

## ACCSC ACCREDITATION ALERT

**To:** ACCSC Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties  
**From:** Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director  
**Date:** July 1, 2019  
**Subject:** Announcements and Revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation*

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### **Announcements/Reminders:**

- Call for ACCSC Commissioner Nominations
- Reminder – Call for ACCSC Nominating Committee Nominations
- *SkillsUSA* Scholarship Award Winners

### **Revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation*:**

The Commission has made revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation* in the following areas:

- **Part I – Revisions from the December 13, 2018 Call for Comment**
- **Part II – Revisions from the May 15, 2019 Call for Comment**
- **Part III – Fees Revisions**
- **Part IV – Other Non-Substantive Revisions**

The Commission has republished the *Standards of Accreditation*, which is now dated July 1, 2019 and replaces the July 1, 2018 version. The July 1, 2019 *Standards of Accreditation* are available for download at <http://www.accsc.org/Accreditation/Standards-of-Accreditation.aspx>

Revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation* are effective July 1, 2019 except as otherwise stated in this *Accreditation Alert*, and the *Accreditation Alerts* dated March 21, 2019 and April 12, 2019.

For additional information related to this *Accreditation Alert*, please contact Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director, at 703.247.4520 or [mccomis@accsc.org](mailto:mccomis@accsc.org).

## Call for Nominations to Serve as an ACCSC Commissioner

On behalf of the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC) and in accordance with the organization's *Bylaws*, the ACCSC Nominating Committee seeks nominations of potential candidates to serve on the ACCSC Board of Directors as a Commissioner.

During this nomination cycle, the ACCSC Nominating Committee is charged with filling the following four (4) vacancies on the Commission:

- One School Commissioner elected three-year term that begins July 1, 2020 and ends June 30, 2023;
- One School Commissioner elected four-year term that begins July 1, 2020 and ends June 30, 2024;
- One School Commissioner appointed four-year term that begins July 1, 2020 and ends June 30, 2024; and
- One Public Commissioner appointed four-year term that begins July 1, 2020 and ends June 30, 2024.

Nominees should submit the [ACCSC Commissioner Call for Nominations Form](#) accompanied by a current resume **on or before October 18, 2019.**

## Reminder-Call for Nominating Committee Nominations

Individuals interested in standing for election to the ACCSC Nominating Committee should complete the Call for Nomination Form and return it to the Commission office no later than **July 9, 2019**. Minimally, the Commission will select two (2) qualified individuals to run for election to fill one vacant seat on the Nominating Committee. The individual that receives the most votes will be declared the winner of the election and appointed to serve on the Nominating Committee for a two-year term ending June 30, 2021.

Nominees must submit the [Nominating Committee Call for Nominations](#) by July 9, 2019.



**Students First.  
That's why...**

For those of you that attended the 2018 ACCSC Professional Development Conference, you know my story. My story is not unlike the students attending your schools now. I was a single mother working as a waitress and attending a certificate program at a small career college. I knew I had one chance to make it. I had to do it for my daughter. I wouldn't have made it through without the dedication and high standards of the school personnel. It was life changing... Never did I imagine that it would lead me to a career of helping and supporting students just like me. Never did I dream I would serve as Chair of the Commission.

When I was encouraged to submit the commissioner nomination packet, I was scared. I questioned whether I was good enough. I knew I met the criteria from my 20 years in the industry and my schools good standing with ACCSC. I had also served as a Team Leader for most of that time. So why was I questioning myself? I was lucky to have support from my mentor and employer and I'll never forget his exact words when I told him how I was feeling... "Mollie, you have more knowledge and experience than you realize. You could work circles around anyone in this industry. You are ready." Those words, coming from a former Commissioner, meant a lot. I knew I wanted to serve and give back to a sector that has given me so much. I wanted to do it for our students.

I'll never forget my first commission meeting. The onboarding process put to rest the nervousness and lingering "am I good enough" feelings. I had no idea at that moment that I was beginning the most fulfilling and rewarding experience of my professional career. The staff support and teamwork of the commission was different than I had imagined. The discussion, thoughtfulness, and thorough consideration during each meeting demonstrated the commitment to this important role and representing our membership. Everyone embraced the mission to *Ensure Quality Education that Enhances Student Success in the Workforce.*

The honor of serving as a Commissioner did much more for me, professionally and personally, than I could ever have done for it in return. I'm a better leader from this experience and have gained a further understanding of the entire accreditation process. In addition, I am more confident in my own abilities. A bonus to this great experience is the lifelong friendships I've made with peers that share the same passion for our industry as I do.

