

STANDARDS OF MEMBERSHIP

NON-DEGREE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE TECHNICAL OR CAREER LEVEL

The Standards of Membership as established at the non-degree level are primarily qualitative and are applied to both individual programs and the institution as a whole. In making recommendations concerning candidacy, initial accreditation and decisions on continued accreditation, the Commission bases its judgements on the nature and purposes of the institution, the appropriateness of objectives in terms of the institution's structure, the degree to which objectives are realized, and the institution's compliance with the Standards of Membership.

1. MISSION

- 1.1 The institution is guided by a mission statement which clearly defines its character, is appropriate for higher education, and is consistent with Commission Standards.
- 1.2 The institution shall state in its mission statement its general purpose and specific objectives. There shall be evidence supporting the fact that the programs of the institution are consistent with these objectives and promote the intellectual growth of its students and the employment prospects of its graduates. Moreover, there shall be evidence that the mission statement is consistent with the institution's charter or formal legal authority.
- 1.3 The institution shall show evidence that the mission statement periodically undergoes a process of review and affirmation at the institutional level. The review of an institution's statement of mission is a major educational decision that should involve the efforts of groups such as faculty, students, administration, governing boards and/or other appropriate groups. The institution shall show evidence that educational decisions are supported by sufficient resources to meet its mission. The institution must also provide evidence which demonstrates the institution's effectiveness in meeting its mission.
- 1.4 Appropriate publications, such as the official catalog, must accurately reflect the statement of mission.

2. PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

The institution develops and implements a broad-based and integrated system of planning and assessment which involves all appropriate constituencies. This system is appropriate to the institution's mission and its purposes as an institution of higher education and includes planning and assessment processes that embrace all of the standards of membership. The results of assessment data are used to determine institutional effectiveness and to modify institutional plans as appropriate. Consistent with institutional outcomes assessments that demonstrate attainment of institutional purposes and objectives, the institutional record of formal complaints which relate to compliance with the accreditation standards and which are filed through the grievance process within the institution or with NEASC or with the U.S. Department of Education during the

review period must be included in all institutional assessments, analyses and self-studies for CTCI accreditation. The records and incident files shall be available for verification. The integration of assessment and planning processes allows the institution to identify priorities for improvement.

Mission

- 2.1 The institutional mission and goal statements include objectives for which accomplishment can be documented and made public. The institution regularly evaluates and revises as necessary its institutional policies, practices, and publications to ensure integrity in all its representations about its mission, programs and services.

Governance

- 2.2 The governing board regularly evaluates and revises as necessary its policies, practices, and performance to ensure its constituencies that it carries out its responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner.

Finance

- 2.3 The institution's planning process and budget process are interconnected. The institution provides the necessary resources for effective evaluation and planning processes.

Faculty

- 2.4 The institution has in place a process to assess the professional qualifications of its faculty and to assess its policies related to faculty. Furthermore, there is a process to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.

Student Services

- 2.5 The institution assesses the learning needs of its student population and provides services and programs for meeting them. The institution regularly evaluates and revises as necessary its student services and programs to ensure that it is meeting the identified needs of its students. The institution uses the results of its systematic assessment activities to improve its instructional programs and institutional services and activities.

Programs of Study

- 2.6 The institution has implemented a process to verify that its programs, wherever and however they are offered, support the mission of the institution. Through its planning and assessment process, the institution ensures the quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness of all of its courses and programs wherever and however they are offered. Furthermore, the planning and assessment process ensures that all educational programs have a coherent design and are characterized by appropriate

breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, synthesis of learning, and use of information resources.

- 2.7 The institution identifies and publishes in appropriate and accessible documents the expected learning outcomes for each of its major programs and general education programs. It assesses and documents that students completing its programs have achieved those stated learning outcomes.
- 2.8 The institution's processes for establishing and evaluating its educational programs are clearly defined, encompass all of the institution's offerings, are conducted on a regular basis, and are integrated into the institution's overall planning and evaluation efforts. The institution uses the results of its assessment activities to improve its educational programs. The institution provides evidence that its program reviews lead to the improvement of the teaching and learning processes at the institution.

Physical Facilities

- 2.9 A process is in place to evaluate the physical facilities of the institution on a regular basis. The results of this process are used to inform the institution's planning processes.

Library and Information Resources

- 2.10 The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the adequacy and utilization of its learning and information resources and services and makes changes as necessary.

Publications

- 2.11 The institution regularly assesses its publications both in terms of their adequacy and their integrity, making sure that the publications are complete, clear, and accurate.

