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Preface

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC) requires prior approval of institutional substantive changes in programs, methods of delivery, and organizational mission, status or form of control. The substantive change process is designed to ensure consistent quality in all aspects of an institution’s operations regardless of where they are offered, on or off campus, or through distance education. The substantive change process ensures that institutions undergoing significant and substantive changes continue to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. Substantive change decisions are made by the Commission’s Substantive Change Committee and that serves as the final decision authority. In some circumstances, the Committee may refer decisions to the full Commission for review and action.

Changes in the Higher Education Act reauthorizations have led to regulations that govern many substantive change decisions. These regulations include requirements for federally mandated site visits to off-campus locations, authentication of students enrolled in distance education courses, and requirements regarding the credit hour. Changes to federal regulatory requirements are integrated into the ACCJC substantive change processes as necessary.

The ACCJC substantive change process is guided by the following principles:

**Positive Change:** The ACCJC promotes educational innovation and experimentation to improve performance while ensuring the integrity of institutional mission and the maintenance of educational quality.

**Institutional Improvement:** Institutional improvement is a primary goal of Accreditation. The ACCJC recognizes that the implementation of fresh and innovative ideas is essential to the improvement of educational quality.

**Recognition of Change:** The ACCJC recognizes that institutions that are engaged in ongoing evaluation, improvement and re-evaluation will identify needed changes. The implementation of those changes is encouraged.

**Responsibility:** As institutions identify and implement change, the first principle is that quality must be maintained and improved. The ACCJC recognizes that responsible institutions guarantee the quality of their programs and services as they make improvements.

The Commission welcomes suggestions for improving this manual and the change process. Please send all comments to the ACCJC office at accjc@accjc.org.
2 Rationale for Requiring Approval of Substantive Changes

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) regulations require that accrediting agencies have policies and procedures that ensure that any substantive changes to the institution, its educational mission, or programs do not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. Federal law mandates that accrediting agencies require institutions to obtain accreditor approval of a substantive change before it is included in the scope of the accreditation granted to the institution.

The accreditation of an institution is an affirmation that the institution has established conditions and procedures to realize its mission and goals. Because institutions are in continual processes of change, the Commission requires that substantive changes be evaluated and approved to ensure that the Commission’s Standards continue to be met. Institutions seek approval for their changes by submitting a substantive change application.

Through the substantive change review process, the Commission ensures that a college maintains the educational quality and institutional integrity of its programs and services, and that the substantive change is consistent with the institutional mission.

Prior approval is required of all substantive changes. In some cases, a visit is also necessary to gather facts about the planned change or to confirm the impact of the change on the institution’s ability to meet the Commission’s Standards.
3 Timing Considerations for Substantive Changes

Substantive change approval is needed before an applicable change can be implemented and before affected students can qualify for federal financial aid. Thus, prior to approval, the change may not be represented or advertised as a part of the institutional accreditation.

Accredited institutions seeking substantive change are aware of and, per Standard I.C.12 and ER 21, have committed to remaining in compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies at all times. A substantive change application is timely when the institution has progressed in its planning to a point where it is able to demonstrate and provide evidence that the change meets Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies and any specific evaluation criteria.

In the following circumstances, institutions may not submit a substantive change application:

- In the six-month period preceding a comprehensive evaluation team visit.
- During the period that an institution is on a sanction such as Warning, Probation, or Show Cause until the conditions that resulted in a sanction have been resolved and the Commission has reaffirmed accreditation. If the sanction includes a specific recommendation which cites as a non-compliance the institution’s failure to seek substantive change approval of an existing program, delivery mode, or location, then, to the extent of that recommendation only, the institution may proceed with a substantive change application.
- If the institution is subject to withdrawal of accreditation, pending the outcome of administrative remedies.
4 Changes the Commission Considers Substantive

If an institution makes substantive changes to its educational mission, or programs, the ACCJC must determine that these changes do not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. Federal Regulation (§602.22(a)(2)) identifies the types of changes that the ACCJC must approve. The Substantive Change Policy identifies the major types of changes to include the following:

1. Change in Mission, Objectives, Scope, or Name of the Institution
2. Change in the Nature of the Constituency Served
3. Change in the Location or Geographic Area Served
4. Change in the Control or Legal Status of the Institution
5. Change in Courses or Programs or their Mode of Delivery that Represents a Significant Departure from Current Practice
6. Change in Credit Awarded
7. Implementation of Direct Assessment
8. Implementation of a Baccalaureate Degree Program
9. Contractual Relationship with a Non-Regionally Accredited Organization

In each of these major categories, there are related changes that require prior substantive change approval. More detailed explanations are enumerated below.

4.1 Change in Mission, Objectives, Scope, or Name of the Institution

- Change in the mission or character of the institution; if the mission or character of the institution becomes dramatically different, the Commission reserves the right to require the institution to complete the eligibility, candidacy, and initial accreditation process
- Change in the degree level from that which was previously offered by the institution, i.e., offering a degree at a level higher than the accredited institution offers currently
- Change in the official name of the institution
- Merger of two separately-accredited ACCJC institutions into a single institution
- Reduction of programs to an extent that the institution’s mission cannot be accomplished

4.2 Change in the Nature of the Constituency Served

- Change in the intended student population
- Closure of an institution or loss of State authorization or licensure for the institution or a program, withdrawal of or from accreditation if such withdrawal will result in closure
- Closure of a location geographically apart from the main campus at which students can complete at least 50% of an educational program
- Courses or programs offered outside the geographic region currently served

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1 See the Policy on Closing an Institution for further discussion of requirements related to closing an institution and teach-out plans for institutional or programmatic closures.
4.3 Change in the Location or Geographic Area Served

- Move of the institution to a new location or an addition of a location, geographically apart from the main campus, where students can complete 50% or more of a program. The Substantive Change Committee will determine if an institution applying for substantive change for a new location requires a visit to the site. Considerations related to an additional or new location include the following:
  - The institution must have the fiscal and administrative capacity to operate the additional location. If required, a visit will be arranged within six months of review to an additional or new location the institution establishes. The purpose of the site visit is to verify that the location has the personnel, facilities, and resources the institution claimed to have in its substantive change application.
  - The Substantive Change Committee may not approve an institution’s addition of locations after the institution undergoes a change in ownership resulting in a change of control until the institution demonstrates that it meets the conditions for the Commission to preapprove additional locations.³

4.4 Change in the Control or Legal Status of the Institution

- Change in the form of control, legal status, or ownership of the institution
- Merger with another institution⁴
- Separation of one unit of the institution into separate institutions, dividing an institution into two or more separately controlled and accredited units, or a change of an off-campus site into a separately accreditable institution
- Acquisition of any other institution or program or location of another institution, and/or the addition of a permanent location at the site of a teach-out the institution is conducting

4.5 Change in Courses or Programs or their Mode of Delivery that Represents a Significant Departure from Current Practice

- Change in the mode or location of courses when the change constitutes 50% or more of a program, degree or certificate. This includes the following:
  - Courses offered at a new or different location;
  - Courses offered through distance education or correspondence education;
  - Course additions that constitute 50% or more of a program.
- Addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure from existing offerings of educational programs or methods of delivery from those offered when the institution was last evaluated
- Addition of programs at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution’s current accreditation.

Definition of Distance Education

Distance Education means (34 C.F.R. § 602.3):

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² as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 600.3.1
³ 34 C.F.R. §602.22(a)(2)(viii)(D)
⁴ See also Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations
Education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include:

1) The internet;
2) one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
3) audio conferencing; or
4) video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3).

**Definition of Correspondence Education**

*Correspondence Education* means (34 C.F.R. § 602.3):

1) Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor
2) Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student
3) Correspondence courses are typically self-paced
4) Correspondence education is not distance education

### 4.6 Change in Credit Awarded

- Substantial increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for the successful completion of a program
- Change from clock hours to credit hours

### 4.7 Implementation of Direct Assessment

- Change of an instructional program from clock hours or credit hours, to direct assessment of student learning. A program must obtain USED approval of a direct assessment program.

### 4.8 Implementation of a Baccalaureate Degree Program

- Instructional program that leads to the award of a baccalaureate degree
- Additional area of emphasis within a baccalaureate degree program of study
- Designation of a minor which can be awarded in association with a baccalaureate degree

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5 See the *Policy on Direct Assessment of Learning*
6 See 34 C.F.R. § 668.10
7 See the *Policy on Accreditation of Baccalaureate Degrees* for specific standards and policies which must be addressed, as well as additional specific evaluation criteria.
4.9 **Contractual Relationship with a Non-Regionally-Accredited Organization**

- More than 25% of one or more of the accredited institution’s educational programs is offered by the non-regionally-accredited organization.\(^8\)

4.10 **Any other Significant Change**

The Commission reserves the right to request reports and visits to assess the effects of any change it deems to be a significant departure from the institution’s status at the time of the previous reaffirmation of accreditation.

These changes, because they may affect the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the total institution, are subject to review prior to as well as subsequent to implementation. Institutions have reported loss of federal financial aid when substantive changes were not approved by regional accrediting bodies.

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\(^8\) 34 C.F.R. § 602.22(a)(2)(vii)
5 Substantive Change Review Process

5.1 Step 1: Determination Whether a Change is Considered Substantive

Section 4 of this manual identifies those changes that are considered substantive and require review and approval prior to implementation. It is important that the institution review the change to ascertain whether a substantive change application is required. Institutions are encouraged to contact ACCJC staff for guidance and questions to determine whether an application is required.

Eligibility for Proposal Submission

- An accredited institution is expected to complete this process sufficiently in advance of a substantive change to permit approval before the change is instituted.
- Institutions which have been declared eligible for accreditation but have not yet achieved candidate or accredited status may not initiate the substantive change approval process since “Eligibility” does not constitute a formal relationship with ACCJC.
- Institutions scheduled for a comprehensive site visit may not initiate the substantive change approval process in the six-month period preceding the visit.