Why become an ACCSC Commissioner? So you can help students like me succeed. Whether you come from a large corporate school or small single owned campus, you can make a difference. You can be part of the bigger picture that ensures all institutions meet best practices to serve our students. Our students deserve this. I am thankful that I had this opportunity and will forever hold it close to my heart. Best, Mollie Ludwig, Former ACCSC Chair.

## SkillsUSA Scholarship Award Winners

ACCSC is pleased to announce the recipients of its annual *SkillsUSA* Scholarship created to help students attend the [SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference \(NLSC\)](#). To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must be a student of an ACCSC-accredited school; be a Gold Medal Winner at their 2019 state competition, advancing to national competition; and be a *SkillsUSA* member in good standing.

The scholarship is awarded based on the student's commitment to excellence in technical skills, work ethic, and leadership as well as how the student will use the opportunity to compete at the *SkillsUSA* National Leadership and Skills Conference to be an ambassador for the skilled trades and workforce development.

Thanks to donations from ACCSC-accredited schools, this year the Commission had enough money to award six (6) \$650 scholarships to support a student and/or chapter's travel expenses to attend and compete at the 2019 NLSC held on June 24-28, 2019 in Louisville, Kentucky. The winners are:

**Austin Kline** – Automotive Training Center, Warminster, PA  
SkillsUSA Contest Area: Marine Service Technology

**Donovan Smolar** - Automotive Training Center, Exton, PA  
SkillsUSA Contest Area: Automotive and High Performance Technology

**Glenn Phillips** – Lincoln College of Technology, Indianapolis, IN  
SkillsUSA Contest Area: Automotive Refinishing

**Nicholas Michniewicz** - Automotive Training Center, Warminster, PA  
SkillsUSA Contest Area: Automotive Refinishing

**Octavio Salazar** - Lincoln College of Technology, Indianapolis, IN  
SkillsUSA Contest Area: Collision Repair and Refinishing Technology

**Ryan Maye** – Automotive Training Center, Exton, PA  
SkillsUSA Contest Area: Collision Reconditioning Technology/ Collision Damage Appraisal and Total Loss Evaluation Technology

### About SkillsUSA



*SkillsUSA* is a partnership of students, teachers, and industry representatives working together to ensure that America has a skilled workforce to help each student to excel. *SkillsUSA* is a national organization serving teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for careers in technical, skilled, and service occupations in a wide array of fields from healthcare occupations to welding. Timothy W. Lawrence, Executive Director of *SkillsUSA* gave the Keynote Address at ACCSC's 2015 Professional Development Conference and made a compelling case that every institution that offers vocational programs can benefit from working with *SkillsUSA*. *SkillsUSA*, along with advocates such as ACCSC's 2014 Key Note Speaker Mike Rowe and hundreds of employers from small businesses and major corporations, is taking employability skills training and development to new levels.

For information on getting started with *SkillsUSA*, go to [www.skillsusa.org](http://www.skillsusa.org) or call 844.875.4557.

### **Revisions to the Standards of Accreditation:**

The Commission has republished the *Standards of Accreditation* which is now dated July 1, 2019 and replaces the July 1, 2018 version. The July 1, 2019 *Standards of Accreditation* includes the revisions promulgated in the March 21, 2019 and April 12, 2019 Accreditation Alerts and as indicated in these Alerts. The July 1, 2019 *Standards of Accreditation* are available for download at <http://www.accsc.org/Accreditation/Standards-of-Accreditation.aspx>

Revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation* are effective July 1, 2019 except as otherwise stated in this *Accreditation Alert*, and the *Accreditation Alerts* dated March 21, 2019 and April 12, 2019.

### **Part I – Revisions from the December 13, 2018 Call for Comment**

The Commission has promulgated the revisions to the **Graduation and Employment Chart Glossary: Unavailable For Employment**. The revisions are as proposed in the December 13, 2018 *Call for Comment* except that the Commission replaced the word “sustained” with “sustainable” in the final language.<sup>1</sup> This reporting change is in effect for all students cohorts that have a **graduation date of January 1, 2020 and later**.

