



Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

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March 11, 2019

**ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**

██████████  
Director  
Chicago Professional Center  
16 E. Piper Lane  
Prospect Heights, Illinois 60090

**School #M072317**  
**Warning**

Dear ██████████:

At the February 2019 meeting, the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (“ACCSC” or “the Commission”) considered its previous decision to defer final action on the Application for Renewal of Accreditation and the Application for a Change of Location-Part I and Part II submitted by Chicago Professional Center located in Prospect Heights, Illinois. Upon review of the September 11, 2018 deferral letter, the September 20, 2018 Team Summary Report for the Change of Location, and the school’s responses, the Commission voted to place Chicago Professional Center on **Warning** with a subsequent review scheduled for ACCSC’s **August 2019** meeting. The reasons for the Commission’s decision and the Commission’s requirements for the school to demonstrate compliance are set forth below.

1. Chicago Professional Center must demonstrate that prior to enrollment the school determines that each applicant meets the school’s admissions requirements and secures documentation to demonstrate that each applicant meets all admission requirements (*Section V (A)(4)(a-b), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*). In the September 11, 2018 deferral letter, the Commission directed Chicago Professional Center to explain how the school determined that ██████████ and ██████████ met the established admissions requirements prior to the students receiving a signed enrollment agreement and before the students started attending classes. In response, Chicago Professional Center stated that the school registered these students “in good faith taking in consideration their assurance of high school completion and sincere desire to attend a full course.” Chicago Professional Center also stated that the school will ensure that students are not registered prior to the school determining that the applicant meets the admissions requirements. Additionally, Chicago Professional Center submitted a copy of the admissions policies and procedures as stated in the catalog which includes the following:

*All students accepted into our school must have completed the following before the beginning of the course:*

- *Be at least 17 years of age by class start date*
- ***Certify that he/she has a United States High School Diploma or the High School Equivalence Certificate (G.E.D.). All applicants from foreign counties must: (emphasis added)***
  - *Provide an original official transcript*
  - *Provide with an English language translation*
  - *Be evaluated by an organization recognized by Association of International Educators (NAFSA).*
- *Enrollment agreement completed and signed*
- *Photo I.D.*
- *All admission requirements must be met and all documentation is secured prior to student enrollment.*

The Commission does not consider a self-certification by a student that he or she has a high school diploma or equivalent to be “documentation” that the student has met this admissions requirement. A school must support its admissions decisions with independent documentation such as transcripts and copies of diplomas or other documentation of equivalency. The aforementioned policy allowing

students to provide a certification statement possibly in lieu of a high school diploma or G.E.D appears to be out of compliance with ACCSC's *Standards of Accreditation*. In addition, ACCSC's *Standards of Accreditation* states that prior to enrollment, a school secures documentation to demonstrate that each applicant meets all admissions requirements. Although the final portion of the Chicago Professional Center's policy includes the requirement that the school secures all documentation prior to enrollment, the policy does not make clear that the school requires independent documentation such as copies of diplomas or other documentation. Furthermore, the Commission noted that the aforementioned admissions policy lists the required admission documentation for international students, and while the policy lists an official transcript as required, the policy does not indicate that a high school diploma or equivalent may be required for those international students.

In response to the September 11, 2018 deferral letter, Chicago Professional Center also submitted a roster of 15 students who enrolled and began attending classes from September 1, 2018 through December 15, 2018 and admissions documentation for each student. The Commission found that the school provided the results from a Wonderlic Basic Skills Test as admissions documentation for Residential and Commercial HVAC Technician/Electrician student, [REDACTED]. Based on this documentation, Chicago Professional Center enrolled [REDACTED] despite the student not meeting the school's admissions requirements of having a high school diploma or its equivalent. Please note that if Chicago Professional Center elects to change its admissions policy to allow for students to enroll without a high school diploma or its equivalent, the determination of the applicant's ability to benefit ("ATB") from the training offered must be confirmed by documentation of the applicant's achievement of an approved score on a test or tests. Additionally, the test or tests must be reviewed by a qualified, independent third party for appropriateness of the instrument and specific score levels required for admission. The acceptable score ensures that students will benefit from the training provided and that a substantial number of students will complete the training and be employed in the field for which training was provided. Furthermore, if the school elects to enroll ATB students, the school must include ATB admissions requirements in its official admission's policy. The Commission also noted the following concerns and discrepancies from the school's response:

- The transcript for Residential and Commercial HVAC Technician/Electrician student [REDACTED] includes a tracking number through Parchment Exchange for document delivery verification. When entering the tracking number, the documentation request date is October 29, 2018 with the date sent as October 30, 2018. According to [REDACTED]'s Enrollment Agreement, the school accepted the Enrollment Agreement and the student began classes on October 2, 2018, prior to the school securing admission documentation, including the transcript.
- The portion of the Enrollment Agreement completed by Maintenance student [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (as indicated on the credential evaluation), including the date the student signed the enrollment agreement, is illegible.
- The timestamp on the side of the copy of Residential and Commercial HVAC Technician/Electrician student [REDACTED] high school diploma shows a date of October 18, 2018. Although Chicago Professional Center indicated the school secured all admissions documentation on September 20, 2018, it appears that the school secured the required admission documentation after the student began class on October 2, 2018.
- The date that Maintenance student [REDACTED] signed the Enrollment Agreement may have been modified and therefore it is unclear when the student signed the enrollment agreement.
- The college transcript for Maintenance student [REDACTED] shows the name [REDACTED]. The school did not provide clarification or documentation to show that both names refer to the same individual.

The Commission has concerns regarding Chicago Professional Center’s admissions policy that allows for self-certification from students in lieu of a high school diploma or its equivalent. In addition, the admissions policy appears to be incomplete in that the policy lacks the admissions requirements and test scores for ATB students and the requirement of a high school diploma or equivalent for international students. Furthermore, the Commission found that the school may not regularly adhere to the school’s admissions policy. The Commission also found that Chicago Professional Center has consistently failed to demonstrate that the school secures documentation to demonstrate that each applicant meets all admissions requirements prior to admission over nearly a two-year period.<sup>1</sup>

Based on the foregoing, the Commission directs Chicago Professional Center to submit the following:

- a. A copy of the school’s admissions policies and procedures as stated in the school’s catalog demonstrating (please also explain any changes made to the policy since the school’s last response, if applicable):
  - i. That the school secures independent documentation such as transcripts and copies of high school diplomas or other documentation of equivalency (i.e. GED) for all students and noting that documentation is secured prior to student enrollment and a student starting classes;
  - ii. Admissions requirements for international students to include transcripts and copies of high school diplomas or other documentation of equivalency (i.e. GED); and
  - iii. Admissions requirements for ATB students, if applicable;
- b. An explanation regarding the above noted discrepancies and how the school determined that [REDACTED] met the established admissions requirements prior to the student receiving a signed enrollment agreement and before the students started attending classes;
- c. A roster of the students enrolled and allowed to begin attending classes from March 1, 2019 through May 31, 2019 as follows:

Student Name	Program	Student Start Date (Class Attendance)	Date All Admissions Documentation Secured	Date Enrollment Agreement was finalized and provided to student

- d. A copy of the admissions documentation, such as proof of high school graduation or its equivalency, and signed Enrollment Agreements for all students captured on the above roster. Chicago Professional Center must also show the dates when the school received the admissions documentation. For students with credentials outside the United States, please include the copy of the documentation, a translation of the document, and the credential evaluation report;
  - e. An explanation for any student that started attending classes prior to the school determining that the applicant met the established admissions requirements or prior to the student receiving a signed enrollment agreement; and
  - f. Any additional information or documentation that the school believes will be useful to demonstrate the school’s compliance with ACCSC’s admissions requirements.
2. Chicago Professional Center must demonstrate that the use of learning resource system (“LRS”) materials is integrated into the school’s curriculum and program requirements as a mechanism to

<sup>1</sup> See the May 26, 2017 Team Summary Report and September 14, 2017, April 12, 2018, and September 11, 2018 Commission letters.

enhance the educational process and to facilitate positive learning outcomes for students (*Section II (A)(7)(b), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*). In response to the September 11, 2018 letter in which the Commission again directed the school to submit documentation to demonstrate that students use the LRS as required for all courses of study, Chicago Professional Center submitted copies of three quizzes that students completed. The quizzes include instructions that state students “have to use LRS” for multiple questions within the quizzes. For example, the Electrician Evaluation Quiz #5 states that students must use the LRS for the following questions:

12. *The motor internal overload will open the circuit if the winding temperature reaches \_\_\_ F.*  
A. 155 B. 170 C. 200 D. 300

13. *Capacitors are always connected \_\_\_\_\_ to the start winding.*  
A. in parallel B. in series C. through a relay D. through a diode