Substantive changes may not be submitted during the period that an institution is on a sanction such as Warning, Probation, or Show Cause until the conditions that resulted in a sanction have been resolved and the Commission has acted to remove the sanction. If the sanction includes a specific recommendation which cites as a non-compliance the institution’s failure to seek substantive change approval of an existing program, delivery mode, or location, then, to the extent of that recommendation only, the institution may proceed with a substantive change application.

5.2 Step 2: Develop the Application

Once it has been determined that the proposed change requires approval, the institution should develop the application using the appropriate substantive change application form. The forms are found in the appendix to this manual. All proposals include the application form and Part I – General Questions. Other parts of the application are specific to the type of change being proposed. The appropriate template should be utilized for each application. Specific templates are available for new programs, off-campus sites, distance education – potential program, and distance education – intentional program. Other changes should utilize the general template.

The institution’s Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) is responsible for disseminating this information to the institutional representatives drafting the proposal. They are also responsible for reviewing the proposal for completeness and accuracy prior to submittal to the ACCJC.

As noted above, a number of templates have been developed to correspond to the types of substantive change. Each question in the template must be addressed. Proposals are limited to 5,000 words, not including attachments. Appendices may be attached to all proposals.
Quality proposals include the following elements:

- Are clearly written and responsive to each question.
- Are linked to the institutional mission.
- Are supported by evidence and data.
- Demonstrate clear alignment between program and course learning outcomes.
- Based on planning processes that include all key constituents, especially faculty.
- Demonstrate the administrative and financial capacity of the institution to sustain the program or location.

All proposals must go through the institution’s appropriate internal approval process. Prior to submission, proposals must obtain all relevant internal and external approvals, including administrative and governance reviews, to ensure adherence to the institution’s quality assurance processes. Faculty must be appropriately involved in developing and approving programs, especially those faculty who will be responsible for instructional delivery.

5.3 **Step 3: Submit the Application and Fee**

Once the application has been completed, it should be submitted with the appropriate forms and the fee. The application should be submitted no later than 45 days prior to the meeting dates of the Substantive Change Committee as posted on the ACCJC website. Substantive change fees are specified in the ACCJC Fee Schedule, which is adjusted periodically. Colleges should consult the fee schedule to ascertain the fee required. Each substantive change application is assessed a fee. Although some changes can be combined into a single application, a separate fee will be assessed for each application that represents a major substantive change as identified in 4.1 through 4.10 above. In some cases, complex changes can result in combined fees. Questions about the required fee should be referred to Commission staff prior to the payment of the fee.

Reviews are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Receipt of the substantive change application and fee will reserve a place on the Substantive Change Committee’s Review Calendar. The Substantive Change Committee will determine how many applications will be reviewed at a meeting. Applications that are unable to be reviewed will be scheduled for the next regular meeting of the Committee.

**Preliminary Review by ACCJC Staff**

Once a proposal has been submitted, ACCJC staff will review the proposal and give the institution the opportunity to provide missing information and to clarify any aspects of the proposal that are unclear. The ACCJC staff and the Substantive Change Committee reserve the right to remove any proposal that is incomplete. The preliminary review is designed to assist institutions in avoiding a denial or deferral of the application.

5.4 **Step 4: Receive Notification of Action from the ACCJC**

The ACCJC Substantive Change Committee will take one of the following actions:

- **Approve the substantive change.** The institution has demonstrated that it meets the evaluation criteria.
Approve the substantive change and require a Follow-Up Report with or without a visit, or a visit without an institutional report. The institution meets the evaluation criteria, but the committee has specific questions (which don’t require deferral), decided general verification is needed of sustained practice, or has questions concerning further implementation stages. A visit timeline will be specified between six to 18 months. The Committee will review the Follow-Up Report and/or the visit report.

Provisionally approve a planned substantive change that is subject to a federally mandated site visit. The plans submitted by the institution for a change of ownership, new location, or creation of a branch campus include future actions that are required to meet the Standards. The provisional approval allows the institution to move forward with steps of implementation in preparation for seeking approval of the substantive change. The provisional approval may include a site visit. The provisional approval must state a date, not to exceed three years, by which the change must be approved for inclusion in the institution’s accreditation. If that time is exceeded, then the substantive change request process must be resubmitted. A new location which requires a federally mandated site visit cannot be provisionally approved if there has been a change in ownership. The Committee may require additional reports or visits before the approval is final.

Defer pending additional information. Consideration of the request cannot move forward without receipt of additional information demonstrating the evaluation criteria are met.

Deny the substantive change. The institution has not demonstrated that the change meets the evaluation criteria.

Refer the proposed change to the Commission. The substantive change application can be referred by the Substantive Change Committee to the Commission when it has determined there may be the need for a comprehensive evaluation or for a special report and visit. The evaluation of the institution’s substantive change Follow-Up Report and/or visit may also be referred to the Commission when deemed appropriate for review by the full Commission. The Committee’s referral to the Commission will include the reasons for such referral.

Step 4A: Appeal of the Committee Decision
If a proposal is not accepted, the institution may request that the Committee reconsider its decision. The request for reconsideration must be received by the ACCJC.

Substantive Change Appeal Process

- If the institution wishes to appeal the decision of the Committee on substantive change, the appeal must be filed in writing within 30 days of the date of the decision and will be deliberated at the next meeting of the Commission.
- The appeal is limited to the substantive change process itself such as errors or omissions on the part of the Committee, bias or conflict of interest on the part of the Committee, or failure by the committee to follow its process. New evidence related to the substantive change application may not be submitted.
- Members of the Substantive Change Committee may participate in the discussion but will abstain from voting on the appeal.
5.5 Step 5: Requirements on Institutions After Approval of Substantive Changes

Visits

Federal regulations require that certain substantive changes include a site visit as part of the approval. Generally, visits are required when there is an additional location where at least 50% of a program is offered, when a branch campus is established, or when there is a change of ownership that results in a change of control. Visits occur within six months of the start of operations.

Federally mandated Visits

- New location where at least 50% of an educational program is offered
  
  When there is a change that constitutes 50% or more of a program, certificate, or degree, at a new location, a federally-mandated site visit is required. The purpose of the visit is to verify that the information provided by the institution in its substantive change application was accurate and complete. It is also used to verify that the actions implemented align with the plans that received provisional approval by the committee.

- Branch campus
  
  Substantive change uses the federal regulation definition of a branch campus. Federal regulations define a branch campus as a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of that institution. The branch location of an institution is independent if it is (1) is permanent in nature; (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential; (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority. An institution must provide a business plan in advance of establishing a branch campus (describing the educational programs, the projected revenues/expenditures/cash flow, the operation, management and physical resources of the branch campus). Approval (accreditation) can only be given after determining the campus has sufficient educational, financial, operational, management, and physical resources.

- Change of ownership
  
  Changes in the ownership of an institution which result in a change of control are subject to federally mandated site visits. The Substantive Change Committee can designate the effective date of its approval as being the date of the actual change, so long as the Committee decision is within 30 days of that change of ownership.

- The Substantive Change Committee may also require a site visit if it deems that a visit would be appropriate. This could include, but not be limited to the following:
  
  - If the institution is not due for a comprehensive evaluation within two years of the approval of the substantive change, an on-site evaluation or other review may be required by the Commission.
  
  - If there has been rapid growth in the number of such locations.

The visit will be conducted by one of the following: A member or members of the Commission staff; a member of the Commission staff and a member of the Substantive Change Committee or other Commissioner; or a member of Commission staff and a
programmatic expert from a member institution. The visiting team will consist of academic and administrative evaluators. The size of the visiting team will be a function of the complexity and size of the site and proposed change. The staff member will serve as chair of the team. The visiting team will focus on the content of the original substantive change proposal and any updated information requested by Commission staff prior to the visit, as well as any stated concerns of the Substantive Change Committee.

An ACCJC action letter detailing the results of the site visit will be prepared by Commission staff, with input from team members, and sent to the CEO and copied to the ALO of the institution within 30 days of the site visit.

Note: The Commission requires institutions to absorb the costs of a site visit.

Institutional Follow-Up

- The Commission may require institutions to submit Follow-Up Reports on specific issues precipitated by the substantive change. These reports make it possible for the Commission to assess the impact of the change once it has been implemented.
- Requirements for these reports will be specified in the action letter approving the substantive change. These reports may be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.
- While not ideal, should a substantive change review already be in progress in close proximity to the preparation of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report the college should then include a description of the change and its status with the review (e.g., whether the substantive change proposal is in draft form or under consideration by the Commission but not yet approved).
- Institutions should include updates of approved substantive changes in their next Institutional Self-Evaluation and Midterm Reports.
- Comprehensive Evaluation team chairs are supplied with a matrix of substantive changes since the last comprehensive visit.
Appendix A: Policy on Substantive Change

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Policy on Substantive Change

Background

The U.S. Department of Education regulations require that accrediting agencies have adequate policies and procedures to ensure that any substantive changes to the educational mission, or programs of an institution, maintain the capacity of the institution to continue to meet Accreditation Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. Membership of the Substantive Change Committee is set forth in the ACCJC Bylaws and represents the composition of academic and administrative personnel, and of public representatives, required of decision-making bodies by the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, educators with specialized expertise may be invited to serve as expert advisors to the Committee to facilitate consideration of substantive change applications involving programs or single-purpose institutions that prepare students for a specific profession. These expert advisors are not members of the Substantive Change Committee and do not vote on substantive change requests.

