

# ACCSC Alert!

Information for  
our member schools

**To:** ACCSC-Accredited Member Schools  
**From:** The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges  
**Date:** June 18, 2025  
**Re:** Vote on Proposed Bylaws Revision

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ACCSC is currently in its re-recognition process with the U.S. Department of Education and has found that ACCSC must make revisions to the following *Bylaws* in order to meet regulatory requirements:

**Section 1.03 – Composition**

**Section 1.09 – Committees**

The regulations in question require that an agency has:

[34 CFR 602.15\(a\)\(2-5\)](#)

*(2) Competent and knowledgeable individuals, qualified by education or experience in their own right and trained by the agency on their responsibilities, as appropriate for their roles, regarding the agency's standards, policies, and procedures, to conduct its on-site evaluations, apply or establish its policies, and make its accrediting and preaccrediting decisions, including, if applicable to the agency's scope, their responsibilities regarding distance education and correspondence courses;*

*(3) Academic and administrative personnel on its evaluation, policy, and decision-making bodies, if the agency accredits institutions;*

*(4) Educators, practitioners, and/or employers on its evaluation, policy, and decision-making bodies, if the agency accredits programs or single-purpose institutions that prepare students for a specific profession;*

*(5) Representatives of the public, which may include students, on all decision-making bodies;...*

Although the Department has previously found ACCSC to meet these regulations and despite the fact that there have been no changes to the regulations or ACCSC's practices, the Department has interpreted these regulations to now mean that an individual cannot fulfill more than one of the required roles. For example, a "Public" member cannot also fulfill the role of academic personnel on an agency's Board. So, while ACCSC has no intention of reducing the actual number of Public members on the Board, the Commission is proposing to lower the percentage of Public members so that these individuals can fulfill an array of roles on the Board. Because the Department has indicated that ACCSC must amend its *Bylaws* to allow each Commissioner to fill one of the Department's required roles, the Commission is proposing changes to Section 1.03 of the AACSC *Bylaws* and to move and supplement the role designations from the Composition section of the Bylaws to the *Rules of Process and Procedure*.

In addition, although ACCSC's Executive Committee has never been deemed a "decision-making" body previously, the Department is now interpreting that because the Executive Committee "is able to make some decisions about accredited institutions on behalf of the agency, it must be included in the agency's scope of recognition." ACCSC continues to contend that the Executive Committee is not a decision-making body, but in order to meet the Department's new interpretation the Commission is proposing to limit the Executive Committee's authority to actions that would not impact the accredited status of a school. Accordingly, the Commission is proposing changes to Section 1.09 of the AACSC *Bylaws*.

### **Electronic Ballot Instructions**

On **June 18, 2025**, each ACCSC-accredited member institution will receive an e-mail from ACCSC with a website link and login instructions to cast its vote regarding the proposed Bylaws Revisions. *Each member shall have one vote, except that a group of affiliated schools – i.e., schools under common ownership – may have no more than five total votes regardless of the number of members in the group.*

Please contact Michelle Ragland at [mragland@accsc.org](mailto:mragland@accsc.org) with any questions regarding the electronic balloting process. Additionally, Dr. Michale S. McComis, ACCSC Executive Director, is available to discuss any questions you may have regarding the election process at [mccomis@accsc.org](mailto:mccomis@accsc.org).

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Proposed new text in **red, bold, italic**, deleted text in ~~blue-strikethrough~~ and, and moved text in green underlined or ~~green-strikethrough-underlined~~

## **ACCREDITATION ALLIANCE OF CAREER SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES – BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I – BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ACCREDITING COMMISSION OF CAREER SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

#### **Section 1.03 – Composition**

The Commission shall be composed of an odd number of not less than nine (9) members and not more than seventeen (17) members *consisting of individuals elected or appointed as established in these Bylaws and designated as set forth in the Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation*. The number of Public Commissioners shall be at least ~~30~~**15**% but less than a majority of the total number of Commissioners. ~~The remainder of the Commission shall be composed of School Commissioners.~~ The number of Commissioners may be changed within the foregoing limits by a vote of at least two-thirds of the Commission. The number and composition of the Commission may otherwise be changed only by amendment of the Bylaws pursuant to Section 4.04 hereof.

