaluation) of Accreditation Application, including the self-study narrative and additional documents can be found at www.acics.org / Accreditation / Accreditation Process. To remain current in the changes to this process, please review the material on our website and seek guidance well enough in advance of the deadline submission date.

ACICS no longer accepts manual (paper) self-study submissions.

REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS

- An explanation of how the self-study was planned, who organized, supervised, and participated in its preparation, which person or persons prepared each section of the report, and to what extent the document is viewed by the institution as a planning document for the future is the first document to upload. This document will *trigger* the additional documents required in the submission process.

- An explanation of future plans for the institution, with specific references to planned changes in faculty, administration, physical plant, equipment, library, admissions, graduation requirements and standards, curriculum, increase or decrease in student body or faculty, and any other future plans.

- Most recent Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) in effect at the institution. If this document exceeds 20 pages in length, please provide an executive summary in lieu of the complete CEP.

- Academic Credit Analysis form listing all courses for each program offered by the campus.

- Self-study narrative (response to self-study questions).

SCHEDULING OF SITE VISITS

Visits take place during one of three travel periods: January-February, late April-June, and late August-October. The scheduling of a visit depends on a number of factors, including the availability of evaluators and staff. Accredited institutions applying for a new grant of accreditation will be scheduled for one of the travel periods during the final year of the current grant. Approximately one year prior to the expiration of the current grant, institutions undergoing reevaluation are contacted via email and assigned a visit cycle for the evaluation visit to the institution during the following year.

The staff coordinator assigned to conduct the campus visit will contact the school to schedule a date prior to the site visit. *Initial applicants should note that visits will not be scheduled until the required financial statements have been received and reviewed.*

Although the staff makes every effort to accommodate requests for a particular date, this is not always possible as visits normally are scheduled in conjunction with other visits within a similar geographic area in order to minimize costs.

Ordinarily, a site visit will be scheduled for no less than two days. The length of a visit will depend on the institution's location, size, and program offerings, as well as any non-main campus operations and their locations.

EVALUATION TEAMS

The minimum team composition for a reevaluation visit is a chair, an evaluator assigned to the student relations section of the report, an evaluator assigned to the educational activities section of the report, a program specialist, and the ACICS staff representative.

Every full-team must have at least one public (not affiliated with an ACICS-accredited institution) evaluator (outsider) and one evaluator affiliated with an ACICS institution (insider), as well as an evaluator classified as an academic and an administrative. *The highest credential offered at an institution is a critical factor that must be considered when selecting the team chair and the program evaluators, i.e., the chair and program evaluators visiting an institution that offers a bachelor's degree must be from an institution that offers bachelor's degree programs, hold appropriate credentials, or have had equivalent work experience.*

A subject (program) specialist will participate on the evaluation visit to evaluate all programs offered by the institution. A staff member ordinarily will accompany the team on the visit in an effort to achieve consistency in evaluation team reports. The responsibilities of the staff member are as follows:

1. Coordinate the visit;
2. Provide guidance to the team on Council priorities;
3. Serve as an information source on Council standards; and
4. Ensure that the report is completed and submitted in a timely fashion.

The staff member will be present at all Council meetings where the report is considered and may be asked questions about what was observed and reported by the team during the visit.

The institution is responsible for all expenses incurred by the evaluation team members, including the ACICS staff representative. The institution will be invoiced for the visit three weeks prior to the scheduled visit. Payment is due 10 days after the invoice is received.

Prior to the visit, the Council will advise the institution to forward a complete copy of the application materials and an Update Report to each team member. The team will review the materials in advance so that the time spent at the institution will be as productive as possible. The major portion of the visit time is devoted to verification of the information provided in the application. An institution is expected to be operating in accordance with the application and to be in compliance with all Council criteria.

STATE OFFICIALS

Appropriate state officials are contacted before the visit and are invited to observe and to share any pertinent information about the information. State officials do not participate in preparing the team report.

PREPARING FOR THE TEAM'S ARRIVAL

The institution shall provide a suitable workspace for the evaluation team. This room must be private, with sufficient table space to allow team members to comfortably review all materials, interview administrative and faculty personnel, and type the report. A telephone in the workroom or other private area and a computer with a printer also should be made available. It is also appropriate for the institution to provide refreshments for the team.

Institutions are provided in advance with a list of current materials and documents (see following page) that must be placed in the team's workroom prior to the time of the team's arrival on the day of the visit. Also, institutions are required to update the application where significant changes have occurred since its submission to the Council at least two weeks prior to the evaluation visit.

The team normally will arrive in the morning on the first day of the visit. In some cases, when the institution offers evening classes, the team may visit the institution the evening before the first full day of the visit. When the team arrives, they will take a brief tour of the facilities followed by an introductory meeting with the chief on-site administrator. At the introductory meeting, the administrator(s) should fully describe all changes that have occurred since the filing of the application.

During the visit, members of the team will meet with administrators, faculty, and students. They will visit classrooms and other parts of the facility. The institution should have informed its faculty, staff, and students of the date and purpose of the visit. The team will examine information such as course syllabi, student academic and financial records, files of faculty and staff, and minutes of meetings. Some teams may also want to consult with directors or trustees and community leaders or employers.

The team will have lunch privately, either in the workroom or off the premises. The lunch period is used to assess the progress of the visit. The institution is expected to provide and pay for lunch for the team.

