**MEMORANDUM TO THE FIELD**

TO: ACICS-Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties  
FROM: Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools  
DATE: January 17, 2017  

The Memorandum to the Field contains final criteria and other information for ACICS-Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties.

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1. Final Criteria Revisions

Following the August 2016 meeting, during October and December meetings, the Council reviewed specific sections of the ACICS Accreditation Criteria for the purpose of enhancing its program of review of colleges and schools offering programs that prepare students for employment in professional, technical and occupational fields. The language contained in the following section reflects content consistent with the procedure outlined in Section 1-1-200(b) of the Accreditation Criteria.

Further, at the December 2016 meeting, the Council reviewed and finalized specific areas of the ACICS Accreditation Criteria that had been presented to the Council through its routine systematic review process.

The ACICS Accreditation Criteria publication has been updated to reflect all final criteria revisions with a publication date of January 10, 2017. To review the updated version of the Accreditation Criteria, please visit the ACICS website at www.acics.org> About Us> Publications> Accreditation Criteria.

The following criteria have been accepted by the Council as final with the effective date indicated (new language is underlined, deleted language is struck).

A. CAR PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES – APPENDIX L

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective December 6, 2016

The Council finalized a number of changes to the standards related to student achievement and the Campus Accountability Report (CAR) which are all outlined in “Appendix L” of the Accreditation Criteria. The new Appendix includes the current student achievement rates and the applicable monitoring status and actions for campuses and programs that are not meeting acceptable student achievement indicators. The approved language more clearly defines the point at which a particular action will be taken, at the campus and program levels, including the issuance of an adverse action, a show-cause directive, a compliance warning, or reporting with restrictions against a campus or program. The Council also approved language in corresponding sections of the Criteria, such as student achievement review and Council actions at the program level.

As communicated in the September 2016 Memorandum to the Field, if the proposed language was approved, it would be used by the Council to evaluate the data submitted in the 2016 Campus Accountability Report.

2-1-809. Student Achievement Review. The Council reviews the Campus Accountability Report (CAR) and Institutional Accountability Report (IAR) to monitor performance in terms of student achievement at both the campus and program levels. Measures will include retention; placement; and licensure, registration or certification examination pass rates, if applicable. When this review indicates that the achievement of an institution’s students is
below benchmark weak or deteriorating, the Council will place the campus or program on reporting and require the institution to add an improvement plan within its Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) and/or Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP). If the Council determines the institution no longer complies with the Council’s requirement for student achievement, the Council will issue a compliance warning, or a show-cause directive, or otherwise take action and require the institution to demonstrate compliance within the time frames described in Title II, Chapter 3. If the Council deems an institution significantly out of compliance relative to student achievement outcomes with little or no chance of coming into compliance, then it will take an adverse action. These time frames may be extended at the sole discretion of the Council for good cause, including evidence that there has been significant improvement in the deficient area(s) and the applicable time frame does not provide sufficient time to demonstrate full compliance, e.g., significant improvement in retention, placement, or licensure pass rates. Institutions that are required to include a plan of student achievement improvement within their CEPs or that are determined to be out of compliance with the Council’s standards for student achievement are considered to be on student achievement review. Those with campus- or institution program-level plans are subject to additional reporting requirements, and additional restrictions may be imposed upon those that are out of compliance.

2-2-502. Program Show-Cause or Compliance Warning. When the Council determines that a program at a campus of the institution has fallen below the compliance standard for retention, placement, or licensure examination pass rates, the institution will be provided in writing with a show-cause or compliance warning regarding the alleged deficiency. The show-cause or compliance warning will note that the program will have to come into compliance by meeting or exceeding the program-level standard prior to the expiration of the established timeframe or be taught out and discontinued or otherwise conditioned.

A program show-cause or compliance warning is not a negative or conditioning action and is therefore not appealable. Rather, it is issued as an official notification to an institution that a program provided by the institution is out of compliance with agency standards. Following receipt of a program show-cause or compliance warning, the institution must bring itself into compliance within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3 and Appendix L, or the institution will be subject to adverse action in the form of withdrawal of approval for inclusion of the program within the institution’s grant of accreditation as described in Section 2-2-503. The time frames may be extended at the sole discretion of the Council for good cause, including evidence that there has been significant improvement in the deficient area(s) and the applicable time frame does not provide sufficient time to demonstrate full compliance, e.g., significant improvement in retention, placement or licensure pass rates.

A program that is placed on show-cause status is required to notify its current and prospective students along with the public immediately and in writing of its show-cause status through appropriate means.

2-2-503. Termination of Programs. The withdrawal of approval for a program following the issuance of a program show-cause or compliance warning or a decision by an institution to terminate any program voluntarily must be appropriately communicated to all interested
publics. These publics include, but are not limited to, students, governmental agencies, the local community, and ACICS.

All institutions subject to the withdrawal of approval for a program or who voluntarily terminate an approved program will be directed to submit a program termination plan that conforms to the following requirements. New students may not be enrolled in any program which cannot be completed prior to the termination date for which public notice has been given. Moreover, the institution is obligated to continue to offer appropriate courses, including prerequisites, so that currently enrolled students will be able to complete the program and receive the credential which was their designated educational objective. For this purpose, the period of time need not extend beyond sufficient time for students already enrolled and maintaining normal academic progress to complete the program.

Council-directed withdrawal of approval for a program conditions the institution’s grant of accreditation with respect to the inclusion of the program and therefore is appealable to the Council. Due to the limited nature and narrow scope of the withdrawal of program approval, the appeal to the Council may be in writing only.

To maintain approval, an institution must demonstrate active enrollment in each program of study. If an approved program is inactive for at least three years, the program will be considered discontinued and will be removed from the institution’s list of approved programs. To reinstate the program, the institution must initiate a new program application process. Programs that have not started within one year of the proposed start date will be surrendered. To reinstate the program, the institution must initiate a new program application process. Requests to extend a new program’s proposed start date beyond one year of the initial date must be submitted to the President.

APPENDIX L - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS AND CAMPUS ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTS

INTRODUCTION
ACICS defines academic quality in terms of the extent to which an accredited institution achieves its intended student learning and student success outcomes. Student learning outcomes involve assessment of skill and competency attainment, including licensure examination pass rates, where applicable. Student success outcomes include student retention or persistence and employment or placement.

