



Setting Standards for Evaluating
Institutional Recognition and
Accreditation

REPORT

AICE 2018 Orlando Symposium

“SETTING STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION &
ACCREDITATION”

Association of International Credential Evaluators, Inc.

Orlando, FL
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PREFACE

The Association of International Credential Evaluators (AICE) held its third annual Symposium in Orlando, FL on March 29, 2018. Each year, AICE sets out to tackle a topic that is both challenging and pertinent to the field of international credential evaluations, by delving deep into the subject in order to reach consensus and mutual understanding on the basic principles that help shape standards in credential evaluation methodology.

The topic of this year's Symposium was on Setting Standards for Evaluating Institutional Recognition and Accreditation. The Symposium featured several distinguished panels of international education specialists whose perspectives encouraged each of us to reflect on what is meant by institutional recognition and accreditation, which authority is to be accepted as the trusted source for institutional recognition and accreditation and how to go about defining institutional status.

The 2018 Symposium continued with the spirit of past symposia highlighting AICE's steadfast commitment to activate and reinforce dialogue on international credential evaluation standards, methodologies and practices. AICE is proud to have contributed to promoting best practices and collaboration for academic excellence and to strengthening communication among international educators from academic and professional organizations, laying a strong foundation for the development of long-term sustainable partnerships and networks.

INTRODUCTION

What is Accreditation?

In the United States, accreditation is a voluntary, nongovernmental process that includes a rigorous external review of a school's ability to provide the highest quality programs. The accreditation process is a comprehensive review of a school's mission, faculty qualifications, and curricula, and the process includes self-evaluations, peer-reviews, committee reviews, and the development of in-depth strategic plans. Accreditation ensures that students are learning material most relevant to their field of study, preparing them to be effective leaders upon graduation.

Institutional recognition and accreditation is the most important step in the credential evaluation process. In fact, it is the first step. Determining an institution's legal status as an educational entity recognized by the source country's official authorities is imperative to credentials evaluation. It is the key ingredient in establishing whether an institution and the credentials issued for studies completed can in fact be compared to those offered by a regionally accredited institution in the United States. Of course, regional accreditation of institutions and programmatic accreditation as we know it is synonymous with the U.S. educational system, furthermore, it is the benchmark used by credential evaluators, admissions officers, and most regulatory boards when assessing academic studies.

Given the importance of institutional accreditation and the guidelines required to determine recognition and the recognition bodies, AICE chose to focus the 2018 Symposium on this topic. Since there are different players involved in the review, assessment and evaluation of international credentials, the Symposium addressed the topic through three modules each represented by a panel of speakers representing credential evaluation services, U.S. institutions of higher learning, and educational organizations from the U.S. and abroad. The speakers on each panel shared with the attendees the perspective from their academic institution, credential evaluation service, or organization.

The modules included the following:

Module #1 – Accreditation for Credential Evaluation

A critical component of due diligence in the evaluation of international academic credentials is determining institutional recognition outside the U.S. In most countries it is the Ministry or Department of Education that is responsible for the regulation and recognition of educational institutions. The presenters in this session discussed the questions an international credential evaluator asks when reviewing credentials from an institution located outside the U.S., including:

- Which regulatory body is responsible for overseeing academic institutions?
- Which institutions have degree-granting authority?
- Can the credential be used for admission to an educational institution in the home country?
- Does the educational system require external examinations that may override institution status recognition?

Module #2 – Accreditation for Admissions

The admissions review of international applicants ensures that academic admissions requirements have been met. Determining the accreditation or recognition status of the previous institutions attended is necessary to ensure an equivalent level of educational quality and reciprocity of credit. The U.S. regional accrediting bodies primarily oversee institutions based in the United States. Moreover, seeking accreditation in the U.S. is voluntary. Comparability to regional accreditation is determined through recognition by a central regulatory authority responsible for the oversight of education in the country in which the institution is located. In this session, the presenters examined the following topics from the point of view of a U.S. international admissions officer:

- What types of regulatory bodies oversee education at secondary, post-secondary, and professional levels, and which matter for my institution?
- How does an admissions officer determine that coursework completed at a recognized institution in another country merits reciprocity at a U.S. institution?
- What happens if an institution does not have the equivalent of regional accreditation? Does that indicate it is a diploma mill, or are there other avenues by which it can be considered for reciprocity?
- How can the admissions requirements articulate that coursework must come from a recognized institution, especially when there are so many variables?

Module #3 – Accreditation of Problematic Institutions

Problematic institutions include those which do not lend themselves easily to having the equivalent of regional accreditation status. Presenters in this session look at accreditation questions around problematic institutions from the point of view of both admissions officers and credential evaluators.

Problematic institutions include the following:

- Religiously-affiliated institutions that are not recognized by the central regulatory authority in the home country
- Institutions that are temporarily or permanently closed
- Institutions that are not authorized by the central regulatory authority or institutions that offer non-authorized degrees
- Institutions that claim accreditation through an organization that is outside the purview of the MOE of a particular country
- Institutions in countries where governmental oversight is in flux or undeveloped
- Professional examination board results from other countries

At the end of the third module, breakout groups were formed where each group was presented a sample document or case study to analyze and discuss. This segment of the Symposium put in focus the

very concepts panelists had shared earlier, helping the attendees with tangible tools to determine institutional recognition and accreditation.

This report will provide highlights of the discussions that ensued and the key takeaways which will enhance AICE's Standards.

Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert
President,
Association of International Credential Evaluators, Inc.

President & CEO,
Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc.
Endorsed Member of AICE

MODULE 1. ACCREDITATION FOR CREDENTIAL EVALUATION

Chair: Beth Cotter

Speakers: Annetta Stroud; Garrett Seelinger

Module One focused on accreditation issues from the point of view of a credential evaluation service. Beth Cotter, Chair (Foreign Credential Evaluations, Inc.) gave a brief overview. Panelist Garrett Seelinger (Incred) then discussed secondary-level accreditation issues from the point of view of an organization that provides evaluations primarily for athletes. Annetta Stroud (AACRAO) followed up by explaining AACRAO's point of view with respect to accreditation/recognition of educational institutions at the tertiary and higher levels.

The discussion began with recognition that from an evaluation service's point of view, an educational institution located outside of the U.S. must be authorized to award degrees by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the country in which it is located, in order to have the equivalent of U.S. regional accreditation status. Sometimes the MOE relegates the authority to confer degrees to another branch of government, which is acceptable.