NOTE: *It is inappropriate for the team to be entertained by the institution in the form of gifts, favors, or social functions before, during, or after the visit.*

EVALUATION VISIT MEETING ROOM MATERIALS

Institutions are requested to place the following materials in the room prior to the team's arrival

1.   Current Information
   a.   Class schedule including course names, numbers, titles, room numbers, class times, names of instructors, and student enrollment by class period;
   b.   Student enrollment on day(s) of visit by program and by day and evening divisions;
   c.   Floor plan of facility;
   d.   Staff roster and organization chart;
   e.   Course syllabi for currently offered courses (For courses not offered in the current term, the syllabi must be provided with the exception of the following items: instructional materials and references, out-of-class activities and assignments, assessment criteria, and method of evaluating students);
   f.   All admissions tests with answer key and test cut-off scores for each program;
   g.   If ability-to-benefit students are admitted, complete documentation evidencing the relationship between admissions test cut-off scores and successful academic or employment outcomes, as well as the contract for the independent test administrator;
   h.   Two copies of the most recently completed, and the prior year's ACICS Campus Accountability Report (CAR) along with the complete back-up documentation. This must include information to support enrollment, graduate, and withdrawal numbers and placement information such as student name, program of study, graduation date, job title, employer name, and employer telephone number;
   i.   A copy of the current Campus Effectiveness Plan along with the progress reports and/or prior year's campus effectiveness plan
   j.   Board of directors and administrative staff meeting minutes;
   k.   Faculty meeting minutes;
   l.   Documentation of in-service training sessions held and the schedule for upcoming sessions;
   m.   A copy of the Certificate of Attendance at an ACICS Accreditation Workshop for the chief on-site administrator or self-study coordinator;
   o.   Copies of correspondence with ACICS for any approvals or notifications for modifications since the last New Grant Visit (campus additions, new programs, distance education activity, substantive/non-substantive changes to an existing program, change of location, change of name, etc.); and
   p.   A copy of the approved and most current Academic Analysis for each program. If applicable, this includes approved Clock to Credit Profiles with corresponding letters of approval.

2.   Official Documents
   a.   Corporate Charter
   b.   Articles of Incorporation, and Certificate of Incorporation or other appropriate documentation of legal structure and ownership of the institution and a chart outlining the ownership structure
   c.   Certificate of good standing; relative to an institution's corporate statute and/or legal identity;
   d.   State license and authorization to award degrees (if applicable);
   e.   Most recent state and VA compliance reports;
   f.   Documentation that the facilities are in compliance with local, state, and federal laws governing fire, safety, and sanitation;
   g.   Documentation that the institution is in compliance with copyright laws for instructional materials utilized;
   h.   U.S. Department of Education Program Participation Agreement and Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (if applicable);
   i.   Reports from most recent reviews by agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education, Inspector General, and guarantee agency, as well as the institution's student financial aid compliance audit; and
   j.   Third-party contracts with other educational institutions or contracts such as JTPA.

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3. Files

   a. Administrative staff personnel files that include updated ACICS data sheets; and
   b. Faculty personnel files that include updated ACICS data sheets, copies of administrative and student evaluations, and faculty development plans with documentation of their implementation.

   NOTE: Student files will be selected randomly for review by team members.

4. Inventories

   a. Resource and reference materials; and
   b. Instructional equipment for all programs.

5. Publications
   a. Most recent ACICS self-study or additional location application
   b. All current advertising and promotional literature, including scripts, copies of newspapers, magazines, brochures, and tapes of radio and television ads
   c. Student, faculty, and staff handbooks (if applicable)
   d. Current catalog with all addenda (if applicable)

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EXIT INTERVIEW

When the team has completed a draft of its report, it will conduct an exit interview with the on-site chief administrator of the institution and anyone else the administrator wishes to be present. The exit interview includes a summary of the team's findings which are to be included in the report, and the next steps in the process. The team does not speak for the Council as to what the final action might be on the accreditation of the institution. The exit interview is not a forum for debate of the team's findings and is not intended to be lengthy. The institution is given the opportunity to respond in writing to the team report.

VISIT REPORT

The team chair will edit the draft of the team report and submit the final copy via e-mail to the Council office. A copy of the report, after multiple edits have been completed in the office, is then forwarded to the institution by e-mail. It is the responsibility of the institution to keep ACICS apprised of the e-mail address of the institution's chief on-site administrator. Once the team report is received the institution has the opportunity to respond in writing to the team's findings.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Every accredited institution must demonstrate financial stability. Therefore, the submission of an audited financial statement for the most recent fiscal year, certified by an independent certified public accountant, is required of all institutions to maintain accredited status and to pursue accreditation. The financial statements are to be submitted via the Annual Financial Report (AFR) system. Evaluation team members do not receive or review financial reports. Initial applicants must submit audited statements with the first part of the application for accreditation. Specific details are provided on the ACICS website at Home > Accreditation > Annual Financial Report.

INTERMEDIATE REVIEW

All materials pertinent to an institution's accreditation are reviewed by a panel of experienced persons prior to review by the Council. These materials include the institution's application and self-study, the visiting team's report, the institution's response to the team report, the institution's current catalog, any official reports from state or federal regulatory bodies, and any complaints (current and closed) filed against the institution.

This group will make a recommendation regarding accreditation if the evaluation process has been completed. If the process has not been completed, the reviewers will organize facts from the institution's files for the Council but will not make a specific recommendation. The Council has the option of postponing examination of files which were incomplete at the time of the interim review, even if subsequent information has been received by the time the Council meets.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Applications are reviewed by the Council at the first appropriate meeting following the site visit. The Council meets in April, August, and December. It reviews each file and makes a determination on the accredited status of the institution.

The institution is notified in writing, normally within a month, of the Council's action. Members of the Council or Council staff may not discuss actions with a school before it receives the written notice. If an institution wishes to appeal a negative decision of the Council, it may do so in accordance with Title II, Chapter Three of the *Accreditation Criteria*.

SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS

MISSION, OBJECTIVES, AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Every educational institution should have a mission, which is its specific purpose for existing. The mission of the institution must be stated in the school's catalog and in other publications readily available to the public. The mission must be completely, clearly, and simply stated in terms readily understandable by a prospective student, parents, the public, and other educational institutions. The mission should be devoted substantially to career-related education and should be reasonable for the program of instruction and facilities of the institution. Each institution should be capable of demonstrating its educational effectiveness through assessment and documentation of student outcomes. This assessment must include evidence that the institution's annual retention and placement rates are in keeping with its mission. The institution's mission statement should be consistent with educational and employment outcomes of its students. *Accreditation Criteria* Reference: Sections 3-1-100 through 3-1-113

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

1.1   How was the mission developed?

1.2   State the institution's mission and supporting objectives.

    1.2.1   Cite where it is found in the catalog.

    1.2.2   Explain how the supporting objectives are devoted substantially to career-related education?

    1.2.3   Explain how the supporting objectives are reasonable for the program(s) of instruction, mode of delivery, and facilities of the campus?