Federal law mandates that accrediting agencies require institutions to obtain accreditor approval of a substantive change before the change is included in the scope of the accreditation granted to the institution. The scope of an institution’s accreditation covers all activities conducted in its name. The Commission’s Substantive Change Committee is the decision-making body of the Commission for substantive change requests. Unless the Substantive Change Committee decides to refer a matter to the Commission for review and action, the Committee’s action on a substantive change request serves as the final decision.

Policy

The Commission, through its Substantive Change Committee and processes, ensures that institutions continue to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The substantive change process requires evidence of institutional planning, resource commitment to the proposed change, and evidence that following the change, the institution continues to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

It is the institution’s responsibility to demonstrate the effect of a substantive change on the quality, integrity, capacity, and effectiveness of the total institution. Substantive changes must

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9 34 C.F.R. § 602.15(a)(3).
be approved by the Substantive Change Committee prior to implementation. The Committee will not approve a substantive change to be effective on a date prior to its action on the substantive change. The approval of a substantive change application will be effective on the date the Substantive Change Committee votes affirmatively to approve the change.

The Commission publishes a Substantive Change Manual that describes the approval process. Institutions seeking approval for a substantive change should note that substantive change applications are subject to review, on the basis of specific evaluation criteria below, and on the impact of the change on the institution’s ability to sustain compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

The institution’s accreditation will be extended to areas affected by the change upon review and approval by the Substantive Change Committee. Any substantive change approval may include the requirement for a Follow-Up Report and team visit to address specific issues identified by the Substantive Change Committee and to verify that the institution remains in compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies as the program implementation moves forward.

POLICY ELEMENTS

I. Timing Considerations for a Substantive Change Application

Substantive change approval is needed before an applicable change can be implemented and before affected students can qualify for federal financial aid. Thus, prior to approval, the change may not be represented or advertised as a part of the institutional accreditation.

Accredited institutions seeking substantive change are aware of and, per Standard I.C.12, have committed to remaining in compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies at all times. A substantive change application is timely when the institution has progressed in its planning to a point where it is able to demonstrate and provide evidence that the change meets Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies and any specific evaluation criteria.

In the following circumstances, institutions may not submit a substantive change application:

- In the six-month period preceding a comprehensive evaluation team visit.
- During the period that an institution is on a sanction such as Warning, Probation, or Show Cause until the conditions that resulted in a sanction have been resolved and the Commission has reaffirmed accreditation. If the sanction includes a specific recommendation which cites as a non-compliance the institution’s failure to seek substantive change approval of an existing program, delivery mode, or location, then, to the extent of that recommendation only, the institution may proceed with a substantive change application.
- If the institution is subject to withdrawal of accreditation, pending the outcome of administrative remedies.

10 34 C.F.R. § 602.22.
II. Changes Classified as Substantive Changes

Substantive changes include, but are not limited to, the following: 11

A. Change in Mission, Objectives, Scope, or Name of the Institution

- Change in the mission or character of the institution; if the mission or character of the institution becomes dramatically different, the Commission reserves the right to require the institution to complete the eligibility, candidacy, and initial accreditation process
- Change in the degree level from that which was previously offered by the institution, i.e., offering a degree at a level higher than the accredited institution offers currently
- Change in the official name of the institution
- Merger of two separately-accredited ACCJC institutions into a single institution
- Reduction of programs to an extent that the institution’s mission cannot be accomplished

B. Change in the Nature of the Constituency Served

- Change in the intended student population
- Closure of an institution or loss of State authorization or licensure for the institution or a program, withdrawal of or from accreditation if such withdrawal will result in closure 12
- Closure of a location geographically apart from the main campus at which students can complete at least 50% of an educational program
- Courses or programs offered outside the geographic region currently served

C. Change in the Location or Geographic Area Served

- Move of the institution to a new location or an addition of a location, geographically apart from the main campus, where students can complete 50% or more of a program. The Substantive Change Committee will determine if an institution applying for substantive change for a new location requires a visit to the site. Considerations related to an additional or new location include the following:
  - The institution must have the fiscal and administrative capacity to operate the additional location. If required, a visit will be arranged within six months of review to an additional or new location the institution establishes. The purpose of the site visit is to verify that the location has the personnel, facilities, and resources the institution claimed to have in its substantive change application.
  - The Substantive Change Committee may not approve an institution’s addition of locations after the institution undergoes a change in ownership resulting in a change of control 13 until the institution demonstrates that it meets the conditions for the Commission to pre-approve additional locations 14

11 Please note that although some change at an institution may not warrant substantive change review, the institution should still take all necessary steps to ensure the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies related to that change are being met.
12 See the Policy on Closing an Institution for further discussion of requirements related to closing an institution and teach-out plans for institutional or programmatic closures.
13 as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 600.3.1
14 34 C.F.R. §602.22(a)(2)(viii)(D)
D. Change in the Control or Legal Status of the Institution

- Change in the form of control, legal status, or ownership of the institution
- Merger with another institution
- Separation of one unit of the institution into separate institutions, dividing an institution into two or more separately controlled and accredited units, or a change of an off-campus site into a separate institution
- Acquisition of any other institution or program or location of another institution, and/or the addition of a permanent location at the site of a teach-out the institution is conducting

E. Change in Courses or Programs or their Mode of Delivery that Represents a Significant Departure from Current Practice

- Change in the mode or location of courses when the change constitutes 50% or more of a program, degree or certificate. This includes the following:
  - Courses offered at a new or different location;
  - Courses offered through distance education or correspondence education;
  - Course additions that constitute 50% or more of a program.
- Addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure from existing offerings of educational programs or methods of delivery from those offered when the institution was last evaluated
- Addition of programs at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution’s current accreditation

F. Change in Credit Awarded

- Substantial increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for the successful completion of a program
- Change from clock hours to credit hours

G. Implementation of Direct Assessment

- Change of an instructional program from clock hours or credit hours, to direct assessment of student learning. A program must obtain USED approval as a direct assessment program

H. Implementation of a Baccalaureate Degree Program

- Instructional program that leads to the award of a baccalaureate degree
- Additional area of emphasis within a baccalaureate degree program of study
- Designation of a minor which can be awarded in association with a baccalaureate degree

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15 See also Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations
16 See the Policy on Direct Assessment of Learning
17 See 34 C.F.R. § 668.10
18 See the Policy on Accreditation of Baccalaureate Degrees for specific standards and policies which must be addressed, as well as additional specific evaluation criteria.

Appendix A: Policy on Substantive Change
I. Contractual Relationship with a Non-Regionally-Accredited Organization

- More than 25% of one or more of the accredited institution’s educational programs is offered by the non-regionally-accredited organization\(^\text{19}\)

III. Circumstances that May Require Reports and Evaluation

A. Special Report and/or Visit

As a result of a substantive change application or Review, circumstances may come to the attention of the Substantive Change Committee that may cause the Committee to recommend to the Commission that a special report is needed to be submitted by an institution. This report may be followed by a visit. These circumstances are:

- Information that reveals or indicates a significant departure from Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies;
- evidence of unethical practices;
- closure of a program or institution due to loss of State authorization or licensing;
- lack of effective educational policies and practices; or
- other circumstances or the accumulation of changes wherein the Commission concludes the institution, to which it granted accreditation, has effectively ceased to operate under the conditions upon which accreditation is granted.

B. Comprehensive Institutional Evaluations

Major substantive changes may cause the Substantive Change Committee to decide that a Comprehensive Evaluation is required.\(^\text{20}\) Comprehensive Evaluations will include a visit by a Comprehensive Evaluation Team and a Commission evaluation and decision. Situations which may trigger this determination include:

- Change of ownership/control/legal status during the process of reaffirmation of accreditation or candidacy status;
- complete or significant change in mission and/or a significant change of mission sought within two years of a change of ownership and change of control;
- any relocation coupled with a change of mission;
- a change of classification from an off-site location to a stand-alone institution;
- student indebtedness compared to program, job market, and salary;
- poor student graduation rates, program quality, performance and/or program outcomes;
- rapid growth in the number of sites where more than 50% of an educational program is offered;
- any change that results in the transition to a primarily distance education institution; or
- other circumstances or the accumulation of changes as determined by the Substantive Change Committee.

\(^{19}\) 34 C.F.R. § 602.22(a)(2)(vii)

\(^{20}\) 34 C.F.R. § 602.22(a)(3) Comprehensive evaluations triggered by a major substantive change will proceed in the same manner as a regularly scheduled comprehensive evaluation, with an institutional self-evaluation report, evaluation team visit and evaluation team report, and action by the Commission on the accredited status of the institution.
IV. Actions on Substantive Change

The charge of the Substantive Change Committee is to ensure that any substantive changes meet the expectations of accreditation (the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies) and that implementation of the change will not adversely affect the institution’s capacity to continue to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The actions of the Committee are considered actions of a decision-making body on the accredited status of a member institution (as to the substantive changes). The review is rigorous and verifies compliance with expectations in Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

Informal communications and feedback by ACCJC staff with institutional representatives prior to committee review of the institution’s substantive change are intended to provide assistance to colleges as they progress through the substantive change approval process, but staff do not predict the outcomes of the Committee decision.

The Substantive Change Committee may take the following actions:

**Approve the substantive change.** The institution has demonstrated that it meets the evaluation criteria.

**Approve the substantive change and require a Follow-Up Report with or without a visit, or a visit without an institutional report.** The institution meets the evaluation criteria, but the committee has specific questions (which don’t require deferral), decides general verification is needed of sustained practice, or has questions concerning further implementation stages. A visit timeline will be specified: 6-18 months. The Committee will review the Follow-Up Report and/or report of the visit.