### **Part II – Revisions from the May 15, 2019 Call for Comment<sup>2</sup>**

Based upon a review of the responses to the Call for Comment, the Commission has promulgated the revisions proposed in the May 15, 2019 *Call for Comment* as follows:

## **Chapter 1 – Rules of Process and Procedure of Process and Procedure**

### **B. Categories of On-Site Evaluation**

Categories of on-site evaluations are:

1. Orientation On-Site Evaluation:
  - i. Unaccredited applicants: For schools seeking ACCSC initial accreditation, an ACCSC staff member will conduct an orientation on-site evaluation after the initial submission of the Self-Evaluation Report. The Commission may require a second orientation on-site evaluation if the school is not prepared to advance to the next phase of the initial application process based on a review of the school’s application and Self-Evaluation Report.
  - ii. Accredited applicants: For schools accredited by another recognized accrediting agency seeking ACCSC initial accreditation, the orientation on-site evaluation is optional unless the Commission, based on a review of the school’s application and Self-Evaluation Report, determines that the orientation on-site evaluation is warranted.
  - iii. The required fee for any orientation on-site evaluation(s) is borne by the school.

## **Chapter 2 – Substantive Standards**

### **Section VI – Student Services**

#### **B. Student Records**

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<sup>1</sup> See the December 13, 2018 *Call for Comment* for rationale and specific changes.

<sup>2</sup> See the May 15, 2019 *Call for Comment* for rationale.

1. The school maintains an educational record for all currently enrolled students that consists of all admissions; transcript (see #2 below) and academic progress reports; records related to tuition and fee payments, refunds, and financial aid; and information upon which a student's initial and continued enrollment is based. The school maintains these records during the student's enrollment and for five years post the student's graduation, withdrawal, or termination date.
2. The school maintains indefinitely a permanent official transcript for all current and formerly enrolled students (i.e., graduates and terminated or withdrawn students). The transcript must include, at a minimum, the student's name and unique identifier; the name and address of the school; the program of study; the name and date/term of courses taken; the clock or credit hours and grades earned for each course; any credits accepted for transfer; the cumulative grade point average; the date of program entry; and the date of graduation, termination or withdrawal.
3. The school must make transcripts available to students upon request and in accordance with the school's policies.
4. The school must securely maintain and protect the above records (physical or electronic) against damage or loss (e.g., fire, water, theft, tampering, etc.).
5. The school must maintain student records in accordance with state or federal regulation or law, which may require additional information or longer retention periods than described above.

### **Part III – Fees Revisions**

The Commission has adjusted fees in the following areas:

- Second and subsequent day(s) of an on-site evaluation adjusted from \$450 to \$600.
- Program Modification Report for Non-Substantive Changes adjusted from \$250 to \$350.

### **Part IV – Other Non-Substantive Revisions**

- **Section II (A)(1)(i)(i), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation:** Added a six-month expiration date for an Application for Initial Accreditation when after being given the opportunity to correct deficiencies, the application cannot be accepted within six months of submission because it is deemed incomplete or fails to minimally establish that the school meets the ACCSC eligibility criteria.
- **Section III (I), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation:** Replaced “Exit Interview” with “On-Site Evaluation Summary Review.”
- **Section III (J)(K), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation:** Replaced “Team Summary Report” with “On-Site Evaluation Report.” This change was also made in other areas of the *Standards of Accreditation* where referenced.
- **Section IV (E)(2)(g)(i), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation:** Increased the number of days that an Application for a Change of Control-Part I is to be submitted prior to the proposed change from 30 to 45 days.
- **Section VII (B)(2), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation:** Added the following language to clarify effective dates of a renewed term of accreditation: “A decision to renew accreditation will be effective as of the date of the letter notifying the school of the action; however,

the term of accreditation will be effective as of the date cited in that letter and generally will continue from the end of the previous term of accreditation.”

- **Section II (A)(5)(c), Substantive Standards, Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation:** Clarified that the school requires the use of safety equipment where applicable.
- **Graduation and Employment Chart Glossary – Graduates-Further Education:** Replaced “higher education institution” with “postsecondary institution.”
- **Guidelines for Employment Classification**
  - #2 - Deleted “e.g., not a single day of employment” as this example caused more confusion than guidance regarding what is considered a reasonable period of time and sustainable.
  - #5 - Added “Program Name” and “Date of Graduation” to the guidelines for “a verifiable employment record.”