

**ACADEMIC UNITS of MEASUREMENT**

**and ACADEMIC PROGRESS MEASUREMENT
REPORT TEMPLATE**

Background

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 an overview of the institution, its mission, and its processes that are integral to delivering quality distance education.

This report on academic units of measurement informs the Commission whether the institution is meeting, partially meeting, or not meeting each of the DEAC accreditation standards and core components when significantly changing its academic units of measurement. Approximately four to six weeks after the off-site subject specialists conduct their reviews, the report is provided to the institution for response. Both the report and the institution’s response are submitted to the Commission for review prior to final decision making.

Instructions

It is the evaluator’s responsibility to review and assess the accuracy of the information presented in the application. By completing the following report template, the Chair of the evaluating team presents a single overall determination of whether the institution adequately demonstrates that it meets DEAC’s accreditation standards when significantly changing its academic units of measurement.

Findings guidelines:

* **Meets Standard:** The institution demonstrates compliance with the intent of the accreditation standard or core component.
* **Partially Meets Standard:** The institution was able to demonstrate compliance with some, but not all, of the elements contained in the accreditation standard or core component.
* **Does Not Meet Standard:** The institution was unable to demonstrate compliance with a majority of the elements contained in the accreditation standard or core component.

The evaluator should provide clear and concise descriptions within the “Comments” section of the report to support each determination that a standard or core component is met, partially met, or not met. If an institution meets the accreditation standard, the evaluator may want to consider highlighting within the Comments section the processes and procedures the institution followed that enabled it to demonstrate compliance. If an institution partially meets or does not meet a standard, the evaluator needs to adequately describe why the decision was reached and refer, as appropriate, to narrative sections and exhibits within the SER that support the determination.

The evaluator must also indicate the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the partially met or unmet accreditation standard. Each required action must be tied back to an accreditation standard or core component.

For required actions, the evaluator should begin each statement with, “[Insert Name of Institution] needs to [insert the action necessary by the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standard.]”

As part of the peer review process, it is important that institutions receive suggestions for improving their educational offerings and support services. This process allows the institution to benefit from an external review and perspective. The evaluator is encouraged to provide suggestions within the report. 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.

For suggestions, the evaluator should begin each statement with, “[Insert Name of Institution] may want to consider [insert the recommendation for improvement.]”

It is the evaluator’s responsibility to review the merits and evidence presented for each determination. It is within the evaluator’s discretion to choose a finding based on the institution’s response and evidence presented within the application.

The evaluator emails the completed report to the DEAC director of accreditation four to six weeks after the completion of the review. Once all information is received, DEAC notifies the evaluator to appropriately dispose of all institutional materials.

Helpful Hints

* The report should be objectively written in third person, narrative format using declarative sentences and simple verbs. The report should avoid broad generalities and speculative views.
* The report represents an accurate, concise, factual, and thorough presentation of the findings during the onsite visit.
* When making a determination whether the institution meets, partially meets, or does not meet accreditation standards, the evaluator should include evidence of documents reviewed on site or analyzed in the report that led to the finding. Include specific examples.
* The report documents attributes and deficiencies using language found in the accreditation standards and core components. All deficiencies must be documented.
* The report should not require an institution to implement a new program or procedure in order to demonstrate compliance with a partially met or unmet accreditation standard. The report states the required action necessary to provide evidence or demonstrate compliance. The institution bears responsibility for demonstrating compliance with DEAC’s accreditation standards.
* The report accurately presents comments, required actions, and suggestions using direct quotations, references, and data.
* The report does not make recommendations to the Commission concerning the overall accreditation of the institution.

DEAC Academic Units of Measurement Report (Confidential)

[ ]  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

Submitted By: Evaluator name

Date of Report: Date of report

# Accreditation Standards Findings

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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 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.

# Focused Comments on Courses Reviewed

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement.

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement

**Program Name:** Insert Program Name

**Course Code/Name:** Insert Course Code and Name

**Comments:** Insert Specific Comments or Observations on the Identified Course

**Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for improvement or enhancement