



Ad Hoc on For-Profit Voting Membership Recommendation

The Ad Hoc Committee researched non-voting membership and non-voting members holding positions in IACAC. The committee consisted of Maddie Corder and Michelle Rogers as Co-Chairs as well as Gwen Kanelos, Merle Wilder, and April Ponte. We were charged with investigating multiple points in relation to non-voting members and membership by-laws. These include:

- The IACAC Mission Statement and by-laws
- The best interests of IACAC membership
- The current makeup of membership, paying special attention to members in the various categories (voting/non-voting; high school, college, IEC, students, retirees, for-profit)
- Most recent month-to-month membership report

We researched much further and looked closely at the identity, mission and value of IACAC. We reached out to NACAC to seek their knowledge. We consulted with other ACACs, some who had just researched non-voting membership and opportunities. We reviewed our short and long-term membership numbers. We looked at the goals of organizations similar to IACAC that serve those who help students, and viewed their non-voting policies. We spoke with members who wanted this change and those who did not, for the understanding and reasoning of and for our membership. Overall, we assessed change, and opportunity for change, in relation to moving forward.

In our findings the strongest and most crucial determining factor was IACAC's mission and value.

IACAC Mission Statement and By-Laws

- IACAC was founded in 1939 for counseling professionals dedicated to serving students as they explore options and make choices about pursuing postsecondary education. That premise is still in effect today. Membership options have expanded, but the work of counseling professionals has remained consistent with the changing world. Members are counselors, admission or financial aid officers, active retirees, and students who are concerned about the future of education in the State of Illinois and the nation. IACAC is committed to maintaining high educational standards which foster ethical and social responsibility among those involved in the transition process.
- The By-Laws start with the purpose for which the corporation is organized: exclusively educational to promote the highest professional standards in counseling and to maintain maximum communication of best practices pertaining to postsecondary admissions at primary, secondary, and postsecondary levels, empowering members to serve the interests of students, parents and/or guardians, and primary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions. These best practices are maintained and promoted through the Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission (GEPKA) of the National Association for College Admission Counseling. **This is important and foundational to who we are as an organization and is why voting membership vs non-voting membership is established. Decisions are made based on providing direct help to students, and that is our ultimate recommendation.**

NACAC's Mission and Voting/Non-Voting Membership

- NACAC's mission is similar, as our wording is guided by theirs. (Theirs is much bigger and vast as is their membership and corporation.) The purposes for which the Association is organized and operated are educational and charitable. The Association is an organization of institutions,

organizations, and individuals dedicated to serving students as they explore options and make choices about pursuing postsecondary education. NACAC is committed to maintaining high standards which foster ethical and social responsibility among those involved in the transition process.

- NACAC distinguishes their voting membership vs non-voting membership. Voting membership is a privilege extended to educational institutions, organizations and individuals that are not-for-profit organizations whose primary activities consist of working on a multi-state, national, or international level and providing counseling, admission, or financial aid services to students or to the college admission counseling or financial aid professions.
- NACAC distinguishes non-voting membership to organizations or individuals (students, employees of non-voting, for-profit organizations) that provide products and/or services to the counseling, admission, or financial aid professions, or in support of students in the transition to postsecondary education.
- People eligible to the Board of Directors, Nomination, and Election Process for NACAC:
 - Persons eligible for election to the Board of Directors must be NACAC voting members in good standing for five years prior to assuming office.
 - NACAC will appoint up to five Directors who may or may not be NACAC members. They also may work for for-profit organizations. Their for-profit appointees do not vote.

IACAC Current Membership Make-Up and Voting/Leadership Eligibility

- Membership currently, and for the past 3-5 years, has been, at most, 12 people that are for-profit, non-voting members. There are approximately 2,000 overall members. This non-voting category is less than 1% (0.6%). IACAC's mission and value is the student. That's why our membership joins. An organization who profits is looking to serve an admission counselor or a high school counselor, not the student.
- In the history of IACAC we have often talked about growth. A few years ago we changed our membership structure. This is the first time we successfully had growth in our membership. Still, the for-profit membership did not grow.

Other Affiliate Research

- Currently, only one affiliate allows for-profit members to vote or hold a leadership role in the organization. New Jersey changed their policy, by laws, and membership structure during the membership meeting (9/26/2024). NJACAC went from organizational membership to individual membership. Therefore, memberships are non-transferable.
- Recently, International ACAC (the affiliate with the most for-profit members) held a by-law vote to change the voting status of for-profit members, and it did not pass.
- Conversations with for-profit members and voting members were completed after the NACAC Conference.

Other Non-Profit Organization Research

- Other non-profit organizations, American School Counselors Association (ASCA), Illinois Community College Admissions & Records Organization (ICCAROO), and Illinois Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (IACRAO), which have similar missions to ours (student-centered), allow for-profit individuals and institutions to be members but not to vote or hold leadership positions. For-profit members consist of less than 1% of the membership for each of these organizations.
- The Illinois Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (ILASFAA) does allow for-profit members to hold a seat on the board; however, their mission is a much bigger scope than IACAC. Their mission serves the interests and needs of students, faculties, **government agencies and sponsors** through the implementation of ideas and programs pertinent to student financial aid. They also provide a forum for **governmental agencies and sponsors** to present new rules and

regulations as well as recent innovations in financial aid. Because ILASFAA is serving governmental agencies and sponsors, the mission of this organization encompasses more than IACAC's mission.

Overall Recommendation

The Ad Hoc Committee recommends no bylaw changes to the Credentials Committee regarding membership status. For-profit members should not be granted the ability to vote or hold leadership positions within IACAC. After thorough research (including consultation with NACAC, review of other organizations serving students, analysis of our membership numbers, our new membership structure, and all other ACAC membership policies), the committee found that IACAC's mission—focused on ethical counseling and those helping students directly—conflicts with granting voting privileges or leadership positions to for-profit members. Since its inception, IACAC has granted the privilege of voting to educational institutions, organizations, and individuals who help students with their postsecondary education, and we believe that should remain our focus.