



2015 Proposed Changes to CEA Standards Summary of Public Comments and Impact Statement December 2014

The Standards Review Committee has reviewed public comments regarding the proposed revisions to the CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions. The following is a short summary of the survey results and a statement of the impact of the survey on the proposed revisions. Survey responses were solicited from the Constituent Council, membership organizations such as EnglishUSA, UCIEP, the NAFSA IEP knowledge community and the TESOL IEP interest section. Fall 2014 Accreditation Workshop participants were also informed of the public comment period, as were current CEA Reviewers.

Demographics:

There were 106 responses to the survey, representing a significant engagement of the field and most especially the Constituent Council. Of 106 respondents, 85% work at CEA-accredited sites. Of these, 49% were programmatic and 39% were institutional with 5% international and 7% in-progress sites. 52% of all respondents were administrators, 20% were faculty, 15% were faculty with administrative duties. 53% were self-study coordinators and 43% were CEA reviewers with the remaining divided among CEA Representatives (6%), current or former Commissioners (15%) and other (25%). The profile of respondents reflects a high level of CEA knowledge and provided especially valuable feedback.

Proposed Standards Changes:

Curriculum 2

93% of respondents considered the proposed revisions to be satisfactory or excellent. 98% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed revision to the standard expressed important and valid principles of good practice.

The majority of comments focused on the desire to clarify what is meant by “significant progress.” It should be noted that some respondents were referring only to the standards statement itself and had not read the accompanying proposed changes to the standard’s discussion section, which has been carefully revised and vetted by the Task Force and the Standards Review Committee (SRC). The intent of the change was to differentiate “significant” from “satisfactory” progress. CEA staff is prepared to educate sites about the concept of “significant progress,” in training (Accreditation Workshops) and through guidance during the accreditation process to assist sites in understanding the intent of this standard in the future. No additional revisions are being proposed as a result of these public comments.

Student Services 4

96% of respondents considered the proposed revisions to be satisfactory or excellent (68%). 97% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed revision to the standard expressed important and valid principles of good practice.

Most of the comments were very positive. Some respondents called for delineation of specific policies in the standard itself or removal of vague language. The Task Force, the Standards Review Committee and the full Commission had previously discussed and reviewed the proposed changes, and opted to craft the language in such a way to allow sites flexibility in meeting the standard, consistent with the CEA Values and its commitment to respecting diversity. Thus, no additional revisions are being proposed as a result of these comments, especially given the overall positive reaction.

Recruiting 2

98% of respondents considered the proposed revisions to be satisfactory or excellent. 100% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed revision to the standard expressed important and valid principles of good practice.

The comments in regarding this proposed revision were overwhelmingly positive. No additional revisions are being proposed as a result of these public comments.

Student Achievement 3

88% of respondents considered the proposed revisions to be satisfactory or excellent. 93% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed revision to the standard expressed important and valid principles of good practice.

This proposed revision seemed to generate the most comments and revolved around the elimination of the word “proficiency.” Of the 23 comments, 9 were positive, 6 were neutral or unclear, and 8 were either negative or questioned the revision. Clarity and deliberate differentiation between achievement and proficiency has been made consistent throughout the revised standards, such that the more accurate use of “achievement” replaces the term “proficiency” to refer to results attributable to the course of instruction. A Task Force appointed by the Standards Review Committee dealt specifically with this topic and released topic briefs in May 2014 prior to the Constituent Council Meeting, and revisited the issue at the August 2014 Commission Meeting with the full Commission. The outcome of that discussion was that the revisions to the standard and the discussion would lead to clarity and perhaps to more sites meeting this standard. No additional revisions are being proposed as a result of these public comments.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standards

95% of respondents considered the proposed revisions to be satisfactory or excellent. 98% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed revision to the standard expressed important and valid principles of good practice.

Comments were positive or called for an additional definition of ethics, which indicated that respondents had not referred to the updated glossary entry related to ethical practice. No additional revisions are being proposed as a result of these public comments.

Student Services 1 and Recruiting 1

95% of respondents considered the proposed revisions to be satisfactory or excellent. 96% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed revision to the standard expressed important and valid principles of good practice.

Comments primarily focused on the relative inability to define ethics or mentioned the difficulty of monitoring ethics. The updated entry for ethical practice in the Glossary was approved by the SRC and operationalizes the issue for sites seeking accreditation, thus no action has been taken on the revisions.

Program Development Planning and Review 2

95% of respondents considered the proposed revisions to be satisfactory or excellent. 96% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed revision to the standard expressed important and valid principles of good practice.

A number of critical comments (most of which were tangentially relevant to the discussion) which related to clarity that the standard permitted one or multiple plans were received. Staff will clarify the options during workshops. However, there were no other items that would affect the revisions and no action has been taken on the revisions.

Review of the Discussion:

46% (n=35) of respondents chose to also review the discussion sections and some provided comment. The summary below addresses these comments for each standards section.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity (NO CHANGES: AFC 2, AFC 6)

AFC 5

A few minor edits are suggested and were incorporated into the proposed revisions as a result of the survey. Corrections have been made to this section accordingly, namely the “support staff” was replaced by “staff” in the discussion section.

AFC 8

Added the word “Capacity” to the Standard title as pointed out in the comments. Other comments focus on the DHS requirements which represented the issue that needed to be resolved. No other adjustments have been incorporated into the proposed revisions.

Student Services (NO CHANGES: Student Services Context, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5, SS7)

Recruiting (NO CHANGES: Recruiting Context)

Student Achievement (NO CHANGES: Student Achievement Context, SA 2, SA3, SA4)

Notes: Some concerns related to clarification were expressed in the comments, which is to be expected given the comments submitted for the changes made to Student Achievement 2 and 3. Many concerns have already been duly discussed by the Task Force, Standards Review Committee and the full Commission. CEA staff is prepared to incorporate specific useful content from the comments into future training sessions.

Program Development, Planning and Review (NO CHANGES: PDPR 1)

PDPR 2

Some confusion as to how many plans; however, the plural was adopted to show that this was the norm and is an attempt to help sites comply better with the standard. The template also covers this requirement. No changes were incorporated into the proposed revisions.

Glossary

Comments were overwhelmingly positive. No changes.

Additional Comments

A final section soliciting comments for the Standards Review Committee had 17 comments. Many comments were very positive, thanking the SRC for its work and for the opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to the *CEA Standards for Language Programs and Institutions*. A limited number of comments expressed again some concerns about specific wording, such as “norms of the field” and “external scale,” and some concerns as to how to define them. As noted above, CEA staff is prepared to incorporate training on the topic of “significant progress relative to the norms of the field” and other topics with in-process and currently accredited sites.