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4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity; Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI or Committee), Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education.

ACTION: Announcement of an open meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the agenda, time, and instructions to access or participate in the September 23 & 24, 2026 meeting of NACIQI and provides information to members of the public regarding the meeting, including requesting to make written or oral comments. Committee members will meet in-person. Agency representatives have the option to meet in-person or virtually, and public attendees will participate virtually. The notice of this meeting is required under 5 USC Chapter 10 (commonly known as the Federal Advisory Committee Act) and Section 114(d)(1)(B) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended.

DATES:

The NACIQI meeting will be held on September 23 & 24, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

ADDRESSES: U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Barnard Auditorium, Washington, D.C. 20202. (Only NACIQI members, accrediting agency representatives, and Department of Education staff will participate in the meeting at this address.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Alan Smith, Executive Director/Designated Federal Official (DFO), NACIQI, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202; telephone: (202) 453-7757; email: *George.Alan.Smith@ed.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Statutory Authority and Function*:* NACIQI is established under Section 114 of the HEA (20 USC § 1011c). NACIQI advises the Secretary of Education with respect to:

- the establishment and enforcement of the standards of accrediting agencies or associations under subpart 2, part H, title IV of the HEA, as amended;
- 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 of the HEA, together with recommendations for improvement in such process;
- 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; and
- any other advisory function relating to accreditation and institutional eligibility that the Secretary of Education may prescribe by regulation.

Meeting Agenda:

The purpose of the meeting is to conduct a review of applications for renewal of recognition submitted by six accrediting agencies, as well as a compliance report submitted by one accrediting agency.

Applications for Renewal of Recognition

1. *American Bar Association, Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar.* Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of programs in legal education that lead to the first professional degree in law, including those offered via distance education, as well as freestanding law schools offering such programs. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: The United States.

2. *Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools.* Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of private, postsecondary

institutions offering predominantly allied health education programs leading to a certificate, diploma, and degree at the level of the Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Occupational Science, Academic Associate, Baccalaureate, and Master's, including those offered via distance education and the programmatic accreditation of medical assisting, medical laboratory technology, and surgical technology programs, through the Associate degree, including those offered via distance education. The scope extends to the Substantive Change Committee, jointly with the Commission for decisions on substantive change. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: The United States.

3. *Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine.* Scope of Recognition: The accreditation and pre-accreditation ("Candidacy") of professional non-degree and graduate degree programs, including professional doctoral programs, in the field of acupuncture and/or herbal medicine, as well as freestanding institutions and colleges of acupuncture and/or herbal medicine that offer such programs, including programs offered via distance education. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: The United States.

4. *American Psychological Association, Commission on Accreditation.* Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of doctoral programs in clinical, counseling, school, and combined professional-scientific psychology; doctoral internship programs in health service psychology; and postdoctoral residency

programs in health service psychology; as well as the pre-accreditation of doctoral internship programs in health service psychology and postdoctoral residency programs in health service psychology. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: The United States. Requested Scope of Recognition: The pre-accreditation and accreditation of master's programs and doctoral programs in clinical, counseling, school psychology (and combinations of two or more of these practice areas); doctoral internship programs in health service psychology; and postdoctoral residency programs in health service psychology, including programs that use distance education and traditional educational methods. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: The United States.

5. *Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).* Scope of Recognition: The accreditation and pre-accreditation ("Candidate for Accreditation") of degree-granting institutions of higher education including the accreditation of educational programs offered via distance and correspondence education, and direct assessment within these institutions. The accreditation status of these institutions and their recognition extends to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, Executive Council, and the Appeals Committee of the College Delegate Assembly on cases of initial candidacy or initial accreditation and for continued accreditation or candidacy. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: Throughout the United States.

6. *Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, Accreditation Commission.* Scope of Recognition: The accreditation and pre-accreditation ("Candidate" status) of Christian postsecondary institutions in the United States that offer certificates, diplomas, and associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees, including institutions that offer distance education. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: The United States.

Compliance Report

1. Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Scope of Recognition: The accreditation and pre-accreditation ("Candidate for Accreditation") of physical therapist education programs leading to the first professional degree at the master's or doctoral level and physical therapist assistant education programs at the associate degree level and for its accreditation of such programs offered via distance education. Geographic Area of Accrediting Activities: Throughout the United States.

