



VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION OF ACCREDITATION OR CANDIDACY (FORMERLY, TERMINATION OF AFFILIATION OR ACCREDITATION)

Policy Change Adopted on Second Reading

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) adopted this policy on second reading at its meeting on February 27–28, 2020.

Background

Institutions that are affiliated with HLC, whether as a candidate or accredited institution, may voluntarily choose to resign their affiliation at any time before HLC’s Board acts to withdraw Candidacy, deny Initial Accreditation or withdraw accreditation. The adopted policy change shortens the waiting period before an institution that resigns its accreditation can once again seek HLC accreditation through the Eligibility Process from two years to one year. The shortened waiting period is consistent with the time an institution that withdraws its application for Candidacy or Initial Accreditation currently is required to wait before reapplying. The change also removes references to institutions submitting a letter of resignation to HLC. In order to help streamline the resignation process, HLC has developed a standardized form that takes the place of the letter.

HLC circulated these policy changes to the membership and other interested parties after the Board’s November 2019 meeting. No comments were received. However, HLC revised the policy to conform with federal regulations effective July 1, 2020, that shorten the period of time for HLC to inform the U.S. Department of Education and others that an institution has resigned. The title of the policy was also changed so that institutions can more readily recognize its applicability.

Implementation

This policy is effective immediately.

Adopted Policy

Wording that was deleted or revised is shown as strikethrough (~~old wording~~); new language, whether through addition or revision, is shown in bold (**new wording**). Changes between first and second reading, other than minor editing, are indicated in bold italics (*new wording*). These revisions have been made on HLC's website at hlcommission.org/policies.

Policy Title: ~~Termination~~ **Voluntary Resignation of Affiliation or Accreditation or Candidacy**

Number: INST.B.30.010

~~Voluntary Resignation From Affiliation With the Commission~~

An institution affiliated with the Commission either as a candidate or as an accredited institution may voluntarily resign from that affiliation at any time. The resignation must be initiated by the legally designated governing body of the institution and conveyed to the Commission ~~through a formal letter signed by the President of the institution~~ **according to procedures provided by the Commission. This letter may set an** The effective date for such resignation ~~may not to exceed~~ one year from the date of ~~the letter submission to the Commission and provided that~~ such effective date is **may not be** more than eleven (11) years (the maximum interval for reaffirmation of accreditation) from the date of the last reaffirmation of accreditation or four (4) years from the date candidacy was awarded.

The Commission will provide the institution with written acceptance of the institution's resignation. Once accepted, an institution's resignation is generally irrevocable.

~~The institution must meet all obligations of affiliation until the resignation becomes effective.~~ Within thirty (30) days of receiving ~~this letter~~ **notice of voluntary resignation**, the Commission issues a public disclosure notice that describes the resignation, including ~~resignation based on the closing of the institution~~ **the effective date of the resignation**, which is available to the public on the Commission's website. Within ~~thirty (30)~~ **ten (10)** days the Commission also notifies the U.S. Department of Education and the appropriate state agency and other recognized accrediting agencies regarding the resignation.

The institution must meet all obligations of affiliation until the resignation becomes effective.

Voluntary resignation does not release an institution from past and current financial obligations to the Commission.

After ~~resigning from membership with the Commission~~ resignation, an institution is ineligible for affiliation for a period of one year. If an institution seeks accredited status with HLC following a resignation, it must reapply through the Eligibility Process.

Policy Number Key

Section INST: Institutional Processes

Chapter B: Requirements for Achieving and Maintaining Affiliation

Part 30: Obligations of Membership and Affiliation

Last Revised: February 2020

First Adopted: August 1987 and October 1988

Revision History: revised May 2002, February 2002, renumbered November 2010, April 2013, November 2016, February 2020

Notes: Policies combined November 2012 – 1.5, 3.8.

Related Policies: INST.B.30.040 Public Disclosure, FDCR.B.10.010 Commission Approval of Institutional Teach-Out Arrangements