



BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS (BOARS)

Barbara Knowlton, Chair

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Assembly of the Academic Senate

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**HAN MI YOON-WU, ASSOCIATE VICE PROVOST &
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS**

RE: CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING ACCREDITORS

Dear Han Mi,

During our meeting on March 1st, BOARS approved a set of recommended criteria for evaluating accreditors. As you know, the need for criteria was identified in early 2020 following discussions about endorsing WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) as the preferred accreditor for public and private high schools in California. In addition, BOARS agreed with an Undergraduate Admissions recommendation that UC require a statement of explanation from any California high school that is accredited by an agency other than WSCUC so that the University has a record of the institution's reasons for not pursuing WSCUC accreditation.

An ad hoc group of BOARS members considered the issues and devised the following set of recommendations which are aligned with [the recent University Committee on Educational Policy's \(UCEP\) guidance about regional and institutional accreditation](#) endorsed by Academic Council.

Recommendation #1) In line with the recent UCEP decision, we recommend that accreditation for California high school A-G lists be limited to the current set of accepted accreditors.

Recommendation #2) Further, we recommend a continued preference for WSCUC. If a high school wants to use another accreditor, it needs to make a compelling argument for another currently accepted accreditor identified in Recommendation #1 above.

Recommendation #3) Update the references to accreditors, given changes in designations/names if needed, as spurred by the 2018 changes in the Department of Education accreditor references. In other words, all accepted accreditors need to be appropriately identified as in the recent UCEP decision.

Recommendation #4) To strike a balance between the maintenance of UC standards and uniformity, while avoiding the downsides of monopoly, provide future quality checks. BOARS should request periodic reports (e.g., every three to five years) from WSCUC on its operation, including complaints and aggregate statistics on accreditation outcomes. Similarly, BOARS should look into the preparedness of students admitted from accredited online schools.

A number of factors led to the ad hoc group's recommendations. Since student preparedness for work at UC requires rigorous high school coursework, our key priority is to ensure that the quality standards for A-G courses are verified by accreditors who have the capability to verify these high standards, and an ability to foster high school improvements in coursework and preparation in cases where high school refinements may be needed. Furthermore, due to prior regionalization of accreditation activities, WSCUC is the preferred accreditor for high school A-G lists in California due to the depth of its past experience with California high schools and desirability of uniformity. In terms of uniformity, the scope of WSCUC's accreditation history makes it uniquely positioned to evaluate schools relative to their California peers. If a school wants to use a different accreditor, they should provide a strong rationale for their decision.

The committee appreciates the opportunity to weigh in on this matter. Don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B Knowlton', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Barbara Knowlton, Chair
BOARS

cc: Academic Council
Divisional Senate Executive Directors
Executive Director Lin