

Letter to the editor

I was intrigued by the article "Are you qualified to serve on the accreditation team?" by William N. Nelson (*C&RL News*, April 1998). I work for a national accrediting body, the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) in Washington, D.C.

ACICS evaluation teams do not include a professionally trained librarian, but our organization has often discussed including such a person. Our traditional visit for an institution offering an associate's degree is two days; and for those that award a bachelor or master's degree, the visit is three days, consisting of persons from ACICS-accredited institutions, as well as regionally accredited institutions. The evaluation team composition can vary in educational and professional background—from directors of financial aid to tenured faculty members at land-grant institutions.

Although several regional accrediting bodies require a librarian on the evaluation team, I noted that the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and Western Association of Schools and Colleges' regulations either do not require a librarian on the team or will be looking into condensing the size of the teams. I assume that shrinking budgets and the cost of accreditation will be playing a larger role with the size of comprehensive

evaluation teams. However, with the numerous changes in technology, it is difficult for our organization to have traditional team members be knowledgeable about resources necessary for an appropriate learning resource center.

Our criteria regarding the library resource center allow the institution to provide documentation to the evaluation team that the resource center is a significant part of the educational offerings. The library resource center's acquisitions not only should emanate from faculty members, but its adequacy is determined by the extent to which the resources support all of the courses offered.

As mentioned earlier, ACICS has never included a librarian on any evaluation team, but we are looking for possible solutions to increasing the skills of those team members who would have to evaluate the learning resource center. The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools has recently published some guidelines on the subject, but I'm not sure if this is the best avenue for our organization. Any thoughts would be appreciated.—*Francis S. Giglio, senior accreditation coordinator, Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools; e-mail: fgiglio@acics.org*

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Affiliation
HBCU

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Branches
Hours
Circulation Services
General
Reserve
Reference
Inter Library
Presentations
Electronic Access

RESOURCES

Human Resources
Number, Percent
Professionals
Other Paid Staff
Volunteer
Students.
Student/Staff Ratio
Collection Resources
Volumes/Student
Volumes held/added

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