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What Is the Authority for the National Advisory Committee?

The National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity is established under Section 114 of the Higher Education Act (HEA) as amended, 20 U.S.C. 1011c.

What Are the Functions of the National Advisory Committee?

The Committee advises the Secretary of Education about:

- The establishment and enforcement of the criteria for recognition of accrediting agencies or associations under subpart 2 of part H of Title IV, HEA.
- The recognition of specific accrediting agencies or associations.
- The preparation and publication of the list of nationally recognized accrediting agencies and associations.
- The eligibility and certification process for institutions of higher education under Title IV, HEA.
- The development of standards and criteria for specific categories of vocational training institutions and institutions of higher education for which there are no recognized accrediting agencies, associations, or State agencies in order to establish the interim eligibility of those institutions to participate in Federally funded programs.
- The relationship between: (1) Accreditation of institutions of higher education and the certification and eligibility of such institutions, and (2) State licensing responsibilities with respect to such institutions.
- Any other advisory functions relating to accreditation and institutional eligibility that the Secretary may prescribe.

What Items Will Be on the Agenda for Discussion at the Meeting?

Agenda topics will include the review of agencies that have submitted petitions for renewal of recognition, submitted progress reports, or submitted interim reports. In addition, the National Advisory Committee will discuss the current status of proposals pertaining to the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, as amended.

Please note that the agency listed below, which was originally scheduled for review during the National Advisory Committee's December 2003 meeting,

will be postponed for review until the June 2004 meeting.

- Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools

Any third-party written comments regarding this agency that were received by September 18, 2003, in accordance with the **Federal Register** notice published on August 4, 2003, will become part of the official record. Those comments will be considered by the National Advisory Committee when it reviews the agency's petition for renewal of recognition at the June 2004 meeting. Another opportunity to provide written comments on the agency prior to that meeting will be announced in a **Federal Register** notice requesting written comments.

What Agencies Will the Advisory Committee Review at the Meeting?

The Advisory Committee will review the following agencies during its December 8-9, 2003 meeting.

Nationally Recognized Accrediting Agencies

Interim Reports

(An interim report is a follow-up report on an accrediting agency's compliance with specific criteria for recognition that was requested by the Secretary when the Secretary granted renewed recognition to the agency.)

1. Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration.
2. American Board of Funeral Service Education.
3. Association of Advanced Rabbinical and Talmudic Schools.
4. National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

Progress Reports

1. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (This is a report on the agency's implementation of its new standards).
2. Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Schools (This is a report on the agency's action plan for coming into compliance with criteria for recognition).

State Agencies Recognized for the Approval of Public Postsecondary Vocational Education

Petition for Renewal of Recognition

1. Missouri State Board of Education (Current scope of recognition: The approval of public, postsecondary vocational education in the State of Missouri).

At its June 2003 meeting, the Advisory Committee had recommended that review of this agency's petition for

continued recognition be deferred until the Committee's December 2003 meeting, and the Secretary had concurred with that recommendation.

Interim Report

1. New York Board of Regents (Public Postsecondary Vocational Education Unit).

State Agency Recognized for the Approval of Nurse Education

Interim Report

1. North Dakota Board of Nursing.

Who Can Make Third-Party Oral Presentations at This Meeting?

We invite you to make a third-party oral presentation before the National Advisory Committee concerning the recognition of any agency published in this notice.

How Do I Request To Make an Oral Presentation?

You must submit a written request to make an oral presentation concerning an agency listed in this notice to the contact person *so that the request is received via mail, fax, or e-mail no later than November 18, 2003*. Your request (*no more than 6 pages maximum*) must include:

1. The names, addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers of all persons seeking an appearance,
2. The organization they represent, and
3. A brief summary of the principal points to be made during the oral presentation.

If you wish, you may attach documents illustrating the main points of your oral testimony. Please keep in mind, however, that *any attachments are included in the 6-page limit*. Please do not send materials directly to Committee members. Only materials submitted by the deadline to the contact person listed in this notice and in accordance with these instructions become part of the official record and are considered by the Committee in its deliberations. Documents received after the November 18, 2003 deadline will not be distributed to the Advisory Committee for their consideration. Individuals making oral presentations may not distribute written materials at the meeting.

If I Cannot Attend the Meeting, Can I Submit Written Comments Regarding an Accrediting Agency in Lieu of Making an Oral Presentation?

This notice requests third-party oral testimony, not written comment. A request for written comments on agencies that are being reviewed during