

BOARD OF REGENTS  
BRIEFING PAPER  
*Handbook Revision, Community College Admission Criteria*

**BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:**

The Board's policy on community college admissions currently provides that to be admitted to a community college an individual must meet one of four criteria: be at least 18 years old, a high school graduate, a qualified high school student or a qualified international student. Under those criteria it is possible that a student may be admitted on the basis of age alone without having graduated from high school. The community college presidents wish to revise the policy to provide that students must have graduated from a high school or meet the current exceptions for qualified high school and international students, effective Fall 2012. The proposed revisions further provide that for those students who are not high school graduates, they may be admitted under alternate criteria or test scores that demonstrate college readiness. Each college will be required to establish procedures and requirements for such alternate admission.

Note Concerning Technical Revision: The proposed revisions specifically delete the reference to "a qualified high school student;" because Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 7 (Early Admissions and Enrollment Policy of Secondary Students) authorizes the enrollment of high school students under defined circumstances. Therefore, the reference to "a qualified high school student" is removed in this section on admissions. This language is not needed to allow high school students to enroll in community college classes if qualified.

**SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:**

Amend Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 18 concerning community college admissions criteria to provide that for admission purposes the student must be a high school graduate or a qualified international student. A student not meeting those criteria may be admitted under alternate criteria or test scores that demonstrate college readiness. Each college shall establish procedures and requirements for such alternate admission. (See attached Policy Proposal.)

Amend Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 7 changing the term "vocational" to "career and technical" as is contemporary phrase typically used today.

**IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):**

This revision to community college admission criteria is brought forward at the request of the community college presidents.

**BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

The proposed revisions will result in the regular admission of only students who are college-ready as evidenced by high school graduation or alternative criteria. It is unfair to routinely "admit" students 18 year old or older if they are not going to be able to succeed in remedial or college-level work, appearing to promise them that they can gain a certificate or degree when data indicate that the pathway to success is not open to them. This does not limit a potential student from applying for admission to the colleges under alternate criteria or testing.

**POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

Historically, Nevada's community colleges have been open access institutions and have not required students to have graduated from high school to enroll. The proposed revisions may be perceived to limit the colleges' access mission, although that issue is addressed in the proposal's provision that alternate admission criteria be developed demonstrating a student's readiness for college.

**ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:**

Maintain the current policy.

**COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:**

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_
- Amends Current Board Policy: *Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 18*
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Fiscal Impact: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X \_\_\_\_\_  
Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**POLICY PROPOSAL**  
**TITLE 4, CHAPTER 16, SECTION 18**  
Community College Admission – **Revisions Effective Fall 2012**

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

**Section 18. Community College Admission – General Policy**

1. In the admission of students, community colleges shall not discriminate on the basis of a person's age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation.
2. All applicants must qualify for admission by satisfying at least one [~~(+)~~] of the following:  
[~~a. at least 18 years of age;~~]  
[~~b~~]a. a graduate of a high school or its equivalent;  
[~~e. a qualified high school student;~~] or  
[~~d~~]b. a qualified international student.
3. *A student who does not meet the community college requirements for admission established in subsection 2 may apply to be admitted under alternate criteria or test scores that demonstrate college readiness. Each college shall establish procedures and requirements for such alternate admission.*
- [3]4. When admitting a student, the institution may consider the student's standing at a previously attended institution, including, but not limited to, records of disciplinary action.
- [4]5. All applicants for admission shall complete such tests, furnish such information, and meet such deadlines as required by the regulations published in the admissions sections of the catalog governing the semester of initial enrollment. The initial semester of enrollment shall be considered the date of matriculation except where otherwise defined by the institution.
- [5]6. Admission to an NSHE community college implies general admission to the college only and does not constitute admission to a specific curriculum or courses that may require additional admission criteria, as published in the college catalog governing the semester of initial enrollment.
- [6]7. Programs designated as limited entry require fulfillment of selective admissions criteria as contained in the institutional catalog and other appropriate college documents. Continuation in selective admissions programs is likewise contingent upon fulfillment of conditions specified by the institution and contained in official institutional documents.

*EFFECTIVE FALL 2012*

## POLICY PROPOSAL

### TITLE 4, CHAPTER 16, SECTION 7

#### Early Admissions and Enrollment for Secondary Students

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

#### Section 7. Early Admissions and Enrollment Policy for Secondary Students

1. High school juniors and seniors may be admitted and may enroll in a NSHE college or university, subject to the approval of appropriate institution officials.
2. High school juniors and seniors identified as *career and technical program completers* [~~Vocational Program Completers~~] may be admitted and enroll in three or more credits per semester, based on written, articulated program agreements with designated school districts. For these juniors and seniors only, college credit may also be given for career and technical courses previously completed in the freshman or sophomore year of high school.
3. Students below the high school equivalent of junior level who are identified as academically gifted or talented by the school district and recommended by the high school principal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for enrollment status in credit courses. Otherwise, high school students below the junior level may enroll for zero credits in Community Services courses only.
4. High school students who have been officially excused from compulsory school attendance on the condition of equivalent instruction outside the school (e.g., home school) may be admitted and may enroll if, on a case-by-case basis, it is determined that the student is:
  - a.) Equivalent to a high school junior or senior and receives approval from the appropriate institution official; or
  - b.) Equivalent to a level below a high school junior and is identified by the institution as academically gifted or talented.
5. Each college or university may establish performance or testing standards to determine readiness for enrollment or admission when other criteria for admission or enrollment are not met.
6. An NSHE institution may, on a limited basis, admit students who have been identified as possessing the abilities and skills necessary for advanced academic work in an alternative program of education for profoundly gifted and talented students that may include degree or non-degree options without reference to the credit limitations established elsewhere in Chapter 16.