**Provisionally approve a planned substantive change that is subject to a federally mandated site visit.** The institution’s submitted plans for a change of ownership, new location, or creation of a branch campus demonstrate future actions that will meet the evaluation criteria. The provisional approval allows the institution to move forward with steps of implementation in preparation for seeking approval of the substantive change. The provisional approval may include a site visit. The provisional approval must state a date, not to exceed three years, by which the change must be approved for inclusion in the institution’s accreditation. If that time is exceeded, then the substantive change request process must be initiated anew. A new location which requires a federally mandated site visit cannot be provisionally approved if there has been a change in ownership since the institution has successfully had three new locations approved by substantive change. The Committee may require additional reports or visits before the approval is final.

**Defer pending additional information.** Consideration of the request cannot move forward without receipt of additional information demonstrating the evaluation criteria are met.

**Deny the substantive change.** The institution has not demonstrated that the change meets the evaluation criteria.

**Refer the proposed change to the Commission.** The substantive change application can be referred by the Substantive Change Committee to the Commission when it has determined there may be the need for a comprehensive evaluation or for a special report and visit. The evaluation of the institution’s substantive change Follow-Up Report and/or visit may also be
Appendix A: Policy on Substantive Change

referred to the Commission when deemed appropriate for review by the full Commission. The Committee’s referral to the Commission will include the reasons for such referral.

V. Substantive Change Actions Involving Federally Mandated Visits

Federal regulations require that certain substantive changes include a site visit as part of the approval. Generally, visits are required when there is an additional location where at least 50% of a program is offered, when a branch campus is established, or when there is a change in ownership that results in a change of control.

A. New location where at least 50% of an educational program is offered

When there is a change that constitutes 50% or more of a program, certificate, or degree, at a new location, a federally-mandated site visit is required. The purpose of the visit is to verify that the information provided by the institution in its substantive change application was accurate and complete. It is also used to verify that the actions implemented align with the plans that received provisional approval by the committee. Visits must take place no later than six months after the substantive change approval.

A federally mandated site visit is required if the institution has:

- Three or fewer additional locations;
- not demonstrated that it has a record of effective educational oversight of additional locations;
- been placed on Warning, Probation, or Show Cause;
- rapid growth in the number of additional locations (more than 20%) within one year.

A federally mandated site visit is not required for a new location if there are findings that the institution has met the conditions below and that the evidence demonstrates it has clearly identified academic control; regular evaluation of the locations; adequate faculty, facilities, resources, and academic and student support systems; financial stability; and long-range planning for expansion. The conditions for an exemption from a federally mandated site visit include:

- The institution has successfully completed one cycle of accreditation (comprehensive evaluation—midterm review—comprehensive evaluation) and has achieved reaffirmation of accreditation; and
- has at least three additional locations that were previously approved by the accreditor; and
- has a demonstrated record of effective oversight of additional locations; and
- the institution is not on sanction.

B. Branch campus

Substantive Change uses the federal regulation definition of a branch campus. Federal regulations define a branch campus as a location of an institution that is geographically

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\[34 \text{C.R.} \S \text{602.22(c)}\]  
\[34 \text{CFR} \S\text{600.2}\]
apart and independent of the main campus of that institution. The branch location of an institution is independent if it (1) is permanent in nature; (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential; (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority. An institution must provide a business plan in advance of establishing a branch campus (describing the educational programs, the projected revenues/expenditures/cash flow, the operation, management and physical resources of the branch campus). Approval (accreditation) can only be given after determining the campus has sufficient educational, financial, operational, management, and physical resources. There must be a site visit as soon as possible after the campus is established, in any case no longer than six months after.

C. Change of ownership

Changes in the ownership of an institution which result in a change of control are subject to federally mandated site visits. The Substantive Change Committee can designate the effective date of its approval as being the date of the actual change, so long as the Committee decision is within 30 days of that change of ownership. There must be a site visit as soon as possible after the change takes effect, in no case later than six months after the change.

23 The campus will be deemed to be established when classes are first offered after the criteria for independence are met.
Appendix B: Brief Descriptions of Selected Policies

The Commission policies summarized below are particularly relevant to specific types of substantive changes such as conducting courses through new distance learning modes, contracting with other agencies for the delivery of educational programs, sharing functions with a related entity, and closing programs or colleges. These and other relevant policies are found in the Accreditation Reference Handbook.

The “Policy on Award of Credit” details the requirements and expectations for awarding credit at a member institution. The Accreditation Standards require that the units awarded be consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms in higher education. In addition, institutions increasingly are providing more varied educational experiences as a means for students to earn college credits such as distance education, independent study, group project work, study abroad, work-experience, transfer of credits from other institutions, credit by examination, and through direct assessment programs. Institutional policy and practice in award of credit must assure the integrity of credit awarded to all educational experiences.

The “Policy on Closing an Institution” includes requirements of provisions for student completion of programs and transfer to other institutions, academic records, financial aid, faculty and staff, and completion of institutional financial obligations.

The “Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations” details the controls institutions must have in place when contracting with another entity to provide courses or programs. The policy provides guidance for contract content.

In the “Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education” the Commission recognizes that most institutions will make use of the growing range of systems for delivery of instruction, including various electronic means. The policy is based on principles of good practice to help assure that distance learning is characterized by the same concerns for quality, integrity, and effectiveness that apply to more traditional modes of instruction.

The “Policy on Institutions with Related Entities” is intended to ensure that accreditors receive appropriate assurances and sufficient information and documentation to determine whether such institutions comply with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (together Commission’s Standards). It addresses change of ownership and details the specific information that is needed in addition to information required by the Policy on Substantive Change or other policies.

The “Policy on Interregional Policies on the Accreditation of Institutions Operating Across Regions” includes policies based upon the premises that the home region should be demonstrably accountable for its accreditation decisions affecting institutions operating in host regions and that the host region has a legitimate interest in the quality of institutions from other regions operating within its jurisdiction. These policies address the evaluation and procedures for accreditation of institutions operating inter-regionally.
Appendix C:
Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education

Background
Recognizing that most accredited institutions are making use of the growing range of modalities for delivery of instructional and educational programs and services, including various electronic means, the Commission has adopted a policy based on principles of good practice to help ensure that distance learning is characterized by the same expectations for quality, integrity, and effectiveness that apply to more traditional modes of instruction.

This policy reflects the federal regulatory requirements regarding distance education and correspondence education.

Definition of Distance Education (34 C.F.R. § 602.3.)
Distance Education means:
Education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include:

(1) The internet;
(2) one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
(3) audio-conferencing; or
(4) video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3).

Definition of Correspondence Education (34 C.F.R. § 602.3.)
Correspondence Education means:

(1) Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor
(2) Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student
(3) Correspondence courses are typically self-paced
(4) Correspondence education is not distance education
Policy
Commission policy specifies that all learning opportunities provided by accredited institutions must have equivalent quality, accountability, and focus on student outcomes, regardless of mode of delivery. This policy provides a framework that allows institutions the flexibility to adapt their delivery modes to the emerging needs of students and society while maintaining quality. Any institution offering courses and programs through distance education or correspondence education is expected to meet the requirements of accreditation in each of its courses and programs and at each of its sites.

Policy Elements

- Development, implementation, and evaluation of all courses and programs, including those offered via distance education or correspondence education, must take place within the institution's total educational mission.
- Institutions are expected to control development, implementation, and evaluation of all courses and programs offered in their names, including those offered via distance education or correspondence education.
- Institutions are expected to have clearly defined and appropriate student learning outcomes for all courses and programs, including those delivered through distance education or correspondence education.
- Institutions are expected to provide the resources and structure needed to accomplish these outcomes and to demonstrate that their students achieve these outcomes through application of appropriate assessment.
- Institutions are expected to provide the Commission advance notice of intent to initiate a new delivery mode, such as distance education or correspondence education, through the substantive change process.
- Institutions are expected to provide the Commission advance notice of intent to offer a program, degree or certificate in which 50% or more of the courses are via distance education or correspondence education, through the substantive change process. For purposes of this requirement, the institution is responsible for calculating the percentage of courses that may be offered through distance or correspondence education.
- Institutions which offer distance education or correspondence education must have processes in place through which the institution establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence course or program is the same person who participates every time in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. This requirement will be met if the institution verifies the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the institution's discretion, such methods as a secure log-in and password, proctored examinations, other technologies and/or practices that are developed and effective in verifying each student's identification. The institution must also publish policies that ensure the protection of student privacy and will notify students at the time of class registration of any charges associated with verification of student identity. 34 C.F.R. § 602.17(g).

24 See Addendum: WCET Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education Version 2.0, June 2009.
This list of best practice strategies is based on "Institutional Policies/Practices and Course Design Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education," produced by WCET in February 2009 and updated in April 2009. In May 2009, the Instructional Technology Council (ITC) surveyed its membership to invite feedback and additional strategies to enhance the WCET work. This June 2009 document reflects the combined contributions of WCET, the UT TeleCampus of the University of Texas System, and ITC. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 United States license.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT

1. Establish a campus-wide policy on academic integrity that articulates faculty and student responsibilities.
2. Demonstrate an institutional commitment to enforcing the policy and in supporting faculty and staff in the handling of academic integrity matters.
3. Make information on academic integrity easy to find on the campus Web site, library Web site, department Web site, course, within the syllabus and within specific assignments.
4. Include ethics instruction within the core curriculum and/or area-specific within degree plans.
5. Address academic integrity at student orientation programs and events.
6. Encourage faculty to report every suspected violation and act upon it.
7. Secure student logins and password to access online courses and related resources, discussions, assignments and assessments.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. State the academic integrity/academic honesty policy within the online learning environment and discuss it early in the course.
2. Require student engagement with the academic integrity policy. For example:
   a. Ask students for their input on how to create a community of integrity at the start of the course. This establishes the students as stakeholders in the community and the process of its formation.
   b. Develop and ask students to commit to a class honor code.
   c. Require students to read and sign an agreement to the campus academic integrity policy.
   d. Write a letter to students about integrity and post it in the course.
   e. Ask students to restate the academic integrity policy (this can also be used as a writing sample to use when grading and reviewing student work).
   f. Ask students to reflect on the academic integrity policy in the discussion board.
   g. Include a lesson on avoiding plagiarism.
3. Have assignments and activities in which appropriate sharing and collaboration is essential to successful completion. Foster a community of integrity by choosing authentic learning tasks that require group cohesiveness and effort. For example, focus assignments on distinctive, individual, and non-duplicative tasks or on what individual students self-identify as their personal learning needs.
4. Provide students with a course or course lesson on research and/or study skills. Work with library staff to design assignments and prepare materials on plagiarism and research techniques.

