

**ACADEMIC UNITS of MEASUREMENT**

**and ACADEMIC PROGRESS MEASUREMENT  
COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT FORM**

Instructions

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission requires all institutions to obtain prior approval from the Commission for any of the following:

* significantly increasing or decreasing clock or credit hours,
* changing from clock to credit hours, or
* changing the way an institution measures student progress for any program, including whether the institution measures progress in clock hours or credit-hours, semesters, trimesters, or quarters, uses time-based or non-time-based methods, or changes to any combination of these measurements.

Prior approval serves two main purposes: (1) It provides the institution an opportunity to critically reflect on its operations, processes, and procedures prior to changing academic units of measurement and (2) it provides the Commission with an overview of the institution, its mission, and its processes that are integral to delivering quality distance education.

The questions on this Compliance Assessment Form are designed to assist the off-site subject specialist (evaluator) in determining whether institutions meet the intent of DEAC accreditation standards when significantly changing academic units of measurement or means of academic progress measurement. This rating form is for the evaluator’s use only. Evaluators do not need to send this rating form to DEAC.

DEAC evaluators decide whether institutions meet, partially meet, or do not meet accreditation standards. For any rating of “partially meets” or “does not meet,” the evaluator must provide a “required action” that instructs the institution on what it needs to provide in order to demonstrate compliance with the identified standard. Evaluators should be careful to review institutions based only on the accreditation standards. Any recommendations beyond the scope of the accreditation standards should be provided in the suggestions section.

Evaluators should refer to the *DEAC Accreditation Handbook and Guide for Self-Evaluation* for any further clarification on institutional requirements.

Institution Information

Significant increase or decrease in clock or credit hours  
   
 Changing from clock to credit hours

Change in the way the institution measures student progress for any program, including whether the institution measures progress in clock hours or credit-hours, semesters, trimesters, or quarters, uses time-based or non-time-based methods, or changes to any combination of these measurements

Name of Institution: Name of institution

Date of Review: Date of review

Accreditation Standards

Standard III: Program Outcomes, Curricula, and Materials

1. **Academic Units of Measurement:** The institution documents policies and procedures used to define the chosen academic unit of measurement. Academic units are measured by either clock hours or credit hours.
   1. Clock Hours

The institution documents its implementation and application of policies and procedures for determining clock hours awarded for its courses and programs. A clock hour is one instructional hour. One instructional hour is defined as 50 minutes of instruction in a 60-minute period.

* 1. Credit Hours

The institution documents its implementation and application of policies and procedures for determining credit hours awarded for its courses and programs. The assignment of credit hours must conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education. A credit hour is defined as an amount of work represented by intended learning outcomes and verified through evidence of student achievement in academic activities.

* 1. Credit Hour Definition

Semester and quarter hours are equivalent to the commonly accepted and traditionally defined units of academic measurement. Academic degree or academic credit-bearing distance education courses are measured by the learning outcomes normally achieved through 45 hours of student work for one semester credit1 or 30 hours of student work for one quarter credit.2

1*One credit/semester hour is 15 hours of academic engagement and 30 hours of preparation.*

*2One quarter hour credit is 10 hours of academic engagement and 20 hours of preparation.*

* 1. Documenting Credit Hours

The institution demonstrates that each course and program requires the appropriate amount of work needed for students to achieve the level of competency defined by institutionally established course/program outcomes. The institution measures and documents the amount of time it takes the average student to achieve learning outcomes and specifies the academic engagement and preparation time.

All student work is documented in the curricula materials and syllabi, including a reasonable approximation of time required for students to complete the assignments. Evaluation of student work is identified as a grading criterion and weighted appropriately in the determination of a final course grade.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Did the institution provide its policy for determining and assigning academic units of measurement? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s process for measuring and documenting the amount of time it takes the average student to achieve the learning outcomes (as a means of assigning academic units of measurement) adequate, based on accepted best practices? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow adequate processes for verifying and documenting that all academic units of measurement are assigned based on the level of educational offering? |  |  |  |
| Are all assigned academic units of measurement appropriate, based on the level of educational offering? |  |  |  |
| **Standard III.F. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. | | |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.