3. GOVERNANCE

- 3.1 The institution has legal authority to operate from all jurisdictions in which services are delivered and it has received authority from all appropriate regulatory agencies. It has a system of governance that facilitates the successful accomplishment of its mission and purposes. In multi-institution systems, the division of responsibility and authority between the system office and the institution is clearly defined. The responsibilities and relationships among the governing board, administration, staff and faculty are prescribed in governance documents and in a table of organization accurately reflecting the actual lines of authority within the institution. The institution's internal system of governance reflects the appropriate and responsible participation of its constituencies and promotes regular and effective communication among them.
- 3.2 The institution has a governing board that is the legally constituted body responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and has the authority to achieve institutional

- purposes. The duties, responsibility, operating procedures and structure of the board are clearly defined in a published governance document. Its membership includes representation reflecting the public interest. The public interest requirement recognizes that institutions do serve a public purpose when they provide educational experiences that benefit not only the individual student but society as well. Public representation is defined as those members of the board who are not administrators, faculty or staff members of the institution (or are directly related to such) and who in no way benefit from the operation. In addition, public representatives are free from present or potential conflicts of interest. The chief executive officer of the institution may be a member of the governing board, but should not serve as its chair. The governing board of the institution has a program for board turnover and development and new board member recruitment and orientation. The board routinely conducts a self-assessment, using the results for improvement.
- 3.3 The institution has a chief executive officer appointed by the board and whose full-time or major responsibilities are to the institution's mission and goals. A qualified administrative staff, appropriately separate from the governing board and accountable to the chief executive officer, has the responsibility for the implementation and management of policies of the institution. The organizational structure reflects the needs of the institution and is responsive to administrative requirements, constituent needs and the community it serves. Groups providing advisory information to the institution function within the established parameters of the institution. All institutional programs, including continuing education, off campus locations, distance education and international programs are incorporated into the administrative management system of the institution.
- 3.4 The extent of various college constituents' involvement, with particular attention to the role of the faculty, in the formulation of educational policy is clearly defined. Within the context of the institution's system of governance, the faculty is accorded the right and exercises its responsibility to provide a substantive voice in matters of educational programs, faculty personnel and other aspects of the institutional policy that relate to its areas of responsibility and expertise.
- 3.5 An atmosphere of trust and focused commitment to the mission of the institution is evident, as is a collegial atmosphere that encourages communication among all of the institution's constituents. The system of governance makes provisions for consideration of student views and judgments in those matters in which students have a direct and reasonable interest.
- 3.6 The institution assesses the effectiveness of its system of management and governance, using the results for its improvement.

4. FINANCE

- 4.1 Since the financial resources of an institution influence, in part, the quality of the instructional program, an institution shall present evidence that financial resources are

- available to achieve and maintain the objectives of the institution. The institution must provide evidence of the reasonable financial viability of the institution and a plan that outlines how the institution intends to continually improve its financial position. The adequacy of financial resources will be judged relative to the purposes of the institution, the scope of programs offered, and the number of students enrolled.
- 4.2 The governing board must accept responsibility for the financial health of the institution. The chief executive officer shall ensure that a qualified financial officer or department oversees the financial operations of the institution. The chief financial officer is accountable to the chief executive officer and provides financial information on a regular basis to the governing board. Moreover, the financial aid program is supervised by a qualified financial aid administrator.
- 4.3 The system of financial management needs to exhibit sound budgeting practices, employ appropriate accounting principles, and utilize financial and non-financial data. The chief executive officer, through the chief financial officer, shall ensure that the system of financial management has appropriate controls that allow reasonable assurance that material errors, omissions and irregularities can be detected without undue delay. The institution's financial systems shall be maintained in such a manner that its fiscal position can be analyzed routinely without undue delay. An audit by a qualified accountant shall be required at least once a biennium. The institution must demonstrate that the auditors' comments and recommendations and reports of findings are addressed promptly.
- 4.4 The institution must demonstrate that it has prudent financial management in both its day-to-day operation and in its handling of investments that are committed for the long-term financial strength of the institution.
- 4.5 The institution must develop and adhere to a published policy for tuition, fees, and other charges. This policy must contain provisions for students who withdraw from the institution. Refund provisions must be consistent with generally accepted refund policies in higher education and with the requirements of grantors of financial assistance, including but not limited to Federal financial aid regulations. Financial aid policies and practices meet state and federal regulations and are subject to periodic audits.

