February 12, 2024

KATHERINE S. NEWMAN
PROVOST & EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Re: Regional and Institutional Accreditation Terminology

Dear Katherine,

In 2020, the US Department of Education removed the differentiation between regional and national accrediting agencies, creating a new comprehensive list of accreditors. Consequently, organizations previously classified as “national” accrediting agencies are now in a single list that includes the regional agencies that UC has long accepted for institutional accreditation purposes. The University of California currently accepts courses for transfer credit from seven accrediting organizations that were previously termed “regional.” However, the distinct list for “regional” accreditors no longer exists. UC policies and guidelines have not yet been revised to specifically refer to those formerly regional agencies now incorporated into the new list.

At its January 2024 meeting, the Academic Council endorsed the attached request from the University Committee on Educational Policy, advocating for UC to maintain its practice of accepting courses only from institutions accredited by the seven formerly regional accrediting agencies. This terminology change also reflects the updated accreditation organization names.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

James Steintrager, Chair
Academic Council

Cc: Academic Council
Associate Vice Provost & Executive Director Yoon-Wu
Senate Division Executive Directors
Senate Executive Director Lin

Encl:
December 20, 2023

JAMES STEINTRAGER, CHAIR
ACADEMIC COUNCIL

RE: REGIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION TERMINOLOGY

Dear Jim,

In 2020 the U.S. Department of Education made a change to how accredited institutions are referenced, but UC still acknowledges acceptance of courses only from institutions accredited by regional accrediting agencies. Undergraduate Admissions at UCOP notified the Senate about the need to catch up with the newer terminology and accrediting agency distinctions in order to avoid a situation where course articulations are rejected for using outdated names. The University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) discussed this matter on December 4th and endorsed a proposal to continue to accept courses from institutions accredited by the formerly labeled “regional accreditors.” Those institutions are:

1. Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
2. New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NEASC-CIHE)
3. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), formerly North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
4. Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
5. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
6. Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)
7. WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)

UCEP sought input from the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools and the University Committee on Preparatory Education, and both committees have indicated their agreement with this proposal. UCEP requests that Academic Council endorse the proposal for the UC system to continue accepting courses from institutions that are accredited by the formerly regional accrediting agencies. The Provost’s Office should be informed that the Senate has determined that the UC policy on accreditation remains the same.

UCEP appreciates the opportunity to comment on this matter. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Melanie Cocco, Chair
UCEP