



# DISTANCE EDUCATION ACCREDITING COMMISSION

2016 CHEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

# ACCREDITATION ACROSS A BROAD SPECTRUM OF DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- 102 Accredited Institutions.
- Student enrollments span 500 to 130,000.
- Institutional offerings range from focus on specific discipline (Master of Fine Arts, Juris Doctorate) to multiple degree program offerings at associate, bachelor, and graduate levels.
- Broad diversity of institutional missions.
- Wide-ranging distance education delivery models:
  - Carnegie Unit
  - Competency-Based
    - Blended Models
    - Direct Assessment
    - Correspondence
- DEAC Commission
  - Five representatives from accredited institutions
  - Five representatives from the public

# HOW DOES ACCREDITATION DEAL WITH SUB-STANDARD INSTITUTIONS?

1. High threshold for initial application acceptance at DEAC (early warning detection strategies)

## *Before an application is accepted:*

- In-depth financial statement review
- Full disclosure of all parties involved
- Extensive background checking
- Preliminary readiness assessment
- On-site readiness assessment

2. Assuming an institution makes it through the above...
  - Comprehensive curriculum review
  - More financial assessment
  - No substantive changes

# INITIAL ACCREDITATION

- **Maximum three year grant** for initial accreditation – no exceptions (five year renewal).
- Extensive scrutiny of substantive changes and student achievement.
- Approval to apply to participate in Federal Financial Aid/Title IV programs is **a substantive change** and requires a separate, comprehensive approval process to an additional on-site evaluation.

# GRADUATION AND COMPLETION

## *IT MATTERS A GREAT DEAL*

### SECTION V, DEAC ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

#### A. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The institution evaluates student achievement using indicators it determines are appropriate relative to its mission and educational offerings. **The institution evaluates student achievement** by collecting data from outcomes assessment activities **using direct and indirect measures**. The institution maintains **systematic and ongoing processes for assessing student learning** and achievement, analyzes data, and documents that the results meet both internal and external benchmarks, including those comparable to courses or programs offered at peer DEAC-accredited institutions. The institution **demonstrates and documents** how the evaluation of student achievement **drives quality improvement** of educational offerings and support services.

#### B. STUDENT SATISFACTION

The institution **systematically seeks student and alumni opinions** as one basis for **evaluating and improving** curricula, instructional materials, method of delivery, and student services. The institution regularly collects evidence that students are satisfied with the administrative, educational, and support services provided.

#### C. PERFORMANCE DISCLOSURES

The **institution routinely discloses** on its website reliable, current, and accurate information on its performance, **including student achievement**, as determined by the institution.

## ANNUALLY, DEAC INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE:

- Audited or reviewed financial statements for review by DEAC;
- A detailed report of the institution's assessment of student learning outcomes in relation to the institution's mission;
- Graduation data (and where appropriate licensure examination data) for every program;
- Student satisfaction survey results;
- SARA Membership/State Authorization approvals;
- Comprehensive Annual Report.

# WHEN ACTION IS WARRANTED TO ADDRESS COMPLIANCE CONCERNS

- Quarterly reporting
- Restrictions on substantive changes
- Undergo **total re-evaluation of compliance** with all standards to continue accreditation
- Special Directed Visit (announced or unannounced)
- Show Cause Order – includes public notice and disclosure of specific reasons for the show cause

THE “EARLY WARNING” PROCESS: WHAT IS THE CURRENT THINKING OF ACCREDITORS ON THIS ISSUE? HAVE ACCREDITORS MADE ANY CHANGES? WILL THEY BE MAKING ANY CHANGES?

- Delicate balance of assuring due process amidst heightening scrutiny of accreditation
- Mindfulness of institution mission
- Agree to common practices of transparency
- What about indemnification?
- More use of data analytics when reviewing and collating outcomes information
- Everything revolves around the student experience

THANK YOU

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