Some educational institutions do not meet this test. For example, an institution may not be authorized by the MOE to award degrees, but instead it may claim accreditation by various multinational accreditation agencies which accredit its programs. Accreditation by such multinational accreditation agencies is not considered equivalent to regional accreditation in the U.S.

There are also institutions that claim accreditation by affiliation with religious denominations but not by authority of the MOE. Accreditation by virtue of these affiliations is usually not considered equivalent to regional accreditation. However, there are exceptions to this rule, such as the Baha'i Institution of Higher Education in Iran.

Credential evaluation agencies operate under certain limitations. If a person doesn't have educational documents, the agency cannot evaluate his/her studies. Refugees are one example. Another is individuals who have lost their documents from a school that either no longer exists or is closed because of war, natural disaster, a teacher's strike, or closure/seizure by the government.

Institutional recognition must have existed at the time the study had been undertaken or the degree was awarded. It can also apply retroactively. For example, a school gained recognition in 1994, so studies completed from 1990-1994 will be accepted.

Admissions offices of U.S. institutions have more flexibility than credential evaluation agencies when it comes to accepting institutions and their credentials, based on the U.S. institution's own internal policies. (This is the topic of Module 2.)

Garrett Seelinger reported on international students in the National Association of Collegiate Athletics (NAIA) and common student-athletes' credentials, discussing Incred's approach to general secondary credentials and to specialized programs for athletes.

When reviewing secondary-level credentials, the accreditation status of the school that the student attended isn't important if the student has passed a national examination, as in the case of students from the UK who take GCSE examinations, students from West Africa who take the WAEC (West African Examinations Council) examinations, or students from Jamaica who take CXC examinations.

The NAIA has its own policies with regard to admissions, and the by-laws for eligibility are investing in something of a low standard for awarding credits. The NAIA also wants to count all levels of studies, including studies undertaken at the post-secondary level, e.g., awarding credit for the foundation program that is at the post-secondary level.

Garrett reviewed several examples of secondary-level or higher documents that Incred has received for evaluation, including:

- UK BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma Sport (Performance & Excellence)
- Brazilian *Ensino Supletivo*, which is a Brazilian-style GED. (The *Ensino Supletivo* is taken when secondary-level studies weren't completed. Upon passing the exams, the high school diploma is awarded, which is equivalent to other Brazilian high school diplomas.
- *Educação de Jovens e Adultos (EJA)* - a GED-style exam.

He noted that it is important to ensure that the studies are part of the secondary system and provide access to higher education, whether they are vocational in nature or GED-style programs.

Annetta Stroud reported that AACRAO currently provides evaluations of post-secondary records and qualifications for specific purposes. Institutional recognition is essential for study to be recommended as accredited, academic study. The official recognition body may not always be the MOE, and it is important to know when programmatic accreditation is required as opposed to institutional accreditation.

Annetta emphasized the importance of retaining older resources. Some of us work with non-traditional students who may be older, so keeping older resources is essential in order to help with determining the recognition status of institutions. It is absolutely essential that we consult primary resources and not rely solely on current internet resources.

At times the recognition status of an institution is not clear. One example is a case in which recognition status is under a different body than the MOE. For example, a military academy may fall under the Ministry of Defense/Army.

Another example is the European Association of Conservatories – even if an institution opts in to be a member of a larger group such as this, it must still be recognized by its own country's official governing body, e.g. MOE. The primary source of recognition resides in the country in which the institution is

located and not in the over-arching bodies that are not relevant to the country but rather to an international group that has nothing to do with the country in which the institution is located.

Group discussion followed, in which it was recommended that all evaluators do their due diligence and go to the primary prevailing resource in order to determine an institution's accreditation status.

Also, it was suggested that the term "comparable" could perhaps be used instead of "equivalent to" when discussing accreditation status. "Comparable" allows for a degree of professional judgment on the part of the recipient of the evaluation report. (However, note that not all users of the report will understand the subtle difference between "comparable to" and "equivalent to" when discussing institutional accreditation.)

"Substantially equivalent" is the language government officials want.

Module 1. Key Takeaways:

- Definition: Recognition in most countries around the world deals with the authority to conduct operations to grant degrees which in terms can be compared to regional accreditation in the U.S.
- It is necessary to have access to the primary prevailing resources applicable to the date on which a degree was awarded in order to determine recognition status comparable to regional accreditation at that time.
- Recognition/Accreditation by a multi-national organization or membership in a multi-national group or religious denomination does not replace having official, degree-granting authority by the government of the country.
- Recognition of secondary level of education can be done either at the school level or by the national examination. In countries where a national examination framework exists they generally take precedence over the recognition of an individual school.
- In some cases, recognition of an institution might not be sufficient. Programmatic or specialized accreditation might be required for full accreditation comparability. In some countries, the government oversight bodies can offer both institutional and programmatic recognition.

MODULE II: ACCREDITATION FOR ADMISSIONS

Chair: Alexander Agafonov, Ph.D.

Speakers: Robert Watkins, Ujjaini Sharasbudhe

Following Module I was the module titled: “Accreditation for Admissions Officers.” This module’s panel presentation was moderated by Alexander Agafonov, President of Globe Language Services, Inc. Dr. Agafonov was joined by Robert Watkins, Assistant Director of Admissions, Graduate and International Admissions Office, University of Texas, Austin and Ujjaini Shasrabudhe, Director, Office of Graduate Admissions, University of Southern California. The expert group of panelists provided in-depth insights on the process of determining recognition of institutions outside the U.S. and equating it to regional academic accreditation in the U.S. for undergraduate and graduate admissions purposes.

The panel discussed institutional (regional, national) and programmatic (specialized) accreditation in the U.S. and focused on the following topics:

- Undergraduate admissions: foreign High School credentials vs. recognition of secondary schools Graduate admissions: recognition of foreign Post-secondary institutions;
- Recognition/ approval of foreign institutions by the Ministry of Education vs. other ministries (e.g., Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, etc.);
- Policies regarding newly-recognized (newly-accredited) institutions and institutions that lost recognition/ accreditation;
- Responsibility for determining recognition of foreign institutions: Admissions Department vs. Registrar’s Office vs. Academic Departments/ Divisions/ Schools;
- Policy exceptions and the appeals process.

Module II also included a short Q&A question section, which allowed symposium attendees to interact with the panelists and ask them questions. This resulted in informative discussion on the topic of recognition of foreign institutions for admission purposes. The panelists agreed that American colleges and universities had more flexibility than professional evaluation companies in determining comparability of foreign institution’s recognition to regional accreditation in the U.S. There flexibility was similar across public and private institutions as well as among selective and open-access schools.