1.3   Explain how the organizational, operational, and educational activities all contribute to the implementation of the institution's mission.

1.4   What are the provisions for ensuring that the mission is subjected periodically to critical review by the administration and faculty to determine if the campus is fulfilling its educational mission and meeting the needs of the community?

1.5   How do degree programs, if applicable, emphasize both the achievement of vocational objectives and general education?

1.6   Are there any plans for changes in the institution's mission and/or supporting objectives? If yes, describe the changes that are being planned.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

1.7   How was the campus effectiveness plan (CEP) developed?

      1.7.1   Who was involved in the development of the plan? Describe the team members' organizational role and responsibility on the team.

      1.7.2   How was the faculty involved in the assessment of student learning outcomes and overall planning for institutional effectiveness?

      1.7.3   Who is responsible for implementing and monitoring the plan? Provide names, titles, and a brief description of experience.

1.8   What are the annual retention and placement rates for the campus and for each program for the past three years (if available)? Provide an analysis of the rates and the trend in performance. How do the rates reflect the institutional, environmental, and economic changes over the last three years?:

1.9   How do these annual retention and placement rates compare to prior rates, if applicable, and to rates at similar institutions?

1.10   What are the campus' retention and placement goals for the next CEP period?

Retention: Placement:

1.10.1   What factors were taken into consideration when developing these goals?

1.11   If applicable, what are the retention and/or placement goals for any program below 70 percent?

Program:

      Retention: Placement:

1.12   What specific activities will be undertaken to meet the retention and placement goals, at the program and campus levels, that will enable the campus to maintain or improve retention and placement outcomes over successive years?

1.13   What data are utilized to evaluate the following elements:

      a.   Level of student satisfaction

      b.   Level of graduate satisfaction

      c.   Level of employer satisfaction

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d.   Student learning outcomes (must include licensure pass rates, if applicable)

1.13.1   Explain how the data is collected and used to improve educational processes for the following elements:

a.   Satisfaction of students

b.   Satisfaction of graduates

c.   Satisfaction of employers

d.   Student learning outcomes

1.14   What other elements are used by the campus to evaluate its effectiveness?

1.15   How does the campus ensure that that the plan is monitored and implemented?

1.15.1   Who is assigned to implement the specific activities outlined above?

1.15.2   How often are progress reports completed? How are they recorded and reported?

1.16   How is the campus effectiveness plan evaluated?

1.16.1   What is the schedule for evaluation?

ORGANIZATION

Each institution, and every campus, should have an organizational structure designed to promote among all staff a spirit of understanding, cooperation, and responsibility. Performance standards and monitoring controls need to be employed to insure adequate administrative functioning. The annual budget expenditures should be adequate to properly implement the stated educational objectives of the institution. *Accreditation Criteria* Reference: Sections 3-1-200 through 3-1-203.

2.1   Describe the governance, control, and corporate organization of the institution and cite where it is stated in the catalog.

2.1.1   Who are the board of directors, trustees, or other officers of governing body?

2.2   How does the administration ensure that faculty and staff clearly understand their duties and responsibilities, the person to whom they report, and the standards by which the success of their work is measured?

    2.2.1   How is this documented?

2.3   How does the administration monitor and evaluate activities of faculty and staff? How often are evaluations conducted?

2.4   Describe how the administration provides for the professional integrity of the staff.

    2.4.1   What internal processes ensure the integrity of all administrative activities?

    2.4.2   How does the administration handle any violation of its policies?

2.5   How is the policy for ensuring academic freedom communicated to faculty? How does the administration support the academic freedom of its faculty?

2.6   Describe the grievance policies and procedures for students, employees, and other interested parties. How are students, faculty, and administrative staff made aware of these policies?

    2.6.1   How many employee grievances have the administration received in the last three years and how were these dealt with and resolved?

    2.6.2   How many student grievances and complaints have been received in the last three years and how were they investigated and resolved? How many are still open?

2.7   What areas have been identified as needing improvement in the organization and what plans have been made or are being implemented to address these areas?

ADMINISTRATION

Each institution must coordinate its administrative functions to best serve its educational mission. All staff should be well trained to carry out administrative functions. Detailed record keeping enhances the management of the institution. *Accreditation Criteria* Reference: Sections 3-1-300 through 3-1-303.

1.1   Who is the on-site administrator and what are that person's qualifications for this position? How long has this individual served as the on-site administrator?

1.2   How does the administration provide for continuous evaluation of the following functions:

    a.   Programs of study

    b.   Student activity programs

    c.   Guidance services and/or student support services, including career services

    d.   Admissions and recruitment

    e.   Financial aid services

    f.   Instructional procedures

    g.   Instructional resources

1.3   What evidence is on file to verify degrees and qualifications of key support staff?

1.4   What records are kept relative to the following areas and how does the campus ensure that these records are correct and reflect operational procedures that are in compliance with all requirements (state, federal, accreditation):

    a.   Financial aid activities

    b.   Admissions

    c.   Curriculum

    d.   Guidance and/or student support services, including career services

    e.   Library or instructional resources

    f.   Instructional supplies and equipment

    g.   School plant

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     h.   Faculty and staff

     i.   Student activities

     j.   Student personnel

     k.   Reported data – retention, placement, licensure rates, if applicable

     3.4.1   How does the campus ensure the integrity of the data as well as the records?

3.5   Describe how student files are maintained and organized. If students records are maintained electronically, describe the system and how records are backed up and protected.

1.6   If applicable, what specific testing records and academic and career advising records are maintained by the campus for students admitted under an ability-to-benefit determination? Insert the analysis of the campus study evidencing the relationship between admissions test cut-off scores and successful academic or employment outcomes.

1.7   What is the procedure to obtain evidence of high school and/or college graduation or equivalency certificates with scores?

     3.7.1   Describe the procedures in place to verify that the credential earned is from a recognized/legitimate institution and not from a "diploma mill."

1.8   What grading system does the campus employ to indicate student progress?

     1.8.1   What is the unit of credit (semester, quarter, or trimester) used or clock hour?

     1.8.2   How does the campus ensure that a transcript or permanent student record is maintained for each student?

     1.8.3   How is the grading system explained on the student's transcript? Is it consistent with the campus catalog?

1.9   How are records and reports (e.g., student, staff, financial) housed so that they are safe from theft, fire, or other possible loss?