Section 2-1-809 of the Accreditation Criteria requires periodic Council review of student achievement data, verified both by the institution as well as by the Council, submitted by the campus in the annual Campus Accountability Report (CAR) as required under Section 2-1-801. Appendix L provides an overview of the Council’s student achievement standards and Council actions that will be taken if the student achievement data show that a campus or program is out of compliance with these standards.
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

Student achievement standards outlined below apply to retention and placement rates at the campus and program levels, and licensure examination pass rates, where applicable, at the program level. Minimum standards are intended to ensure that a substantial majority of students at ACICS-accredited campuses are retained, pass licensure examinations where applicable, and find appropriate employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus-Level Student Achievement Elements (Effective 2013 Reporting Year)</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retention Rate</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement Rate</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program-Level Student Achievement Elements (Effective 2013 Reporting Year)</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Retention Rate
  Program length equal to or less than one (1) year                     | 60%      | 70%       |
| Program length equal to or more than one (1) year                        | 60%      | 70%       |
| Placement Rate                                                           | 60%      | 70%       |

Licensure Examination Pass Rates, where applicable**

*A campus and/or program whose rates fall below the Benchmark must develop and implement an Improvement Plan.

**Licensure examination pass rates apply where a licensure is required for employment. The program is also required to meet applicable licensure agency standards if higher rates are required.

DATA COLLECTION AND VERIFICATION OF DATA INTEGRITY

As required under Standard 2-1-801 each main campus and each branch campus must submit an annual Campus Accountability Report (CAR). These reports are due on or before November 1 annually. The CAR reporting year is July 1 to June 30. Placement is accepted through November 1st of the CAR reporting year. Based on the student-by-student data submitted by the campus, the Council calculates the various student achievement rates. All data reported to ACICS for any purpose is expected to reflect an accurate and verifiable portrayal of institutional performance and is subject to review for integrity, accuracy, and completeness (See Standard 3-1-203). In addition to the Council review of data on an annual basis, placement information is reviewed via monthly submissions, and all CAR data is subject to review and verification at any time, including during an on-site evaluation visit.
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REVIEW AND COUNCIL ACTIONS
The Council reviews student achievement data for each campus on an annual basis and takes appropriate action. The Council reserves the right to take immediate adverse action once a campus and/or program is found out of compliance. The Council will follow the guidelines listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Reporting</th>
<th>Rates</th>
<th>Campus and/or Program Status*</th>
<th>Council Directed Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                | 60-69.9%       | Reporting                     | • Implementation of an Improvement Plan (IP) and inclusion into the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) (campus- and program-level)  
• Attendance at ACICS’ Retention and Placement Workshop (campus-level) |
|                | 50-59.9%       | Compliance Warning           | • Implementation of an Improvement Plan (IP) and inclusion into the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) (campus- and program-level)  
• Mid-year rate and backup documentation of the activities occurring between July 1 and December 31 (campus-level) |
| Current Submission ** | Below 49.9%   | Show-Cause                   | • Submit evidence of corrective action to the Council (campus- and program-level)  
• Mid-year rate and backup documentation of the activities occurring between July 1 and December 31 (campus-level)  
• Notification of its status to its current and prospective students (campus- and program-level) |
|                | *             | Adverse Action               | • Implement an ACICS approved Teach-out Plan and Agreement, if applicable (campus- and program-level)  
• Appealable to the Review Board of Appeals (campus-level)  
• Submit a Program Termination |

*Adverse Action
### Plan for ACICS approval (program-level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Following Year 1</th>
<th>50-59.9%</th>
<th>Show-Cause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>50-59.9%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Show-Cause</strong></td>
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<td>50-59.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adverse Action</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 59.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adverse Action</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Adverse Action</strong></td>
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</table>

- Submit evidence of corrective action to the Council (campus- and program-level)
- Notification of its status to its current and prospective students (campus- and program-level)
- Attendance at ACICS’ Retention and Placement Workshop (campus-level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Following Year 2</th>
<th>Below 59.9%</th>
<th>Adverse Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Below 59.9%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adverse Action</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adverse Action</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Implement an ACICS approved Teach-out Plan and Agreement, if applicable (campus- and program-level)
- Appealable to the Review Board of Appeals (campus-level)
- Submit a Program Termination Plan for ACICS approval (program-level)

* If the Council deems an institution or an individual program significantly out of compliance relative to student achievement outcomes with little or no chance of coming into compliance within the maximum time frame, it will take an adverse action. In the event that the Council finds an institution or an individual program to be out of compliance at a level that, in its judgement, can be remedied in a reasonable period of time, it will take action appropriate to the circumstances such as compliance warning or show-cause.

**For any campus or program that receives a compliance warning or show-cause, the institution must bring itself into compliance within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3 (i.e. an institution whose longest program is less than one year in length has a time frame of twelve months to come into compliance).
DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REVIEW ACTIONS

Immediate Adverse Action – The Council reserves the right to take immediate adverse action if the campus is significantly out of compliance with the Council standards with little or no chance of coming into compliance within the maximum time frame. An adverse action for a campus is a withdrawal by suspension and for a program is termination of the program, except for teach-out purposes for the currently enrolled students. An institution, in accordance with Section 2-3-403(a), will be allowed the opportunity for a hearing prior to the issuance of a withdrawal by suspension.

Show-Cause – The Council will issue a show-cause directive against any campus or program that is materially below the Council standard, as defined as below 50% for any student achievement indicator in its current submission. The show-cause directive is an action by which the Council determines that the campus and/or program is materially out of compliance and submit evidence of corrective action to the Council. In addition, the campus and/or program must provide notification of its status to all current and prospective students. As a result of being found out of compliance, the campus and/or program will have one year to bring themselves into compliance with the applicable standard.

Reporting – Following the CAR submission if a campus and/or program reports student achievement retention or placement rates or program-level licensure examination pass rates between 60-70%, it is considered, on student achievement review and reporting. The campus and/or program is required to show improvement and must develop and implement an Improvement Plan that is fully incorporated into the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP).

The Improvement Plan must include the required elements and may be reviewed during any on-site evaluation visit. In addition, those campuses must attend an ACICS Retention and/or Placement Workshop.

Compliance Warning – Following the CAR submission if a campus and/or program reports student achievement retention or placement rates or program-level licensure examination pass rates between 50-60%, the Council will issue a compliance warning and the campus and/or program will be found out of compliance. A campus and/or program on compliance warning is required to evaluate, analyze and, if necessary, revise the Improvement Plan implemented while on student achievement reporting. The Council reserves the right to request submission of the evaluation and analysis of the Improvement Plan for Council review. As a result of being found out of compliance, the campus and/or program must come in to compliance within the time frame specified in Title II, Chapter 3.

Withdrawal by Suspension or Termination of a Program – If a campus does not come into compliance within the time frames specified for compliance warning or show-cause, then the Council will issue a withdrawal by suspension action. The Council will require the
campus to submit an ACICS-approved teach-out plan and teach-out agreement, if applicable. If a program does not come into compliance within the time frames specified for compliance warning or show-cause, it will be required to cease enrollment and terminate the program of study.

