





TO: Higher Education Committee
FROM: John L. D'Agati 
SUBJECT: Renewal of Institutional Accreditation:
The Rockefeller University
DATE: February 1, 2018
AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents renew the institutional accreditation of The Rockefeller University?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the Higher Education Committee at its February 2018 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken. It will then come before the full Board at its February 2018 meeting for final action.

Members of the Board of Regents with a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest on this application are asked to recuse themselves from participating in the deliberation and decision.

Procedural History

On December 4, 2017, the Regents Advisory Council on Institutional Accreditation (RAC) met to consider the accreditation renewal application of The Rockefeller University. The RAC recommendation is hereby transmitted to the Board of Regents for consideration and final action. The recommendation of the RAC is to renew the accreditation of The Rockefeller University with conditions for ten years, during which time

the institution shall come into compliance with standards for accreditation within two years.

Consistent with §4-1.5(a)(8)(v) of the Regents Rules, the Commissioner adopted the findings and recommendations of the RAC, and hereby transmits them to the Board of Regents for consideration and final action. The full record of the application for renewal of accreditation is available to the Board, electronically, through the Board Secretary.

Background Information

The Rockefeller University (New York County) has applied for renewal of its institutional accreditation by the New York State Board of Regents and Commissioner of Education.

The Rockefeller University is an independent institution located at 1230 York Avenue in New York and was chartered in 1901 as The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. In 1965, the name of the University was changed to The Rockefeller University. The Rockefeller University offers Master of Science (M.S.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree programs in Biological Sciences and Physics (“The David Rockefeller Graduate Program”) and an M.S. degree program in Clinical and Translational Investigation (“Clinical Scholars Program”). In addition, The Rockefeller University participates in tri-institutional Doctor of Medicine (M.D.)/Ph.D. programs with Weill Cornell Medical College and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; it provides the biological sciences Ph.D. component of those programs. The Board of Regents has accredited The Rockefeller University since 1954. The last institutional accreditation peer review site visit was in 2007, at which time The Rockefeller University was accredited for a period of ten years. The period of accreditation was administratively extended until February 12, 2018, pending completion of the process for renewal.

Related Regents Items

N/A

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents renew the accreditation of The Rockefeller University with conditions for ten years during which time the institution shall come into compliance with standards for accreditation within two years.

Timetable for Implementation

N/A

Information in Support of Recommendation

Peer Review Visit

On November 16, 2016, a peer review team (“Team”) conducted a site visit to The Rockefeller University as part of a review to determine the institution’s compliance with Regents accreditation standards. In its report, the Team made a total of ten recommendations.

The Team found the institution in compliance with standards (as defined under §4-1.4 of the Regents Rules) addressing institutional mission, assessment of student achievement, faculty, resources, admissions, HEA Title IV program responsibilities, teach-out agreements, and public disclosure of accreditation status.

The Team found the institution out of compliance with the standards addressing programs of study, administration, support services, consumer information, and student complaints.

Overall, the Team concluded that the institution had the understanding to adequately address the recommendations.

The Department transmitted the draft team report to The Rockefeller University for review and comment. The institution accepted the draft report’s recommendations, and included evidence that the recommended improvements are ongoing or planned. Based on the self-study and the institution’s response, the Department concurred with the Team’s recommendation.

Regents Advisory Council on Institutional Accreditation (RAC) Review

As required by Subpart 4-1 of the Regents Rules, the Department transmitted the compliance review report and the institution’s self-study for consideration by the Regents Advisory Council. (The RAC is established in §3.12(d) of the Rules of the Board of Regents “to review applications for accreditation and renewal of accreditation pursuant to Part 4 of this Title, and such other matters as the Department may ask it to review, and make recommendations to the Regents and the Commissioner based on its review.”)

On December 4, 2017, the RAC met to consider The Rockefeller University’s application. In a public meeting, it met with a representative of the institution, the chair of the peer review team, and Department staff. The RAC members discussed their observations and asked questions of the institution. The institution’s representative responded to each of these questions. The RAC then voted unanimously to recommend the following:

Accreditation with conditions for a period of ten years, during which the institution will come into compliance with standards for accreditation by the end of year two.

