

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Implementation of New U.S.D.E. Regulations

Academic Senate CCC Accreditation Institute

February 10-11, 2012

The U.S. Department of Education issued a number of new regulations for institutions and accreditors that became effective July 1, 2010, and July 1, 2011. These new regulations follow the Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008, and also reflect the Department of Education's continuing efforts to improve program integrity for its Title IV financial aid funds. Information about some of the 2011 regulations is still being disseminated to institutions, and some was provided as recently as August 15, 2011, to accrediting bodies.

The attached chart is designed to describe some specific procedures that the ACCJC needs comprehensive evaluation teams to undertake in order to demonstrate the ACCJC's compliance with the new regulations. The chart includes condensed reference to the regulatory language and in the right hand column, the procedures the ACCJC wishes teams to follow. Copies of the federal formula for converting clock hours to credit hours will be given to the team and team chair as well.

As the ACCJC develops the 2012-13 editions of the *Team Evaluator Manual*, and other training documents such as the *Guide to Evaluating Institutions*, these new elements will be incorporated into the manuals and there will not be a need for this supplementary material. Please incorporate this material into files for use during the evaluation team visit you will undertake this year, 2011-12.

**ACCJC Comprehensive Evaluation Team Responsibilities for
Compliance with U.S. Department of Education Regulations
HEOA 2008 and regulations effective July 1, 2010 and 2011**

PARAGRAPH	USDE REGULATION	EVALUATION TEAM TASK
602.16	Standards effectively address "success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution's mission,... including as appropriate consideration of course completion, State licensing examinations, and job placement rates."	Evaluation teams examine institution summary data on course completion rates, licensure pass rates where available, and job placement rates where available. The team also examines program/certificate completion data, and graduation data provided by the college. The evaluation team cites this information as evidence of the institution's accomplishment of mission. The evaluation team report cites the use of this evidence in describing its evaluation of how well the institution fulfills its mission. <i>(Standards I.B; I.B.1-6; II.A; II.A.1.c; II.A.2.a,b, f, g, h, i; II.A.5; II.A.6; ER 10-Student Learning and Achievement)</i>
602.16(a)(l)(viii) And related 668.8(k)(2)	Standards effectively address the quality of the institution or program in: "ensuring that any awarded academic credits/degrees/credentials conform to commonly accepted practice including time invested and content mastered." If the institution converts clock hours to credit hours for purposes of federal financial aid, the institution adheres to the Department of Education's 2011 conversion formula	<p>The evaluation team examines the institution's policy and procedure for awarding credit hours to determine whether it conforms to the "Carnegie Unit", the commonly accepted practice in American higher education and accepted by the ACCJC. The evaluation team samples at least five course outlines and corresponding syllabi, and examines the class schedule, to determine that the institution has assigned an appropriate amount of work to conform to the Carnegie Unit, and this sampling must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one distance education course • At least one classroom based course with a laboratory • At least one course that provides for clinical practice, if applicable to the institution • At least one class that converts clock hours to credit hours for purposes of awarding credit, if the institution does so. <i>See handout on conversion; copy given to each team.</i> <p>The evaluation team includes in its narrative its findings as to whether the institution adheres to the federal regulations, and cites the evidence of the classes examined by naming those sampled classes. <i>(Standards I.B; I.B.1-6; II.A; II.A.1; II.A.2; II. A.2.h; II.A.6.a-c; ER 9-Academic Credit; Policy on Award of Credit)</i></p>