~~At least 30% of the Commissioners will be designated as an Academic—an individual currently or recently directly engaged in a significant manner in postsecondary education, training, teaching, or research—and at least 30% of the Commissioners will be designated as an Administrator—an individual currently or recently directly engaged in a significant manner in postsecondary program or institutional administration.~~

#### **Section 1.09 – Committees**

The Commission may create such standing or special committees as it may deem necessary or desirable and define their duties and responsibilities. Except as provided below, appointments to such committees shall be made by the Chair of the Commission as such office is defined in Section 1.11.a.i hereof and confirmed by the Commission. In addition to any standing or special committees created in accordance with the foregoing, the following shall constitute standing committees of the Commission:

- a. Executive Committee: The membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the Corporation, as such offices are defined in Section 1.11 hereof. Between meetings of the Commission, the Executive Committee is *delegated authority and empowered to act upon matters related to the management and operations of the Commission requiring immediate action and to issue a Warning to accredited institutions*, but the Executive Committee may not change or waive standards of accreditation or *make decisions that would change the accredited status of a school—i.e., place a school on Warning, Probation, or Show Cause or grant, renew, deny, or withdraw accreditation—which are authorities reserved exclusively by the Commission as the decision-making body.*

The following revised language does not require a vote but is being included here for context and to show that the language being proposed for deletion regarding the different roles and classifications will be added to the ACCSC *Rules of Process and Procedure in the Standards of Accreditation*.

## **RULES OF PROCESS AND PROCEDURE**

### **SECTION I – DEFINITIONS, ACCREDITATION OBLIGATIONS, ELIGIBILITY AND PROCESS, AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **A. Definitions**

1. The term “Commission” refers to the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges composed as described in the *Bylaws* of the Accreditation Alliance of Career Schools and Colleges (“AACSC”) *and as set forth below:*
  - a. *One or more Commissioners will be designated as the following:*
    - i. *Administrative - an individual currently or formerly engaged in a significant manner in postsecondary programmatic or institutional administration.*
    - ii. *Academic - an individual currently or formerly engaged in a significant manner in postsecondary education, training, teaching, or research.*
    - iii. *Educator, Practitioner, and/or Employer – an individual currently or formerly engaged in the application of skills, teaching, or employment of individuals.*
  - b. *The number of Public Commissioners (as defined in the Bylaws) shall be at least 15% but less than a majority of the total number of Commissioners.*
2. The term “public member/~~Commissioner~~” used in the *Standards of Accreditation* ~~and/or the Bylaws~~ means a person who:
  - a. Has experience in industry, government, education (e.g., accreditation, postsecondary, public, private, adult or vocational/career-oriented), or in similar or allied fields;
  - b. Is not an employee, member of the governing board, owner, shareholder, or consultant of an institution that is accredited by the Commission, has applied for accreditation by the Commission, or is affiliated with a School Commissioner or any institution or entity which is also affiliated with a School Commissioner;
  - c. Is not a member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with ACCSC;
  - d. Is not a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in paragraph (b) or (c) of this definition; and
  - e. Has been appointed to ~~serve on the Commission pursuant to Section 1.05 of the AACSC Bylaws or appointed to~~ sit on the Standing Appeals Panel pursuant to *Section VIII (D)(2)(d), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation*.
3. *The term “Single Purpose Institution” means an institution that offer a single program that leads to a singular and specific occupation.*

*Current items 3. through 20. would be renumbered 4. to 21.*

## SECTION VIII – APPEAL OF A COMMISSION DECISION

### D. Appeals Panel

2. Standing Appeals Panel:
  - a. The Standing Appeals Panel does not include any current member of the Commission.
  - b. Members of the Standing Appeals Panel are subject to the ACCSC Appeals Panel Code of Conduct and other requirements as stated in the Commission’s policies and may be removed from the list of Standing Appeals Panel members for failure to comply with these policies.
  - c. At least 10 persons constitute the Commission’s Standing Appeals Panel.
  - d. Members of the Standing Appeals Panel are nominated by the Commission Chair, with the advice of the Executive Director of ACCSC, and confirmed by the Commission from a pool of candidates who have knowledge of accrediting policies and procedures, such as school and college administrators and academic personnel; public members with an academic and/or administrative background and individuals from industry, government, or education; or individuals with experience in accreditation.
  - e. Prior to the Appeals Panel hearing, the school is advised of the names and school affiliations, if any, of members of the Standing Appeals Panel.
  - f. Alternates: The Standing Appeals Panel may be supplemented with qualified alternates in the event that there is an insufficient number of members of the Standing Appeals Panel to constitute a Sitting Appeals Panel with the requisite number of persons.
3. Sitting Appeals Panel: ~~Three persons are nominated~~ **Nominees** by the Executive Director of ACCSC from the Standing Appeals Panel and are confirmed by the Commission Chair to serve as the Sitting Appeals Panel, which will fairly and impartially consider a school’s appeal. One member will be designated to Chair the Sitting Appeals Panel, one member will be designated as an administrative representative, one member will be designated as an academic representative, and at least one member will be a public member.<sup>4</sup> ***In cases where a single purpose institution is appealing a Commission decision, the Appeals Panel will include a member that is designated as an Educator, Practitioner, and/or Employer. Each Appeal Panel member will be designated to fill only one role.***

~~FN1—An Appeals Panel Member may hold more than one designation—for example a member may be designated as the Chair of the Sitting Appeals Panel and as an administrative representative or a member may be designated as a public member and as an academic representative—but in no case will a member be designated as both an administrative and academic representative.~~