

ACCSCCT Alert!

Information for
our member schools

To: ACCSCT Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties
From: Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director
Date: December 31, 2008
Subject: Announcements, Reminders, and Revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation*

The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSCT) has announcements and revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation* in the following areas:

- *Schools to Be Considered List for the February 2009 Meeting Available Online*
- *Eligibility Criteria – Section I, Rules of Process and Procedures*
- *Application for Accreditation – Section II, Rules of Process and Procedures*
- *Accreditation Fees*

The full text of the Accreditation Alert can be found on the Commission's website at www.accsct.org. Go to "**Accreditation**" and then "**Standards of Accreditation**" and "**Accreditation Alert.**" Accredited institutions and others maintaining a complete and up-to-date copy of the *Standards of Accreditation* should add this notice to their current standards book under the *Accreditation Alerts* tab. Please check the Commission's website regularly for announcements and be sure to keep your contact e-mail up to date using the ACCSCT Annual Report Portal. Beginning in 2009, the Commission will begin to send more correspondence electronically and will rely on the e-mail address provided in each institution's Annual Report.

The published version of the *Standards of Accreditation* has been revised as of January 1, 2009. The January 1, 2009 *Standards of Accreditation* are available for download from the Commission's website at www.accsct.org. All provisions of the *Standards of Accreditation* are effective as of March 15, 2007 with the exception of applicable grandfather provisions and areas subsequently revised or added. Please consult the previous version of the *Standards of Accreditation* dated February 15, 2006 for earlier requirements. Substantive revisions or additions to the *Standards of Accreditation* made on or after March 15, 2007 are included in the January 1, 2009 version and are identified by the date of revision.

For additional information related to this Accreditation Alert, please contact Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director, at (703) 247-4520 or via email at mccomis@accsct.org.

Schools to Be Considered List for the February 2009 Meeting Available Online

The Commission has prepared and published a list of the schools that may be considered at its February 2009 Commission meeting. Reviews scheduled for the February 2009 meeting include, but are not limited to, those schools that have undergone evaluations for initial and renewal applications for accreditation; substantive changes such as the addition of new programs (i.e., non-degree, degree and distance education), changes of location, changes of ownership, and the addition of separate facilities; and other reviews as may have been deemed necessary by the Commission.

The Commission's *Schools to be Considered List* can be found on its website at www.accst.org. Go to "*Commission Actions*" and then "*Schools to be Considered*."

Accredited institutions, governmental and non-governmental agencies, industry members, the general public, and other interested parties are invited to submit written comments pertaining to any school included on the Commission's list. Comments should include information that will assist the Commission in making a decision regarding the accreditation action pending for a school. Any comments received will be forwarded to the school with an opportunity to submit a response to those comments. The deadline to submit written comments is ***January 22, 2009***. Submit written, signed, and dated comments to Nickia King, School Actions Coordinator, by way of the Commission office or to nking@accst.org.

Eligibility Criteria & Application for Accreditation

The Commission has revised the ACCST *Rules of Process and Procedure* in the areas that pertain to the eligibility requirements for accreditation as proposed in the June 20, 2008 Call for Comment. The reasons for these revisions are to make the Commission's eligibility requirements more clear and to establish criteria that align with the Commission's standards and operational requirements. The revised criteria are also meant to allow for more informed accreditation decisions both at the application stage and the final action stage of the initial accreditation process. A summary of the proposed revisions follow:

- Provide a more precise description of the eligibility requirements;
- Establish that institutions must be able to provide student achievement outcomes – graduation and employment – before accreditation can be granted;
- Establish that initial accreditation applicant institutions are expected to be in compliance with the Commission's requirements from the date that the institution's application is accepted (this is a long standing practice that is not expressly stated in the *Rules*); and
- Establish that institutions must offer at least one program that is 300 clock hours or greater in order to be eligible for ACCST accreditation (currently accredited schools and schools whose initial application have already been accepted will be grandfathered).
- Establish the criteria required to have an application for accreditation accepted.

The new eligibility language can be found under *Section I* and *Section II* of the *Rules of Process and Procedure* in the January 1, 2009 *Standards of Accreditation* and are effective as of that date.

Accreditation Fees

On-Site Evaluation Fees:

Effective January 1, 2009, the fees required for on-site evaluations will increase. As explained in the September 9, 2008 ACCST Call for Comment, the Commission has experienced consistent increases in the travel costs associated with conducting on-site evaluations. These increases correspond to higher rates being charged across the travel industry to include airfare, travel charges, hotel room rates, car rental fees, fuel, and taxes. Given these increases, the Commission's current budget and projected revenues for on-site evaluations for fiscal year 2009 were not sufficient to cover the higher cost of travel being experienced

To cover these increased expenses, the Commission determined that an increase in the fee structure for on-site evaluations is necessary and appropriate. The Commission's new fees, effective for all on-site evaluations conducted as of January 1, 2009, are as follows:

- \$1,400 per evaluator for the first day of the on-site evaluation, and
- \$400 per evaluator for each day thereafter.

Program Modification Report – Non-Substantive Modifications Fee:

Effective January 1, 2009, the Commission will begin to assess a fee for the submission of the Program Modification Report – Non-Substantive Modifications, which is required for program name changes and curriculum changes that result in a less than 25% increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours in an approved program. The new fee is \$150.00 and will only apply to non-substantive modifications that result in a change to the number of clock or credits hours and result in a change to the type of credit hour (e.g., semester to quarter). Non-substantive program modifications that result only in the change of the name of a program or the type of credential (e.g., diploma to certificate) will continue to be free of charge.