



MEMBERSHIP DEFINITION

Bylaws Change Adopted on Second Reading

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) adopted this bylaw on second reading at its meeting on November 5–6, 2020.

Background

Current usage of the term “affiliation” throughout HLC policies has created the potential for confusion for HLC’s institutions as well as external stakeholders. The adopted change clarifies the meaning of membership as defined in the HLC Bylaws. Both accredited institutions and those that are candidates for accreditation will be clearly identified as members of HLC with all applicable rights and obligations, as consistent with their accreditation status.

Conforming changes will be made throughout the Bylaws:

- Article IV; Section 2(B)(3)
- Article V; Section 2
- Article X; Section 1
- Article XI; Section 1(a)

HLC circulated these policy changes to the membership and other interested parties after the Board’s June 2020 meeting. No comments were received.

Implementation

This policy is effective immediately.

Adopted Bylaw

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**). These revisions have been made on HLC's website at hlcommission.org.

ARTICLE III: Jurisdiction of and Membership in the Commission

Section 1. Definition of Membership.

Members of the Commission are those educational institutions and systems of institutions offering higher education that are accredited by the Commission **or that are candidates with the Commission, as defined by Commission policy**. To be a Commission member, an educational institution or system of institutions must be within the Commission's Jurisdiction as defined in Section 2 of this Article.

Section 2. Jurisdiction for Accreditation.

The Commission shall extend accreditation and candidacy for accreditation to higher education institutions which are 1) registered to do business* or incorporated in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, or operating under federal authority within these states, subject to provisions for application specified in Section 5 of this Article, and 2) have substantial presence, as defined in Commission policy, in these states.

**See Section 5 of this Article.*

Section 3. Voting Rights of Members.

Commission members shall elect the members of the Board of Trustees as provided for in Article VI of these Bylaws. The Board of Trustees of the Commission may refer to a vote of the members of the Commission on such additional matters as the Board shall determine.

~~Section 4. Pre Accreditation:~~

~~Institutions that are not members but are seeking accreditation by the Commission may be recognized by the Commission as expressly established by the Board of Trustees in Commission policy. Such recognition shall include candidate for accreditation status for institutions eligible for membership. To receive such recognition, the non-member institutions must be within the Commission's Jurisdiction as defined in Section 2 of this Article. Pre-accredited institutions shall not have voting rights in the Commission.~~

Section 5. Application of Jurisdictional Requirements.

All institutions submitting Preliminary Information Forms or other documentation to establish eligibility for Commission evaluation on or after July 1, 2010 or having evaluation visits for initial candidacy in 2010-11 shall comply with jurisdictional requirements for incorporation and substantial presence in the region, as identified in Section 2 of this Article.

All institutions accredited by the Commission or a candidate for accreditation status on or after July 1, 2010 shall comply with substantial presence requirements no later than July 1, 2012 or at the time of evaluation for initial accreditation, whichever comes first. Institutions accredited by the Commission on July 1, 2010 shall be evaluated against this requirement at the time of the next comprehensive evaluation except where the Commission has information to indicate that an institution does not meet this requirement and initiates, subsequent to July 1, 2012, an inquiry to review jurisdiction.

All institutions accredited by the Commission or a candidate for accreditation status on July 1, 2010 shall be grandfathered from the requirement for incorporation in the region; such institutions known to be incorporated outside the region shall provide evidence of having registered within the region to do business no later than July 1, 2011.