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3.9.1   If the campus utilizes computerized record keeping, what are the back-up procedures?

1.10   How long are various student records maintained by the campus?

1.11   What administrative processes/procedures are in need of improvement and what is the campus leadership doing to address them?

RELATIONS WITH STUDENTS

An institution's methods of attracting and retaining students often are subject to scrutiny and are of considerable concern to the public, to other educational institutions, and to the Council. An institution's recruitment efforts should be devoted to locating and informing students, in a professional and dignified manner, who the institution can best serve. Recruiting practices contribute to an institution's image. Each institution also should strive to ensure that its financial relations with students reflect the highest ethical standards and are in conformance with all state and federal laws and regulations. Each institution is required to develop a program of student personnel services that is consistent with its stated mission. Such services should support the educational program and reflect the institution's concern for the welfare of the student. *Accreditation Criteria* References: Sections 3-1-400 through 3-1-442 and Appendices C, D, and E.

ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT

4.1   What is the admissions policy?

4.1.1   Does the policy differ based on the credential awarded or program of study?

4.1.2   Explain how the admissions policy adheres to the institution's mission.

4.2   If applicable, what is the admissions policy regarding enrollment of ability-to-benefit students?

4.3   What records are maintained by the campus to reflect the basis for the admission of each student?

4.4   Describe the student recruitment program and the written policy used to train representatives.

4.5   Describe how admissions representatives are trained, compensated, and monitored.

4.5.1   How does the campus ensure that representatives accurately and ethically represent its programs and services?

4.5.2   If admissions calls are recorded, what is the process in place to correct any concerns identified with the admissions practices of any representative (please be specific)? If not recorded, how are admissions representatives' activities monitored?

4.5.3   How does the campus document its oversight of admissions and recruiting personnel to ensure that they are providing current and accurate information (i.e. recorded or listen-live calls and remediation, internal secret shoppers, admissions representative orientation and continuous training, student sruvey of process, etc.)

4.6   If the campus recruits internationally and employs the services of international agents, describe the process used to identify and contract these agents to recruit students on the campus's behalf. How are they trained and systematically monitored?

4.6.1   How are the recruiters compensated?

4.6.2.   How does the campus ensure that the recruiters are current on the information being shared with prospective students?

4.6.3   How does the campus evaluate the performance of the recruiters and how often are contractors renegotiated?

4.7   Describe the policies and procedures regarding processing of incoming transfer of credit.

4.7.1   Where are these policies and procedures published?

4.7.2   Describe any articulation agreements with other institutions.

4.7.3   Describe where the campus publishes a list of institutions with which it has established the agreements.

4.7.4   Describe the process for notification to students of the articulation agreements and the transferability of credits in the programs that are offered.

STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

4.8   Who administers the standards of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) for the campus and what are this individual's qualifications to administer SAP?

4.8.1 How does the campus ensure that the individual maintains currency with the expectations of the US Department of Education's Student Financial Aid division, as it relates to SAP. Describe the professional growth activities undertaken by this individual on a regular basis.

4.9 Describe the SAP monitoring process?

4.9.1 How does the campus determine if a student is making satisfactory progress according to the policy?

4.9.2 What actions does the campus take when a student is not making SAP?

4.9.3 What internal monitoring process is in place to ensure that all students' progress is accurately and systematically evaluated?

4.9.3.1 Who reviews the student's records and advises the student?

4.9.3.2 Who monitors probation?

4.9.4 Describe the appeals process. Within the last year, how many SAP appeals were made and of those, how many were granted and for what mitigating circumstance?

FINANCIAL RELATIONS

4.10 If the institution sponsors *institutional* scholarship, grant, or loan programs, describe them. Where are they publicized?

4.10.1 What is the scholarship awarding process to include criteria, application review, and award?

4.10.2 How does the campus ensure that its institutional grants and loans are aligned with ethical practices (if applicable)?

4.11 What evidence does the campus have that demonstrates the tuition, fees, and other charges for all students who enrolled at the same time and in the same program are consistent. If they are not consistent, explain.

4.12 What are the refund policies and procedures?

4.12.1 How does the campus ensure that refunds are processed in a timely manner? Within the last reporting period, have there been any instances when the refund policy was not followed and if so, how did the campus correct the error?

4.13   What are the qualifications of the financial aid officer?

4.13.1 In what activities does the financial aid officer participate to keep up to date on changes in financial aid programs?

4.13.2 What memberships does the financial aid officer hold?

4.14   What federal programs does the campus participate in? Provide the percentage of students that participate in the various programs, as applicable:

4.14.1 What is the cohort default rate for the last three years?

Year: Rate:

Year: Rate:

Year: Rate:

Describe improvement measures and/or the formal improvement plan if the cohort default rate is above 25%.

4.15   If applicable, describe the system for counseling students regarding their student loan repayment obligations.

4.16   If applicable, describe the cash discount policy.

STUDENT SERVICES

4.17   Describe the orientation that the campus employs for new students.

4.18   Describe all academic and personal counseling services offered.

4.18.1 What are the qualifications of the staff responsible for the counseling program(s)?

4.19   Describe the retention program.

4.20   What areas have been identified as needing improvement in the area of relations with students.

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5.   EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The major index of an institution's quality is the effectiveness of its educational program. The educational program must be consistent with the stated mission, must be adequate in breadth and context to achieve it, and must produce measurable results. Another index of an institution's quality is the competence of its faculty. The effectiveness of any institution depends upon good teaching and upon the ability and commitment of its faculty. The selection, orientation, guidance, stimulation, and evaluation of the teaching staff are among the most significant responsibilities of the administration. The faculty should actively participate in developing the total educational program of the institution. A third index of institutional quality is the resources available to instructors and students. *Accreditation Criteria* References: Sections 3-1-500 through 3-1-544.

Teaching hours, assignments, and schedules will vary from field to field and from institution to institution, but they should allow faculty time for adequate preparation and professional development. The institution shall devise a plan for the efficient use of faculty competence and time, which addresses student-teacher ratios, number of teacher preparations, and number of teaching hours. *Accreditation Criteria* References: Sections 3-2-100, 3-3-200, 3-4-200, 3-5-200, and 3-6-400.