Appendix C: Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education
5. Include a statement that the instructor reserves the right to require alternative forms and/or locations of assessments (e.g., proctoring).
6. Ask students follow-up questions to assignments such as, “expand upon this statement you made,” “tell me why you chose this phrase, description or reference,” and “expand upon the ideas behind this reference.”
7. Select one or two difficult concepts from the paper and ask the student to restate/rewrite the information.
8. Require students to share key learning from references for a paper or self-reflection on an assignment in the discussion board.
9. Include an ethical decision-making case study within the course.

FACULTY SUPPORT
1. Incorporate academic integrity strategies into professional development and faculty training offerings.
2. Publish academic integrity strategies and policies in faculty handbook and Web-based faculty resources.
3. Publish guidelines for handling/reporting individual student infractions.
4. Assign a department academic integrity liaison to support faculty.
5. Use a plagiarism detection service.
6. Use Google to search for a unique text string or unique phrase from the paper.
7. Keep student papers filed in the department by topic for reference.

STUDENT SUPPORT
1. Define academic integrity and cheating and clearly explain what is considered dishonest and unacceptable behavior.
2. Provide information and examples to help students understand the difference between collaboration on assignments and cheating, and identify plagiarism. Teach the proper use of citations.
3. State how much collaboration is permissible on each assignment.
4. State what the instructor’s expectations are for the students and explain what they should expect from the instructor. For example:

   a. Include a statement in the syllabus encouraging honest work.
   b. Repeat the campus academic integrity statement and provide a link to campus policies.
   c. Describe academic dishonesty.
   d. Describe the repercussions for academic dishonesty.
   e. Describe permissible and impermissible collaboration.
   f. Include outside links to information on plagiarism, self-tests and examples.
   g. Include information on acceptable sources.
   h. Include information about the college’s writing center, library or other support.
5. Provide a writing style sheet or handbook with information on plagiarism and campus policies.
6. Indicate assessments may require follow-up documentation, questions or assignments.
7. State expectations for the time needed to complete coursework.
8. State whether the instructor/college will use a plagiarism detection service.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
1. Provide rubrics, or detailed grading criteria, for every assignment at the beginning of the course so students understand how they will be graded.
2. Train faculty on ways to use the settings on the college’s learning management system to reduce cheating:
   a. Use a test bank with more questions than will be used on any particular test and have the learning management system pull a smaller number of questions from the test bank
   b. Randomize the order of answers for multiple test questions so for example, the correct answer for a particular question might be “a” for one student and “b” for another.
   c. Require forced completion on exams so students cannot re-enter a test.
   d. Set a short window for testing completion, i.e. one or two days to take an exam rather than a whole week. Setting a completion time reduces a student’s ability to access the test, look up the answer, and re-enter the test.

\[1\] The ACCJC recommends the use of any appropriate search engine.
Most test-taking software applications keep track of time on the server, not on the student's computer.

e. Password protect exams.

f. Show questions one at a time (makes more difficult for students to copy and paste the test in order to give it to someone else).

g. Use a Web browser lock-down service during testing.

h. Check the computer "properties" for the "creation date" and "author" for essay or term paper submissions if students are suspected of submitting work created by someone else.

3. Clarify that students with disabilities and requesting testing accommodations (extended time for completion of examinations and quizzes) must identify themselves to the college's office of disabilities and provide appropriate documentation.

4. Change test items and assignment topics each semester.

5. Emphasize assignments that require written work and problem solving (e.g., essays, papers, online discussions).

6. Use a variety of assessment strategies (quizzes, short and long papers, test questions that require the application of a theory or concept).

7. Adopt the following practices to encourage authentic written work:

a. Require students to turn in copies of reference articles with cited text highlighted.

b. Require annotated bibliographies.

c. Do not allow last minute changes in assignment topics.

d. Require specific references be used (this might be the course text).

e. Require an abstract.

f. Give narrow assignment topics (tied into class experience) and require thesis statements prior to topic approval.

g. Require students to turn in a draft, and their bibliography or references prior to the paper's due date.

h. Require students to write a concept paper and project plan prior to completing an assignment.

8. Evaluate the research process and the product.

9. After an assignment is due, have students post in the discussion board, describing the assignment and the research method used, a summary of conclusions and an abstract (a meta-learning essay).

10. When evaluating student written work, consider following these practices:

a. Be wary of student writing that reads like an encyclopedia, newspaper article or expert in the field.

b. Look for whether a paper reflects the assignment, has changes in tense, includes odd sentences within a well-written paper, is based on references older than three years, refers to past events as current, or uses jargon.

c. Compare student writing on the discussion board with that on assignments and papers. A writing sample collected at the start of the semester can be helpful.

d. Compare the writing at the beginning and end of the paper with that in the middle of the paper -- language, sentence length and reading level.

e. Check references; compare quotations with cited sources; look for the same author in multiple references.

f. Read all papers on the same topic together.

11. Make assignments cumulative (students turn in parts of a project or paper throughout the semester).


13. Other than grades, do not provide students feedback on tests until all of the students in the class have completed them.

14. Use proctored test sites where appropriate.

15. Faculty should use a robust user name and password to protect their computer-based grade book and keep a printed copy in a secure place in case students are able to hack into the computer system.
SOURCES

"101 Ways to Maintain Academic Integrity in an Online Course," by Michael Anderson and Lori McNabb, UT TeleCampus, The University of Texas System. Handout for faculty development program.


WCET Survey on Academic Integrity and Student Verification, August 2008.


Instructional Technology Council Survey on Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education, May 2009.
Appendix D: Clock-to-Credit-Hour Conversion Requirements

General

- Are in §668.8(k) and (l), October 29, 2010 program integrity final regulations, p. 66949-66950 (preamble: pp. 66854-66857)
- Is an exception to the credit-hour definition that applies for purposes of the title IV, HEA programs
- Modified regulations—
  - the requirements for when an institution must use clock hours for undergraduate programs, and
  - the standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions

Clock Hour Only: not eligible for conversion – §668.8(k)(2)

- Section 668.8(k)(2) applies to degree and non-degree programs.
- The program is required to be measured in clock hours for Federal or State approval except if required for only a limited component of the program.
- Completing clock hours is a requirement for licensure to practice an occupation except if required for a limited component of the program.
- The credit hours awarded are not in compliance with the definition of a credit hour.
- The institution does not provide the clock hours that are the basis for credit hours and does not require attendance in those hours in the case of a program that might otherwise qualify to do conversion to credit hours.

No Conversion required – §668.8(k)(1)

- Unless §668.8(k)(2) applies, an undergraduate program may use credit hours as defined in §600.2 without applying the conversion formula if—
  a) The program is at least two academic years in length and provides an associate degree, a bachelor's degree, a professional degree, or an equivalent degree as determined by the Secretary; or
  b) The program is a non-degree program with
     - each course in the program being fully acceptable toward a degree program at the institution; and
     - the institution able to demonstrate that students enroll in, and graduate from, that degree program.
- A program not meeting a) or b) must use the conversion formula or use clock hours.

New Conversion Ratios – §668.8(l)(1)

- One semester or trimester credit hour is equal to at least 37.5 clock hours.
- One quarter credit hour is equal to at least 25 clock hours.
New Conversion Ratios Exception – §668.8(l)(2)

- Is an exception to new ratios for programs that demonstrate that the credit hours meet new definition and there are no deficiencies identified by accreditor, or if applicable State approving agency

- Must base evaluation on individual coursework components of a program, e.g., classroom study versus practical or labs with little outside study

- Regardless, must meet these minimums:
  - One semester or trimester credit hour is equal to at least 30 clock hours.
  - One quarter credit hour is equal to at least 20 clock hours.

Conversion Case Study (to semester hours)

- A program with 720 clock hours consists of
  - five classroom courses with 120 clock hours each, and
  - a 120 clock-hour externship with no out-of-class student work.

- The institution determines that for
  - the first three classroom courses, a student generally is required to perform 40 hours of out-of-class work for each course, and
  - The last two classroom courses have eight hours of out-of-class work for each course.

