

Guidelines for Preparing Reports on the Establishment of Off-Campus Programming: Branch Campus or Additional Instructional Location

To assist institutions in preparing reports in advance of establishing a Branch Campus or an Additional Instructional Location, the following guidelines have been developed. (See “Policy on the Review of Off-Campus Programming” for more details.)

Length: Reports are typically 25-30 single-spaced pages in length, exclusive of appendices.

Format of the report:

Cover Page: The Cover Page for Substantive Change Requests (signed by the institution’s CEO) should be included. The form is available on the Commission website.

Cover Sheet: Include the institution’s name, the date, and a notation of the location, type (Branch Campus or Additional Instructional Location), and proposed starting date of the off-campus programming under consideration, along with the degree(s) to be offered.

Institutional Overview: Provide an overview of the institution, including its purpose, setting, and any special circumstances that would help the reader understand its nature and scope. In addition, a brief rationale for undertaking the off-campus programming should be articulated. Enough information should be provided so that a reader unfamiliar with the institution will have a basic understanding of how its off-campus programming is related to the function of the institution as a whole.

Contractual Relationships: Describe the contractual arrangements, if any, that the institution has made for the offering of its off-campus programming. The institution should ensure that programs offered at its off-campus locations fulfill the Commission’s *Standards for Accreditation* with regard to any contractual agreements with organizations not accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education that will recruit students and/or provide instruction or otherwise provide academic services in support of the off-campus programming. (Institutions establishing off-campus programming through a contractual relationship should refer in their reports to the Commission’s statement on “Good Practices in Contractual Arrangements Involving Courses and Programs.”) Include a copy of the contract as an appendix to the report. Where contractual relationships are involved, the report may exceed the above-suggested page limits.

Standards for Accreditation: Describe how, through the proposed location(s), the institution will continue to fulfill each of the five Standards:

1. Mission, Organization, Governance, and Planning: Provide evidence that the off-campus programming is consistent and compatible with the institution's mission. (Note: Standard 1.1). Describe how the governance structure will accommodate – or be changed to accommodate – the new off-campus location(s) and that participation of constituencies in the planning and decision-making will be ensured according to established policies and norms. (Note: Standards 1.4, 1.12) Explain how faculty will have primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum at the off-campus location(s). (Note: Standard 1.13) Provide evidence that planning for the off-campus programming includes analysis of need or demand; realistic short- and long-term goals; and regular, systematic, evaluation of effectiveness that is aligned with priorities and resources. (Note: Standard 1.14) If the off-campus location(s) is or are located outside the United States, describe how any requirements imposed by the home country are consistent with the *Standards for Accreditation*. (Note: Standard 1.8)

2. The Academic Program, Faculty, and Students: Describe the programming to be offered at the off-campus location(s) and provide evidence for how the institution will demonstrate authority and oversight for its academic elements, including the design, content, quality, and delivery of courses. (Note Standards 2.3, 2.13) Describe the student body the institution intends to serve at the off-campus location(s). (Note Standard 2.23) Describe how the institution will ensure there are sufficient faculty and academic staff at the off-campus location(s) and that their preparation, qualifications, and evaluation are appropriate to the nature of their assignments. (Note Standards 2.18, 2.19, 2.22) Describe how the institution intends to provide, as applicable, co-curricular programs and opportunities to students at the off-campus location(s). (Note Standards 2.25) Describe how the institution will identify and systematically respond to the needs of students at the off-campus location(s). (Note Standard 2.24)

3. Institutional Resources: Provide evidence that the institution's short- and longer-term enrollment goals for the off-campus programming align with its overall financial planning and projections. (Note Standard 3.2) Describe how facilities are constructed and/or maintained to ensure access, safety, and security and that physical and/or digital information and learning resources will be provided and maintained to support student learning at the off-campus location(s). (Note Standards 3.9, 3.10, 3.11) Describe how data integrity, security, and privacy will be preserved and how disaster recovery and business continuity plans encompass the off-campus location(s). (Note Standard 3.12) Explain how the institution will be able to respond to any unforeseen circumstances or emergencies related to the off-campus programming. (Note Standard 3.5)

4. Educational Effectiveness and the Success of All Students: Discuss how the institution will assess student learning, as well as the quality and effectiveness of its academic, co-curricular, and student services program, at the off-campus location(s). Describe the mission-appropriate quantitative and qualitative measures of student success (including retention and graduation rates, and post-enrollment/post-graduation success measures as defined by the institution) that have been identified for the program(s) offered at the location(s) and how the institution will use assessment results for improvement. (Note Standards 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5)

5. Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure: Describe how the institution will maintain high ethical standards in its dealings with all constituents, the public, and the Commission with respect to this off-campus programming. (Note Standards 5.1, 5.4) Discuss how the institution will provide accurate, timely, and readily accessible digital and/or physical information about the off-campus programming, including the learning opportunities available, to the public and its internal and external constituencies. Describe how the institution has secured the necessary operating authority, intends to operate within this authority, and complies with applicable legal requirements for each jurisdiction in which it conducts off-campus programming; include any official approval documents in an appendix. (Note Standards 5.2, 5.5)

An electronic copy (single, searchable pdf file) of the report should be submitted to the Commission through the NECHE Institution Portal.

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