Module 2. Key Takeaways:

- Accreditation comparability for admission and admission and transfer of credit policies is influenced by the accrediting body by the U.S. institutions.
- Institutions in the U.S. have a great deal of flexibility in determining whether an institution’s recognition would be comparable for their purposes.
- Recognition status is determined as of the date of the degree conferral.

MODULE III: ACCREDITATION OF PROBLEMATIC INSTITUTIONS

Chair: Hany Arafat

Speakers: Barbara Glave; Quentin Law Phu; Johann Rokko

Contributors: Ann M. Koenig

I. Religious Affiliated Institutions

Challenging cases in accreditation research began with a presentation on religiously-affiliated institutions prepared by Ann M. Koenig of AACRAO. In this section, Koenig outlined the basic steps of researching institutional status, namely the following: identifying the name of the institution, its location, public or private status of the institution, the governing authority over education in that location, and if that authority regulates religious institutions. In researching the final question, it becomes necessary to determine regulation includes academic oversight of religious institution, or if there is another type of external oversight over these types of institutions.

Koenig further identifies five types of religious institutions: 1. Government regulated but not by the educational authority, 2. Those with their own education system, 3. Those with their own quality assurance mechanism, 4. Those regulated, but to a different extent than academic institutions, and 5. Non-recognized institutions.

The first type of institution is exemplified by the qualification of Imam-Preacher from Tashkent Islamic Institute named for Imam Bukhari in Uzbekistan. This institution is overseen by the Committee of Religious Affairs in the Uzbek Government, but not by the Ministry of Higher Education. As such, equating academic recognition is not recommended.

The second and third types of institution appear similar but are treated much differently. Recognition of institutions from the Vatican (Holy See), such as Pontifical University Grégoriana and Pontifical University Latarenensis can be considered to have regional academic accreditation, despite being Catholic religious institutions because Vatican City is a sovereign state with an academic qualification framework and academic oversight system. Conversely, the General Conference of the Seventh Day Adventists oversees seminaries and religious education institutions of the Adventist faith around the world, but these institutions are located in countries that have their own educational oversight systems. As such, in order for an institution recognized by the Adventist Accrediting Association to have regional academic recognition, it must be recognized in the country where it is located.

The fourth example comes from the Russian Federation, where religious institutions are “licensed” by the Ministry of Education and Science, but the licensure gives the right to operate, but does not include any curricular or credential oversight.

The final example are religious institutions not recognized in any way by the government of where they are located, or by an external religious oversight authority. This is exemplified by the Baha’i Institute for Higher Education, which is not recognized by the government of Iran. Despite lack of any recognition,

this institution has been reviewed by many US universities, and its credentials are frequently recognized for credit and degree equivalence.

The lessons conveyed in this section are that religious recognition is fundamentally different than academic recognition, and it is not recommended for religious oversight or affiliation to be substituted for academic recognition of institutions. Notable exceptions, such as the Baha’I Institute exist, and autonomous academic institutions can choose to accept credit from these institutions on a case-by-case basis. As illustrated in sections I and II of the Symposium, institutional autonomy allows for this to happen, while professional credential evaluators must follow the guidelines of academic recognition in place for the country or region that is being evaluated.

2. Higher Education Institutions Closed by Governments or Natural Disasters

Quentin Law Phu of Purdue University explained how academic institutions cease operation through acts of government, natural disasters, and war or conflict. The first scenario is exemplified by Cameroon, where the 2017 closure of the University of Buea and University of Bamenda was organized by the government to subdue unrest in Anglophone regions. Meanwhile in Turkey, fifteen universities were closed in the Summer of 2016 over alleged links to the Gulen movement. It must be noted that in these examples, all of the institutions that were closed were once recognized as degree-granting institutions in their home country.

The second scenario occurs when institutions are damaged by natural disasters to the point of temporary or permanent closure. Most recent examples result from the 2017 hurricanes Maria and Irma, which severely affected the University of Puerto Rico and University of the Virgin Islands. In this situation, institutional recognition was not affected, but access to student information systems, records, and other functions were severely disrupted.

The final example takes place when institutions are closed or disrupted by war. Few countries have been more severely affected by war over recent decades than Iraq. Many universities remain disrupted or hindered resulting from functional difficulties, such as regular power outages and equipment deficiencies. Other universities ceased to operate completely, with varied levels of records transfers.

With the increase in student mobility, and in particular the migration of students from affected areas to the United States, institutions must start drafting policies on handling cases where previous institutions have closed. Purdue does not yet have a comprehensive written policy on this topic but is considering a reconstruction/review process for such applicants and currently reviews their credentials on a case-by-case basis. Notably, evaluators at Purdue University and elsewhere should verify institutional recognition at the time that the credential to be evaluated was awarded.

3. Unrecognized Credentials Conferred by Recognized Institutions of Higher Education

The penultimate section of this module focuses on programs of study and resulting credentials offered at recognized institutions but are not part of the standard academic system of the country in question. Barbara Glave uses the examples of *Titulos Propios* in Spain, *lato sensu* graduate programs in Brazil, and

non-RVOE recognized programs at private higher education institutions in Mexico. These types of programs are not exclusive to Latin America.

Titulo Propio programs in Spain are taught outside of the formal academic framework, and the credentials do not have standard formatting or a signature of the King of Spain. These programs were designed to appeal to foreign students, frequently focusing on language instruction and teacher training designed for international students to upgrade their teaching positions when they return to their home country. However, Spaniards can also enroll in these programs, as evidenced by credentials encountered recently by AICE endorsed members. Fortunately, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of Spain maintains a comprehensive list of official degrees offered at each university, available at <http://srv.aneca.es/ListadoTitulos/>. As such, programs not listed here are most likely for *Titulos Propios*. Most AICE Endorsed Members selectively recognize these credentials for credits, if they are quantified in any way, but never recognize them for degree equivalence.

Brazil offers two types of graduate programs: *Stricto sensu*/strict sense, which refers to official master's and doctoral degrees, and *Lato sensu*/wide sense degrees that do not lead to official degrees. *Lato sensu* programs in Brazil are frequently offered in the field of Business. They commonly use the term "MBA" even though the word "Master" refers to an official credential in Brazil. They do not grant access to doctoral programs in Brazil and can be as short as one semester of study.

