



Public Notification of Information About Affiliated Institutions

The following policy governs the release of information regarding the status of affiliated colleges and universities by institutions and by the Commission.

1. Release of Information by Institutions Regarding Their Accreditation Following Commission Action

At the conclusion of the evaluation process institutions are encouraged to make publicly available information about their accreditation status including the findings of evaluation committee reports and any obligations or requirements established by Commission action, as well as any plans to address stated concerns. Institutions are asked not to publish or otherwise disseminate excerpts from these materials, to avoid the release of any misleading information.

The Commission maintains that it is good practice for an institution to make available copies of self-evaluation reports, peer-evaluation reports, or other documents related to its accreditation, in their entirety, after notification of Commission action.

If an institution releases or otherwise disseminates information which misrepresents or distorts its accreditation status, the institution will be notified and asked to take corrective action to publicly correct any misleading information it may have disseminated, including but not limited to the accreditation status of the institution, the contents of evaluation reports, and the Commission actions with respect to the institution. Should it fail to do so, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, acting through its President, will release a public statement in such form and content as it deems desirable providing correct information.

2. Published Statement on Accredited Status

The Commission asks that the following statement be used by the institution for disclosing its accredited status on its website and in catalogues, brochures, advertisements, etc.

The following statement, in its entirety, must be used when an institution includes within its website, catalogue or other material a statement which will give the public a better idea of the meaning of regional accreditation:

_____ College (University) is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

Accreditation of an institution of higher education by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality evaluated through a peer review process. An accredited college or university is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

Accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities is not partial but applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is not a guarantee of every course or program offered, or the competence of individual graduates. Rather, it provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding an institution's accredited status by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities should be directed to the administrative staff of the institution. Individuals may also contact:

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
8060 165th Avenue N.E., Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052
(425) 558-4224
www.nwccu.org

Accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities refers to the institution as a whole. Therefore, statements like “fully accredited” or “this program is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities” or “this degree is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities” are incorrect and should not be used.

3. **Published Statement on Candidate Status**

An institution granted Candidate for Accreditation status must use the following statement whenever it makes reference to its affiliation with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities:

_____ College (University) has been granted Candidate for Accreditation status by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Candidacy for Accreditation is a status of affiliation with the Commission which indicates that the institution has achieved initial recognition and is progressing toward accreditation.

Candidacy is not accreditation nor does it assure eventual accreditation.

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4. **Public Notification of Information About Affiliated Institutions by the Commission**

The Commission will release the following information about affiliated institutions:

- The date of initial accreditation and/or when candidacy was granted;
- The date and nature (year three or year seven/comprehensive) of the most recent evaluation and subsequent Commission action on the institution's accredited status;
- The date and nature (year three or year seven/comprehensive) of the next scheduled evaluation;
- Submission date and action taken on the most recent written report required by the Commission;
- The extent of, or limitations on, the status of affiliation;
- A decision by an accredited or candidate institution to voluntarily withdraw its affiliation with the Commission will be reported within 30 days after the Commission's action on the institution's withdrawal of its accreditation.

Within 30 days after the action on accreditation status is taken, the Commission will notify the Secretary of Education, Northwest state higher education officers, appropriate accrediting agencies, and the public. Such actions include a final decision to:

- Grant candidacy or accreditation;
- Reaffirm/continue an institution's accreditation.

In cases of adverse action (denial or termination of candidacy or accreditation, show cause or imposing probation), the Commission will post notice on its website within 24 hours of its notice to the institution.

In cases of adverse action, no later than 60 days after the decision, the Commission will make available to the institution and at the same time to the Secretary of Education, the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, appropriate accrediting agencies and the public, the Commission's reasons for recommending that status, and in the case of probation, its plans to monitor the institution. The institution will be offered the opportunity to make its official comment; if the institution does make an official comment, the comment will be made available by the Commission. If the institution does not comment the Commission will provide evidence that it has been offered the opportunity to provide official comment.

For institutions whose candidacy or accreditation has been terminated, the date of, and reasons for, termination will be made available by the Commission.

Institutions are allowed seven days to file an appeal regarding adverse actions (imposing probation, denial of candidate status or accreditation, revocation of candidacy, and termination of accreditation). If the institution does not notify the Commission of such an appeal, notification will be made. If an appeal is filed, the notification will be communicated after the appeal process is completed. The Commission, at its discretion, may make the adverse action public before an appeal is completed. In so doing, the Commission will provide information about the appeal process.

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