14. *Fuses are rated and sized by:*  
A. Amps & Watts B. Volts & Watts C. Watts & Ohms D. Volts & Amps

Based on the Chicago Professional Center’s submission, the school did not make clear if students are required the use of LRS materials to answer the quiz questions as it appears that the knowledge acquired to answer the question may be taught during classroom instruction. The school also submitted multiple syllabi, which include LRS assignments. The Commission found that all of the LRS assignments relate to questions on quizzes and not to other types of assignments that require research, writing, and completion of projects. Based on the foregoing, the Commission questions if the school integrates LRS materials into the curriculum and utilizes the LRS as a mechanism to enhance the educational process and therefore the Commission directs Chicago Professional Center to submit the following:

- a. An explanation as to how the school integrates the use of the learning resource system materials into the school’s curriculum and program requirements, including an explanation as to how the provided quizzes utilize the LRS;
  - b. Documentation for at least two courses from each program (e.g., completed copies of student work, syllabi containing assignments that use the LRS) to demonstrate that students utilize the school’s LRS as required for all courses of study; and
  - c. Any additional information the school believes will be useful to the Commission in making a determination regarding the school’s compliance with accrediting standards regarding the school’s LRS.
3. Chicago Professional Center must demonstrate that the school adheres to its published satisfactory academic progress (“SAP”) policy (*Section VII (A)(3)(a) and (e), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*). In the September 11, 2018 letter, the Commission directed the school to submit a list of all students enrolled between September 1, 2018 and December 15, 2018 and copies of cumulative academic progress documentation (e.g., attendance and progress reports) for each of these students. While Chicago Professional Center provided a roster of students in its response, the school failed to submit academic progress documentation. Specifically, the school’s response includes only a “Satisfactory Academic Progress Report” form for one student, [REDACTED]. The response does not include documentation for any other students. In addition, the form provided for [REDACTED] includes a portion for the Director of Education’s signature and date, however; these fields are incomplete. Without the requested academic progress documentation, Chicago Professional Center did not demonstrate that the school adheres to its published SAP policy.

Based on the foregoing, the Commission directs Chicago Professional Center to submit the following:

- a. A copy of the disclosure of the school’s SAP policies as stated in the catalog;
  - b. A list of **all** students enrolled at Chicago Professional Center between March 1, 2019 through May 31, 2019;
  - c. Copies of **cumulative** academic progress documentation (e.g., attendance and progress reports) for each student listed in (b.) above demonstrating that the school adheres to the published policies (e.g., Academic Warning notices); and
  - d. Any additional information that the school believes will be useful to the Commission in making a determination regarding the school’s compliance with ACCSC’s requirements regarding SAP policies.
4. Chicago Professional Center must demonstrate compliance with accrediting standards in regards to student services in the following areas:
- Chicago Professional Center must demonstrate that the school maintains written policies and procedures addressing student services and maintains a student services program that takes into account the number of programs, and size and mix of the student body and that responds to individual student needs (*Section VI (A)(1&3), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*); and
  - Chicago Professional Center must demonstrate that the school maintains comprehensive documentation of student advising sessions (*Section VI (A)(5), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*).

In the September 11, 2018 ACCSC letter, the Commission directed Chicago Professional Center to submit a narrative description along with an updated copy of its written policies and procedures for administering the school’s student services program including the procedures and identifying each staff member responsible for each stage and component of the program. In its response, the school provided the policies and procedures related to student services, which consists of the “Student Services and Procedures” portion of the catalog. The school also indicated which staff member is responsible for each area related to student services, such as admissions, financial aid, academic advising, and career services, and presented documentation that each of the three primary staff members completed some type of online professional development course within the last year. The Commission noted, however, that the school’s response provides only a list of services the school provide to students, and the school failed to include a narrative description of the overall student services program available to students. As such, the school did not demonstrate that the student services program encompasses relevant coping skills (e.g., life, career development, budget, and personal financial planning skills); general development appropriate to higher education students; and student retention strategies suited to the school’s programs. Additionally, regarding information concerning housing, transportation, and child care, the school’s catalog states that “[t]his service is unavailable in Chicago Professional Center.” Therefore, the Commission found that the school’s student services program does not minimally encompass all areas as required in the *Standards of Accreditation*

In the September 11, 2018 letter, the Commission noted that the school conducted only one student advising session over a nearly 10-month period and that the particular advising session was a meeting regarding processing a withdrawal, rather than assisting a student academically or personally. Therefore, the Commission directed Chicago Professional Center to submit documentation for all student advising sessions from July 1, 2018 through December 15, 2018. In response to the September 11, 2018 ACCSC letter, the school stated that there were no advising sessions during the requested

period. With the school reporting total enrollments of 135 students from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 in the 2018 ACCSC Annual Report, the Commission questions how the school essentially had no advising sessions in over a year timeframe, which raises concerns for the Commission regarding the school's attentiveness to students' needs.

