

Report from the Accrediting Commission

March 6, 2014

Changes to Standards, Policies and Procedures

The DETC Accrediting Commission met on January 17, 2014 and gave final adoption to the following (to view these documents, please go to DETC's website at www.detc.org and visit "Public Notices"). New language is indicated by the underlined text. Accredited institutions must be in compliance by June 1, 2014.

Final Approval

1. Standard VI.C. Instructors/Faculty/Staff:

The institution has a sufficient number of qualified instructors²/faculty³ to give individualized instructional service to each student. The institution maintains files containing the resumes and official transcripts of its instructors/faculty. Faculty are carefully screened for appointment, and are properly and continuously trained with respect to institution policies, learner needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of appropriate instructional technology. The institution has clear, consistent procedures to evaluate faculty performance.

²Instructors teaching technically- or practice-oriented courses must have practical experience in the field and hold current licenses and/or certifications, as applicable.

³ qualifications for degree-granting institutions are described in C.9. Policy on Degree Programs.

2. **C.17. Policy on International Activities:** Major revision (requiring visits to foreign sites).

3. **E.14. Application for Change of Ownership/Control:** Revised. Deleted Management; added requirement that new owner must complete *DETC's Preparing for Accreditation* online course.

4. **E.17. Glossary:** Add definition of Division.

DIVISION:

A "division" of a DETC institution typically refers to any name used by an institution to advertise its various courses or programs. A "division" is owned and operated by the parent institution and is not a separate legal entity. For example, the XYZ Institution advertises its degree-granting programs under the name "XYZ University" and its vocational courses under "XYZ Career Institute" and its high school programs under "XYZ High School." Another example is the company, ABC Company, offers several programs and advertises each program by a different name; such as ABC Career School or ABC Photography School. DETC requires that any separately advertised division be listed in the *DETC Directory of Accredited Institutions*.

Proposed Changes (call for public comment):

The Commission approved the following changes for public comment. Affected institutions, students, and the public are invited to submit comments on the changes. To view these documents, please go to DETC's website at www.detc.org and visit the "Public Notices" tab. New language is indicated by the underlined text. Comments are due **May 1, 2014** and should be sent to Sally Welch (sally@detc.org). Please write "Comments on Proposed Changes" in the subject line of your e-mail, and expect an e-mail acknowledging receipt of your comments.

1. Standard IX.A. Financial Practices: adding language for clarification:

The institution shows, by complete, comparative financial statements covering its two most recent fiscal years, that it is financially responsible and that it has sufficient resources to enable it to meet its financial obligations to provide quality instruction and service to its students. (Financial statements must be audited ~~or~~ and reviewed and prepared "in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.") The institution has budgeting processes that allows the institution to demonstrate that current and future budgeted operating results will be ~~are~~ sufficient to allow the institution to accomplish its mission and goals.

2. Standard IX.E. Demonstrated Operations: adding "financial" in "sound financial and ethical operation" for clarification.

3. Standards XII.A. Planning and Evaluation: adding language for clarification:

An accredited institution has a written plan (institutional improvement plan) that is designed to identify internal and external trends and patterns, optimize opportunities, address challenges, reflect on achievements, develop operating plan and budgets, and maintain quality. The planning enables the institution to improve services to students, ensure the professional growth of its instructors/faculty and staff, provide for the financial stability, long-term quality, and growth of the institution. ~~and long-term quality and growth of the institution.~~ The institution collects and analyzes data on a systematic, consistent basis to monitor the status and effectiveness of the plan and evaluates its full range of services.

4. C.9. Policy on Degree Programs: adding language to clarify IRB process on Page 4: In addition, the institution must require prior formal review and approval for all research involving humans through an institutional review board (IRB), which has been designated to approve, monitor, and review all research involving human subjects. The IRB should ensure that the subjects are not placed at undue risk, and that they have voluntarily agreed to participate and have received appropriate informed consent. The IRB must meet all federal regulations and the institution must be able to demonstrate they are in compliance including providing evidence that all IRB members have had appropriate training. (Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 46).

5. **C.9. Policy on Degree Programs:** Standard VI: Qualifications and Duties of Owners, Governing Board Members, Officials, Administrators, Instructors/Faculty, and Staff, and Reputation of Institution: Adding If under extenuating circumstances where official transcripts/documents cannot be provided, an institution may make an exception to the following requirements if it documents the reason(s) why and how the exception request was reviewed and approved by an appropriate official. Under Qualifications of Faculty and Standard VII. Admission Practices. Qualifications for Admission.

6. **C.18. Policy on Annual Reports:** Adding requirement for Title IV institutions to submit audited financials.

DETC Benchmarks for 2014

The Accrediting Commission reviewed C.14 – *Policy on Student Achievement and Satisfaction* and its methodology for establishing benchmarks for graduation rates. Policy C.14 states that these benchmarks will be set by the Commission. Upon reviewing the graduation rate data submitted in the 2013 Annual Reports, as well as the data submitted for the 2012 and 2011 Annual Reports, the Commission calculated a three-year average of the data to establish graduation benchmarks. The Commission determined that a three-year average stabilizes the benchmark year-to-year and utilizes a broader array of outcomes data for determining the benchmarks. Each year, the Commission may establish a revised three-year average by including the most recent year data and removing the most dated year (i.e., next year include 2014 data and remove 2011 data). In accordance with this methodology, the following benchmarks will be in effect for the period of March 1, 2014 – February 28, 2015.

Credential	Three-year Average Benchmarks	
	average	15 points below
For-profit Postsecondary	71	56
Specialized For-profit Postsecondary	75	60
Non-profit Postsecondary	85	70
Associate	48	33
Bachelor	58	43
Master's	61	46
1st Professional	56	41
Doctorate	50	35