- Two options
  - Default option: convert only based on clock hours and ignore any out-of-class work
  - Full formula option: take into account both clock hours and out-of-class work to determine the maximum allowable credit hours
  - Four possible outcomes depending on institutional policy for method and rounding: 19.2 or 18 using default option and 22.026 or 21 using full formula option

- Default option: use the default 37.5 clock hours per semester hour, ignoring the out-of-class work [conversion must be course by course]
  \[ \frac{120}{37.5} = 3.2 \text{ semester hours per course} \] (3, always round down course-by-course)
  - Converted program = 3.2 * 6 = 19.2 semester hours (or 3 * 6 = 18 semester hours, if rounding)

- Full formula option
  Illustrates:
  - Must evaluate on individual coursework components of a program
  - Total clock hours and out-of-class student work is irrelevant
  - Must meet limitation for the minimum number of clock hours per credit hour in addition to out-of-class work
  - Excess out-of-class student work per credit hour does not carry over between courses or educational activities in a program
  - Use exact calculation including any fractions of credit hours or round down any fraction, including a fraction equal to or greater than \( \frac{1}{2} \)
  - Rounding on individual course or educational activity, not on the total
Full Formula Option

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course #1 (40 hours of actual out-of-class student work)</th>
<th>In-class clock hours</th>
<th>Allowable out-of-class prep hours</th>
<th>Total clock and prep hours</th>
<th>Semester hours</th>
<th>Semester hours (rounded)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>7.5 * 4 = 30</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(A), (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course #2 (40 hours of actual out-of-class student work)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>7.5 * 4 = 30</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(A), (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course #3 (40 hours of actual out-of-class student work)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>7.5 * 4 = 30</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(A), (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course #4 (8 hours of actual out-of-class student work)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3.413</td>
<td>3 (B), (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course #5 (8 hours of actual out-of-class student work)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3.413</td>
<td>3 (B), (D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Externship (no out-of-class student work)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3 (E)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total clock hours and out-of-class student work (amount not relevant)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>826</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total semester hours if no rounding: 22.026
Total semester hours if rounding (must round down any fractions to ensure no overawards): 21

NOTES:

Limitation: the rules do not allow more than 7.5 hours of out-of-class prep for every 30 hours in class

(A) 120 in-class hours divided by 30 hours = 4
There are 10 hours of out-of-class prep per 30 clock hours (40/4 = 10), but cannot have more than 7.5 (4 * 7.5 = 30)

(B) 120 in-class hours divided by 30 hours = 4
There are 7.5 or fewer hours of out-of-class prep per 30 clock hours (8/4 = 2), so use actual hours of out-of-class prep (8)

Semester hours per course

(C) 150 total clock and prep hours divided by 37.5 = 4
(D) 128 total clock and prep hours divided by 37.5 = 3.413
(E) 120 total clock hours divided by 37.5 = 3.2

August 2011
Appendix E: Guide for Preparing an ACCJC Baccalaureate Degree Substantive Change Proposal

Colleges that wish to apply for authorization to offer a baccalaureate degree through the Substantive Change process shall utilize the Protocol and Policy for the Addition of a Baccalaureate Degree. The college must meet all elements of the Protocol before approval will be granted.

In addition to addressing the Standards noted in the Protocol, the College shall also complete the substantive change application form, including Part I – General Questions and Part II – Program Specific Questions (Addition of a Baccalaureate Degree Program)

PROTOCOL AND POLICY ON THE ACCREDITATION OF BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

[Colleges that seek approval through the Substantive Change process must address all of the Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards identified in this Protocol. Upon institutional implementation of the baccalaureate degree, evaluators will examine the evidence provided by the college to support the Eligibility Requirements and Standards listed and determine that the college meets the Standards with respect to the baccalaureate degree.]

Eligibility Requirements

1. **Authority:** The institution is authorized or licensed to operate as a post-secondary educational institution and to award degrees by an appropriate governmental organization or agency as required by each of the jurisdictions or regions in which it operates.

   Private institutions, if required by the appropriate statutory regulatory body, must submit evidence of authorization, licensure, or approval by that body. If incorporated, the institution shall submit a copy of its articles of incorporation.

   Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

   - Authority requires that an institution be authorized or licensed as a post-secondary institution to award degrees. An institution wishing to gain approval for a baccalaureate degree will have to provide evidence of the institution’s authorization to offer the degree, as required by each of the jurisdictions or regions in which it operates.

   College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Eligibility Requirement and the associated criterion.

Accreditation Standards

The Accreditation Standards listed below apply to the institution as a whole and to each baccalaureate program. As appropriate, the list includes criteria indicating how the Standards
specifically apply to baccalaureate programs. In addressing the Standards, the institution must also address and provide evidence of its practices for the baccalaureate program-specific evaluation criteria identified below.

**MISSION**

**Standard I.A. Mission:**

**Standard I.A.1.** *The mission describes the institution’s broad educational purposes, its intended student population, the types of degrees and other credentials it offers, and its commitment to student learning and student achievement.* (ER 6)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- Baccalaureate degrees generally extend beyond previously identified credentials, service areas, and intended student populations. Member institutions may need to make changes within the institutional mission to reflect these differences.
- The baccalaureate degree program must align with the institutional mission.
- Student demand for the baccalaureate degree should demonstrate its correlation with the institutional mission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Standard I.A.2:** *The institution uses data to determine how effectively it is accomplishing its mission, and whether the mission directs institutional priorities in meeting the educational needs of students.*

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The assessment of data, in addition to measuring institution effectiveness, must also demonstrate the effectiveness and success of the baccalaureate program.

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<tr>
<th>College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.</th>
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</table>

**Standard I.A.3:** *The institution’s programs and services are aligned with its mission. The mission guides institutional decision-making, planning, and resource allocation and informs institutional goals for student learning and achievement.*

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The baccalaureate program is clearly aligned with the institutional mission.
- The institution has included the baccalaureate degree in its decision making and planning processes, and in setting its goals for student learning and achievement.
ASSURING ACADEMIC QUALITY AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Standard I.B.2: The institution defines and assesses student learning outcomes for all instructional programs and student and learning support services. (ER 11)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:
- Student learning outcomes for upper division baccalaureate courses reflect higher levels of depth and rigor generally expected in higher education.
- Assessment must be accurate and distinguish the baccalaureate degree outcomes from those of other programs.

Standard I.B.3: The institution establishes institution-set standards for student achievement, appropriate to its mission, assesses how well it is achieving them in pursuit of continuous improvement, and publishes this information. (ER 11)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:
- The institution has institution-set standards for the baccalaureate program and assesses performance related to those standards. It uses this assessment to improve the quality of the baccalaureate program.
- Student achievement standards are separately identified and assessed for baccalaureate programs to distinguish them from associate degree programs.

Standard I.B.7: The institution regularly evaluates its policies and practices across all areas of the institution, including instructional programs, student and learning support services, resource management, and governance processes to assure their effectiveness in supporting academic quality and accomplishment of mission.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:
• The institutional evaluation policies and practices recognize the unique aspects and requirements of the baccalaureate program in relation to learning and student support services and resource allocation and management.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

**Standard I.C.1:** *The institution assures the clarity, accuracy, and integrity of information provided to students and prospective students, personnel, and all persons or organizations related to its mission statement, learning outcomes, educational programs, and student support services. The institution gives accurate information to students and the public about its accreditation status with all of its accreditors.* (ER 20)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

• Information related to baccalaureate programs are clear and accurate in all aspects of this Standard, especially in regard to learning outcomes, program requirements, and student support services.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard I.C.3:** *The institution uses documented assessment of student learning and evaluation of student achievement to communicate matters of academic quality to appropriate constituencies, including current and prospective students and the public.* (ER 19)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

• The assessment results of student learning and student achievement in the baccalaureate programs are used in the communication of academic quality.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard I.C.4:** *The institution describes its certificates and degrees in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected learning outcomes.*

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

• The purpose, content, course requirements and learning outcomes of the baccalaureate programs are clearly described.
**INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

**Standard II.A.1:** All instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education, are offered in fields of study consistent with the institution’s mission, are appropriate to higher education, and culminate in student attainment of identified student learning outcomes, and achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education programs. (ER 9 and ER 11)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The baccalaureate degree field of study aligns with the institutional mission.
- Student demand for the baccalaureate degree program demonstrates its correlation with the institutional mission.

**College:** Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard II.A.3:** The institution identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures. The institution has officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes. In every class section, students receive a course syllabus that includes learning outcomes from the institution’s officially approved course outline.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- Learning outcomes for baccalaureate courses, programs, and degrees are identified and assessed consistent with institutional processes.

**College:** Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard II.A.5:** The institution’s degrees and programs follow practices common to American higher education, including appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. The institution ensures that minimum degree requirements are 60 semester credits or equivalent at the associate level, and 120 credits or equivalent at the baccalaureate level. (ER 12)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:
A minimum of 40 semester credits or equivalent of total upper division coursework including the major and general education is required.

The academic credit awarded for upper division courses within baccalaureate programs is clearly distinguished from that of lower division courses.

The instructional level and curriculum of the upper division courses in the baccalaureate degree are comparable to those commonly accepted among like degrees in higher education and reflect the higher levels of knowledge and intellectual inquiry expected at the baccalaureate level.

Student expectations, including learning outcomes, assignments and examinations of the upper division courses demonstrate the rigor commonly accepted among like degrees in higher education.

The program length and delivery mode of instruction are appropriate for the expected level of rigor.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard II.A.6:** The institution schedules courses in a manner that allows students to complete certificate and degree programs within a period of time consistent with established expectations in higher education.\(^{25}\) (ER 9)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- Baccalaureate courses are scheduled to ensure that students will complete those programs in a reasonable period of time.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard II.A.9:** The institution awards course credit, degrees and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education. If the institution offers courses based on clock hours, it follows federal standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions. (ER 10)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

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\(^{25}\) Glossary- Established expectations in higher education (also, appropriate for, accepted in, common to, accepted norms in, etc.): shared and time honored principles, values and practices within the American community of higher education.
Baccalaureate degrees and the course credit in those programs are based on student learning outcomes. These outcomes are consistent with generally accepted norms and equivalencies in higher education, especially in relation to upper division courses.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard II.A.10:** The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission. (ER 10)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- Policies for student transfer into the baccalaureate program ensure that all program requirements are fulfilled, including completion of the minimum required semester units, prerequisites, experiential activities, and general education.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