PROGRAM PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

5.1   Describe how the educational programs have been developed based on the institution's mission.

   5.1.1   List each program offered, as approved by the state and ACICS, and state the occupational and general objectives of the program. Provide an overview of how these programs are delivered (i.e., lecture, laboratory, self-paced instruction, direct assessment competency based, distance instruction, etc.).

   5.1.2   Have any of these programs been modified, revised, added since the campus's last evaluation? If yes, what factors influenced the changes?

5.2   Identify who is responsible for the following at the campus. Describe their academic and/or experiential qualifications for this position:

   5.2.1   Overall administration of all academic programs.

   5.2.2   Administration of each academic program offered.

5.3   Describe the role of the faculty, administration, alumni, employers and other stakeholders in establishing the educational programs.

5.4   Describe how the educational programs reflect the needs of the students and the community. Provide details on the involvement of the community in evaluating the value of the educational programs to include placement outcomes, etc.

5.5   How are provisions made for individual educational differences among students?

5.6   Describe the variety of community resources that are utilized to enrich each program?

      5.6.1   Describe how the utilization of these resources is documented.

5.7   Describe the policy on the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic governance.

      5.7.1   How was the academic governance policy communicated to the faculty?

      5.7.2   How does the campus ensure that the policy is adopted and implemented?

5.8   Is there a detailed syllabus on file for each course?

      5.8.1   How are syllabi developed?

      5.8.2   How often are the syllabi revised?

      5.8.3   Describe the process for revising syllabi.

      5.8.4   How are out-of-class assignments, if applicable, incorporated in the syllabi and how are they evaluated?

5.9   Describe any externship programs, indicating name of program, procedure, and person(s) responsible for the oversight and administration of these activities.

      5.9.1   Have both the campus and the practicum site(s) signed an agreement outlining the arrangements of the internship/externship? Describe the contents of the agreement.

      5.9.2   Describe how qualified faculty members oversee the student's externship experience:

5.10   Describe the methods utilized to evaluate and revise the curricula. Identify any differences in these procedures among various programs.

5.10.1   If advisory boards and/or program advisory committees, are utilized, list members and their qualifications. How often do the boards (committees) meet and how are meetings documented?

5.10.2   How are students, graduates, and employers involved in the process? Provide a summary of feedback provided by these stakeholders and how they were considered in the evaluation and revision process.

5.11   How was the length of each program determined?

5.12   Do any programs include training by a third party? If so, please explain.

5.13   Is licensure or other certification required for persons employed in any program offered?

Yes ☐   No ☐

5.13.1   If yes, list the program(s) and the licensing or certification oversight body:

5.13.2   List specific skills that students will need to acquire in order to be licensed or certified and how the curriculum provides for attainment of these skills.

5.13.3   Where in the catalog are the licensing requirements outlined and how does the campus ensure that all students are aware of them?

5.13.4   Describe any applicable examinations and the pass rate on each of these exams.

5.13.5   Describe how the campus verifies the licensure pass rates for in each program (i.e. student attestation, documentation from licensing board, etc.

5.13.6   Indicate the pass rates for the past three years for each program that requires licensure or certification:

5.14   If applicable, share details on any program that requires specialized programmatic accreditation to obtain entry-level employment or licensure by the state in which the campus is approved. (Include name of the program and name of the specialized agency.)

5.14.1   Explain the current status in holding such accreditation.

5.14.2   How have students been notified of this requirement and how it affects their employability following program completion?

5.15   How are appropriate course sequencing and prerequisites determined?

      5.15.1   How is the curriculum structured to ensure an increasing level of difficulty as the student progresses?

      5.15.2   What internal processes are in place to ensure that students follow the course sequence and take prerequisites as published?

5.16   How is the need for curriculum changes determined?

      5.16.1   How are faculty members involved in curriculum evaluation and revision?

      5.16.2   How does the campus utilize follow-up studies of its graduates and employers to assist in curriculum evaluation and revision?

      5.16.3   How does the campus utilize student evaluations, student satisfaction surveys, and other forms of student input in the curriculum evaluation and revision process?

5.17   What significant curriculum changes have been made during the last three years?

      5.17.1   What significant changes are contemplated for the next three years?

5.18   How does the campus determine the appropriate allocation of contact time among lecture, laboratory, and intern/externship activities?

      5.18.1   How does the campus monitor the number of contact hours completed for each course?

      5.18.2   In the case of an emergency and classes are cancelled, how are contact hours made up?

5.19   How does the campus apply the U.S. Department of Education's definition of a credit hour for financial aid (as required in Section 2-2-503 of the *Accreditation Criteria*)?

      5.19.1   Where are the procedures published?

      5.19.2. How is compliance documented?

5.20   How does the campus determine the appropriate scheduling of classes in relationship to the needs of the students?

5.21   If applicable, describe the method used to evaluate and award academic credit to students who demonstrate subject competency based on academic, occupational, or personal experiences.

      5.21.1   Who is responsible for the evaluation and awarding of such credit?

      5.21.2   How does the campus ensure consistency in the evaluation?

      5.21.3   Since the last evaluation cycle, how many cases of such award have been evaluated and what was the outcome in each case?

5.22   Who is the individual on staff assigned to provide employment assistance to students? Describe their qualifications to serve in this role.

      5.22.1 Describe employment services offered to students and how they are documented.

      5.22.2   Describe how placement verification is documented (i.e. sampling, multi-layered internal review, 100% third-party verification, etc.).

      5.22.3   What data are maintained for students who do not graduate, but who become employed?

5.23   Describe the process used to conduct follow-up studies on graduate and employer satisfaction

      5.23.1   How often are the follow up studies conducted?

      5.23.2   Based on the results collected from the last follow up studies conducted, what changes have been made to educational processes?

5.24   Describe the programs of extracurricular educational activities, if any.

INSTRUCTION AND FACULTY

In responding to the questions below, please consult Section 3-2-200, 3-3-300, 3-4-300, 3-5-300, and 3-6-500 of the *Accreditation Criteria.*

5.25   Describe how physical facilities, equipment, and resources are used to enhance classroom instruction.

5.26   How are learning materials selected? Describe how instructional procedures and materials are evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

5.27   Describe how the campus ensures that students have timely access to appropriate learning materials (e.g., textbooks, laboratory equipment).