Based on the foregoing, the Commission found that Chicago Professional Center might not have a student services program that sufficiently supports student needs in all required areas. Accordingly, the Commission directs Chicago Professional Center to submit the following:

- a. A description regarding how the school provides each of the following services: relevant coping skills (e.g., life, career development, budget, and personal financial planning skills); general development appropriate to higher education students; and student retention strategies suited to the school's program;
- b. An updated copy of the written policies and procedures for administering the school's student services program regarding information concerning housing, transportation, and child care;
- c. Documentation of each student advising session conducted from December 15, 2018 through May 31, 2019;
- d. A survey of at least 50% of the student enrolled population using a survey substantially similar to the ACCSC student survey and to submit the following:
  - i. A description of the student survey process and a copy of the survey instrument utilized by the school;
  - ii. A detailed analysis of the survey results with a particular focus on any result that show less than 80% satisfaction; and
  - iii. A detailed narrative of plans to address any areas of student dissatisfaction, if applicable, and any other information to support the efforts made to enhance a student's experience at the school; and
- e. Any additional information that the school believes will be useful to the Commission in making a determination regarding the school's compliance with ACCSC's requirements regarding student services and student advising sessions.

**Warning Restrictions:**

Pursuant to *Section VII (K)(9), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation*, the Commission will not consider substantive changes, a change of location/relocation, or additions (i.e., separate facilities, new programs) to a school or its separate facilities while the school is under a Warning.

**Response Requirements:**

By applying for accreditation, a school accepts the obligation to demonstrate continuous compliance with the *Standards of Accreditation*. While the Commission employs its own methods to determine a school's compliance with accrediting standards, the burden rests with the school to establish that it is meeting the standards. The Commission's deliberations and decisions are made on the basis of the written record and thus a school must supply the Commission with complete documentation of the school's compliance with accrediting standards.

Chicago Professional Center must provide a response to the items expressed above that provides the information requested along with any additional information that the school believes supports a

demonstration of compliance with accrediting standards.<sup>2</sup> If the school's response contains documentation that includes personal or confidential student or staff information that is not required for the Commission's review (e.g., social security numbers, dates of birth, etc.), please remove or redact that information.

Chicago Professional Center must upload the school's electronic response directly to ACCSC's College 360 Database. The ACCSC College 360 database can be accessed by [clicking here](#). Please note that the password utilized by the institution to access the Annual Report Portal is the same to access the School Submission section of the College 360 database. The Instructions for Electronic Submission can be found [here](#). A detailed overview on how to upload a school submission can be found [here](#).

Keep in mind, the school's response must be prepared in accordance with ACCSC's Instructions for Electronic Submission (e.g., prepared as one Portable Document Format ("PDF") file that has been prepared using Adobe Acrobat software (version 8.0 or higher) and which has a .pdf extension as part of the file name). The school will receive an e-mail confirmation that the file has been received within 24 hours of the submission.

The school's response must also include a signed certification attesting to the accuracy of the information and be received in the Commission's office **on or before June 13, 2019**. If a response, the required fee,<sup>3</sup> and the certificate of attesting to the accuracy of the information is not received in the Commission's office **on or before June 13, 2019**, the Commission will consider further appropriate action.

For assistance with the password or for any other questions regarding the electronic submission requirements, please contact [REDACTED]. Please note that any password requests to access College 360 must be made by the school director, or designated member of the school's management team, via e-mail.

For further assistance or additional information, please contact [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Michale S. McComis, Ed.D.  
Executive Director

c: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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<sup>2</sup> ACCSC has issued two modules of the **Blueprints for Success Series** – [Organizing an Effective Electronic Submission](#) and [Preparing a Comprehensive Response for Commission Consideration](#) – which provide a framework for submitting a well-documented, organized, electronic response for Commission consideration. ACCSC encourages the school to review these modules when formulating its response to this letter. More information is available in the [Resources section](#) at [www.accsc.org](http://www.accsc.org).

<sup>3</sup> ACCSC assesses a \$500 processing fee to a school placed on Warning.