**Standard II.A.11:** The institution includes in all of its programs, student learning outcomes, appropriate to the program level, in communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, the ability to engage diverse perspectives, and other program-specific learning outcomes.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- Student learning outcomes in baccalaureate programs are consistent with generally accepted norms in higher education and reflect the higher levels expected at the baccalaureate level.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.
Standard II.A.12: The institution requires of all of its degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy for both associate and baccalaureate degrees that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on faculty expertise, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum, based upon student learning outcomes and competencies appropriate to the degree level. The learning outcomes include a student’s preparation for and acceptance of responsible participation in civil society, skills for lifelong learning and application of learning, and a broad comprehension of the development of knowledge, practice, and interpretive approaches in the arts and humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences. (ER 12)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- At least 36 semester units or equivalent of lower and upper division general education is required, including at least nine semester units or equivalent of upper division general education coursework.
- At least nine semester units or equivalent of upper division general education coursework is required.
- The general education requirements are integrated and distributed to both lower division and upper division courses.
- The general education requirements are distributed across the major subject areas for general education; the distribution appropriately captures the baccalaureate level student learning outcomes and competencies.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

Standard II.A.13: All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. The identification of specialized courses in an area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core is based upon student learning outcomes and competencies, and include mastery, at the appropriate degree level, of key theories and practices within the field of study.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The baccalaureate degree programs include a focused study on one area of inquiry or discipline at the baccalaureate level and include key theories and practices appropriate to the baccalaureate degree level.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.
Standard II.A.14: Graduates completing career-technical certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment standards and other applicable standards and preparation for external licensure and certification

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The CTE baccalaureate degree ensures students will be able to meet employment standards and licensure or certification as required in the field of study.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

LIBRARY AND LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

Standard II.B.1: The institution supports student learning and achievement by providing library and other learning support services to students and to personnel responsible for student learning and support. These services are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to support educational programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education. Learning support services include, but are not limited to, library collections, tutoring, learning centers, computer laboratories, learning technology, and ongoing instruction for users of library and other learning support services.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- Learning support services to support the baccalaureate program are sufficient to support the quality, currency, rigor and depth of the baccalaureate degree and reflect the unique needs of this program.
- Resource collections are sufficient in regard to the rigor, currency, and depth expected of baccalaureate programs.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Standard II.C.6: The institution has adopted and adheres to admission policies consistent with its mission that specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs. The institution defines and advises students on clear pathways\(^{26}\) to complete degrees, certificate and transfer goals. (ER 16)

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\(^{26}\) Glossary- Pathways: The specific selection and progression of courses and learning experiences students pursue and complete and they progress in their education toward a certificate, degree, transfer, or other identified educational goal.
Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The prerequisites and other qualifications for the baccalaureate are appropriately communicated and applied to students.
- The advising of students related to the baccalaureate degree appropriately identifies course sequencing and pathways.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.</th>
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</table>

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Standard III.A.1:** The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing administrators, faculty and staff who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated and address the needs of the institution in serving its student population. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The job descriptions for faculty members teaching in the baccalaureate degree accurately reflect the duties and responsibilities associated with the position.

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<tr>
<th>College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.</th>
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</table>

**Standard III.A.2:** Faculty qualifications include knowledge of the subject matter and requisite skills for the service to be performed. Factors of qualification include appropriate degrees, professional experience, discipline expertise, level of assignment, teaching skills, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Faculty job descriptions include development and review of curriculum as well as assessment of learning. (ER 14)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The qualifications for faculty teaching upper division courses in the baccalaureate degree include the requirement for a master’s degree (or academic credentials at least one level higher than the baccalaureate degree) or doctoral degree, in an appropriate discipline.
- In cases where no master’s degree is available for the field of study, the qualifications for faculty teaching upper division courses in the baccalaureate degree include a bachelor’s degree in the discipline or closely related discipline, and a master’s degree in any discipline, and demonstrated industry work experience in the field for a minimum of six...
years, and commonly required industry-recognized certification or professional licensure.

- The Commission may require some faculty in non-career technical education baccalaureate programs to have the recognized terminal degree in the field of study.

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<tr>
<th>College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.</th>
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</table>

**Standard III.A.7**: The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty, which includes full-time faculty and may include part-time and adjunct faculty, to assure the fulfillment of faculty responsibilities essential to the quality of educational programs and services to achieve institutional mission and purposes.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- There is at least one full-time faculty member assigned to the baccalaureate program.

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<tr>
<th>College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.</th>
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</table>

**PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

**Standard III.B.3**: To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The facilities and other physical resources utilized by the baccalaureate program are evaluated for feasibility and effectiveness for the program on a regular basis.

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<th>College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.</th>
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**TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

**Standard III.C.1**: Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are appropriate and adequate to support the institution’s management and operational functions, academic programs, teaching and learning, and support services.
Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- Technology services, support, facilities, hardware and software utilized by the baccalaureate program are appropriate and adequate for the program.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Standard III.D.1: Financial resources are sufficient to support and sustain student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, allocation and reallocation, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. (ER 18)

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The financial resources allocated to the baccalaureate program are sufficient to support and sustain program student learning and effectiveness.
- Financial resources allocated to the baccalaureate program ensure the financial stability of the program.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.

DECISION-MAKING ROLES AND PROCESSES

Standard IV.A.4: Faculty and academic administrators, through policy and procedures, and through well-defined structures, have responsibility for recommendations about curriculum and student learning programs and services.

Specified Baccalaureate Degree Program Evaluation Criteria:

- The faculty and academic administrators assigned to the baccalaureate program have responsibility for making recommendations to appropriate governance and decision-making bodies about the curriculum, student learning programs, and services for the program.

College: Provide a description and supporting documentation demonstrating how the College meets this Standard and the associated criteria.
Catalog Requirements
The institution assures that the Catalog provides the following information about the baccalaureate degree program:

1. General Information
   - Course Program and Degree Offerings
   - Student Learning Outcomes for Programs and Degrees
2. Requirements for
   - Degrees, Certificates, Graduation, and Transfer

Commission Policies
In preparing its ISER, an institution with one or more ACCJC-accredited baccalaureate degrees must, for the evaluation criteria cited in the Checklist for Evaluating Institutional Compliance with Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies in the categories identified below, specifically address and provide evidence of its practices as to the baccalaureate degree and how those practices meet the criteria.

- Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement
- Credits, Program Length, and Tuition
- Transfer Policies
- Distance Education and Correspondence Education
- Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Substantive Change Application Form

Directions: This application should be submitted at least 45 days prior to the anticipated state date of the program. Applications must be complete and the required fees received in order to be scheduled for review.

Completed application and fees must be submitted to ACCJC, 10 Commercial Blvd, Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949 or accjc@accjc.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of application:</th>
<th>Intended starting date:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Name of institution:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<tr>
<td>City:</td>
<td>State:</td>
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27 See the Checklist for Evaluating Institutional Compliance with Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies for articulation of the evaluation criteria.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of application and description of proposal:</th>
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<td>ALO Name</td>
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<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Contact Name</td>
<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
<th>Required fee:</th>
<th>(see attached fee schedule)</th>
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Fees must be paid before any review of a substantive change proposal.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of change</th>
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<tr>
<td>Change in courses or programs or their current mode of delivery that represents a significant departure from current practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>New program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance education: 50% or more of a program that can be completed through distance education (potential de program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance education: program that is intended to be completed through distance education (intentional de program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Correspondence education: 50% or more of a program that can be completed through correspondence education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course additions that comprise 50% or more of a program (significant departure from current practice)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in credit awarded (increase or decrease in clock or credit hours or change from clock hours to credit hours or credit hours to clock hours)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Change in location or geographic area served.</th>
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<tr>
<td>New off-campus instructional site where 50% or more of a program’s credits are offered or a move of an institution to a new location.</td>
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<td>Site name:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<td>City</td>
<td>State</td>
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<th>Control or legal status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in the control or legal status of the institution</td>
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<tr>
<th>Direct assessment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of direct assessment</td>
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<tr>
<th>Contractual relationship</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contractual relationship with a non-regionally accredited organization</td>
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### Fee Schedule:

The current ACCJC Fee Schedule should be consulted for current fees applicable to substantive changes. Each major type of substantive change noted above (italics) is subject to a separate substantive change fee.
Part I: GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Requested Change: Briefly describe the change for which the institution is seeking approval including the planned timeline for implementation.

2. Approvals: Has the institution received all necessary internal and external approvals? Provide appropriate evidence that approval has been granted.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal (Curriculum, Board)</td>
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<tr>
<td>System/State Approvals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Approvals (as Required)</td>
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Evidence of approvals (list as appropriate):
### Part II: PROPOSAL SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

#### NEW PROGRAM

**Section A: Description of the Change Requested**

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<tr>
<th>Program name: Include the name of the program, degree or level (if applicable), and CIP Code</th>
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<th>Total credit hours:</th>
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<th>Proposed date for initiation of program:</th>
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<th>Target audience of program:</th>
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**Section B: Institutional Planning for Program Change**

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<th>Briefly describe the planning process to determine the rationale and need for the new program.</th>
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<th>Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Identify the impact that the proposed program on physical facilities and equipment. What, if any, new facilities or equipment are required to implement the new program?</th>
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<tr>
<th>Describe the assessment that was used to determine the need for the program. Identify the market that supports the addition of the new program. For CTE programs, what labor market data supports this program? (Documentation submitted in conjunction with an application for State approval of the program should be included.)</th>
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<tr>
<th>What is the expected impact of this program? What benefits will result from this change? What is the impact on enrollment and how will the institution accommodate that growth?</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
What is the financial impact of this program? Does the institution have sufficient financial resources to support this program? Provide a three-year projection of revenues and expenses associated with the program. Provide documentation to demonstrate that the institution has sufficient fiscal and administrative capacity to oversee and assure the quality of the proposed change.

Section C: Curriculum and Instructional Design

List the program course requirements including name, course descriptions, and unit values:

Identify the program learning outcomes for the program:

Describe how the program learning outcomes will be assessed:

Identify the institution-set standards applicable to the program:

Describe the administrative oversight and program review process used to ensure program quality.

Section D: Institutional Staffing, Faculty

What faculty will be assigned to the program and are they qualified and sufficient to support the program.