Data Collection and Verification – ACICS standards are applied by the Council to data collected from each main and branch campus through the annual Campus Accountability Report (CAR). The Council reviews campus and program-level retention and placement rates and program-level licensure examination pass rates where licensure is required for employment in the state the campus is located. The CAR reporting year is July 1 to June 30 and placement is accepted through November 1st of the CAR reporting year.

Please refer to Campus Accountability Report (CAR) Guidelines for details regarding online submission of the annual report, instructions, types of information collected, and calculation formulas.

B. COUNCIL ACTION STANDARDS

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council finalized changes that would streamline its current Council action procedures. A number of changes have been approved and include the following:
- The addition of an introduction to the Accreditation Deferred or Conditioned section to clarify the Council’s ability to take any of the actions so outlined, at any point in time, to include a final adverse action.
- The removal of “admonition” as a formal Council action.
- The combining of “show-cause directive” and “probation order” into one action – that of a show-cause directive. This enhanced language will require notification to the U.S. Department of Education, the students, and the public. Having been accepted, all applicable sections of the Accreditation Criteria that describe a “probation order” have been revised to a “show-cause directive”.
- The determination that all hearings before the Council will be in writing unless an in-person hearing is specifically directed by the Council.

Title II, Chapter 3 Council Actions -Introduction

When the Council has considered all of the information and reports submitted as a result of the accrediting process, it will make a judgment as to an institution’s compliance with the Accreditation Criteria. The Council’s decision is based on the extent of an institution’s compliance. The judgment made is referred to as a “Council action.” The actions which the Council may take are described in this chapter. Procedures available to institutions to challenge those actions and the maximum time frames for achieving final disposition of those actions by the Council also are explained. There are four general areas of Council actions: accreditation granted, accreditation deferred, accreditation denied, and accreditation withdrawn.
If the Council determines that an institution is not in compliance with the Accreditation Criteria, it will take prompt adverse action against the institution, or it will require the institution to take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance with the Accreditation Criteria within a time frame specified by the Council after the institution has been notified that it is not in compliance. That time frame will not exceed and may be less than the following:

(a) twelve months, if the longest program is less than one year in length;
(b) eighteen months, if the longest program is at least one year, but less than two years in length; and
(c) two years, if the longest program is at least two years in length.

2-3-101. Admonition. The Council may judge an institution to be generally in compliance with the criteria, but it also may wish to call the institution’s attention to one or more deficiencies that are not serious enough to preclude a grant of accreditation but that nonetheless must be corrected. In these cases, the institution will be awarded a grant of accreditation but will be admonished to correct the deficiencies. An admonition is an instruction to an institution either to initiate some prescribed practice or to refrain from some proscribed activity. An admonition does not condition the grant of accreditation, but failure to respond to it could result in a subsequent negative action.

2-3-200 – ACCREDITATION DEFERRED OR CONDITIONED
The Council, upon review of relevant information concerning an institution, may take any of the following actions at any time in accordance with the procedures described, up to and including a final adverse action.

2-3-210. Deferral. When Council determines there is insufficient evidence available to make a decision, they may defer action until a later date pending receipt of additional information. In such cases, the Council will provide in writing the reasons for the deferral, state what the institution needs to provide with sufficient time for the institution to respond, and specify the response date. Based on the nature and/or number of identified deficiencies, the Council may require attendance of key administrators at a workshop and/or consultation.

Deferral is, in effect, “no action at this time” and is not a negative action. Therefore, deferral is not an appealable action. Neither is a deferral a final action. In all cases of deferral on renewal of accreditation of accredited institutions, the Council will extend the present grant of accreditation for a period sufficient for the institution to provide the information needed.

2-3-220. Compliance Warning. When the Council determines that an institution is not in compliance with the Accreditation Criteria, the Council will issue a compliance warning. The institution will be provided in writing with the areas of noncompliance and will be required to demonstrate corrective action for review by ACICS. The Council may issue a show-cause directive or a denial action/suspension order may be issued by ACICS as the result of this review reviewing a compliance warning as
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described in Section 2-3-230 or 2-3-402. Following receipt of a compliance warning, the institution must bring itself into compliance within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3, or the institution will be subject to a final adverse action.

When the reasons for the compliance warning are satisfied, the action may be lifted either by the President in cases where no evaluation is involved.

2-3-230. Show-Cause Directive. When the Council determines that an institution is not in compliance, and is unlikely to become in compliance, with the Accreditation Criteria, the institution will be provided in writing with the areas of noncompliance and will be invited to “show cause” why its accreditation should not be suspended or otherwise conditioned.

The opportunity to show cause before the Council will be considered to be a hearing as defined in Section 2-3-500. A suspension order or denial action may be issued by ACICS as the result of this hearing, and such action is considered a final action which may only be appealed to the Review Board of Appeals as described in Section 2-3-600. Following receipt of a show-cause directive, the institution must bring itself into compliance within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3, or the institution will be subject to final adverse action.

When the reasons for the show-cause are satisfied, the directive may be lifted by ACICS. All institutions directed by the Council to show cause why their accreditation should not be suspended or otherwise conditioned will be directed to submit a school closure plan and may be required to submit a teach-out agreement as described in Section 2-2-303 of the Accreditation Criteria.

2-3-240230. Show-Cause Directive. Probation Show-cause is a status that the Council may impose on an institution when it determines that if the institution does not consistently materially operate in accordance with the Accreditation Criteria. 2-3-241231. Imposition. The Council will provide the institution with a written summary of the areas of noncompliance, and the institution will be required to provide evidence of the institution did not materially operate in accordance with the Accreditation Criteria, will be required to demonstrate corrective action for review by ACICS. Probation may be imposed by the Council either when it continues a show-cause directive after at least one hearing either in person or in writing, or after an institution has notified the Council that it intends to appeal a denial action. Following receipt of a show-cause directive, the institution must bring itself into compliance within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3, or the institution will be subject to an adverse action.

The issuance of a show-cause directive may be considered the basis for a hearing, at the discretion of the Council, as defined in Section 2-3-500. A suspension order or denial action may be issued by ACICS as the result of this hearing, and such action is considered a final action which may only be appealed to the Review Board of Appeals as described in Section 2-3-600. All institutions that are issued a show-cause directive by the Council will
be directed to submit a school closure plan and may be required to submit a teach-out agreement as described in Section 2-2-303 of the Accreditation Criteria.

2-3-242231. Result of Probation Show-Cause. The Council will not accept any applications for new programs or new campuses from any institution on probation show-cause unless the institution receives approval in advance to submit such an application.