The final example deals with program-based recognition. In Mexico, programmatic accreditation is granted at the federal or state level, while select institutions received "free" status through a presidential decree to develop their own curricula. Many online resources are in place for checking program accreditation in Mexico, but reviewing older programs is made challenging when programs and institutions change titles and names, respectively. This type of programmatic accreditation can be likened to the dual accreditation (both institutional and programmatic) of certain US programs in professions requiring licensure, such as many health professions.

4. Institutional Recognition from Organizations Outside of National Ministry of Education

Johan Roko of NOKUT presented on the broad issue of institutions that operate outside the purview of national Ministries of Education, a topic that overlaps with several other modules presented during the symposium.

The first example presented was international accreditation of medical and veterinary schools in the Caribbean. Numerous medical schools operate in Caribbean states with a license from the respective state, but such licenses typically require very little or no quality assurance. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) decided in 2003 to create the Caribbean Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions (CAAM-HP), with the mandate to accredit programs at these schools. Up to 2017, no medical programs in the Caribbean had received unconditional accreditation from CAAM-HP. The second example showed international accreditation systems set up by associations of business and management schools. Examples include EQUIS (EFMD Quality Improvement System) and AACSB (The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business). While these accreditation bodies are highly specialized and their approval can be a sign of quality, credential evaluators have to consider carefully

the requirements for accreditation and the relationship between accreditation by a professional body and the national degree system and oversight mechanisms in a given country. There might be examples where a program is accredited by a professional association, but where the credential conferred is not part of the official academic structure in the country.

Credentials from Institutions set up by international organizations such as the UN or the EU can also be challenging to assess. Such institutions typically offer credentials that do not belong to the academic structure in the country where they are located. The institutions have received the right to grant credential from the international organization, and these credentials may be considered for credit or degree equivalence. However, one may still ask who carries out oversight of the study programs at these institutions.

The final example is the very broad issue of institutions that operate campuses in other countries. These offshore campuses will typically offer credentials belonging to the academic structure at “home”, and not the host country. The challenge can be to figure out what accreditation status the offshore campus has in the host country, and whether accreditation/recognition in the host country is a prerequisite for the credential to be accepted in the “home country”.

Module 3. Key Takeaways

- In exceptional cases, a case-by-case assessment must be made by both institutions and credential evaluation agencies.
- Recurring exceptions can lead to institutional policies both at academic institutions and credential evaluation agencies.

SUMMARY

Determining institutional recognition of problematic institutions and evaluating challenging cases presents an ongoing need for case-by-case review. Each of the examples above represent unique scenarios affected by a multitude of factors. Despite the unique nature of these cases, it is helpful for an evaluator to understand the purpose and scope of his/her evaluation, such as whether it is for university admission, professional licensure, or issue of an official evaluation report by an evaluation agency. As outlined in Modules I and II, the purpose of the evaluation matters. Admissions officers, in reviewing challenging credentials on a case-by-case basis, can use other factors to determine admissibility. They can also form exceptions to traditional recognition standards based on what works for their institution. Other evaluators, however, must maintain consistency in defining regional academic accreditation, in which case many of the examples in Module III would be found lacking regional recognition or it's equivalent.

Aleksander Morawski
Moderator,
2018 AICE Orlando Symposium

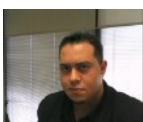
Chair, Scholarship & Publications Committee, AICE

Director of Evaluations, Foreign Credits, Inc.
Endorsed Member of AICE

SPEAKERS/PANELISTS



Alexander Agafonov, Ph.D. is the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Globe Language Services, Inc. He holds a Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Policy Studies from the University at Albany (SUNY), M.S. in Higher Education Administration from the University at Albany (SUNY) and B.A. in Foreign Languages/ Linguistics from Murmansk State Humanities University in Russia. He has worked in education for more than 20 years as a teacher, administrator, researcher and consultant. Prior to joining Globe Language Services Dr. Agafonov served as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at ASA College in NYC. His extensive experience in the field of International Education includes advising international students, serving as PDSO (Primary Designated School Official), developing articulation agreements and dual-degree/ degree completion programs with US and foreign institutions, evaluating foreign credentials, and doing research in the field of comparative education. Dr. Agafonov served on accreditation and program review teams for Middle States Commission on Higher Education and New York State Education Department. He currently serves as Chair of the Association of International Credential Evaluators, Inc (AICE). (Endorsed Member of AICE) Email: alexander@globelanguage.com www.globelanguage.com



Hany Arafat's primary role is as the President and Senior Evaluator at SDR Educational Consultants. First established in 1999, SDR Educational Consultants specializes in comparative education research and the evaluation of foreign educational credentials to determine their U.S. equivalency. Hany has been working in the field since 2005. He has authored and co-authored highly-referenced research such as country profiles for NAFSA's Online Guide to Educational Systems Around the World (profiles on the Palestinian Territories, the Sudan, Dominican Republic and El Salvador). He has also presented on a variety of topics at professional conferences in the field, including at NAFSA national/regional conferences, as well as at other major conferences in the field of international education, including at the annual AICE Symposium. Over the years, Hany Arafat has been a major contributor to the Credential Connection and GRADE databases and is currently serving as the Chair of the AICE Bylaws and Boards Development committee. He also serves as an international education consultant for the Houston Forum, and lends his expertise as an active volunteer on the MD Anderson Pediatrics Scholarship Committee. Email: hany@sdreducational.org www.sdreducational.org



Beth Cotter has been President and CEO of Foreign Credential Evaluations, Inc. since 2000. Beth received her B.A. degree in German from Wake Forest University and her M.B.A. degree in Finance from Georgia State University. She had eight years of teaching and educational administration experience in curriculum development at the post-secondary level prior to joining FCE in 1997. She has been a member of NAFSA: Association of International Educators since 1999, where she has presented at State and Regional Conferences. Beth is currently the Chair of the AICE Membership Committee. FCE has been an Endorsed Member of AICE since 2006. (Endorsed Member of AICE) Email: beth_cotter@fceatlanta.com www.fceatlanta.net



