

Date: June 5, 2019

To: Commission and Other Interested Parties

From: Dr. John Morton, Policy Committee Chair
Gohar Momjian, ACCJC Vice President

Subject: Policy Changes Submitted to the Commission

The Policy Committee oversees the development of new policies and changes to existing policies. Commission procedures generally provide that proposed policy changes and/or new policies be considered by the Commission in a two-meeting process. At the first meeting, new policies/policy changes are discussed, and modifications are made as appropriate (first reading). These policies are then circulated to ACCJC's member institutions and other interested parties for review and comment before presentation at the next scheduled Commission meeting for second reading and adoption.

When changes are needed in order to align with federal regulations, or for other extenuating circumstances, policy changes can be made by the Commission outside the normal two-meeting process. If these changes are made by Commission action between regularly scheduled meetings, the changes are communicated to the field, including the reason for immediate action by the Commission. The policy is widely disseminated for input and comment from the field. All comments are brought forward to the Commission's Policy Committee for consideration. The Policy Committee will forward relevant comments to the Commission for deliberation during the policy's second-read, and prior to Commission adoption.

Items for Second Reading

The Policy Committee received one public comment, considered the comments during their review, and forwarded the following policies for their second read.

1. **Revision: Policy on Commission Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions** - this policy has been revised to clarify the opportunity for member institutions, through their CEOs, to submit to the Commission written responses on issues of substance contained in the Peer Review Team Report. Language has been added to further clarify the scope of additional evidence the Commission will consider prior to taking action on an institution. Since the first reading, further clarified that CEOs may appear via tele/video conference before the Commission.
2. **Revision: Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions** – language has been added to clarify the complaint process, including a deadline for applicable complaints to be reviewed. Since the first reading, language clarifies the type of days are working days for stated response times.
3. **New: Policy on Institutional Appeals** – The ACCJC's appeal procedure was documented in the agency's bylaws. This new policy updates the previous procedure and defines the conditions on appealable actions to ensure all member institutions have the right to due process and fair and unbiased accrediting decisions for the withdrawal or termination of accreditation. No changes were made since the first reading.

Items for First Reading

1. **Revision: Policy on Monitoring Institutional Performance** - this policy has been revised to align with language in the federal regulations to monitor annual student achievement. In addition, the policy limits the definition of significant headcount growth as a 50% increase in one year consistent with the federal definition for significant growth in distance or correspondence education.
2. **Revision: Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions** – language has been added to clarify the timeline for notifying the public about third party comments, and the handling and usage of third party comments in the peer review process.
3. **Revision: Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process** – deleted the section requiring the Commission to disclose upon request the number of complaints against an institution; in addition, outdated and redundant language has been deleted from the policy.
4. **Revision: Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions** – this policy has been revised to instruct applicants for Initial Accreditation to address only the Standards found not to be in compliance at the time of the Candidacy review, instead of preparing another Institutional Self Evaluation Report. The revised policy language supports the Commission to grant Initial Accreditation to applicants for Candidacy if the institution demonstrated that it is in compliance with the Commission's Standards at the time of the Candidacy review.