2-3-243232. Probation Vacate Show-Cause Lifted. Probation does not expire automatically. Instead, the institution is obligated to demonstrate to the Council that the conditions or circumstances which initially led to the imposition of probation have been corrected before probation will be lifted. Probation may be continued even if the show-cause directive has been vacated. (See Title II, Chapter 3, Introduction). If the institution demonstrates that it has addressed the Council’s concerns and is operating in compliance with the Accreditation Criteria, then ACICS may vacate the show-cause. The Council may also order a special visit at the institution’s expense before vacating the probation show-cause.

2-3-244233. Notification of Probation Show-Cause. The Council will notify the U.S. Secretary of Education, appropriate state regulatory agencies, other appropriate accrediting agencies, and the public of its decision to place an institution on probation show-cause. The institution is required to notify immediately in writing its current and prospective students along with the public of its show-cause status through appropriate means, including posting a prominent notice on its website that it has been placed on probation by its accrediting agency.

2-3-403. Procedural Guarantees for Withdrawal by Suspension. In all cases where accreditation is subject to withdrawal by suspension under Section 2-3-402, the institution is afforded the following procedural guarantees:

(a) Opportunity for a hearing before ACICS on all material issues in controversy.

(b) Written prior notice of the proceedings, the charges levied, and the standards by which the institution ultimately is to be judged.

(c) A decision on the record alone and a statement of reasons for the ultimate decision.

(d) A right of appeal as provided in Section 2-3-600.

(e) If the Review Board of Appeals affirms the withdrawal of accreditation by way of suspension, the appeal shall be deemed to be finally disposed of upon issuance of the decision and publication will be made as described in Section 2-3-607.

2-3-501. Hearing Format. Hearings before the Council resulting from a show-cause directive and involving areas of noncompliance other than or in addition to financial concerns will take place before a panel of commissioners.

A hearing panel of at least three commissioners will be designated by the Council to hear the presentation of the institution. The panel will present its findings and its recommended action to the full Council, which will make the final decision in a within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3, not to exceed twelve months, if the longest program is less than one year in length; eighteen months, if the longest program is
at least one year, but less than two years in length; and two years, if the longest program is at least two years in length from the time the institution was found out of compliance with the Accreditation Criteria.

2-3-502. Financial Hearings. All hearings before the Council for financial concerns only will be heard by a panel of at least three commissioners, which will include at least one representative of the Financial Review Committee. The panel will present its findings and its recommended action to the full Council, which will make the final decision in a within the time frames specified in Title II, Chapter 3 not to exceed twelve months, if the longest program is less than one year in length; eighteen months, if the longest program is at least one year, but less than two years in length; and two years, if the longest program is at least two years in length from the time the institution was found out of compliance with the Accreditation Criteria.

C. REQUIREMENT FOR TITLE IV COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council approved language that requires all institutions that participate in Title IV programs to now submit their compliance audit along with the submission of the Annual Financial Report (AFR). ACICS will review these audits and incorporate this information, as appropriate, into its current procedures for possible action or further at-risk review.

2-1-803. Compliance Audits and Audited Financial Statements. Title IV compliance audits and audited financial statements, certified by an independent certified public accountant, are essential instruments in the determination by ACICS of an institution’s compliance with Title IV requirements and financial stability. All institutions are required to submit audited financial statements within 180 days of the end of their fiscal year. All institutions that participate in the Title IV program are required to submit the compliance audit within 180 days of the end of their fiscal year.

D. MISSION STATEMENT

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council finalized language which clarified the requirement that the institution’s mission must include a mission statement and specific set of objectives that are devoted substantially to career-related education.

3-1-100 – Mission: Purpose and Objectives
Every institution must have a mission which is its specific purpose for existing. The mission must include a mission statement and a set of objectives which together accomplish the purpose of the institution. This mission, together with a set of objectives to accomplish it, must be summarized in a mission statement. The objectives should be
devoted substantially to career-related education and should be reasonable for the program of instruction, mode of delivery, and facilities of the institution.

E. CAMPUS EFFECTIVENESS PLAN (CEP) – APPENDIX K

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council has finalized and approved a series of revisions to the criteria sections focused on Campus Effectiveness. These changes include the addition of “Appendix K,” which details the guidelines and requirements for the development, implementation, and monitoring of the CEP, including all evaluation elements and monitoring processes. In addition, the Council approved the addition of program-and campus-level graduation rates to the list of required elements as this rate significantly impacts the campus’s assessment of effectiveness.

3-1-110 –CAMPUS EFFECTIVENESS
An important indication of the overall effectiveness of an ACICS-accredited campus is the degree to which it meets the mission, objectives, and educational goals it has identified. Each ACICS-accredited main and branch campus shall develop and implement a written Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) that is consistent with its mission and objectives. The CEP shall identify how a campus plans to assess and continuously improve its overall educational operations and how it plans to meet the educational and occupational objectives of its programs, taking into consideration its review of all critical organizational functions such as admissions, recruitment, financial aid, and student services.

For the Campus Effectiveness Plan, the following elements, at a minimum, shall be evaluated and reported for achievement of outcomes, at both the campus and program levels:
1. retention rate;
2. placement rate;
3. graduation rates;
4. the level of student satisfaction;
5. the level of graduate satisfaction;
6. the level of employer satisfaction; and
7. student learning outcomes.
8. cohort default rates, if applicable.

3-1-111. Development of the Campus Effectiveness Plan. The effectiveness plan for each campus shall be described in a written CEP document that complies with Appendix K, “Requirements and Guidelines for the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP).”

3-1-112. Implementation and Monitoring of the Campus Effectiveness Plan. Each campus shall establish a process for developing, reviewing, and monitoring the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP). Each campus shall document that progress reports, completed
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at least biannually, related to completion of activities and changes in data and information for each of the elements identified in the CEP are prepared.

3-1-113. Evaluation of the Campus Effectiveness Plan. Each campus shall evaluate the CEP, its goals, and the effectiveness of activities completed at least annually. The annual evaluation will involve comparison of outcomes with baseline rates and goals for each of the elements measured after completion of planned activities. Data for historical outcomes shall be maintained and included in the report to provide a basis for evaluating the achievement of goals for the various elements of operations and campus and program effectiveness over time.

Appendix K Requirements and Guidelines for the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP)

This Appendix identifies the Council’s requirements for the content of a written Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) document. The CEP should provide information about the campus and how it measures and evaluates key elements of its operations in order to continuously improve its overall educational operations and meets its mission and objectives. The Council requires each campus to have a current CEP available that meets the requirements identified in this Appendix.

A main and branch campus may use similar language, format, and general content in CEPs, where appropriate. However, the CEP for each main and branch campus must also include information and data specific to its own campus including the characteristics and demographics of the current student population; the number of students enrolled in each program; campus and program retention, placement, and graduation rates; results of surveys to determine current student, graduate, and employer satisfaction; and student learning outcomes.

