



Association of International  
Credential Evaluators, Inc.®  
*Setting the standard for credentials evaluation*



## AICE Newsletter

**March 2016**

*Message from the Editor:*

Greetings from everyone at AICE.

As winter draws to a close, spring brings with it a busy time for credential evaluators, admissions officers, and other international educators alike. Non-immigrant visa deadlines make for busy months for professional credential evaluators. Admissions decisions continue to be made and admitted students must make their attendance decisions. The international education community is preparing for spring state conferences as well as big national events such as AACRAO's annual meeting, NAGAP, as well as the first annual AICE Symposium.

In addition to the aforementioned professional development events, I recently attended NAFSA's Advocacy Day in Washington DC. This event is an organized way for international educators to meet with their congressional representatives and lobby for NAFSA's advocacy mission relating to international education as a whole. This year, we focused on high-skilled immigration reform as well as the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act and the Cuba Trade Act. Regardless of political views, it can be agreed on that the immigration system in this country is in need of reform. Similarly, the executive opening of relations with Cuba provides opportunity for interaction between Cuban and American students alike.

I'm sharing this experience in the introduction of the AICE Standard to showcase how the often compartmentalized roles of international educators are interrelated in their daily work and in the mission of their profession. My state's delegation on Capitol Hill included an admissions officer, an immigration advisor, a senior university department leader, consultant, and me, a representative of credential evaluation. While our work is diverse, this experience solidifies the fact that we share many common values. We are also aware of how each of our positions relate to the other as international educators. Based on this information, I'd like to take the opportunity to remind credential evaluators that our work

goes beyond the conversion of credits and grades, the equivalence judgment, or statements of accreditation, listed on our evaluation reports. As international educators, and as experts in our field, we must be cognizant about how our decisions affect the international student, as well as the admissions officer, that immigration coordinator, university leadership, employers, et. al., because although we may not deliver lectures have direct contact with students, we are international educators.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Aleks Morawski

*Director of Evaluation Services*

*Foreign Credits Inc.*

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## AICE® Forum Highlights

This section includes highlights from the monthly AICE® Forum on February 18th, 2016. Although this is meant to serve as a synopsis of the discussion, additional details can be obtained by contacting the Members listed by each topic.



### High School Completion Examinations, Albania

In the education system of Albania, students who complete grade 12 sit for a maturity examination, and must pass it before earning the Dëftesë Pjekurie (Maturity Certificate) required for admission to post-secondary education. The case discussed included confirmation of completing grade 12, but not passing a

sufficient number of subjects on the maturity examination. The dilemma, therefore, is whether or not these credentials can be evaluated as equivalent to a high school diploma. Our affiliate members did share that this individual would not be eligible for admission at their US institutions. Other evaluators agreed that while this would be equivalent to completion of grade 12, equivalence to the US benchmark high school diploma is not recommended.

~ Beth Cotter

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## Uschilische programs from Russia and former Soviet Republics

These are programs which accept students after completing lower secondary or senior secondary. Lower secondary (grade 8/9) spend 3-4 years to earn these credentials, while graduates of senior secondary programs (grades 11/12) complete them in approximately 2 years. Since the awarded credential is the same, it is agreed that post-secondary credit is recommended for that course work completed beyond senior secondary education. In many cases, these can be evaluated as associate's degrees.



~ Alex Donin



## Charter University

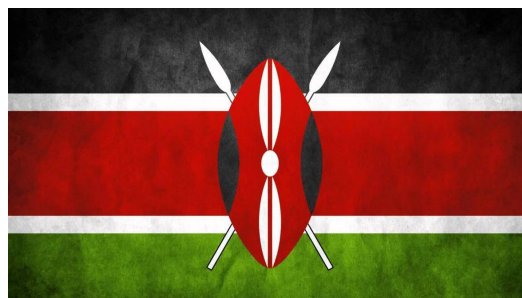
An applicant holding an undergraduate credential from "Charter University" was admitted to Heriot-Watt University in Scotland and received a graduate

qualification. Much evidence was presented confirming that "Charter University" does not have the equivalent of regional academic accreditation. A consensus was formed that, while regionally accredited autonomous institutions can admit students based on independently conceived standards, this should not be the basis for confirming regional accreditation status of previous educational institutions.

~ Beth Cotter

## Kenya – Kenya Christian Industrial Training Institute (KCITI)

Although this institution claims to be a registered Technical Training Institute (TTI) with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, it is not listed on the public listing of TTI's as of 2014. As such, the institution is considered to lack regional academic accreditation.



~ Drew Feder



## Syria (Syrian Interim Government-issued Secondary School Examinations)

Given the volatile political situation in Syria, assessment of credentials and availability of information is difficult. A report prepared by Jasmin Saidi-

Kuehnert on the current state of the education system of Syria during the time of conflict was previously shared with the members. The report included information on the influence of the Syrian Interim Government (SIG) in refugee camps in Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan where refugees can sit for secondary school baccalaureate examinations of the SIG in lieu of the exams offered by the internationally-recognized baccalaureate of the Syrian Ministry of Education. This conversation focused specifically on secondary school certificates issued by the Syrian Interim Government (SIG). Several evaluators noted that due to the volatility of the current system of governments, these certificates cannot be expected to rely on established standards, and would not accept them from refugees. Affiliate members confirmed that in such cases, they would rely on integrated assessment tools, such as standardized tests, essays, etc., instead of these certificates.

~ Drew Feder submitted on behalf of Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert

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## Professional Development and Events

### AICE Phoenix Symposium, March 23-24, 2016

AICE cordially invites you to collaborate with other evaluators as we discuss the need for standards in our industry. The AICE Phoenix Symposium will benefit you by increasing your knowledge of sound evaluation practices, connecting you with others in the industry with whom you can discuss evaluation questions and problems, offering you access to an ongoing forum in which to compare and analyze educational credentials, and increasing your confidence in the reliability of credential evaluation reports which you produce and which you receive from others.

**REGISTER NOW**

**RESERVE ROOM**

For more information, please contact Beth Cotter at [beth\\_cotter@fcatlanata.com](mailto:beth_cotter@fcatlanata.com).

Click here for: [AICE Symposium Overview](#)

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