



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

February 19, 2025

Dear ACCJC Member Institution ALOs, CEOs, Chancellors, Board of Trustee Presidents, and other interested parties,

On February 14, 2025, the United States Department of Education (ED) issued a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\)](#) addressing the obligations of institutions that receive federal financial assistance from ED, and sharing the Department's interpretation of federal law related to the 2023 Supreme Court decision in [Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College](#).

The letter titled "Dear Colleague Letter: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act in Light of Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard" addresses what ED interprets as the requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution, and other federal civil rights and constitutional law principles, and indicates that institutions must comply with the guidance within 14 days or risk losing federal funding. The scope of the DCL covers institutional operations in areas including admissions, financial aid, hiring, training, and all other institutional programming, whether offered directly or through contractual third-parties. The letter states that further legal guidance will follow in due course.

Institutions, state departments of education, state higher education systems, and other agencies are encouraged to provide feedback regarding the guidance. Comments can be submitted by emailing comments to OCR@ed.gov or writing to the following:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Institutions should note that the Dear Colleague Letter specifically states:

This guidance does not have the force and effect of law and does not bind the public or create new legal standards.

Further, constituents should visit [Significant Guidance at the Department of Education](#), a website referenced in the Dear Colleague Letter, where it provides the following:

Guidance documents represent the Department of Education's (ED) current thinking on a topic. They do not create or confer any rights for or on any person and do not impose any requirements beyond those required under applicable law and regulations.

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) is monitoring this situation carefully. All constituents should review the letter and expect future guidance that will be issued as more information becomes available from ED and as necessary. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful attention to this matter.

Accrediting Commission for
Community and Junior Colleges
accjc.org

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