For those campuses offering programs in non-traditional modes of delivery, the plan for this mode of delivery must be integrated into the CEP and the elements evaluated to include the effect of the modality on overall outcomes. Further, the campus must also incorporate its assessment of faculty performance into its plan.

Evaluation of Elements in the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP)

The CEP shall, at minimum and at both the campus and program levels, report outcomes for each of the elements listed below. For each element, at the campus and program levels, as appropriate, baseline rates and levels for comparison and goals for the current evaluation period must be identified. A summary and analysis of previous performance, a rationale for the baseline rates and levels, goals, and a listing of activities that will be undertaken to achieve the goals must also be included.

1. Retention rates
2. Placement rates

Student retention and graduate placement rates reported on the Campus Accountability Report (CAR) shall be included in the CEP for the most recent three years, or, if less than
three years’ worth of CAR data is available, data for at least one reporting period. The data and information reported for retention and placement rates must demonstrate that the campus is maintaining or improving performance each year or, if that is not the case, then the campus must provide an explanation of mitigating circumstances affecting improved outcomes. In accordance with Section 2-1-809, a specific plan to improve the retention and/or placement rate(s) for each program not meeting current Council benchmarks or standards for retention and/or placement must be included within the CEP.

3. **Graduation rates**
   Graduation rates are based on the “scheduled to graduate” cohorts for each program offered at a campus. The graduation rates reported on the Campus Accountability Report (CAR) shall be included in the CEP for the most recent three years, or, if less than three years’ worth of CAR data is available, data for a minimum of one reporting period.

4. **The level of current student satisfaction.**
5. **The level of graduate satisfaction.**
6. **The level of employer satisfaction.**
   The level of satisfaction for each of the three elements identified above shall be determined and reported at least twice a year. For each of these three elements, the CEP must identify and describe what types of data were used to determine the level of satisfaction, how they were collected, and the target group’s response rate. Graduate satisfaction should be evaluated no sooner than 30 days following and within 6 months after graduation and include both placed and non-placed graduates.

7. **Student learning outcomes (SLOs).**
   Measuring and evaluating achievement of the SLOs are among the most important activities available to validate and confirm overall program and campus effectiveness. SLOs should be appropriately selected to reflect the nature of the academic programs offered and must include direct assessments but may also include indirect measurements (see Glossary definitions of Direct and Indirect Assessment). For campuses that offer programs for which licensure or certification is required to practice in the specific career field, pass rates shall be evaluated as a required student learning outcome.

**IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE CAMPUS EFFECTIVENESS PLAN (CEP)**
Each campus shall systematically prepare progress reports on a periodic basis as defined by the campus but no less than two times during the CEP year that document completion of activities and changes in data and information for each of the CEP elements. Activities, as described in the reports, are to be specific and measurable.

In addition to the periodic progress reports, each campus is required to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its plan at the end of the CEP year and to incorporate the results of that evaluation into the next year’s CEP, as appropriate. The next year’s CEP should contain a narrative section describing or explaining the consideration and, if applicable, the incorporation of the previous year’s outcomes in the formulation of the new document.
F. LEARNING SITE DEFINITION

Explanation of Final Change – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council finalized a definitive requirement for the distance from which a learning site may be geographically separated from its managing (main or branch) campus. This distance is a radius of five miles. Any learning site application that proposes to be further than five miles from its oversight campus will be reviewed by the Council on a case-by-case basis for appropriateness of the arrangement. For those campuses that currently have active learning sites further than 5 miles away from its oversight must comply with the new criterion language by January 1, 2018. ACICS will send separate communication to these campuses with additional information on the necessary actions to be taken. All learning sites are subject to an on-site evaluation visit.

1-3-103. Learning Site. A learning site is a classroom extension of a main campus or branch campus that is apart from the managing location within five miles of the managing campus; offers less than 50% of a program of study; and maintains academic quality by is capable of providing sufficient academic and administrative oversight providing and access to all student services and instructional resources; and maintaining required to academic quality. Learning sites that are greater than five miles from the managing campus and offer student transportation to the managing campus; or are used for delivery of distance education activity; or collaborative arrangements with other entities for specific on-site educational activity must be approved by the Council on a case-by-case basis and are subject to a quality assurance visit as specified by the Council. All learning sites are subject to an on-site evaluation visit during the managing campus renewal of accreditation evaluation visit.

G. WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE TIMEFRAME

Explanation of Final Change – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council finalized language to qualify the time-limit expectation for the workshop attendance requirement. The 18-month window is up until the submission of the evaluation visit materials (i.e. two weeks prior to the visit) rather than 18 months prior to the submission of the self-study.

2-1-100 – Accreditation Workshop Requirements
The Council schedules accreditation workshops each year. Applicants for initial or renewals of accreditation are required to attend a workshop. During these workshops, Council representatives will consult with institutional representatives to help them understand and complete the process. Institutional representatives are required to attend an
accreditation workshop within 18 months prior to the final submission of the evaluation visit materials, self-study, which are due two weeks prior to an on-site visit. For initial applicants, the chief on-site administrators of main campuses and all branch campuses are required to attend. For currently accredited institutions, the chief on-site administrators or the renewal self-study coordinators for single campus institutions and multiple campus institutions, and representatives of centrally controlled institutions are required to attend. Currently accredited centrally controlled institutions are responsible for providing workshop information to the chief on-site administrators and renewal self-study coordinators of all main campuses and branch campuses.

H. EXternship Definition

Explanation of Final Change – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council proposes clarifying the requirement that the externship course must be supervised by a qualified faculty member and that a written agreement must be developed that clearly outlines the arrangement between the institution and the externship site.

Glossary of Definitions

Externship. A supervised practical experience, under the supervision of a faculty member, that is the application of previously studied theory. Under the supervision of a faculty member, a written agreement shall be developed that outlines the arrangement between the institution and the externship site, including specific learning objectives, course requirements, and evaluation criteria.

I. Admissions, Transfer Credit, and Catalog Disclosures

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council finalized revisions to a number of items related to transfer of credits, and pertinent admissions and disclosure requirements for such credits. Institutions must ensure that foreign transcripts of international students are validated for their equivalency to U.S. requirements during the admissions process as well as for the evaluation of accepting transfer of credit. In addition, institutions may only accept transfer credits from accredited institutions that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or by their respective governments. Furthermore, transfer of credit policies and all contracts and agreements, including articulation agreements must be disclosed in the institutional catalog.

