

# CALL FOR COMMENT

# ACCSC

**To:** ACCSC Accredited Institutions and Interested Parties

**From:** Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director

**Date:** May 15, 2019

**Subject:** Proposed Revisions to the Standards of Accreditation

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The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC) presents the following topics for comment by the ACCSC membership and other interested parties:

- **Orientation On-Site Evaluation**
- **Student Records**

The Commission welcomes and encourages the comments of ACCSC-accredited institutions and other interested parties on the topics listed above. The Commission encourages all member institutions and interested parties to read carefully the Commission's request for feedback and to submit comments and recommendations for consideration by the Commission. The Commission will give careful consideration to the comments received, particularly those that reflect thoughtful insights which take into account what is best for the entire ACCSC membership and support and enhance ACCSC's mission.

With regard to the proposed revisions, after considering the written comments, the Commission may adopt the revision as proposed, adopt the revision with additional changes, defer action for further study and consideration, or reject the proposed revision. If the Commission adopts the revisions, ACCSC will establish an effective date allowing reasonable time for institutions to come into compliance and will announce the revision via an *Accreditation Alert*.

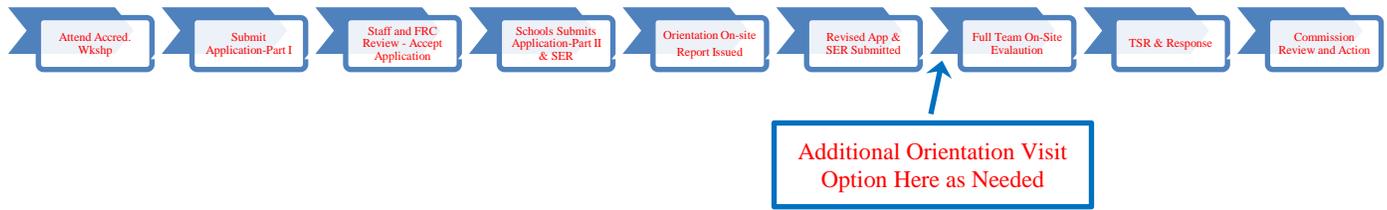
All comments are to be in the form of a PDF document on letterhead with the signature of the commenter. Please send all written comments to the attention of Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director, via e-mail to [mccomis@accsc.org](mailto:mccomis@accsc.org). Written comments regarding the Proposed Revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation* are due by **June 15, 2019**.

For assistance or additional information regarding this Call for Comment, please contact Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director, at 703.247.4520 or [mccomis@accsc.org](mailto:mccomis@accsc.org).

## Proposed Revisions Orientation On-site Evaluation

The Commission has noted instances during the initial accreditation process where a school has met ACCSC's basic eligibility requirements and gone through the entire accreditation only to have accreditation denied. In several of these instances, however, the school did not appear to be ready to progress beyond the initial Orientation On-Site Evaluation stage. Currently, ACCSC's *Rules of Process and Procedure* do not have a mechanism to offer or require a second Orientation On-site Evaluation in such instances, which likely could have been helpful to schools new to the accreditation process attempting to demonstrate compliance with standards for the first time.

The proposed language below gives ACCSC latitude to require a second orientation on-site evaluation in cases where a school has demonstrated ACCSC eligibility but otherwise has not shown sufficient progress toward becoming accredited, and in particular, is not prepared to receive an Initial Accreditation Evaluation. Although the proposed language is borne out of cases where unaccredited schools were not moving satisfactorily toward becoming accredited, it also takes into consideration the possibility that an already accredited initial applicant school may not appear ready to receive an Initial Accreditation Evaluation.



Original proposed new text in **Red, Bold, and Italic** print and revised new text in print. Proposed deleted text in ~~Blue Strikethrough~~.

### CHAPTER 1 – RULES OF PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

#### SECTION III – THE ON-SITE EVALAUTION

##### B. Categories of On-Site Evaluations

###### 1. Orientation On-Site Evaluation:

- i. Unaccredited applicants: **For schools seeking ACCSC** ~~for~~ initial accreditation, ~~with~~ ACCSC will **conduct** ~~receive~~ an orientation on-site evaluation ~~conducted~~ by an ACCSC staff person after the initial submission of the Self-Evaluation Report. **The Commission may require a second orientation on-site evaluation when it appears that, through a review of the school's application and Self-Evaluation Report, the school is not prepared to advance to the next phase of the initial application process.***
- 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, through a review of the school's application and Self-Evaluation Report, determines that the orientation on-site evaluation is warranted.** ~~Accredited schools seeking initial accreditation with ACCSC may request at any time an Orientation on-site evaluation,~~*
- iii. The ~~cost of which~~ **required fee for an orientation on-site evaluation** is borne by the school.*

## Proposed Revisions Student Records

The Commission and on-site evaluation teams have noted several instances where a school has met ACCSC's minimum transcript requirements but found also that the transcripts lacked several important items that are considered generally accepted practices (e.g., name of the student and institution, courses taken, etc.). The proposed language below is an attempt to align ACCSC's *Standards of Accreditation* with generally accepted practices for transcripts. In so doing, the Commission has also reorganized this section, reduced the number and types of records which are to be kept indefinitely, and has added more specificity for the transcript as an on-going and final record of student performance. As an additional benefit, the Commission hopes that more informative transcripts may assist students with transfer-of-credit decisions and credential assessments for further education or work promotion.

Accordingly, the Standards Committee proposes the following revision to the *Standards of Accreditation*. Proposed new text in **Red, Bold, and Italic** print, and deleted text is ~~blue strikethrough~~.

### CHAPTER 2 – SUBSTANTIVE STANDARDS

#### SECTION VI – STUDENT SERVICES

##### B. Student Records

1. The school maintains ~~an permanent~~ educational record for all currently enrolled students that consists of all admissions; **academic transcript (see #2 below) and academic progress reports;** ~~and financial~~ 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 ~~(physical or electronic) must be securely maintained and protected against damage or loss (e.g., fire, water, theft, tampering, etc.)~~ **during the student's enrollment and for five years post the student's graduation, withdrawal, or termination date.**
2. The school maintains ~~an 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 sequence of courses taken and 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; ~~and the clock or credit hours and grades earned. An~~
3. **The school must make transcripts available** ~~official transcript must be made available~~ to students upon request and in accordance with the school's policies. ~~This transcript (physical or electronic) must be securely maintained indefinitely and protected against damage or loss (e.g., fire, water, theft, tampering, etc.).~~
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.).** ~~The school maintains student financial records related to financial aid, tuition and fee payments, and tuition refunds for a minimum of five years. (State or federal regulation or law may require these records to be maintained for a longer period of time.)~~
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.**