5. FACULTY

- 5.1 The primary responsibility for the development and improvement of educational programs lies with the faculty. The selection and retention of a qualified faculty must be a major focus for the institution. The professional qualifications of the faculty, employment responsibilities, and the effectiveness of teaching are paramount factors in consideration of an institution for membership. The institution has in place policies governing the role and responsibility of full-time and part-time faculty.
- 5.2 To ensure full participation by the community, the institution uses an open process in the selection of faculty. Faculty routinely participate in the search process for

- the selection of new instructional staff. The institution follows applicable employment guidelines which reflect its desire for diversity in academic preparation and expertise in its faculty ranks.
- 5.3 The institution employs a sufficient number of full-time faculty members to ensure effective teaching, proper advisement of students, adequate review and development of curricula, and involvement in institutional governance and planning.
 - 5.4 The preparation and qualifications of full-time and part-time faculty members must be appropriate to their instructional assignments. Teaching faculty must have competence in the fields in which they teach and must demonstrate success in creating a supportive learning environment for students.
 - 5.5 The minimum academic credential is an academic degree at least one degree level above the level being taught. Moreover, the faculty must hold degrees related to the field(s) in which they are teaching.
 - 5.6 In some fields, however, there may be other qualifications which are equivalent to the minimum academic credential. Qualifications may be measured by such accomplishments as scholarship, advanced study, creative activities, and relevant professional experience, training, and credentials, such as licensure or professional registration. Institutions must provide documentation in those cases where qualifications other than the minimum academic degree are used for faculty appointment.
 - 5.7 While teaching loads and schedules will vary depending on the institution and the field of instruction, faculty should be allowed time for adequate preparation and for continuing professional growth. The student-faculty ratio shall be appropriate to the type of programs offered by the institution. Faculty assignments and workloads are reviewed periodically by appropriate personnel and adjusted as institutional conditions change.
 - 5.8 Since faculty are responsible for the development and improvement of the instructional program, a shared system of governance must exist which includes the participation and representation of the faculty in appropriate matters relating to academic affairs.
 - 5.9 The institution regularly evaluates faculty to ensure that they are effective in carrying out their professional responsibilities. The criteria used in the evaluation process reflect the mission and objectives of the institution. The evaluation procedures used are broad-based and equitable.
 - 5.10 Written policies concerning faculty responsibilities and conditions of employment are clearly stated and understood. These policies allow for due process to deal with grievances brought by the faculty. Faculty are provided reasonable contractual security for appropriate periods of time consistent with the resources of the institution. As part of this reasonable contractual security, a statement of academic freedom for the faculty is adopted by the governing board. Crucial to the integrity of an educational institution, a

statement of academic freedom allows faculty and students -- even in institutions with particular philosophical or religious beliefs -- to examine all pertinent data, to question assumptions, and to teach and study the full range of a given discipline.

6. STUDENTS

- 6.1 Each institution provides an environment which fosters academic success and intellectual and personal growth by offering appropriate student support services and co-curricular activities. Student support services begin with the recruitment and admission of students, continue throughout the academic experience, and include placement and career counseling activities prior to completion of the program.
- 6.2 Each institution's recruitment and admissions policies ensure that the qualifications and interests of the students recruited are compatible with the institution's mission and the accepting program's focus. The institution's admissions policies are published and admissions practices are consistent with those policies.
- 6.3 Student financial aid policies and opportunities are published and the institution's process of awarding financial aid is in keeping with the published process. Financial aid policies and practice meet state and federal regulations and are subject to periodic audits.
- 6.4 The institution provides appropriate and effective orientation for new students. Counseling services are available at the institution or by referral for personal and emotional needs of students. Career counseling, placement services and transfer counseling are available for students.
- 6.5 The institution continually monitors the learning needs of its student population and provides services to meet those needs. Those services may include but are not limited to: basic skills training, remedial preparation or course work, academic program supplementary services such as tutoring or mentoring, counseling on personal and/or educational problems. Academic skills development programs are also available.
- 6.6 Academic retention policies and standards for continuation need as much attention as recruitment policies. Standards for satisfactory academic progress and continued enrollment are clearly stated, publicized and uniformly applied. Academic advising and counseling is available for students to help them assess their personal education goals and determine their compatibility with the objectives of their academic program. Such services may be available through the faculty or the academic support services. The diversity of student educational goals is recognized in all institutional policies on retention and continuation.
- 6.7 The institution fosters the intellectual and personal development of each of its students through the co-curricular activities it provides in keeping with its mission and objectives. The institution supports opportunities for student development and the growth of student leadership. If consistent with its mission and purposes, the institution provides