3-1-411. Admissions. The admissions policy shall conform to the institution’s mission, shall be publicly stated and shall be administered as written. The following minimums apply:

(a) The requirements for students admitted to programs leading to a certificate, diploma or degree shall include graduation from high school or its equivalent, or demonstration of
the student’s ability to complete the program under the ability-to-benefit classification as specified under standard 3-1-303(b) and (c), as provided for by governing laws. Foreign transcripts of international students seeking admission must be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to validate equivalency with graduation from high school and eligibility to enter college or university in the United States.

(b) It is the responsibility of the institution to maintain student records which reflect the requirements for admission of all students.

(c) Institutions are not precluded from admitting, under different requirements, students who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance or who may be otherwise specifically circumstanced, such as:

(i) having financial sponsorship through contractual agreements with public or private organizations

(ii) having identifiable needs requiring remedial instruction as a supplement to the regular curriculums

(iii) participating in innovative postsecondary programs specially described to ACICS; or

(iv) being enrolled in individual courses not leading to an academic credential.

3-1-413. Transfer of Credit. An institution shall evaluate and consider awarding proper academic credit for credits earned only at institutions that are either accredited by agencies recognized by the United States Department of Education, or recognized by the respective government as institutions of higher education, for internationally-based institutions. The institution shall establish and adhere to a systematic method for evaluating and awarding academic credit for those courses that satisfy current program course requirements, including an evaluation of all foreign transcripts by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE), the American Association of CollegiateRegistrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES), prior to the evaluation and award. Written policies and procedures must clearly outline the process by which transfer of academic credit is awarded. The institution shall make public in its catalog its policies on transfer of credit, including a statement of the criteria established by the institution by which a determination is made with regard to accepting credits from another institution and if applicable, a list of institutions with which the institution has established articulation agreements.

In addition, the institution shall must provide notification to students as to disclose in its catalog these articulation agreements and the transferability of the credits in the programs that are offered.
Appendix C – Institutional Publications Requirements

At a minimum, the catalog must contain the following items:

…

21. A statement of the criteria established by the institution by which a determination is made with regard to accepting credits from another institution and, if applicable, a list of institutions with which the institution has establish articulation agreements (See Section 3-1-413).

22. A statement on the transferability of the credits in the programs that are offered (See Section 3-1-413).

23. A description of the contracts or agreements and the services to be provided, if the institution has entered into an agreement with an accredited institution, an agreement with an unaccredited institution, or an international partnership agreement (See Sections 2-2-504, 2-2-505, and 2-2-507 for additional information).

24. If the institution offers degrees, the catalog must include the following information:
(a) for occupational associate’s degree programs, identification of courses that satisfy the general education requirement and an explanation of the course numbering system;
…

J. BASIC RECORDS

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council finalized clarifying language, to include definitions, surrounding record maintenance and protection. The Council updated the language on record protection and now requires institutions to determine an appropriate records maintenance and retention policy and comply with that policy. In addition, the Council now more clearly defines student records, specifically relative to admissions and advisement records, the permanent academic record, and financial aid records.

3-1-303. Records.

…

(f) All basic records and reports pertaining to students shall be safely protected. Records shall be stored consistently in a manner that provides protection against misuse, misplacement, damage, destruction, or theft. Acceptable methods of protecting records from theft, fire, water damage, or other possible loss include electronic records management systems and software, appropriately fire-rated file cabinets (that can be and
are locked when not being used); a central location such as a vault, the entirety of which is
protected; and microfilmed records, computer disk, backup tape, printout records, or other
hard copies of records protectively stored off the premises.

(g) Certain basic records shall be maintained by the institution for a specified period of
time. The institution shall adopt and publish a policy on the responsibility and authority of
the institution to properly maintain and retain such records. At a minimum, the policy
should address the following document retention requirements:

1. Transcripts Academic records should be kept maintained indefinitely
   permanently (see Record, Permanent Academic in Glossary);
2. Admissions data and other advisement records should be kept for at least five
   years from graduation or the last day date of attendance (see Record, Admissions
   and Advisement in Glossary);
3. Financial aid records shall be maintained according to the record retention policies
   and guidelines established by the funding source (see Record, Financial Aid in
   Glossary).

The institution shall comply with its published policy on records maintenance and
retention.

Glossary of Definitions

Record, Admissions and Advisement. Official documents of admissions data,
counseling, and advising. These documents include, but are not limited to, applications for
admission or readmission (for matriculates), admission letters, denial and waitlist
notifications, aptitude/assessment test scores, military records, degree audit records,
transfer credit evaluations, transcripts reflecting degrees earned from other institutions, and
counseling and advising correspondence.

Record, Permanent Academic. The official documents on which is listed the courses
attempted, grades and credit earned, and status achieved by a student of the student’s
scholastic progress. These documents include, but are not limited to, official transcripts;
final grade reports detailing each course code, course title, and final grades for a given year
and term; and any documented change to final grades.

Record, Financial Aid. Official documents regarding any grant, scholarship, or loan
offered to assist the student in meeting college expenses. Documentation may vary
depending upon the funding source (e.g. state or federal programs, high schools,
foundations, or corporations).

Record, Student. A record (electronic or hard-copy) which is comprised of, at a
minimum, a student’s admissions and advisement, permanent academic, and financial aid
records. A file which may contain the following: a record of the student's scholastic
progress, the extracurricular activities, personal characteristics and experiences, family
background, secondary school background, aptitudes, interests, counseling notes, etc.
K. LIBRARY, INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES, AND TECHNOLOGY

Explanation of Final Changes – Effective January 1, 2017

The Council finalized extensive changes to the library and instructional equipment sections, for all institutions and at specific credential levels. These changes require all institutions to ensure that the resources lead to academic success and include research needs, as appropriate. In addition, the language acknowledges that there are additional online library services that provide further access to students. Notwithstanding, the Council continues to recognize the importance of the physical space needed for residential students to access information and the revisions include expectations to that effect.

3-1-800 – Library Resources and Services

The adequate provision of library resources and information services, appropriate to the academic level and scope of an institution’s programs, is essential to teaching and learning. It is incumbent upon all member institutions to assess the level of library resources needed in relation to their programs and to provide a range of support to meet these needs. The size of collections and the budget allowed for library resources and services do not ensure adequacy. The quality, relevance, accessibility, availability, and provision of support services ultimately will determine the adequacy of an institution’s efforts. In assessing library resources and services, ACICS requires that an institution, at a minimum, shall:

(a) develop an adequate base core of library resources to support academic success and to meet instruction and research needs as appropriate;
(b) ensure up-to-date means to access these resources;
(c) develop a continuous assessment strategy for library resources and information services that includes staff and faculty;
(d) provide adequate staff to support assessment, library development, collection, organization, and accessibility;
(e) ensure that library services are provided to all learners, including those at nonmain campuses and those online;
(f) provide training and encouragement for students and faculty to utilize library resources as an integral part of the learning process and as life-long learners; and
(g) those campuses that have a residential component, must provide students a physical space on site or within close proximity to the institution in order to allow for access to library resources and services;

3-2-200 – Instructional Resources, Materials

The instructional resources, audiovisual teaching equipment, and instructional materials shall be adequate to serve the needs of the institution’s educational programs. The resources shall be consistent with the institutional mission and include current print or digital titles, periodicals, professional journals, and/or full-text online resources appropriate for the institution’s educational programs. There shall be evidence that appropriate instructional resources, equipment, technology, and materials are utilized to support the educational objectives.
3-2-201. **References.** The institution shall have available and easily accessible to faculty and students standard print, digital, or online reference works appropriate to the curriculum. Major consideration will be given to the diversity of the collection including variety of volumes, books, periodicals, online resources, and information technology readily available to students and faculty, recency their currency of publications, appropriateness, and relevance to the programs offered by the institution.