5.27.1   When are textbooks made available to students, if included in the total cost?

5.27.2   How does the campus determine the quantity of laboratory equipment needed based on its student population and program offerings?

5.28   Describe how the campus ensures that it maintains appropriate licenses for computer software and how it ensures compliance with copyright laws.

5.29   Who is responsible for faculty orientation and training?

5.29.1   Describe the orientation of the faculty to the campus.

5.29.2   Describe the training process.

5.30   How does the administration determine the qualifications of a faculty member to teach a particular course?

5.30.1   Describe qualifications of non-degreed teachers for the subjects they teach, at the credential level they teach.

5.30.2   How are the qualifications documented?

5.31   Describe the procedure for collecting official transcripts, for qualifying credentials and/or those listed in the catalog, for faculty members.

5.31.1   If there are faculty members whose official transcripts are not on file, document what efforts are being made to obtain them. Please include any unique circumstances that may impact the ability to obtain such transcripts (such as political instability, institution closing, etc.).

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5.32   In what ways does the campus evaluate instruction?

      5.32.1   What systematic processes are in place to enhance and promote teaching effectiveness?

5.33   What is the system in place to ensure that annual faculty development plans are on file for each member of the faculty and signed by the faculty member and his/her supervisor?

      5.33.1   How are the activities on the plan determined? How does the campus ensure that the plans are individualized for each faculty member?

      5.33.2   How is the plan implemented?

      5.33.3   How often is the plan reviewed?

5.34   Describe how the campus ensures that all faculty complete the activities on the development plans.

      5.34.1   How are the activities documented by the campus?

5.35   Describe the program of in-service training for the improvement of instruction and curriculum.

      5.35.1   List the schedule for the next 12 months.

5.36   Describe how the administration documents professional growth for full- and part-time faculty members.

5.37   Describe the frequency, content, and documentation of faculty meetings.

5.38   Describe the plans for ongoing improvement in curriculum and faculty.

5.39   What are the normal teaching loads, number of field preparations, and number of subject preparations for full-time and part-time instructors at the campus?

      5.39.1   How does the campus define full-time faculty status? What is the full-time/part-time faculty ratio at the campus? How does the campus maintain an appropriate distribution to ensure sound direction and continuity of development of the programs?

5.40   What is the student-teacher ratio, for each program area, at the campus?

OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S, ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, AND BACHELOR'S DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

5.41   Describe how the general education courses offered by the campus contribute to the development of the student.

    5.41.1   What are the general education courses and how are they determined to be appropriate for the students served:

    5.41.2   Cite examples:

OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S, ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

5.42   Describe how part-time faculty are utilized by the campus.

    5.42.1   How are part-time faculty members supported in providing assistance to students and contributing to the development of the programs?

    5.42.2   Describe the procedures for evaluation and monitoring of part-time faculty.

ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

5.43   What percent of those subjects which are part of academic associate's, bachelor's, and/or master's degree programs are taught by faculty members possessing advanced degrees as required in the *Accreditation Criteria*?

    5.43.1   Describe the efforts to recruit and retain qualified faculty members. What is the average tenure of the faculty?

5.44   What evidence is available to indicate that the members of the faculty are teaching courses which are based on their major and minor academic preparation and related experience?

    5.44.1   If any faculty members teach a course outside of their academic major or minor, list their names and describe for each, how the administration determined their qualifications to teach their assigned subject(s). How are the qualifications documented?

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5.45   Describe how the campus ensures that there is sufficient enrollment in the second year of a two-year program or upper division courses in baccalaureate degree programs.

MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

5.46   Describe the oversight committee who has the responsibility for developing, modifying, and maintaining each graduate program. Summarize the background of the committee members and roles on the committee (student, faculty , administrator, employers).

5.46.1   How often does the committee meet?

5.46.2   What documentation does the campus maintain to evidence the role of this committee in the development of the program(s)?

DOCTORAL DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

5.47   What evidence is available to demonstrate that the members of the faculty are experts in their field of study in which they are assigned to teach?

5.48   Describe how the campus encourages its faculty to engage in practical or scholarly research and to publish in professional journals.

5.49   Explain how the core full- and part-time faculty is effective in ensuring the sound direction and development of its doctoral degree program(s).

6.   EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Each institution must provide an environment that is conducive to good instruction and learning and that supports the educational programs offered by the institution. The adequacy of the environment is assessed against the demands made upon it by the curriculum, faculty, and students. *Accreditation Criteria* Reference: Sections 3-1-600 through 3-1-602.

6.1   Describe how the buildings, classrooms, equipment, furniture, and surroundings meet the needs of the campus in size and scope.

6.1.1   Describe how the facility in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local codes for occupancy and safety?

6.2   Does the campus utilize learning sites?

Yes ☐   No ☐

6.2.1   If yes, when were they approved and what programs are offered at the site(s)?

6.3   Does the campus utilize any additional classroom spaces?

        Yes ☐   No ☐

6.3.1   If yes, when were they approved, where are they located, and how are they used?

6.4   Describe any plans to improve the physical plant and equipment.

7.   PUBLICATIONS

It is important that an institution recognize the value of "truth in advertising" when promoting its operations. Publications must be prepared and presented in a professional manner to reflect favorably upon the institution. Information published must be accurate and factual and must reflect the current status of the institution. Only the Council can accept or reject an institution's catalog, and a final decision will not be made based on a draft. *Accreditation Criteria* References: Sections 3-1-700 through 3-1-704 and Appendix C.

7.1   Describe how the catalog reflects the educational programs, operations, and services.

7.1.1   How often is the catalog published?

7.2   How does the campus ensure that all enrolled students are provided with a copy of the campus catalog?

7.2.1   What other publications are provided to enrolled students?

7.3   Describe the advertising and promotional literature.

7.3.1   What media are used to promote the campuses and its services?

7.3.2   How does the campus ensure that the information disseminated and published is accurate and avoids misleading or exaggerated impressions of the campus?

