



# Changes to the Accreditation Categories



# USDE Re-cognition Review

- ACOTE® is currently undergoing US Department of Education (USDE) re-recognition review.
- ACOTE's recognition by USDE allows the programs it accredits to be eligible to participate in federal programs that lead to federal student aid funds.
- During this review, USDE found that ACOTE's Accreditation Classifications does not meet USDE regulations.
- As a result, to remain compliant with USDE regulations, ACOTE added additional Accreditation Classifications.

# Current Accreditation Categories

- Current Accreditation Categories
  - Accreditation
  - Accreditation Probationary
- A new term of Accreditation for existing programs and initial Accreditation for new programs can be granted even if programs have an area of noncompliance identified in during their on-site review.

# Changes to the Accreditation Categories

**Per USDE: ACOTE cannot award a new grant of Accreditation (re-accreditation) or an initial grant of accreditation if there are ANY areas of noncompliance.**

**Therefore, ACOTE must change policies to maintain USDE recognition**

# ACOTE Policy Changes

- ACOTE added Additional Categories of Accreditation  
(see ACOTE Policy IV. C. CLASSIFICATION OF ACCREDITATION CATEGORIES)
- New Accreditation Categories
  - Accreditation
  - **Accreditation with Conditions**
  - **Continuing Accreditation with Warning**
  - **Continuing Accreditation Probationary**

*Items in **RED** are changes to the current policy*

# Accreditation Categories

- **Accreditation**

- Initial and continuing Accreditation is granted when a program is in compliance with **all** the ACOTE Accreditation Standards

*Items in **RED** are changes to the current policy*

# Accreditation Categories

- **Accreditation with Conditions**

- A program may be in substantial compliance if one or both conditions exist:
  1. The program does not have all the elements in place to meet all aspects of one or more of the ACOTE Accreditation Standard(s), but it is believed that with minimal modifications, these areas can be readily correctable within **60 days**. A new award of accreditation will be granted contingent upon the program providing the appropriate evidence within **60 days** of the ACOTE action.
  2. The program is in minimal compliance with the Standard but there are concerns with the programs ability to remain in compliance with a Standard. ACOTE would like to monitor the Standard and see an updated plan in **one** year.
- Once a continuing program (re-accreditation) corrects the indicated area(s) of substantial compliance, their accreditation status will move to Accreditation. However, if the continuing program does not adequately address the issue(s) within 60 days or the monitoring period reveals the program is not in compliance, the Standard(s) will be changed to an area of non-compliance and the program's accreditation status will move to Continuing Accreditation with Warning.
- Once a new (initial) program corrects the indicated area(s) of substantial compliance, their accreditation status will move to Accreditation. However, if the new program does not adequately address the issue(s) within 60 days or the monitoring period reveals the program is not in compliance, the program's accreditation status will move to Continuing Accreditation – Probationary.

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# Accreditation Categories

- **Continuing Accreditation with Warning**
  - Granted to programs when there are **any** areas of noncompliance. The program's current accreditation status will be extended to allow them to come into compliance with **all** standards within the time frame outlined in ACOTE policy IV. C. Classification of Accreditation Categories.
  - Once the program comes into full compliance a **Accreditation Status** will be granted. The amount of time the program was in Continuing Accreditation with Warning Status will be subtracted from the new accreditation award.
  - This category name is changed but the process is the same as currently used to address programs that have an area of non-compliance. Programs will be required to submit a plan of correction/progress reports and will have up to 2 years to fix an AON depending on the length of the program.

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# Accreditation Categories

- **Continuing Accreditation - Probationary**
  - The areas of noncompliance are so serious that the capability of the program to provide acceptable educational experiences for the students is threatened.
  - The program has failed to document significant progress toward compliance with one or more cited areas of noncompliance.
  - The program is in jeopardy of having its accreditation status withdrawn due to the mandated time limit for carrying areas of noncompliance.
  - The program fails to comply with administrative requirements.

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# Impact on Initial Accreditation

Programs being reviewed for initial accreditation can be granted:

- Accreditation
- Accreditation with Conditions
  - Students are eligible to sit for the exam
- Maintain Pre-accreditation Status
  - If a program is not in substantial compliance (receives an AON that is not able to be fixed within 60 days) they will not be granted accreditation,
  - Graduates from these programs would not be eligible to sit for the NBCOT exam
- Accreditation Withheld – A program would need to start the process again.

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# Moving Forward

- The AOTA Accreditation Department is available to address questions ([accred@aota.org](mailto:accred@aota.org))
- Providing 3 Self Study workshops a year
- Providing administrator workshops for institutions that will be starting a new program

# Questions? Concerns?

