

# **Council on Accreditation for Recreation, Park Resources and Leisure Services**

## **POLICY ON ASSOCIATION AFFILIATION**

### **Association Affiliates**

Professional associations in the recreation, park resources, leisure experiences or human service industries may apply for affiliation status with the Council on Accreditation for Recreation, Park Resources and Leisure Services (COA). Affiliation status affords the association the opportunity (1) to develop and recommend adoption of accreditation standards representing professional competence in its area of specialization, (2) to place a representative on the Council to vote on the consideration of programs seeking accreditation in its area of specialization, (3) for the designated representative to fill an ad hoc, non-voting, seat on the Council with respect to general matters of accreditation policy and procedures and program review, and (4) for periodic (no less than every 5 years) review and recommendation of changes to the accreditation standards representing professional competence in its area of specialization.

These affiliations provide post-secondary education programs with opportunities to pursue accreditation in specialization areas in addition to the accreditation of the core curriculum in recreation, park resources, leisure experiences or human service industries.

### **Qualifications**

In order to qualify as an affiliate, an association(s) must demonstrate the following:

- Represent professional practice that is aimed at producing recreation-related service and experience offerings. These offerings may be intended to yield immediate experiential outcomes (e.g., pleasure, fun, emotions, situational engagement, and motivational states) or transformational outcomes (e.g., health, well-being, learning, rehabilitation, and habilitation).
- Represent practitioner members who are actively involved in direct production of service and/or experience offerings that are the focus of the professional association(s).
- Represent a professional career opportunity for graduates of baccalaureate programs as defined by professional standards and practices, governmental codes, and/or regulatory agents.
- Demonstrate viability through formally recognized structure(s) (e.g., by-laws, recognition as a 501(c)3 organization, and/or fiscal health) and relevant documentation of its practitioner members' engagement in professional practice. Coalitions of two or more associations are eligible for membership if viability of the coalition can be demonstrated through similar mechanisms.
- Represent a professional practice for which a scientific knowledge-base is being actively pursued by competent researchers or must otherwise demonstrate that its knowledge-base is of sufficient complexity to warrant university-level inquiry into its concepts, principles, practices, and procedures.

### **Procedure for Becoming an Association Affiliate**

An association recommending that standards for a specialty profession be established within the Council on Accreditation engages in a collaborative dialogue with the Council. The dialogue serves to establish the basis for such recommendation by the association. If accepted into a mentoring relationship, the association and the Council work collaboratively to further define the standards upon which the specialty

profession is seeking recognition. The mentoring phase is to exist for a period of time not less than one year nor more than three years. Upon successful completion of the mentoring phase, associations may apply for affiliate status by presenting to the Council a proposal demonstrating that it meets or exceeds the qualifications stated in this policy. Proposals are accepted and acted upon twice a year during regularly scheduled Council meetings. The Council deliberates and formally votes on all affiliation proposals. An association(s) is accepted as an affiliate of the Council following a majority vote in support of its proposal and payment of the annual fee.

### **Evidence of Successful Completion of Mentoring Phase**

The Council will formally consider accreditation standards recommended by affiliate associations. To be considered, standards must 1) meet requirements of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA); 2) be realistic for implementation by programs seeking accreditation; 3) be outcome-based; and, 4) may not contradict or diminish in any way the standards established by the Council for program accreditation in recreation, park resources, leisure experiences or human service industries. A majority vote of Council members is required for acceptance of standards recommended by an association affiliate.

### **Term**

Association(s) pursuing specialization accreditation shall be given the opportunity to develop a plan of action to prepare and validate their standards and operating processes to assure compatibility with COA standards and policies. During this period of time not less than one year nor more than three years, the Council shall provide assistance through a mentor relationship. With the approval of the specialization standards, as presented by the association(s), the association(s) will be recognized as an affiliate. The life-span of all affiliations is five years, with the potential for quinquennial renewal existing indefinitely. The Council will review all affiliations during the fourth year of each five-year period and will vote on continuation of that affiliation for a subsequent five year period. A majority vote of Council members is necessary for renewal.

### **Termination**

Either party, the Council or the association affiliate, may terminate the affiliation by giving six months notice. If termination of an affiliation occurs subsequent to the payment of that year's annual fees, no refund will be provided of funds for that year. Accreditation status of the applicable specialized programs will become null and void at the conclusion of their current accreditation cycle unless another affiliate association presents and has approved by the Council respective specialization standards.

### **Costs**

Association(s) with a mentor-mentee relationship will pay an annual fee, up to three years, of \$500. An association affiliate will pay an annual affiliation fee determined by administrative costs. These fees are due annually on the anniversary of the application or affiliation date. Travel expenses for participation in the annual spring and fall Council business meetings and hearings are to be covered by the association(s). Program visit costs are borne by the institutions seeking recognition of the respective specialty standard(s).