- opportunities and facilities for student recreation and athletics. Such activity supports institutional educational objectives.
- 6.8 Institutions state and publish statements of student rights and responsibilities that include clearly stated expectations for student behavior. Student conduct policies clearly state the institution's due process procedures and specify possible sanctions. Student rights and responsibilities policies include a procedure to address complaints against the institution or institutional personnel.
- 6.9 Health, wellness and safety education appropriate to the learning community are provided through seminars and student services. The institution provides a safe learning environment and information on security is clearly stated and readily available. Continuing policies and procedures for security and safety are monitored for effectiveness.
- 6.10 If the institution provides residences for students, residence-life policies and procedures support the institutional mission and are clearly stated, well publicized, readily available and fairly and consistently administered.
- 6.11 The institution has established policies regarding information maintained in student records, their access, and maintenance. Records of health, admission criteria and student performance are maintained with full protection assured for that information over time. Records of graduate performance including employment and continued education are kept in sufficient detail to serve as a major source of information concerning program effectiveness. Adequate security and respect for the confidentiality of student records are observed.
- 6.12 All student support services and co-curricular activities are available to students no matter where the student is enrolled in the institution's programs.
- 6.13 The institution periodically and systematically evaluates the appropriateness, adequacy and effectiveness of all student services. Information obtained through this evaluation is used to improve the effectiveness of the student services.

7. PROGRAMS OF STUDY

- 7.1 A CTCI member institution offers programs of study in an environment conducive to learning and free inquiry. A program of study is defined as a curriculum or sequence of course work, lab work, independent study or other academic endeavor that leads to a certificate or diploma. The objectives, requirements, and suggested curricular sequence for each program are clearly specified, published and readily available. The institution regularly and systematically evaluates its programs of study to assess their effectiveness in accomplishing the objectives and to maintain these standards for programs of study. (See also Planning and Assessment, Standard 2).

- 7.2 Programs of study are directly related and appropriate to the general purposes and specific objectives of the institution. Each program demonstrates consistency with the institution's mission through its goals, structure, and content. The institution provides resources and services to meet the learning needs of students in each program. It provides the instructional personnel, resources, equipment and facilities necessary to deliver its programs of study so as to meet their objectives.
- 7.3 The major program, through the development of a mastery of methods of inquiry, promotes an appreciation for the complex structure of the discipline, its relatedness to other knowledge, and current field practice. There is continuous progression across the discipline as well as depth beyond the introductory level. The timing, sequencing and delivery format of courses in a program ensure opportunities for reflection, analysis, mastery of the subject matter and the development of skills of application.
- 7.4 Programs of study allow for the student's completion in a reasonable time according to the institution's published standards. The skills of students who are accepted into a particular program are consistent with the program's clearly specified entry expectations and give the students reasonable potential for success in the program. In cases where a program is to be modified or eliminated, appropriate and timely notice is given and arrangements are made to allow enrolled students the opportunity to complete their education with a minimum of disruption.
- 7.5 Curriculum planning and development occur under clearly defined institutional policies and procedures. Faculty have a substantive responsibility for the design, implementation, and review of curriculum. Institutions offer evidence of regularly using advisory committees in the planning process as well as in periodic curriculum reviews, especially for technical or career programs.
- 7.6 Programs that use internship, clinical, co-op, or similar work experiences have written agreements that define the parameters of activities and the responsibilities of the institution, the students and the host site.

8. PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- 8.1 Physical resources, including buildings and grounds, utilities, laboratories, shops, equipment and materials whether owned or rented, at both on-campus or off-campus locations, are adequate to enable the institution to fulfill its stated purposes and objectives. Additionally, the institution's physical resources contribute to the establishment of a climate in which effective learning can occur.
- 8.2 Classrooms, laboratories, shops and other facilities are appropriately configured and equipped, and provide lighting and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems appropriate for its use with consideration for conditions which might adversely affect health and safety. Particular attention is paid to institutional cleanliness and appearance.

- 8.3 Facilities are designed, constructed and maintained in accordance with legal requirements regarding physical access, environmental standards and regulations, energy efficiency, safety, security, aesthetics, and consistency with the institution's mission. Physical resource evaluation and planning occurs on a regular basis to ensure that the physical resources allocated to any institutional function are adequate for the effective conduct of that function and its current demand. Special attention is given to safety issues relating to the use and disposal of equipment and hazardous materials. Adequate safety equipment and supplies are mandatory in laboratories and other hazardous areas. Proper management, maintenance, and operation of all physical facilities are accomplished by adequate and competent staffing.
- 8.4 The institution has a facilities plan linked to academic, student services and financial planning for the operations of its physical resources to include ongoing operations and maintenance, preventive maintenance, energy management, deferred maintenance and capital renewal and replacement. The plan specifies strategies for correcting identified problems, includes estimated costs, and is supported by adequate and appropriate staffing.

9. LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

Mission

- 9.1 The institution makes available the library and information resources necessary for the fulfillment of its mission. The published mission and objectives of the library are consistent with those of the institution.

Outcomes Assessment and Planning

- 9.2 The library continuously and systematically evaluates its effectiveness by identifying outcomes consistent with its mission, gathering data to measure those outcomes, and using that data to improve library resources, instruction, and services. The library's outcomes assessment process reflects and contributes to institutional planning. The institutional outcomes assessment plan includes components outlining the role of the library and information resources in maximizing student learning and institutional effectiveness.

Teaching and Learning

- 9.3 The library staff is integrally involved in the teaching and learning of the institution. The institution provides opportunities and demonstrates that library staff and faculty collaborate to: ensure that materials and services support curricula/curriculum frameworks; integrate information literacy into the learning process; assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and use information gathered to develop a plan for curricular and instructional improvement. The library provides orientation and instruction in the use of resources which develop skills enabling users to become lifelong

learners with the ability to locate, select, evaluate, organize, apply, and present information effectively.

Resources and Access

- 9.4 The institution ensures that students use library resources as an integral part of their education. Resources and services are readily available to the learning community wherever programs are located or however they are delivered. These resources (i.e. collections, technology, and services), owned by the institution or guaranteed through formal written agreements, are appropriate in quality, level, scope, diversity, quantity, and currency to support and enrich the institution's mission. Cooperative relationships and access to external resources are encouraged as a means of complementing rather than substituting for the institution's own adequate and accessible collection and services. In addition to curriculum support, the library provides materials that support faculty teaching and the intellectual, cultural, and personal development of the community.
- 9.5 Faculty, staff, students, and administration participate, through formal and informal means, in the development, assessment, and improvement of library services and collections. The library has a written policy governing the selection and deletion of all materials. The institution demonstrates that the library's hours of operation meet the information needs of students, faculty and staff.

Staff

- 9.6 The institution demonstrates that staff size is appropriate to serve effectively the learning community. Library staff is credentialed and/or professionally and educationally qualified to support the teaching and learning mission and goals of the institution. The institution clearly defines the responsibilities of library personnel and provides evidence that opportunities for ongoing professional development are pursued by staff.

Facility and Environment

- 9.7 The institution provides accessible facilities with a welcoming atmosphere that encourages inquiry, study, and learning among students, faculty, and staff. The physical layout includes multiple-use space accommodating individual and group study. The overall size of the library supports the teaching and learning of the institution, including space for efficient use of collections, staff operations, storage, and administrative and educational technology. The library facility and equipment is up-to-date, properly maintained, repaired in a timely manner, and secured.

Financial Support

- 9.8 The institution provides sufficient and consistent financial support for staff, collection development, instructional resources, and the maintenance and enhancement of facilities,

technology, and equipment. The library staff participates in the development of the institution's annual budget.

10. PUBLICATIONS

- 10.1 In presenting itself to current and prospective students as well as other members of the interested public, the institution provides information in either print or electronic format (appropriate to the audience) that is complete, accurate, and clear.
- 10.2 The information disseminated in all institutional publications reflects the most currently available information, and it portrays the institution ethically and honestly.
- 10.3 As appropriate, publications, print or electronic, should include the date of publication and contain the institution's mission, objectives, and expected educational outcomes; requirements, procedures, and policies related to admissions and the transfer of credit; student fees, charges, refund policies, and financial aid options; other items related to attending or withdrawing from the institution; academic programs, courses currently offered, and other educational opportunities; academic policies and procedures; and the requirements for certificates and/or diplomas.
- 10.4 Relevant publications, print or electronic, also include a list of current faculty showing degrees held and the institution which granted them; the names of administrative officers with their titles; and the names of the members of the governing board together with their residence by city or town and any appropriate affiliations.
- 10.5 The institution publishes and provides a description of the size and characteristics of the student body, the campus setting, those institutional learning and physical resources from which a student can reasonably be expected to benefit, and the range of co-curricular and non-academic opportunities available to students.
- 10.6 The institution has readily available valid documentation for any statements regarding such matters as program excellence, learning outcomes, business and community partnerships, success in placement, and achievements of graduates or faculty.
- 10.7 The institution assures ready availability on request of all of its publications, and it is also responsive to reasonable requests for all other information pertaining to the institution.
- 10.8 Relevant publications include an accurate, explicit statement about the institution's current status with respect to accreditation.
- 10.9 Through a systematic process of periodic review, the institution ensures that all of its publications are current, comprehensive, accurate, and ethical.