Barbara Glave began participating in international education when she transferred to the *Universidad de las Américas*, Mexico City, from which she graduated with a B.A. in Spanish, with minors in French and Linguistics. At LSU, she earned an M.A. in Spanish and Romance Philology, plus 24 additional credits in the same fields. From 1972-83, she taught Spanish, freshman English, and ESL at the University of Houston – Downtown. In 1982, she passed the ATA Spanish-to-English certification exam. In 1980, she co-founded SpanTran Educational Services in Houston; she remained until 2012. Since 2013-14, she has worked for Credential Consultants as a part-time translator and SDR Educational Consultants as a part-time evaluator and researcher. Barbara is a longtime member of the American Translations Association and NAFSA: Association of International Educators; she served Region III as ADSEC representative, 1995-97, and on the NAFSA Trainers Corps, 2009-16. She currently serves on the AICE Membership Committee and Scholarship and Publications Committee. Barbara has authored/co-authored ten country profiles for the NAFSA *Online Guide to Educational Systems Around the World: Albania, Argentina, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico and Sudan* as well as an overview of Mexican education for NAFSA *IEM Spotlight*, posted April, 2014. In addition to the accomplishments detailed above, she has over 80 activities as a committee member, consultant, panelist, moderator, session presenter, and workshop leader in comparative international education. She is the recipient of the 2015 NAFSA Region III Outstanding Service award. Barbara is a consultant with SDR Educational Consultants (Endorsed Member of AICE) Email: barbara@sdreducational.org www.sdreducational.org



Melanie Gottlieb joined the staff as Deputy Director of AACRAO in 2015. She came to the national office with 18 years as an AACRAO member, with experience in Records & Registration, Enrollment Management and International Recruitment and Credential Evaluation. She has served the association in a variety of leadership roles throughout her career, most recently as Vice President for International Education on the AACRAO Board of Directors. Melanie earned an MA in Information Science from the University of Missouri – Columbia and a BA in History /American Studies from Marlboro College in Vermont. Email: gottlieb@aacrao.org www.aacrao.org



Ann M. Koenig has been an associate director with AACRAO International since 2002. Her career in international education spans more than 25 years, including foreign credential evaluation in professional evaluation services, and campus-based work in international undergraduate and graduate admissions, student records management, academic advising and transfer credit evaluation, at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, a University of Maryland University College program in Germany, Golden Gate University in San Francisco, and the University of California, Berkeley. Ann has done in-depth research on education in several countries. She is the author of the ECE monograph *An Overview of the Educational System of Albania* (1993), co-author of the PIER workshop report on Poland (1992) and AACRAO Country Guide *The Educational System of the Russian Federation* (2008), and contributor to NAFSA's *A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World* (1999), the AACRAO EDGE online database, AACRAO's *Guide to Bogus Institutions and Documents* (2006), *The AACRAO International Guide* (2010 and 2016 editions), *AACRAO's Transfer Handbook* (2015), and AACRAO's quarterly journal *College & University*. A frequent workshop trainer and conference presenter, Ann specializes in sharing information on country educational systems, best practices in international academic record review and admissions, and academic credential fraud awareness. She has presented at professional development and training events sponsored by AACRAO, NAFSA, NAGAP, EAIE, and other organizations in the U.S. and Europe. Email: koeniga@aacrao.org



Aleksander Morawski, director of evaluation services at Foreign Credits, Inc., is an experienced international enrollment management professional with an extensive background in credential evaluation, university admissions, and management. He also serves as chair of the AICE Scholarship and Publications committee. Morawski completed his bachelor's degree at Marquette University and master's degree at San Diego State University, both in political science with a focus on international relations. He is an active and experienced trainer and member of NAFSA Trainer Corps, presently serving as workshop dean of the credential evaluation curriculum. He has served as the NAFSA Admissions and Credential Evaluation network leader, and is a regular presenter at local, national, and international conferences. (Endorsed Member of AICE) Email: amoraeski@foreigncredits.com www.foreigncredits.com



Quentin Law Phu has been working at Purdue University since January 2016. Quentin primarily works with international transfer students applying to Purdue from the United States and abroad. Quentin earned a Master of Education degree in Human Resource Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Quentin frequently speaks to individuals and groups about application requirements and international admissions practices. Email: qlawphu@purdue.edu



Johan Rognlie works as an Advisor at NOKUT, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education. He has been a credential evaluator at NOKUT since 2014, focusing in particular on the Middle East. In addition, Johan assesses credentials from The Americas and selected Asian countries, including India. Email: Johan.Rognlie.Roko@nokut.no



Ujjaini Sahasrabudhe is the director of the Office of Graduate Admission at University of Southern California. She is responsible for coordinating with academic programs and managing graduate admission-related operations for the university. She holds master's degrees in human development and family studies, as well as social and multicultural foundations of education. She has presented at conferences such as NAFSA, NAGAP, Association for the Study of Higher Education and Comparative and International Education Society. She formerly served as the managing editor for NAFSA's *IEM Spotlight* e-newsletter. Email: usahasra@usc.edu



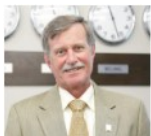
Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert is the founder, President and CEO of Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc. (ACEI), incorporated in the State of California since 1994. She has authored the Country Guide Series Reports on Senegal (2000) and Cameroon and co-authored the 1998 book on the system of education of Hong Kong. She has contributed to PIER Reports on the systems of education of Central America (1987), Canada (1987), and the United Kingdom (1990). She served as Chair of the Admission-Section (ADSEC) Committee of NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisors: Association of International Educators) from 1999 to 2001, as Chair of NAFSA's Region XII Southern District committee from 1995 to 1999 and served on AACRAO's Publication and Reviews Committee from 1990-1993. She has provided training and made frequent presentations on foreign educational systems and the recognition of international credentials at conferences and symposia in the United States and abroad. She is frequently called on by US government, academic institutions, state licensing boards, private enterprise as well as institutions and educational ministries abroad for assistance with international academic credentials. She holds the BA in Political Science from the University of San Diego and MBA from Pepperdine University. She is currently serving on the International Education Standards Council (IESC) of AACRAO and is President and Treasurer of the Association of International Credential Evaluators, Inc. (AICE). (Endorsed Member of AICE) Email: jasmin@acei-global.org www.acei-global.org



Garrett Seelinger was raised in Morocco and England before earning a B.A. from DePaul University and an M.A. from the University of Notre Dame. Garrett has worked for the NAIA since 2014, evaluating documents for thousands of international students. (Affiliate Member of AICE) Email: GSeelinger@naia.org



Annetta Stroud began working with AACRO in 2008 in the role of Senior Evaluator and Training Coordinator and is currently the Associate Director for Training and Program Development. She has worked in the field of international education for over 15 years in both public and private institutions in various positions in international admissions and credential evaluation, student services and academic management. Her current role with AACRAO allows her to engage in the research of international comparative education and support the training of professional in the field and has presented at various conferences including both AACRAO and NAFSA annual and regionals and the Education USA MENA Forum. Annetta holds a B.A. in Music from the University of New Mexico, M.A. in Adult Education from San Francisco State University, and an Ed.M. in Human Resource Development from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Email: strouda@aacrao.org



