

# Report of the Meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity

April 13, 2012



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Jamienne S. Studley, Chair

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## DISCLAIMER

This report was written as a part of the activities of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI), an independent advisory committee established by statute. The NACIQI is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the regulations implementing that statute. This report represents the views of the NACIQI. The report has not been reviewed for approval by the Department of Education, and therefore, the report's recommendations do not purport to represent the views of the Department.

*Background:*

The National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI or the Committee), was established by Section 114 of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended by the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 and, most recently, Section 106 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). Chief among its statutory functions is the Committee's responsibility to advise the Secretary of Education, or his designee, the Senior Department Official (the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education), regarding the recognition of specific accrediting agencies or associations, or specific State approval agencies, as reliable authorities concerning the quality of education and training offered by the postsecondary educational institutions and programs they accredit. Another function of the NACIQI is to advise the Secretary on the establishment and enforcement of the Criteria for Recognition of accrediting agencies or associations under Subpart 2, Part H, Title IV, of the HEA. The NACIQI also provides advice to the Secretary regarding policy affecting both recognition of accrediting and State approval agencies and institutional eligibility for participation in programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The NACIQI is required by law to meet at least twice a year.

The HEOA made changes to section 496 of the HEA "Recognition of Accrediting Agency or Association" and suspended the activities of the NACIQI upon enactment on August 14, 2008. It also changed the composition of the Committee by increasing the membership from 15 to 18 and shifting appointment authority that had been vested solely in the Secretary to the Secretary of Education, the President pro tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House, each of whom may appoint six members. Also, rather than having the Secretary appoint the Chair, the HEOA required the members to elect a Chair. In July 2010, new regulations went into effect that govern the process by which accrediting agencies seek recognition by the Secretary as a reliable authority regarding the quality of education and training provided by an institution (or program) they accredit.

*Discussion:*

A tele-meeting of the Committee was coordinated by the Department and conducted on April 13, 2012. The purpose of the tele-meeting was to enable the Committee to deliberate and adopt a report of recommendations for the Secretary to inform the reauthorization of the HEOA.

Chair Studley called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 a.m. eastern time.

Roll call was taken. NACIQI members in attendance for all or part of the meeting included Jamienne S. Studley (Chair), Arthur J. Rothkopf (Vice Chair), George T. French, Jr., Arthur Keiser, Earl Lewis, Anne D. Neal, William Pepicello, Susan D. Phillips, Cameron C. Staples, Lawrence N. Vanderhoef, Carolyn G. Williams, Frank H. Wu and Federico Zaragoza.

U.S. Department of Education personnel who also participated in the meeting included: Committee Executive Director Carol Griffiths, Accreditation Director Kay Gilcher, Program Attorney Sarah Wanner, and Program and Management Analyst staff member, Patricia Howes.

In response to the Federal Register Notice solicitation for public comments, the Committee heard oral presentations from:

1. Ms. Joyce Rechtschaffen, Director Office of Government Affairs, Princeton University,
2. Mr. Joseph Vibert, Executive Director Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors; and
3. Dr. Sylvia Manning, President Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association.

At the conclusion of the oral comments, Chair Studley outlined the motion procedures and responded to procedural questions. The motion was made to advance the draft report as it stands for consideration as adoption in full by the committee (Phillips) and seconded (Staples).

This was followed by a motion that the comments submitted on March 16, 2012 to NACIQI which were entitled "Alternative to the NACIQI Draft Final Report submitted by Anne Neal and Arthur Rothkopf be substituted in its entirety for the draft final report" (Rothkopf). The motion was seconded (Neal). After discussion and a roll call vote, the alternative motion failed to pass by a roll call vote of four to seven.

Three proposed amendments were forwarded prior to action on the main motion:

1. To add language at the very end of the document - "We advance these recommendations with the further guidance that their consideration and/or implementation be undertaken with recognition that determination of quality be solidly recognized as a non-governmental and nonfederal function." After discussion, the amendment was withdrawn.
2. To recommend deletion of the substantive recommendation in Number 8 and the language in the preceding paragraph that tracks setting up that Number 8 recommendation. After discussion, the amendment passed by a roll call vote of eleven yes and one no.
3. To remove Recommendation 9 (now Number 8) and the sentence stem that proceeds it; specifically, it says, "Encourage a dialogue within the accreditation community about the structure and organization of the accreditation enterprise, the diversity of educational activity and mission today may call for a system of accreditation that is aligned more closely with mission or sector or other educationally relevant variables than with the geography. This dialogue may also afford institutions greater opportunity to choose among accreditors." After discussion, the amendment failed to pass by a roll call vote of five yes and six no.

*Action:*

With no further amendments, the Committee took action on the main motion made by Susan Phillips and seconded by Cameron Staples -- that the Committee adopts the draft final report as amended with respect to Recommendation Number 8." The motion passed by a roll call vote of nine yes and two no.

Chair Studley adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m. eastern time.