7.3.3   If advertising is done in languages other than English, what documentation is maintained to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the information?

7.3.4   What percentage of revenue is budgeted for advertising/marketing?

7.4   Describe any changes in advertising over the last year to include media, financial investments, community outreach, etc.

7.5   If applicable, describe how the courses are numbered and identified in the catalog to indicate that advance work is offered and based upon the appropriate prerequisites.

     7.5.1   How does the catalog explain the course numbering system?

7.6   If applicable, describe how and where the catalog identifies the general education courses required in a program.

7.7   Describe the published performance information concerning student achievement.

     7.7.1   Where is the campus performance achievement information published?

     7.7.2   How often is the information updated?

     7.7.3   How does the campus validate the accuracy and reliability of the information disclosed?

8.   LIBRARY, INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES, AND MATERIALS

The instructional resources, audiovisual teaching equipment, and instructional materials shall be adequate to serve the needs of the institution's educational program. The effectiveness of the library or learning resource center is of the utmost importance for institutions. Its collections should be appropriate and adequate to support the educational programs. They should be used by both students and faculty. The library or learning resource center should be organized with the educational needs of the particular institution in mind. The acquisition of materials should reflect the changing and developing trends of the business and technical world. In responding to the questions below, please consult Sections 3-1-800, 3-2-200, 3-3-400, 3-4-400, 3-5-400, and 3-6-700 of the *Accreditation Criteria*.

FOR ALL INSTITUTIONS

8.1   Explain how the instructional resources serve the needs of the educational programs.

     8.1.1   Describe any contracts or agreements with outside libraries or resource centers.

     8.1.2   Describe if the institution has contracted with a library resource provider to offer access to library resources. What types of services are outsourced to such an outside provider?

8.2   Briefly describe the physical and/or online holdings of the campus. (For online holdings, list the full-text databases in which the library maintains active subscriptions.)

8.3   Explain how the quantity and quality of instructional resources are appropriate for the size and scope of the campus.

8.4   Explain how reference materials and periodicals are organized for easy usage and preservation.

8.5   Who is responsible for developing and maintaining an up-to-date inventory of instructional resources?

8.6   What is the budget for instructional resources (excluding personnel allocations)?

      8.6.1   How is the budget determined?

8.7   Describe the assessment strategy for library resources and information services.

8.8   Describe the training for students and faculty to utilize library resources as a part of the learning process.

8.9   Describe the facility where library and instructional resources are held.

8.10   Describe any plans for improving instructional resources.

FOR OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S, ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, MASTER'S, AND DOCTORAL DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

8.11   Who is responsible for assisting students and faculty in the use of the library during posted library hours? If the individual is professionally trained, describe these qualifications.

      8.11.1   If there are library assistants describe how these individuals are trained to assist students and faculty.

8.12   Explain how the instructional resources serve the needs of the educational programs.

      8.12.1   How does the campus determine which reference works are acquired?

8.13   What percentage of total tuition revenue is spent for library acquisitions?

8.14   During the past three years, have budget allocations for library acquisitions been increased, decreased, or maintained at previous levels? Explain any changes in the allocations

8.15   Explain how reference materials and periodicals are organized for easy usage and preservation.

8.16   How does the campus provide physical and/or online resources necessary to make the educational program(s) effective?

8.17   Describe the physical and online library resources, including information about the

      8.17.1   Total number of physical volumes

      8.17.2   Total number of online collections available

      8.17.3   Number of titles and/or online collections related to each program offering

      8.17.4   Number of titles and/or online collections related to general education courses taught

      8.17.5   Number of program-related periodicals to which the institution currently subscribes

      8.17.6   Number of other periodicals available

8.18   Describe the library's procedures regarding student borrowing and return of materials.

8.19   Describe how online resources, if any, are made available to students.

8.20   Describe how the campus monitors student usage of the library and instructional resources?

8.21   What evidence shows that the institution, in maintaining and improving the quality of its library holdings, seriously considers recommendations of:

a. faculty

b. appropriate national professional organizations and societies, and

c. a nationally recognized list (or lists) of online collections, books, and periodicals?

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8.22   Describe any plans for improving the library.

FOR ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, MASTER'S, AND DOCTORAL DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

8.23   How does the professionally trained individual maintain his/her professional awareness?

8.24   How many hours a week does the professionally trained individual personally supervise the library?

8.25   Describe the information technology available in the library. List web-based research and information literacy resources currently used by students and faculty.

8.26   What system is used to catalog library titles?

8.27   Describe how library resources are made available to students. (List the hours during which the library is open.)

8.28   Describe the interlibrary loan or other outside resource agreements, if applicable.

8.29   What evidence indicates that the library collection (on-site and online) includes up-to-date holdings which are pertinent to the various subject fields and are responsive to the needs of individual courses?

FOR MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL DEGREE INSTITUTIONS

8.30   Describe how the library holdings exceed the requirements of the average student in order to encourage the intellectual development of all students and to enrich the professional development of the faculty.

8.31   Describe the library resources the campus provides to support a better understanding of scholarly research at the graduate level.

SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS SUPPLEMENT

9. DISTANCE EDUCATION, DIRECT ASSESSMENT COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION, AND OTHER FORMS OF NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION

For institutions that offer distance education courses or programs or when alternative modes of educational delivery are used. Accreditation Criteria References: Section 3-1-505 and Appendix H

Check the type(s) of non-traditional instructional delivery offered by the institution:

☐ Direct Assessment Competency-based program

☐ Online Distance Education

☐ Hybrid

☐ Fully online

☐ Self-Paced Instruction

In addition to the self-study questions on the previous pages, institutions that offer distance education and other forms of nontraditional education must answer the questions below. *Accreditation Criteria* References: Section 3-1-505 and Appendix H.

DISTANCE EDUCATION OR SELF-PACED INSTRUCTION ONLY

Accreditation Criteria Reference: Appendix H, Section II & III

INSTITUTIONAL READINESS

9.1   List the course(s)/program(s) approved by ACICS for delivery through distance education and/or self-paced.

     9.1.1   Indicate the percentage that each program is available for distance education and/or self-paced instruction.

9.2   Describe the method(s) used to deliver the distance education and/or self-paced course(s)/program(s).

     9.2.1   Indicate any other institution or entities that are involved in the delivery of distance education for students at the campus.