**Budget (at all credentials)**

3-2-204. **Budget.** Budget allocations and expenditures for instructional resources, equipment, and materials may be centralized and shall be sufficient to meet the needs and fulfill objectives of the institution’s programs.

3-3-402, 3-4-402, 3-5-402, 3-6-702, 3-7-702. **Budget.** An annual library budget, appropriate to the size and scope of the institution and the programs offered, shall be established, may be centralized, and the allocation expended for the purchase of books, periodicals, library equipment, print and/or digital books, periodicals, and other resource and reference materials.

**Function (at all credential levels)**

3-3-403. **Function.** The library function is shaped by the mission and the educational programs of the institution. Appropriate reference, research, and information resources must be made available to enhance, augment, and support the curricular and educational offerings. The resources shall include the study, reading, and information technology facilities necessary to make the educational programs effective. The ultimate test of the library’s adequacy is determined by the extent to which its resources support all the courses offered by the institutions.

3-4-403, 3-5-403. **Function.** The library function is shaped by the mission and the educational programs of the college. Appropriate reference, research, and information resources must be made available to provide basic support for curricular and educational offerings and to enhance student learning.

3-6-703. **Function.** The library function is shaped by the mission and the educational programs of the institution. Institutions offering master’s degree programs shall provide access to substantially different library resources in terms of their depth and breadth from those required for baccalaureate degree programs. Students should discover information in a variety of formats with an appropriately supporting information technology infrastructure.

These resources shall include bibliographic and monographic references, major professional journals and reference services, research and methodology materials, and, as appropriate, information technologies. The depth and breadth of the accessible library holdings shall be such as to exceed the requirements of the average student in order to
encourage the intellectual development of superior students and to enrich the professional
development of the faculty.

Appropriate reference, research, and information resources must be made available to
enhance, augment, and support the curricular and educational offerings and to enhance
student learning. The resources shall include the study, reading, and information
technology facilities necessary to *make enhance the effectiveness* of the educational
programs effective.

**3-7-703. Function.** The library function is shaped by the mission and the educational
programs of the institution. Institutions offering master’s degree programs shall provide
access to substantially different library resources in terms of their depth and breadth from
those required for baccalaureate degree programs. Students demonstrate the ability to
define problems, access, evaluate, and analyze a variety of resources, and use retrieved
information ethically.

These resources shall include bibliographic and monographic references, major
professional journals and reference services, research and methodology materials, and, as
appropriate, information technologies. The depth and breadth of the accessible library
holdings shall be such as to exceed the requirements of the average student in order to
courage the intellectual development of superior students and to enrich the professional
development of the faculty.

Appropriate reference, research, and information resources must be made available to
enhance, augment, and support the curricular and educational offerings and to enhance
student learning. The resources shall include the study, reading, and information
technology facilities necessary to *make enhance the effectiveness* of the educational
programs effective.

**Use and Accessibility (at all credential levels)**

**3-3-404. Use and Accessibility.** In evaluating the use of library resources by students,
consideration shall be given to accessibility and to methods used by the faculty to
courage the use of these resources by students. Records of physical and/or online
circulation and inventory shall be current and accurate.

Physical and/or online library materials and services must be available at times consistent
with the typical student’s schedule in both day, and evening, and online programs. Easy
access to and use of reference materials, periodicals, and information technology are of
prime importance in determining if the institution is meeting the educational needs of its
students and faculty. If online resources are utilized, an appropriate number of terminals
and/or wireless access shall be provided for student use. Interlibrary agreements are not
substitutes for an institution’s library, but rather a means to supplement the institution’s
holdings in limited areas. In determining the appropriateness of such agreements,
consideration will be given to the uniqueness of the lending library’s collection, provisions
for interlibrary loans, and the degree of accessibility to the students.
3-4-404, 3-5-404, 3-6-704, 3-7-704. Use and Accessibility. The faculty should inspire, motivate, and direct student usage of the library resources. The library’s adequacy ultimately is determined by the extent to which physical and/or online resources including full-text resources support all the courses offered by the institution. For library resources, the Dewey Decimal System, Library of Congress classification system, or other appropriate system of classification should be used. Records of physical and/or online circulation and inventory shall be current and accurate and must be maintained to assist staff and faculty in evaluating the adequacy and utilization of the physical and/or online resources including full-text holdings. Physical and/or online, full-text library materials and services must be available at times consistent with the typical student’s schedule in both day, and evening, and online programs. If online or computer based resources are utilized on site, a sufficient number of terminals and/or wireless access shall be provided for student use. If interlibrary agreements are in effect, provisions for such use must be practical and accessible and use must be documented. In determining the appropriateness of such agreements, consideration will be given to the nature of the participating library’s collection, provisions for interlibrary loans, and the degree of accessibility to the students. A college’s library must contain, at a minimum, a core collection of physical and/or online resources including full-text reference materials appropriate for the offerings of the institution.

Holdings (at all credential levels)

3-3-405. Holdings. The institution shall have available and easily accessible standard physical and/or online reference works, professional journals, and current periodicals appropriate to the curriculum. Consideration also shall be given to supplementary library resources contracted by the institution and online resources available to its student body.

3-4-405, 3-5-405. Holdings. A collegiate library shall contain up-to-date physical and/or online resources including full-text titles appropriate for the size of the institution and the breadth of and enrollment in its educational programs. The library collection shall include holdings on the Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences, and Sciences, including mathematics; magazines and essential professional journals and periodicals; online data networks and retrieval systems, CD-ROMs, and interactive research systems that support all of the course offerings of the institution.

