



Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

Revised August 18, 2014

Advertising, Publications, and Promotional Literature

1. Educational programs and services offered should be the primary emphasis of all advertisements, publications, promotional literature, and recruitment activities.
2. All statements and representations should be clear, factually accurate, and current. Supporting information should be kept on file and readily available for review.
3. Catalogs and other official publications should be readily available either on-line or in hard copy and should accurately depict:
 - a. institutional purposes and objectives;
 - b. admission requirements and procedures, including policies on transfer credit;
 - c. academic calendars and basic information on programs and courses, with required sequences and frequency of course offering explicitly stated;
 - d. degree and program completion requirements, including length of time normally required to obtain a degree or certificate of completion;
 - e. grievance procedures;
 - f. faculty and primary administrators (full-time and part-time listed separately) with degrees held and the conferring institution;
 - g. institutional facilities and services readily available for educational use;
 - h. rules and regulations for conduct;
 - i. grading system and related policies;
 - j. tuition, fees, and other program costs;
 - k. opportunities and requirements for financial aid;

1. policies and procedures for refunding fees and charges to students who withdraw from enrollment.
4. In college catalogs and/or official publications describing career opportunities, clear and accurate information should be provided on:
 - a. national and/or state legal requirements for eligibility for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered;
 - b. any unique requirements for career paths, or for employment and advancement opportunities in the profession or occupation described.
5. Information on student learning outcomes should be available to prospective students.
6. Policies and procedures regarding transfer of credit and credit for extra-institutional college-level learning should be published and implemented. (See “Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation.”)
7. All information required to be disclosed by applicable law or regulation should be disclosed as required.

Student Recruitment for Admissions

1. Student recruitment should be conducted by well-qualified admissions officers and trained volunteers whose credentials, purposes, and position or affiliation with the institution are clearly specified.
2. Independent contractors or agents used by the institution for recruiting purposes shall be governed by the same principles as institutional admissions officers and volunteers.
3. No misrepresentations should be made in student recruitment, including:
 - a. assuring employment unless employment arrangements have been made and can be verified;
 - b. misrepresenting job placement and employment opportunities for graduates;
 - c. misrepresenting program costs;
 - d. misrepresenting abilities required to complete intended program;

- e. offering to agencies or individual persons money or inducements other than educational services of the institution in exchange for student enrollment.

Representation of Accredited Status

1. The term “accreditation” is to be used only when accredited status is conferred by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and/or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.
2. No statement should be made about possible future accreditation status or qualification not yet conferred by the accrediting body.

Statements such as the following are **not** permissible:

“(Name of institution) has applied for candidacy with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education”,

“The (Name of program) is being evaluated by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and it is anticipated that accreditation will be granted in the near future.”

3. Any reference to state approval should be limited to a brief statement concerning the actual charter, incorporation, license, or registration given.
4. The phrase “fully accredited” must not be used, since no partial accreditation is possible.
5. When accredited status or Candidate for Accreditation status is affirmed in institutional catalogs and other official publications, in print, via the internet or other electronic transmissions, it should be stated accurately and fully in a comprehensive statement including:
 - a. identifying the accrediting agency by name, including the agency’s address and telephone number
 - b. indicating the scope of accreditation as:

- (1) institutional (regional or national)

Example for a Candidate Institution:

The University of _____ is a Candidate for Accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104. (267-284-5000)

Candidate for Accreditation is a status of affiliation with a regional accrediting commission which indicates that an institution has achieved initial recognition and is progressing toward, but is not assured of, accreditation. It has provided evidence of sound planning, appears to have the resources to implement the plans, and appears to have the potential for reaching its goals within a reasonable time.

Example for an Accredited institution:

The University of _____ is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104. (267-284-5000)
The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Note that the Commission is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education for accrediting activities in the Middle States region, which includes the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Institutions based outside of the United States, whether or not chartered or licensed within the Middle States region, may not make reference to the Commission's recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education. Any reference to accredited status may not imply that the Secretary's recognition of the agency extends to foreign institutions.

(2) programmatic (curriculum or unit accredited must be specified)

Examples:

Programs in Art and Design are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, a specialized accrediting agency recognized by (the U.S. Secretary of Education and/or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation).

The Department of Music at the University of _____ is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, a specialized accrediting agency recognized by (the U.S. Secretary of Education and/or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation).

Programs for the preparation of elementary, secondary, and special education teachers at the bachelor's and master's level, for the preparation of guidance counselors at the master's and specialist degree level, and for school superintendents at the specialist and doctoral degree level are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, a specialized accrediting agency recognized by (the U.S. Secretary of Education and/or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation).

Under no circumstances may the institution imply that the program is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

6. The accredited status of a program should not be misrepresented.

a. The accreditation granted by an institutional accrediting agency has reference to the quality of the institution as a whole. Since institutional accreditation does not imply specific accreditation of any particular program in the institution, statements like "this program is accredited" or "this degree is accredited" are incorrect and misleading. Institutions wishing to make a statement about the relationship of a degree or program to the institution as a whole should state that the program or degree is offered at an institution that is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 267-284-5000. The statement also should make clear that Commission accreditation does not imply specialized accreditation of the programs offered.

b. "Free-standing" institutions offering programs in a single field (e.g., a school of art, engineering, or theology), granted accreditation by a regional or national institutional accrediting agency alone, should clearly state that this accreditation does not imply specialized accreditation of the programs offered.

c. Institutions granted the status of Candidate for Accreditation must use the statement described above under Representation of Accredited Status. In addition, the institution should indicate the effective date (month and year) candidate status was granted.

7. The MSCHE logo is the property of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Its use signifies that the institution is accredited. Institutions that are accredited by the Commission on Higher Education are encouraged to use the MSCHE logo in the acknowledgement of their accredited status. Prior to use of the logo, the institution must receive written permission to do so. If, at any time, an institution's accreditation is removed, it will be prohibited from using this logo. Use of the logo is prohibited by Applicant and Candidate institutions.

Member institutions should contact the Commission's Office of Communications for relevant electronic logo files and the Commission's acceptable use guidelines. To request such permission, contact the MSCHE Office of Communications and Public Relations at (267) 284-5048 or via email at rpokrass@msche.org. The institution will receive an electronic file of the logo along with acceptable use guidelines, including approved colors and wording to accompany the logo.