Robert Watkins has been in the field of international admissions and credential evaluation for 40 years all of it at The University of Texas at Austin where he is Assistant Director of Admissions in the Graduate and International Admissions Center. A member of NAFSA, AACRAO and EAIE, he has presented frequently on international credentials at annual meetings of all three organizations. He is former Chair of the Admissions Section (ADSEC) now known as International Enrollment Management (IEM), former Vice President for International Education on the AACRAO Board of Directors and served as Chair of the International Student Records Committee of the NCAA (2002-11). He served on and then chaired the former National Council on the Evaluation of Foreign Educational Credentials (1992-2000) as a NAFSA representative and was co-author of the PIER Canada Workshop (1989) and PIER Philippines Workshop (2001) and now serves on the AACRAO International Education Standards Council (IESC) which formulates the Credential Advice in AACRAO EDGE. Email: robert.watkins@austin.utexas.edu

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Results of the AACRAO-AICE 60-Second Survey 2018



Setting the standard for credentials evaluation

ACCREDITATION AND RECOGNITION OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

RESULTS OF THE AACRAO-AICE JANUARY 2018 60-SECOND SURVEY

Melanie Gottlieb
Deputy Director, AACRAO
gottlieb@aacrao.org



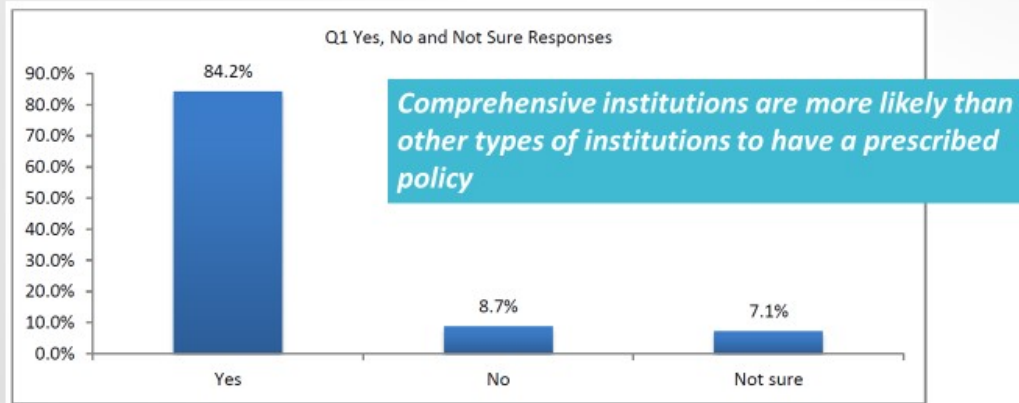
Setting the standard for credentials evaluation

RESPONDENTS

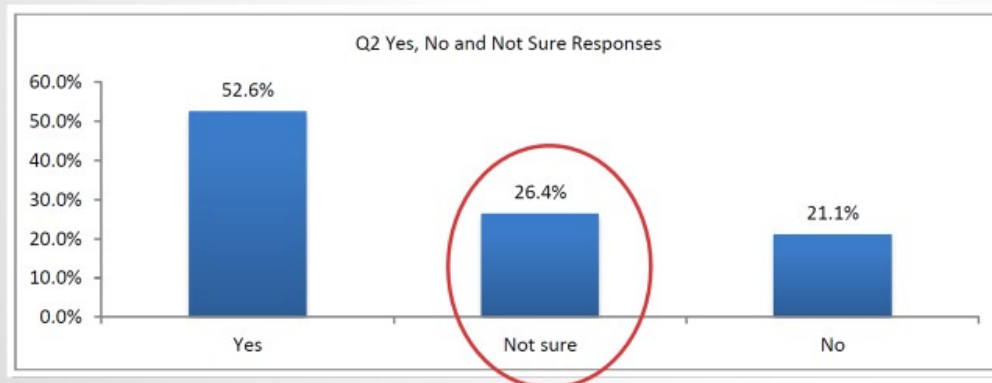
- 588 Respondents
 - 552 US institutions, 36 non-US (21 Canada)
 - 290 public institutions; 276 private non-profit, 22 proprietary

Control, Type and Size Count of Control	
Public	290
<i>Lower Division Only</i>	88
<i>Undergraduate</i>	21
<i>Undergraduate, graduate and/or professional</i>	175
<i>Graduate and/or professional</i>	4
<i>Other</i>	2
Private, not-for-profit	276
<i>Lower Division Only</i>	4
<i>Undergraduate</i>	57
<i>Undergraduate, graduate and/or professional</i>	195
<i>Graduate and/or professional</i>	19
<i>Other</i>	1
Private, proprietary	22
<i>Lower Division Only</i>	1
<i>Undergraduate</i>	6
<i>Undergraduate, graduate and/or professional</i>	11
<i>Graduate and/or professional</i>	3
<i>Other</i>	1
Grand Total	588

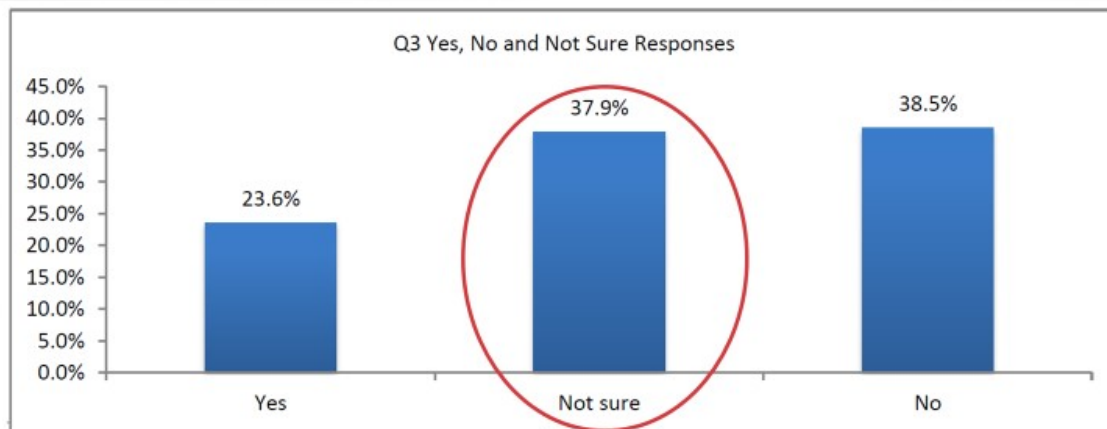
DOES YOUR INSTITUTION HAVE A PRESCRIBED POLICY ON REGIONAL ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION AND TRANSFER-OF-CREDIT PURPOSES?