9.2.2   If distance education is provided under a consortium agreement, provide the name of the Host institution and the relationship with this institution or entity. Include the percentage of the program offered by the Host institution or entity.

9.3   Describe how the Campus Effectiveness Plan incorporates distance education as a mode of delivery

9.3.1   What data is the campus collecting to assess student and faculty satisfaction with distance education and/or self-paced instruction?

9.4   Who oversees the distance education and/or self-paced course/program curriculum?

9.4.1   What are this individual's qualifications?

9.4.2   Who is responsible for course/program evaluation for nontraditional education mode of delivery?

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS AND ENROLLMENT

9.5   What are the admission requirements for students taking distance education coursework? (If there are any differences from the residential admissions policy, explain.)

9.6   How does the campus make it clear in writing at the time of enrollment:

9.6.1   How the student's identity will be verified throughout the course and program?

9.6.2   How the student's privacy will be protected in the identity verification process?

9.7   Describe the orientation program for distance education and/or self-paced students.

CURRICULUM CONTENT AND INSTRUCTION AND DELIVERY

9.8   Describe how interaction between faculty and students takes place.

9.9   Describe how interaction among students takes place.

9.10   What is the student-teacher ratio for distance education courses?

9.10.1   Describe how this ratio is appropriate and provides sufficient interaction between the faculty and the students and among students.

FACULTY AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

9.11   Describe the faculty training program to prepare faculty to teach self-paced courses or in a distance education environment.

9.12   Identify the educational resources and technology available to faculty on campus and on-line.

9.13   Identify the platform used to deliver instruction.

RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT

9.14   What is the budget allocated to distance education delivery?

9.15   Describe the instructional resources, equipment, and library resources available to students on-line and residentially.

STUDENTS AND STUDENT SERVICES

9.16   Describe the student services available to students taking coursework on-line.

STUDENT EVALUATION AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

9.17   How are students taking self-paced and/or distance education courses evaluated?

9.18   How is retention monitored?

9.19   Describe the placement services that are available.

9.20   Describe how student, faculty, and employer satisfaction are identified.

9.21   How does the institution measure core competencies for programs and objectives for courses offered in a distance education environment?

9.22   How are equivalent out-of-class assignments, if applicable, incorporated in the syllabi and how are they evaluated?

PUBLICATIONS

9.23   Do the statements in the catalog, Web site, and, when appropriate, in advertising and promotional materials meet requirements for institutions offering coursework through distance education?

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9.24   Describe the information given in the catalog regarding nontraditional education, if applicable, including mode of delivery, admissions requirements, tests to determine access, resources offered to nontraditional education students, and any special costs for the students associated with nontraditional education.

DIRECT ASSESSMENT COMPETENCY-BASED PROGRAMS ONLY

Accreditation Criteria References: Section 3-1-505 and Appendix H, Section I

9.25   What programs are offered as Direct Assessment competency-based and when were they approved by ACICS?

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND READINESS

9.26   Describe the basis for the introduction of such programs and how they support the mission and objectives of the institution.

        9.26.1   Describe the process utilized in identifying and defining specific competencies related to the program.

        9.26.2   Describe how the following stakeholders participated in the development of the program: faculty, alumni, employers, and experts in the field.

        9.26.3   Describe how this modality is incorporated into the Campus Effectiveness Plan.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND DIRECT ASSESSMENT MEASURES

9.27   What types of direct assessment measures are utilized in assessing achievement of specified competencies? Describe the types of standardized tests or industry-recognized examiniations utilized as direct assessment of student learning.

        9.27.1   Describe how the institution utilizes systematic methods for determining credit hours or clock hours.

UTILIZATION OF EXTERNAL ENTITIES OR EXPERTS

9.28   If external entities or experts are utilized in the direct assessment process, how does the institution ensure oversight? What portion of the program is provided by the institutional faculty versus external entities or experts?

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

9.29   Describe how the following providers of student support services are formally trained to serve needs of students in achieving their competency goals:

(a) mentors;

(b) student counselors;

(c) academic advisors;

(d) registrars; and

(e) financial aid counselors.

9.29.1   What provisions are available for competency-based program students who may be advised to transition to a traditional fixed-schedule, teacher-directed instructional format?

9.29.2   What policies have been developed and implemented for determining that a student in such programs is making satisfactory academic progress?

9.29.2.1 Who is assigned to monitor satisfactory academic progress for the program?

9.29.2.2 How has this individual been trained to monitor satisfactory academic progress of students enrolled in direct assessment competency-based programs?

CONTINUOUS PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

9.30   What specific plans and strategies are implemented for the continuous assessment of the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the direct assessment competency-based programs? Are such plans described in the Campus Effectiveness Plan?

SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS SUPPLEMENT

10. ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

For institutions that offer English as a Second Language as a separately eligible, stand-alone program or courses as part of an eligible program. Accreditation Criteria Reference: Appendix F

How is the English as a Second Language program structured?

☐   As a separately eligible, stand-alone program or

☐   Courses as part of an eligible program

SEPARATELY ELIGIBLE, STAND-ALONE ESL PROGRAMS

10.1   When was the program approved by ACICS? How does it adhere to the institution's mission?

10.2   What demographic does the program serve primarily? How does that affect structure, outcomes, etc?

10.3   Who is responsible for the administration of the ESL program? Describe this individual's qualifications and how the campus ensures that they remain current in the field.

10.4   Describe the entrance and exit nationally recognized exam of English comprehension used. How has the test results affected program deliver, evaluation, and outcomes?

10.5   Describe the admissions process for the program including the records that are maintained.

10.6   Describe the credentials of faculty members in the program and how the institution ensures that they have prior experience and any required certification in the field of instruction.

       10.6.1   Describe the professional organizations and workshops that faculty members are involved in which enables them to meet the needs of the students.

10.7   Describe how students cover the cost of the program, including if Pell Grants are also used.

ESL COURSES AS PART OF AN ELIGIBLE PROGRAM

10.8   Describe the ESL coursework offered as part of the program.

10.9   Describe evidence that the coursework meets the US Department of Education regulations.

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