What, if any, support staff will be assigned to the program and are they sufficient to support the program.

What professional development is planned to effect and sustain this change.
What management oversight exists to ensure the continued quality and success of the program?

Section E: Student Support

Describe the programs, services, and activities which will support student enrolled in the new program.

Section F: Library and Learning Resources

What library and information resources (general and specific) exist to support the program?

Section G: Evaluation

Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the program.

Describe the process for assessing and improving student learning, including student persistence and completion, in the new program.

Section H: Appendices
Part II: PROPOSAL SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
DISTANCE EDUCATION – POTENTIAL PROGRAM

[This substantive change process is required when individual course changes (adding distance education as an approved modality) raise the potential that more than 50% of a program can be completed through distance education]

Section A: Description of the Change Requested

| Identify the programs impacted by this change (programs that have the potential that 50% or more of the program can be completed through distance education) |
| Describe how the distance education courses and the impacted programs will be monitored and evaluated. How is this evaluation process integrated into institutional assessment processes? |
| How is administrative oversight conducted for distance education? |
| How is student attendance in distance education courses monitored? |
| Describe the process to authenticate student identity to demonstrate that the student who participates is the same as the person who received credit. |
| How does the institution ensure that there is regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty in distance education courses (34 CFR §602.3) |

Section B: Institutional Planning for Program Change

<p>| Briefly describe the planning process to determine the rationale and need for the adoption of distance education. |
| Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide student success, retention, and achievement data</td>
<td>that compares these factors for face-to-face and distance education courses and programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe how student readiness is addressed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the physical facilities and equipment needed to deliver programs in distance education. What, if any, new facilities or equipment are required to implement?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the delivery systems and modes of instruction (technology and software). How do these systems meet student learning needs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the expected impact of this change? What benefits will result from this change? What is the impact on enrollment and how will the institution accommodate that growth?</td>
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<td>What is the financial impact of this change? Does the institution have sufficient financial resources to support this change? Provide a three-year projection of revenues and expenses associated with the program. Provide documentation to demonstrate that the institution has sufficient fiscal and administrative capacity to oversee and assure the quality of the proposed change.</td>
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</table>
Part III. Institutional Questions.

Section A: Institutional Staffing, Faculty

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What faculty will be assigned to implement the planned change and are they qualified and sufficient to support the change.</td>
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<td>What, if any, support staff will be assigned to the planned change and are they sufficient to support the change.</td>
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<td>What professional development is planned to effect and sustain this change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What management oversight exists to ensure the continued quality and success of the change?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Section B: Student Support

Describe the programs, services, and activities which will support students impacted by this change.

Section C: Library and Learning Resources

What library and information resources (general and specific) exist to support the change?

Section D: Evaluation

Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the change after implementation.

Describe the process for assessing and improving student learning, including student persistence and completion, in the areas impacted by the change.
Section E: Appendices
Part II: PROPOSAL SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
DISTANCE EDUCATION – INTENTIONAL PROGRAM

(This substantive change process is required when a program is designed and intended to be completed through distance education)

Section A: Description of the Change Requested

| Identify the programs impacted by this change (programs that are designed so that 75% or more of the program will be completed through distance education) |
| Describe how the distance education courses and the impacted programs will be monitored and evaluated. How is this evaluation process integrated into institutional assessment processes? |
| How is administrative oversight conducted for distance education for this program? |
| How is student attendance in distance education courses monitored? |
| Describe the process to authenticate student identity to demonstrate that the student who participates is the same as the person who received credit. |
| How does the institution ensure that there is regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty in distance education courses (34 CFR §602.3) |

Section B: Institutional Planning for Program Change

| Describe the planning process used to determine the rationale and need for the adoption of distance education for this program. |
| Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution. |
Describe how student readiness is addressed. What strategies has the institution developed to ensure student success in the distance education mode when that is the primary mode for the delivery of the program?

What provisions have been made by the institution to ensure that all necessary student support services are available to students enrolled in this program?

Provide student success, retention, and achievement data that compares these factors for face-to-face and distance education courses and programs.

Describe the physical facilities and equipment needed to deliver programs in distance education. What, if any, new facilities or equipment are required to implement?

Describe the delivery systems and modes of instruction (technology and software). How do these systems meet student learning needs?

What is the expected impact of this change? What benefits will result from this change? What is the impact on enrollment and how will the institution accommodate that growth?

What is the financial impact of this change? Does the institution have sufficient financial resources to support this change? Provide a three-year projection of revenues and expenses associated with the program. Provide documentation to demonstrate that the institution has sufficient fiscal and administrative capacity to oversee and assure the quality of the proposed change.
Part III. INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

Section A: Institutional Staffing, Faculty

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Section B: Student Support

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<td>Describe the programs, services, and activities which will support students impacted by this change.</td>
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Section C: Library and Learning Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What library and information resources (general and specific) exist to support the change?</td>
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Section D: Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<td>Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the change after implementation.</td>
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<td>Describe the process for assessing and improving student learning, including student persistence and completion, in the areas impacted by the change.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Section E: Appendices
Part II: TOPIC SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
NEW OFF-CAMPUS LOCATION WHERE 50% OR MORE OF A PROGRAM’S CREDITS ARE OFFERED

Section A: Description of the Change Requested

| Program site: Is the site a branch campus or an instructional site? Include the address of the new site. |
| Describe the programs to be offered at the site. |
| Describe how programs at the new site will be monitored and evaluated. How is this evaluation process integrated into institutional assessment processes? |
| How is administrative oversight conducted at the new site? |

Section B: Institutional Planning for Program Change

| Briefly describe the planning process to determine the rationale and need for the new site. |
| Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution. |
| Describe the physical facilities and equipment at the new site. What, if any, new facilities or equipment are required to implement? |
| What is the expected impact of this new site? What benefits will result from this change? What is the impact on enrollment and how will the institution accommodate that growth? |
| What is the financial impact of this new site? Does the institution have sufficient financial resources to support this site? Provide a three-year projection of revenues and expenses associated with the program. Provide documentation to demonstrate that the institution has sufficient fiscal and administrative capacity to oversee and assure the quality of the proposed change. |
Part III. Comprehensive Questions.

Section A: Institutional Staffing, Faculty

What faculty will be assigned to implement the planned change and are they qualified and sufficient to support the change.

What, if any, support staff will be assigned to the planned change and are they sufficient to support the change.

What professional development is planned to effect and sustain this change.

What management oversight exists to ensure the continued quality and success of the change?

Section B: Student Support

Describe the programs, services, and activities which will support students impacted by this change.

Section C: Library and Learning Resources

What library and information resources (general and specific) exist to support the change?

Section D: Evaluation

Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the change after implementation.

Describe the process for assessing and improving student learning, including student persistence and completion, in the areas impacted by the change.
Part II: PROPOSAL SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
OTHER SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES

Section A: Description of the Change Requested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide a clear and concise description of the change.</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discuss the rationale for the change.</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Proposed date for initiation of change:</th>
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Section B: Institutional Planning for Program Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Briefly describe the planning process that identified and led to the change.</th>
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<th>Identify the impact that the proposed on institutional resources including human, technological, and physical facilities?</th>
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</table>
### Section C: Institutional Impacts

#### Human Resources:
What impact will this change have on institutional staff (faculty, and support staff)?

What professional development is planned to effect and sustain this change.

#### Institutional Oversight:
What management oversight exists to ensure the continued quality and success of the institution that will result from this change?

#### Student Support Services:
Describe the impact of this change on the programs, services, and activities which will support students.

#### Library and Information Resources, Technology Resources:
Describe the impact on library and information resources (general and specific) related to the change?

Describe the impact on institutional technology resources related to this change.

#### Institutional Assessment of the Change:
Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the program.

Describe the process for assessing and improving student learning, including student persistence and completion, in the new program.

### Section D: Appendices
Part II: PROPOSAL SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

ADDITION OF A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM

Section A: Description of the Change Requested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name: Include the name of the program, degree or level (if applicable), and CIP Code.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

| Total credit hours:                                             |
|                                                               |

| Proposed date for initiation of program:                        |
|                                                               |

| Target audience of program:                                     |
|                                                               |

Section B: Institutional Planning for Program Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Briefly describe the planning process to determine the rationale and need for the new program.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Identify the impact that the proposed program on physical facilities and equipment. What, if any, new facilities or equipment are required to implement the new program?</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Describe the assessment that was used to determine the need for the program. Identify the market that supports the addition of the new program. For CTE programs, what labor market data supports this program? (Documentation submitted in conjunction with an application for State approval of the program should be included.)</th>
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Section C: Curriculum and Instructional Design

| List the program course requirements including name, course descriptions, and unit values: |
| Identify the program learning outcomes for the program: |
| Describe how the program learning outcomes will be assessed: |
| Identify the institution-set standards applicable to the program: |
| Describe the administrative oversight and program review process used to ensure program quality. |

Section D: Institutional Staffing, Faculty

| What faculty will be assigned to the program and are they qualified and sufficient to support the program. |
| What, if any, support staff will be assigned to the program and are they sufficient to support the program. |
| What professional development is planned to effect and sustain this change. |
What management oversight exists to ensure the continued quality and success of the program?

Section E: Student Support

Describe the programs, services, and activities which will support student enrolled in the new program.

Section F: Library and Learning Resources

What library and information resources (general and specific) exist to support the program?

Section G: Evaluation

Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the program.

Describe the process for assessing and improving student learning, including student persistence and completion, in the new program.

Section H: Protocol and Policy for the Addition of a Baccalaureate Degree.

In addition to completion of the sections above, institutions applying for the addition of a baccalaureate degree must complete the Protocol and Policy for the Addition of a Baccalaureate Degree. All Accreditation Standards noted in the Protocol must be met.

Section H: Appendices