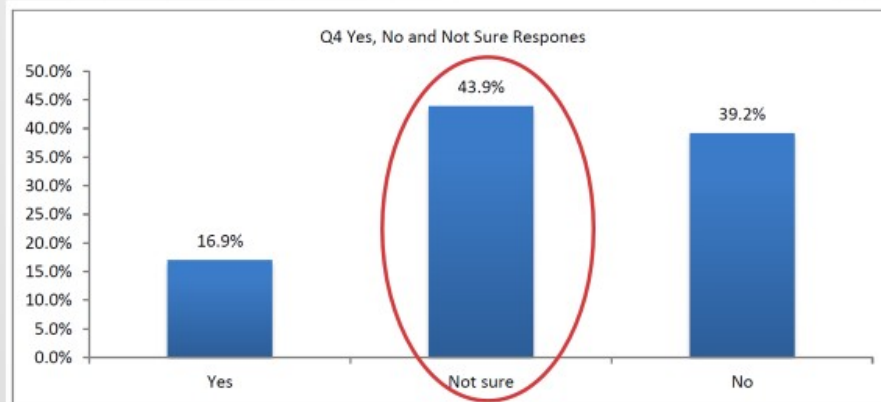
ACCORDING TO YOUR INSTITUTION'S CURRENT PRACTICE/GUIDELINES, WOULD A FOREIGN INSTITUTION'S RECOGNITION BY A NATIONAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BE EQUIVALENT TO REGIONAL ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION IN THE UNITED STATES?



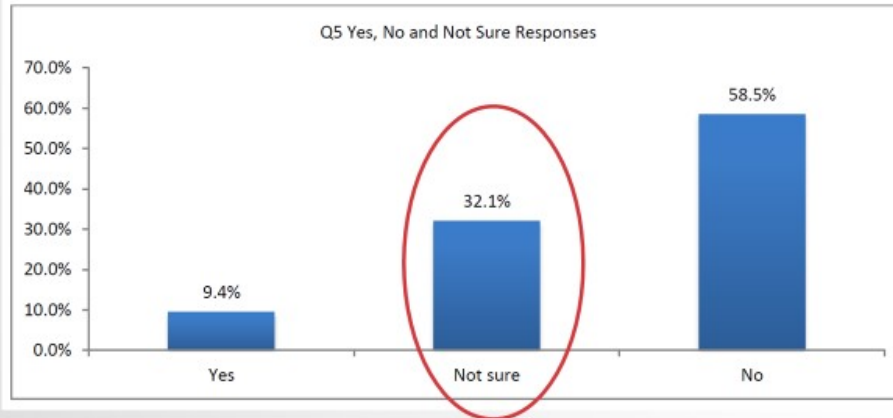
ACCORDING TO YOUR INSTITUTION'S CURRENT PRACTICE/GUIDELINES, WOULD A FOREIGN INSTITUTION'S RECOGNITION BY A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT BOARD OR BODY OVERSEEING PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OR EMPLOYMENT BE EQUIVALENT TO REGIONAL ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION IN THE UNITED STATES?



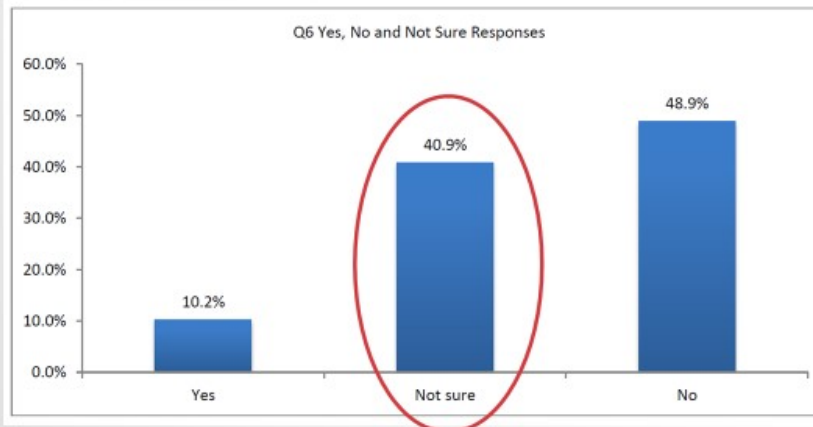
ACCORDING TO YOUR INSTITUTION'S CURRENT PRACTICE/GUIDELINES, WOULD A FOREIGN INSTITUTION'S RECOGNITION BY A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT BOARD OR BODY OVERSEEING SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL SECTORS (HEALTH/AGRICULTURE/DEFENSE/ETC.) BE EQUIVALENT TO REGIONAL ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION IN THE UNITED STATES?



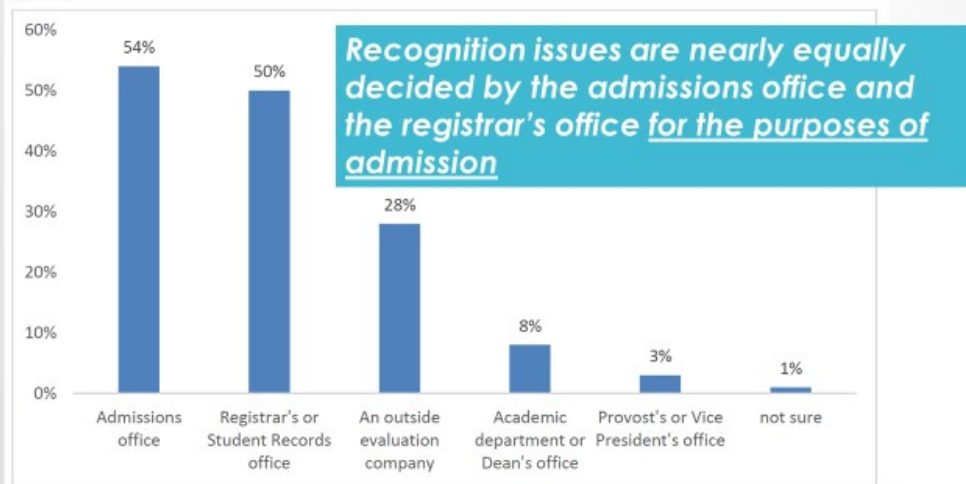
ACCORDING TO YOUR INSTITUTION'S CURRENT PRACTICE/GUIDELINES, WOULD A FOREIGN INSTITUTION'S RECOGNITION BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION, SUCH AS A PRIVATE OR CORPORATE QUALITY ASSURANCE OR ACCREDITATION ORGANIZATION BE EQUIVALENT TO REGIONAL ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION IN THE UNITED STATES?



