

## 10. Selection and Training of Commissioners

### ***Procedure for the Selection and Training DETC Commissioners***

The process of selecting and vetting a person to serve on the DETC Accrediting Commission begins with the DETC's Nominating Committee. As prescribed by DETC's Constitution and Bylaws, the Nominating Committee is charged with nominating individuals to be elected or appointed to the Accrediting Commission. Institution members of the Commission are elected by members of the Council, and public members of the Commission are appointed by the Accrediting Commission. The Nominating Committee is comprised of three individuals from the Council membership not currently serving on the Commission. (10/11)

Nominations come from interested persons, the general public, and Council members. Using the qualifications described below, the Nominating Committee reviews and vets the nominees' resumes. Once a decision is made by the Nominating Committee, the nominations for institution members are published for a period not less than 30 days prior to the Annual Business Meeting of the DETC. Nominations may also be made from the floor by members of the DETC at its Annual Business Meeting. Following the closing of nominations, the members of the Council vote for the nominations. The nominations for the public commissioners are presented to the members of the Commission, who make the final appointment. (10/11)

### **Size and Make-up of the Commission**

The selection criteria used for the Accrediting Commission are prescribed by the DETC Constitution and Bylaws Article 6.3. It states the Commission shall be: “. . . comprised of nine (9) members: five (5) members from DETC-accredited institutions elected by the Council and four (4) members appointed by the Commission to represent the public. At least two members of the Commission must be ‘academics,’ defined by DETC as a person who works full time at an educational institution who, possibly in addition to other duties, actively teaches, delivers educational content to learners, or engages in educational research related to the institution's mission. At least two members of the Commission must be ‘administrators’ defined by DETC as a person currently or recently directly engaged in a significant manner in the administration of an institution.”

At its Annual Business Meeting, the DETC members elect Commissioners from the ranks of accredited members to replace those whose terms of office expire that year. Public members are appointed by the Accrediting Commission to replace public members of the Commission whose terms expire.

When an unexpected vacancy occurs by reason of resignation or otherwise, or when a Commission member from an accredited institution is no longer currently active in academic or administrative functions, the Chair of the Commission will declare the position vacant and the Chair will appoint a qualified individual to fill the position, who will thereby start his/her own first term upon taking his/her seat on the Commission.

By custom, the Chair of the Commission is a public Commissioner who has at least two years of service remaining on his or her term. Normally, a Chair does not serve more than three years as the Chair.

## Qualifications of Commissioners

**Public:** Public Commissioners are selected from diversified fields and backgrounds to include, insofar as possible, representatives from government, industry, business, finance, and education.

In seeking individuals to be recommended for appointment to the Commission, the DETC Nominating Committee considers persons whose qualifications and experience will bring expertise that would best help the Commission deal with special areas of institution evaluation (i.e., finance, administration, management, curriculum, etc.).

In addition to the above, the following informal guidelines will be considered in appointing Public Commissioners from outside the distance study field:

1. The personal qualities of leadership, integrity, ability, and personal reputation; and
2. Formal education—holding one or more appropriately accredited academic degrees.

A Public Commissioner may not be (1) an employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution that either is accredited by DETC or has applied for such accreditation; (2) *a member of any organization that transacts business with or receives any funding or payments from DETC*; or (3) a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in (1) or (2) above. (10/11)

**Institution:** Institution Commissioners are selected from DETC accredited institutions and are individuals who are currently active academic or administrative personnel who do not have a representative currently serving on the Accrediting Commission.

The Commissioners are selected so that they are representative of the variety of institutions in the Distance Education and Training Council and the distance education field insofar as possible.

In addition to the above, the following informal guidelines are considered in appointing Commissioners from the distance study institution field:

1. The personal qualities of leadership, integrity, ability, and personal reputation;
2. Formal education—holding one or *more appropriately accredited* academic degrees; (10/11)
3. Experience in the distance study field with a contemporary knowledge of the field;
4. Demonstrated supportiveness of the accrediting program;
5. Experience as a member of Accrediting Examining Committees; and
6. Interest in and support of the Distance Education and Training Council as evidenced by regular attendance at Council functions and personal as well as institutional participation on Council Committees and Council workshops, conferences, and other events. (10/11)

All Commissioners must have an interest and willingness to serve and should be able to devote the time to do the necessary reading and background preparation and attend all Commission meetings so that they can serve effectively.

## Responsibilities of Commissioners

The Commissioners have the following responsibilities consistent with the *DETC Constitution and Bylaws*. The Commission's responsibilities are:

1. Establish, implement and promulgate standards and policies reflecting the qualities of sound and reputable distance education and training institutions, and determine effective procedures and administrative guidelines for evaluating distance education and training institutions seeking DETC accreditation.
2. Receive and act upon applications for accreditation and re-accreditation from distance education institutions, evaluate new programs submitted for approval, decide the merits of any petitions from institutions and oversee an ongoing program that ensures all standards and policies are effective, current and compliant with existing requirements for a recognized accrediting association.
3. Conduct an institutional accreditation program that is compliant with extant Federal and CHEA-adopted recognition criteria for nationally recognized accrediting associations.
4. Review the reports of evaluation committees and all other pertinent materials, including the Self-Evaluation Report, and, acting as a joint body of decision-makers, accredit, deny or withdraw accreditation from accredited institutions or order a Show Cause. In cases where accreditation is withdrawn or denied, the institution will be given the reasons for the adverse decision and will be given the opportunity of appealing the adverse decision before it becomes final.
5. Re-evaluate, at reasonable intervals, accredited institutions.
6. Exercise such other powers and duties as are necessary to carry out the functions of a nationally-recognized accrediting association.

## Training of Commissioners

Commissioners must successfully complete DETC's online course entitled, "DETC Evaluator's Training Program," before attending their first Commission meeting. In addition to the online training course, DETC's staff provides an annual Training Seminar. All Commissioners are required to attend this Seminar. Items covered at this Seminar include the Mission and Goals of DETC; The History, Traditions and Culture of the Commission; The Accreditation Process and How Accrediting Commission Meetings are Conducted; How Applications are Processed, From Start to Finish; Duties and Obligations of Commission Members; How the Commission Makes Decisions; Enforcement of Timelines; Ethics, Conflicts of Interest, Confidentiality of the Process and Legal Issues, Appeals Panel Role and Function, and How to Execute Commissioners Duties and Stay Current. Recusals are addressed in the Conflicts of Interest session.

All Commissioners are also required to participate in an on-site evaluation as an Observer from time to time. DETC provides additional training through its workshops and webinars, which the Commissioners routinely participate in or attend. Commissioners also keep current on any changes to DETC's standards, policies, or procedures through information provided in DETC's numerous publications and through its website postings. (10/11)

### **Conflict of Interest**

Each Commissioner is required to review, sign and abide by the DETC Conflict of Interest Policy (D.8.) each January. Each Commission must also review, sign, and abide by DETC's Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form (D.8.1.) before each Commission meeting. These forms are kept on file or stored electronically at the DETC offices.  
*(10/11)*

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