Commissioner's Review

Neither the institution nor the Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education appealed the recommendation of the RAC. Therefore, pursuant to Subpart 4-1 of the Regents Rules, the Commissioner adopted the recommendation of the Council as her recommendation to the Board of Regents.

The attachment to this item sets forth the range of accreditation actions authorized under Subpart 4-1 of the Rules of the Board of Regents.

Rules of the Board of Regents

Subpart 4-1, Voluntary Institutional Accreditation for Title IV Purposes

§4-1.2 Definitions.

As used in the Subpart:

(a) *Accreditation* means the status of public recognition that the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents grant to an educational institution that meets the standards and requirements prescribed in this Subpart.

(b) *Accreditation action* means accreditation, accreditation with conditions, probationary accreditation, approval of substantive changes in the scope of accreditation, and denial, revocation, or termination of accreditation.

(c) *Accreditation with conditions* means accreditation that requires the institution to take steps to remedy issues raised in a review for accreditation, and provide reports and/or submit to site visits concerning such issues, provided that such issues do not materially affect the institution's substantial compliance with the standards and requirements for accreditation.

(d) *Adverse action or adverse accreditation action* means suspension, withdrawal, denial, revocation, or termination of accreditation or pre-accreditation.

....

(s) *Probationary accreditation* means accreditation for a period of time, not to exceed two years, during which the institution shall come into compliance with standards for accreditation through corrective action.

From NYSED's Handbook of Institutional Accreditation (p.6)

At a regularly scheduled public meeting, the Board of Regents considers the complete record of the accreditation process (including the institution's self-study, compliance report, and the record of the Council) and makes the final determination on accreditation action. Representatives of the applicant institution may be present at this meeting, but normally they are not invited to participate in the discussion.

The Regents may act or may defer action pending further consideration by the Council or the receipt of additional information. If the Regents take adverse action as defined in Regents Rules §4-1.2(d) on an application for institutional accreditation or renewal of accreditation, a statement of the reason(s) for this action will be provided to the applicant institution.

Possible Accreditation Actions

- Accreditation without conditions. The institution is in full compliance with the standards for institutional accreditation. Any follow-up matters are not, in the judgment of the Regents, of a nature or scope that affects the institution's capacity to maintain adherence to the institutional accreditation standards for the period of accreditation. Recommendations or any follow-up reports relate either to minor compliance matters or to the strengthening of practices that meet the standards of compliance. Accreditation without conditions may be for a period of up to ten years. Accreditation without conditions may apply to institutions seeking initial accreditation or renewal of accreditation.
- Accreditation with conditions. The institution is in substantial compliance with the standards for institutional accreditation. Any areas of non-compliance are not of such nature or scope as to call into question the institution's substantive adherence to the institutional accreditation standards during the term of accreditation. The institution has demonstrated the intent and capacity to rectify identified deficiencies and to strengthen practice in marginally acceptable matters within no more than two years. The institution will be required to take steps to remedy issues raised in the review for accreditation and to provide reports and/or submit to site visits concerning such issues. Accreditation with conditions may be for a period of up to ten years, contingent on a finding of compliance within no more than two years on any areas for deficiency cited in the Regents accreditation action. Accreditation with conditions may apply to institutions seeking initial accreditation or renewal of accreditation.
- Probationary accreditation. Probationary accreditation means accreditation for a set period of time, not to exceed two years, during which the institution shall come into compliance with standards for accreditation through corrective action. During this period, the institution provides documentation of compliance with standards, particularly all standards that were not met at the time of the Regents action. A follow-up visit by Department staff and/or peer reviewers may be required following provision of a required report. Probationary accreditation is only available to institutions seeking renewal of accreditation.
- Denial of accreditation. The institution does not meet standards for institutional accreditation and cannot reasonably be expected to meet those standards within two years. Denial of accreditation may apply to institutions seeking initial accreditation or renewal of accreditation.