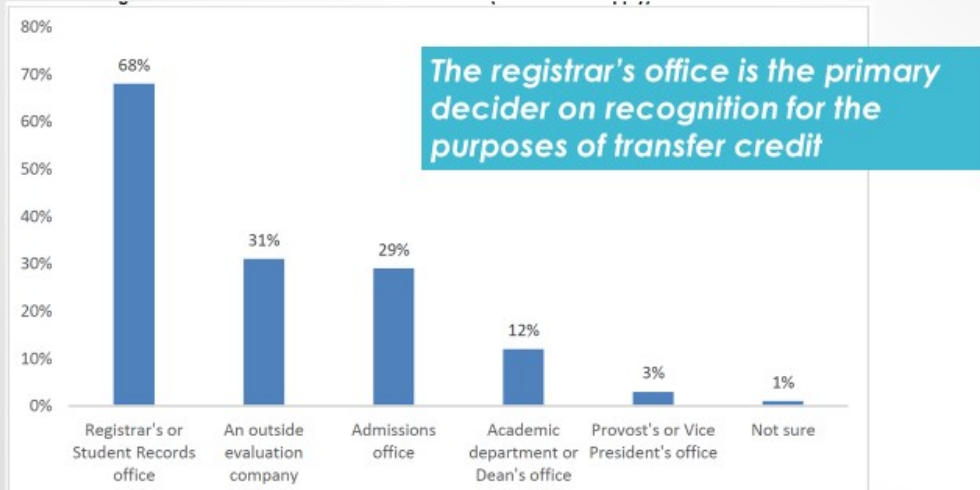
ACCORDING TO YOUR INSTITUTION'S CURRENT PRACTICE/GUIDELINES, WOULD A FOREIGN INSTITUTION'S RECOGNITION BY A GOVERNMENTAL BOARD OF A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT (OUTSIDE OF WHERE THE INSTITUTION IS GEOGRAPHICALLY LOCATED) BE EQUIVALENT TO REGIONAL ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION IN THE UNITED STATES?



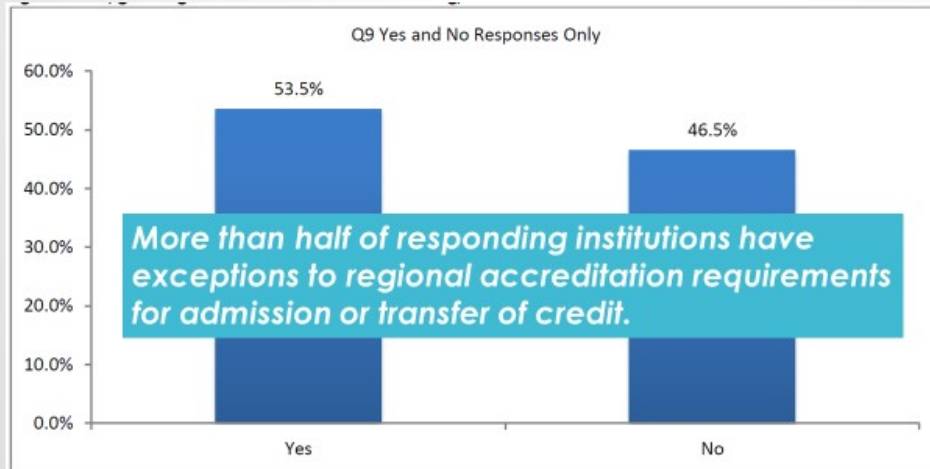
FOR ADMISSION PURPOSES, WHICH OFFICE AT YOUR INSTITUTION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING WHETHER STUDENTS' FOREIGN EDUCATION COMES FROM AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL?



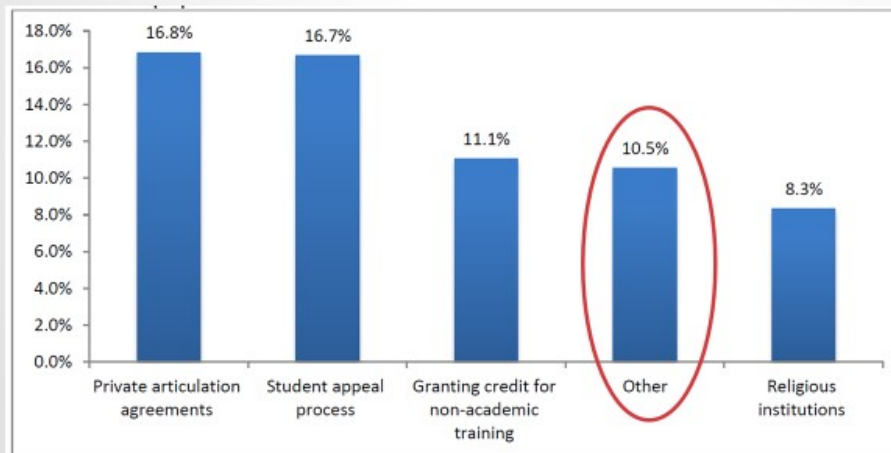
FOR TRANSFER-OF-CREDIT PURPOSES, WHICH OFFICE AT YOUR INSTITUTION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING WHETHER STUDENTS' FOREIGN EDUCATION COMES FROM AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL?



ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY EXCEPTIONS TO REGIONAL ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION OR TRANSFER-OF-CREDIT PURPOSES WHICH YOUR INSTITUTION MAKES?



WHAT ARE THE KNOWN EXCEPTIONS TO REGIONAL ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION OF TRANSFER-OF-CREDIT PURPOSES?





WHAT ARE THE **KNOWN EXCEPTIONS** TO REGIONAL ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION OF TRANSFER-OF-CREDIT PURPOSES?

- For admissions purposes, but not transfer credit
- For approved study abroad credit
- AACRAO TCP benchmarks
- Case-by-case approval process
 - Faculty department review of course materials and instructor credentials
 - Applicable to major
 - Previously approved by another regionally accredited institution
- Prior learning assessments
- National Accreditation
- DOE approval



ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS & QUESTIONS

- There is an identified gap in institutional understanding of recognition practices outside of the US once you move beyond the Ministry of Education
- There appears to be some reliance on outside evaluation services to support institutional decision-making
 - How are evaluation services framing the recognition statement?