PARAGRAPH	USDE REGULATION	EVALUATION TEAM TASK
<p>602.16(a)(1)(ix)</p> <p>And related</p> <p>668.43</p>	<p>The standards effectively address the quality of the institution in addressing: “the Record of student complaints received by, or available to, the agency.”</p> <p>The institution "must make readily available to enrolled and prospective students.... (a)(6) the names of associations, agencies or governmental bodies that accredit, approve or license the institution and its programs and the procedures by which documents describing that activity may be reviewed under paragraph (b)." (b) "the institution must make available for review to any student or prospective student upon request a copy of the documents describing an institutions accreditation and its State, Federal or tribal approval or licensing. The institution must also provide (those persons) with contact information for filing complaints with its accreditor and with its State approval or licensing entity and any other relevant State official or agency that would appropriately handle a student's complaint."</p>	<p>The evaluation team will be sent a copy of any complaints that have been filed with the ACCJC in accordance with the criteria for filing such complaints. The evaluation team will examine the institution's own files containing formal student complaints or student grievances for the five years preceding a comprehensive evaluation. The evaluation team will examine any patterns observed in the complaints to determine whether they constitute evidence that indicates the institution has failed to comply with Accreditation Standards, ERs and policies. Any deficiencies will be identified in the team report as such. <i>(Standards II.B; II.B.2.c; II.B.3.a; II.B.4; ER 20-Public Information; Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions)</i></p> <p>The evaluation team will examine the institution's means of providing to any student or prospective student information about its accrediting bodies and governmental (usually state) licensing or approval bodies, copies of documents describing an institution's accreditation or governmental approval, as well as contact information for filing complaints with such bodies. <i>(This is a new regulation effective July 1, 2011)</i>. The team report will describe the institution's compliance with this new requirement. <i>(ER 20 -- Public Information)</i></p>

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602.17(g)	<p>The agency requires institutions that offer distance education or correspondence education to 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 student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The agency meets this requirement if it:</p> <p>1. Requires institutions to verify the identity of a student who participates in a class or program by using methods such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A secure log in and passcode (ii) Proctored examinations (iii) New or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identity 	<p>The evaluation team will examine the efficacy of methods that the institution uses to verify the identity of students enrolled in distance education and correspondence education classes. The evaluation team will describe whether the institution uses the secure log in and password for its distance education classes. If the institution uses other methods for its distance education classes or correspondence classes, the evaluation team will describe those methods and the team's judgment of their efficacy in preserving the integrity of the credits and grades awarded. (<i>Standards II.A; II.A.1; II.A.2; II.A.2.c, d, e; II.A.7; II.B.1; II.B.2.c; II.A.3.a; II.C.1; Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education</i>)</p>

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602.19(a-e)	<p>The agency must demonstrate that it has and effectively applies a set of monitoring and evaluation approaches that enable the agency to identifyinstitutional strengths and stability. These approaches must include ... collection and analysis of key data and indicators, including fiscal information and measures of student achievement.</p>	<p>Comprehensive evaluation teams must examine the institution's longitudinal data on the institution's fiscal condition, including significant increases or decreases in revenues and enrollments, and identify any team concerns about fiscal stability. Comments should be included in Standard IIID. (<i>Standards II.D; III.D.1.b, c, d; III.D.2.b, c, g; III.D.3; ER 17-Financial Resources; ER 18-Financial Accountability.</i>)</p> <p>Comprehensive evaluation teams must examine the institution's longitudinal data on student achievement (course completion, program/certificate completion, graduation, licensure, job placement data) and identify any team concerns about stability and achievement of mission, as well as any trends that identify strengthened institutional performance. (<i>Standards I.B; I.B.1-6; II.A.1.c; II.A.2.a,b; II.A.2.f-i; II.A.5; ER 10-Student Learning and Achievement</i>)</p>
602.24(f)	<p>Credit Hour Policies. The accrediting agency, as part of its review for initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation, must conduct an effective review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours. Policies and procedures, (34CFR600.2) and application of the institution's policies and procedures to programs and coursework. May use sampling.</p>	<p>See section 602.16(a), on page one of this chart.</p>
668	<p>Gainful Employment. The institution must demonstrate that its CTE programs prepare students for jobs that pay sufficient salaries.</p>	<p>Effective July 1, 2012 accrediting agencies will check the accuracy of data provided to current and prospective students on gainful employment.</p>