To ensure sufficient time for all agency reviews, including NACIQI questions and discussion, the Department requests that the agencies limit their opening statements to 10 minutes (total for one or more statements) and that the agencies avoid extended discussions about agency representatives and their backgrounds. Following the brief opening statement, the agency's presentation should focus on the regulatory criteria and, in particular,

responses to areas where Department staff has recommended a finding of noncompliance or substantial compliance, or where other concerns have been raised that the agency would like to address. However, the agency should expect that questions from NACIQI members may focus on other areas.

Instructions for Accessing the Meeting

Registration:

You may register for the meeting on your computer using the link below. After you register, you will receive a confirmation email containing personalized participation links for the meeting no later than 8:30 a.m. Eastern Time on September 23, 2026.

Registration Link

https://cvent.me/nNeEgY

Public Comment

Submission of requests to make an oral comment regarding a specific accrediting agency under review, or to make an oral comment or written statement regarding other issues within the scope of NACIQI's authority:

Opportunity to submit a written statement regarding a specific accrediting agency under review was solicited by previous **Federal Register** notices published on April 04, 2025 (90 Fed. Reg. 14815; Document Number 2025-05853) and May 12, 2026 (91 Fed. Reg. 25871; Document Number 2026-09432). The period for submission of such statements is now closed.

Additional written statements regarding a specific accrediting agency or State approval agency under review will not be accepted at this time. However, members of the public may submit written statements regarding other issues within the scope of NACIQI's authority, as outlined under Section 114 of the HEA (20 USC § 1011c).

Members of the public may make oral comments regarding a specific accrediting agency under review and/or other issues within the scope of NACIQI's authority. Oral comments may not exceed three minutes. Oral comments about an agency's recognition when a compliance report has been required by the senior Department official or the Secretary must relate to the criteria for recognition cited in the senior Department official's letter that requested the report, or in the Secretary's appeal decision, if any. Oral comments about an agency seeking expansion of scope must be directed to the agency's ability to serve as a recognized accrediting agency with respect to the kinds of institutions or programs requested to be added. Oral comments about the renewal of an agency's recognition must relate to its compliance with the criteria for the Recognition of Accrediting Agencies, which are available at https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-602?toc=1.

Instructions on Requesting to Make Public Comment:

To request to make oral comments of three minutes or less *or* to submit a written statement to NACIQI concerning its work outside of a specific accrediting agency under review during the September 23 & 24, 2026 meeting, please follow the instructions below.

Submit an email to the ThirdPartyComments@ed.gov mailbox. Please do not send material directly to NACIQI members. To be considered for the current cycle review, written statements and requests to make oral comment must be received by September 16, 2026, and include in the subject line "Oral Comment Request: [agency name]," "Oral Comment Request: [subject]" or "Written Statement: [subject]"; the email must include the name(s), title, organization/affiliation, mailing address, email address, and telephone number, of the person(s) submitting a written statement or requesting to speak. All individuals submitting an advance request in accordance with this notice will be afforded an opportunity to speak.

Access to Records of the Meeting: The Department will post the official report of the meeting on the NACIQI website https://sites.ed.gov/naciqi/archive-of-meetings/ within 90 days after the meeting. In addition, pursuant to 5 USC § 1009, the public may request to inspect records of the meeting at 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202, by emailing aslrecordsmanager@ed.gov, or by calling (202) 453-7415

to schedule an appointment. The senior Department official's (as defined in 34 CFR § 602.3 at https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-602/subpart-A/section-602.3) decisions, pursuant to 34 CFR § 602.36(https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-602/subpart-C/subject-group-ECFR21f0283b12d15ca/section-602.36), associated with all NACIQI meetings can be found at the following website: https://surveys.ope.ed.gov/erecognition/#/public-documents.

Reasonable Accommodations: The dial-in information and weblink access to the meeting are accessible to individuals with disabilities. If you will need an auxiliary aid or service to participate in the meeting (e.g., interpreting service, assistive listening device, or materials in an alternate format), notify the contact person listed in this notice at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting date. Although we will attempt to meet a request received after that date, we may not be able to make available the requested auxiliary aid or service because of insufficient time to arrange it.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available via the Federal Digital System at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of

the Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site. You also may access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Authority: Section 114 of the HEA of 1964, as amended (20 USC § 1011c).

David Barker,
Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education

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