

ACCSCCT Alert!

Information for
our member schools

To: *ACCSCCT Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties*

From: *Elise Scanlon, Executive Director*

Date: *July 10, 2003*

Subject: *Amendments to the Standards of Accreditation*

The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology has reviewed all written comments submitted by accredited institutions and other interested parties regarding the revisions to the Standards of Accreditation as proposed in the Commission's June 14, 2002 and December 31, 2002 Call For Comment. The Commission has subsequently voted to adopt many of the additions and revisions to the Standards of Accreditation as proposed in those Call for Comment documents in the following area:

➤ ***Revisions to Section III – Faculty***

The full text of the Accreditation Alert can also be found on the Commission's website at: www.accsct.org. Go to "***Staying Accredited***" and then "***Accreditation Alert***." The revisions and additions have been incorporated into the Standards of Accreditation, a revised copy of which can be found on the Commission's website by going to "***Staying Accredited***" and then "***Standards of Accreditation***." The revised Standards of Accreditation dated July 10, 2003 should be used to replace all previous versions.

Accredited institutions and others maintaining complete, up-to-date copies of the Standards of Accreditation should add this notice to their current standards book under the Accreditation Alerts tab. For additional information related to these adopted changes, please contact Michale S. McComis, Director of Accreditation at (703) 247-4520.

REVISIONS TO SECTION III - FACULTY

The Commission has reviewed its faculty qualification standards and has adopted the revisions set forth below in order to ensure that students are taught by the best qualified faculty available based upon both demonstrated levels of education and related practical work experience. The new standards relate a faculty member's credentials more precisely to the type of "course" (e.g., technical, applied general education, and general education) taught by a faculty member. In addition, the new standards continue to emphasize practical and related work experience for faculty teaching technical and occupationally related courses and upgrade the qualifications required of faculty teaching academic courses (e.g., general education).

The Commission has established a "grandfathering" provision which will give schools a period of time to prepare for the implementation of the new faculty qualification standards. The new standards set forth below in Section III (B)(1-6) are effective as of January 1, 2004. All faculty hired on or after January 1, 2004 must meet, minimally, the qualifications set forth below. While it is the Commission's hope that schools will use the new standards as a framework for all faculty, the previous standards will be applied to faculty employed prior to January 1, 2004.

In addition, the Commission has revised its faculty development standard in order to articulate more clearly its expectation that faculty engage in meaningful professional development activities on an on-going basis. The Commission places a great deal of importance on faculty development as a mechanism for ensuring quality education as is reflected in the revision to Section III (A)(4). This standard is effective immediately.

Lastly, in Accreditation Alerts distributed in 1996 and 1999, the Commission defined and interpreted its teacher training requirements and explained the Commission's expectations regarding the type of training that teachers in accredited schools should, at a minimum, have received. As was expressed in the June 14, 2003 Call for Comment, given the critical importance of teaching to the quality of education, the Commission believes it is appropriate to incorporate its expectations into the Standards of Accreditation. Therefore, the addition of Section III (A)(8) is, in essence, a clearer articulation of the Accreditation Alerts issued in 1996 and 1999 and reflects the Commission's expectations regarding teacher training. This standard is effectively immediately.

III. FACULTY

A. General Requirements

4. The school must have a written and comprehensive plan for faculty improvement with specific benchmarks, timelines, and goals. The plan shall include such elements as: continuing education in the subject area(s) taught; teaching skill development; instructional methods; membership in trade and professional organizations; attendance at trade and professional meetings; faculty meetings to encourage professional growth; and other elements appropriate for the on-going development of faculty. The school is required to document that the plan is implemented.

8. All faculty members must be trained in instructional methods and teaching skills. The school should hire faculty members who have received training in instructional methods and teaching skills or who are experienced teachers. Should a school hire a faculty member without prior training or experience, the school must provide training before the faculty member assumes primary instructional responsibilities in any classroom, curriculum, laboratory, or program related training. Faculty must engage in on-going development of teaching skills as part of the school's plan for faculty improvement.

The school may provide its own faculty training in-house or utilize resources outside the institution. In either case, teacher training shall include such elements as: formal education; workshops/seminars presented by an appropriate individual focusing on areas related to instructional methods and teaching skill development; or formal in-house mentoring programs with appropriately qualified and experienced faculty.

B. Faculty Qualifications

1. Faculty members must have appropriate qualifications and be able to teach in a manner that permits announced educational objectives to be achieved. All faculty must be able to demonstrate a command of theory and practice, contemporary knowledge, and continuing study in their field.
2. Faculty teaching technical and occupationally related courses in either non-degree or occupational associate degree programs must have a minimum of three years of related practical work experience.
3. Faculty teaching applied general education courses in an occupational associate degree program must have a baccalaureate degree with appropriate coursework in the subject area(s) taught or three years related practical work experience and college level coursework in the subject area(s) taught.
4. Faculty teaching technical and occupationally related courses in an academic associate or baccalaureate degree program must have a minimum of: three years of related practical work experience in the subject area(s) taught and a baccalaureate degree.
5. Faculty teaching general education courses in an academic degree program must have, at a minimum, a master's degree with appropriate academic coursework and preparation in the subject area(s) taught.
6. In academic associate and baccalaureate degree programs, the majority of hours must be taught by full-time faculty. Teaching loads and schedules will vary, but in all cases shall allow time for student advising, adequate preparation and continuing professional growth.