3-6-705. Holdings. The library shall support the academic programs and the literacy, intellectual, and cultural development of students, faculty, and staff; shall provide current and appropriate physical and/or online, full-text resources for the size of the institution and the breadth of and enrollment in its educational programs; shall provide, when appropriate, online data networks and retrieval systems; and shall be capable of supporting an understanding of the methods and principles of scholarly research and how to use information ethically and/or scholarly research at the graduate level.
3-7-705. **Holdings.** The library shall support the academic programs and the intellectual and cultural development of students, faculty, and staff; shall provide current and appropriate physical, digital, and/or online full-text resources for the size of the institution and the breadth of and enrollment in its educational programs; shall provide, when appropriate, physical and/or on-line, full-text data networks and retrieval systems, CD-ROMs, and interactive research systems; and shall be capable of supporting scholarly research at the graduate doctoral level.

**Staffing (at all credential levels)**

3-4-401, 3-5-401. **Staff.** A professionally trained individual shall supervise and manage library and instructional resources, facilitate their integration into all phases of the institution’s curricular and educational offerings, and assist students in their use. A professionally trained individual is one who holds a bachelor’s or master’s degree in library or information science or a comparable program, or state certification to work as a librarian, where applicable, or, for foreign institutions, who holds a bachelor’s or master’s degree recognized as appropriate for the position by its government or higher education authority. The institution must provide evidence that the degree is from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. If the degree is from an institution outside of the United States, the institution must be recognized by its government as an institution of higher education or be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine the equivalency of the degree to degrees awarded by institutions in the United States. ACICS, if unable to determine qualifications, may require the translation and/or evaluation of transcripts in languages other than English. The professionally trained individual must participate in documented annual professional growth activities. During library hours that are scheduled and posted, there shall be a trained individual on-site who is assigned to oversee and to supervise the library and to assist students with library and information services. This individual shall be competent and technologically literate to use and to aid in the use of the online and computer based library technologies and resources.

3-6-701, 3-7-701. **Staff.** A professionally trained individual shall supervise and manage library and instructional resources, facilitate their integration into all phases of the institution’s curricular and educational offerings, and assist students in their use. A professionally trained individual is one with special qualifications to aid students in research and who holds a M.L.S. degree or the equivalent, or, for foreign institutions, who holds a master’s degree recognized as appropriate for the position by its government or higher education authority. The institution must provide evidence that the degree is from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. If the degree is from an institution outside of the United States, the institution must be recognized by its government as an institution of higher education or be evaluated by a member of the Association of International Credentials Evaluators (AICE), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), or
the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine the equivalency of the degree to degrees awarded by institutions in the United States. ACICS, if unable to determine qualifications, may require the translation and/or evaluation of transcripts in languages other than English. The professionally trained individual must participate in annual documented professional growth activities.

There shall be a professionally trained individual on duty for sufficient hours, as published by the institution, to support the programs and to assist students with library functions and research. This individual shall be competent both to use and to aid in the use of the physical, computer based, digital and online library technologies and resources.

Appendix H- Principles and Requirements for Nontraditional Education

Resources and Equipment
(b) The institution must demonstrate that students taking online courses have access to the same or equivalent library resources and support as students taking courses in a physical classroom. If the majority of a student’s classes are online, these resources must include at a minimum access to a virtual library collection of program-related books, journals, and periodicals, and access to virtual library and information technology services.

L. FACULTY FIELD PREPARATION

Explanation of Final Changes

The Council revised the restriction of the number of preparations that can be taught by a faculty member at the non-degree level, given confusion on the interpretation of an “academic term” as a result of variation of application by institutions.

3-2-102. Field Preparation. Assignments requiring more than three preparations in different fields (e.g., allied health, business, criminal justice, secretarial studies, business administration, data processing) shall not be given to an instructor at any given time during one academic term.
2. For Information Only

A. ACICS BYLAWS – GENERAL PROVISIONS AND DEFINITIONS

This revision became effective on October 3, 2016.

The ACICS Board of Directors approved a revision to the bylaws as it relates to the definition of a public representative and the criteria by which they would not be able to serve on the Council.

BYLAWS ARTICLE I, Section 7

Public Representatives. Representatives of the public are persons who are interested in career education; have knowledge or experience useful to the accreditation process; are willing to contribute opinion, advice, and expertise to the endeavors of ACICS and the Council; and are not (1) employed or formerly employed within the last 3 years by an institution or program that either is accredited by the agency or has applied for accreditation; or (2) associated as members of the governing board, owners, shareholders, consultants or in some other similar capacity with an institution or program that either is accredited by the agency or has applied for accreditation; or (3) a member of any related, affiliated trade association or membership organization; or (4) a spouse, parent, child or sibling of an individual identified in paragraph (1), (2) or (3) of this definition.

B. MEMORATUM ON DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

At the December meeting, the Council voted unanimously to place a moratorium on any further acceptance of institutions offering programs above the master’s degree level or program applications beyond those previously approved above the master’s. The Council’s ultimate goal and immediate direction is to begin an orderly phase-out of the doctoral programs.

C. ACICS AWARE WEBINAR

An AWARE webinar will be held on Wednesday, January 18 at 12:30 pm. This webinar will focus on information presented in the January 2017 Memorandum to the Field. ACICS looks forward to explaining these final Criteria changes and answering any related questions. In an effort to be efficient with the limited time dedicated to the session, please send questions to Ms. Perliter Walters-Gilliam at pwgilliam@acics.org, so that the responses can be prepared and shared during the webinar.
D. ACICS PLACEMENT VERIFICATION PROGRAM (PVP) ENHANCEMENTS

Updates have been made to the PVP process to include revised e-mails which now allow for graduates and employers to qualify (detail) how the graduate received a benefit from their credential to enhance their current position. The spreadsheet has also been updated to include the scheduled to graduate cohort.

ACICS has established a process for reviewing any placements that were marked as invalid by ACICS that a campus would like to appeal. If an institution feels that the placement is in accordance with the guidelines and therefore valid, they may submit the placement and all supporting documents to the review committee at pvpreview@acics.org. The committee will review the documentation submitted and make a final decision on the validity of the placement.

An informational webinar will be held at 2:00pm on Wednesday, January 18, 2017 at the conclusion of the AWARE webinar. If you have any questions concerning the PVP, please email Ms. Karly Zeigler at kzeigler@acics.org so that she compile and prepare appropriate responses. Please note that campus-specific questions/concerns and situations will not be discussed during the webinar.

E. ACICS WEB SITE

Please visit the ACICS Web site. It continues to be revised and updated based on Council activities, to include the new Accreditation Criteria publication. The site contains revised and detailed information about accreditation, accredited institutions, applications, publications, workshops and special events. New features are now available.

NOTE: The institutional ACICS ID should be used on all correspondence to and from ACICS. If you have questions about your ID code, please send an email to ebiz@acics.org.

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If you have any questions about the memorandum to the field, please contact:
Ms. Karly Zeigler
Manager of Institutional Compliance
kzeigler@acics.org

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