



Report from the STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Update from the Committee's Meeting at the 2025 Fall Workshop
October 19-21, Chicago

Presented by David Srygley, Chair of the Standards Committee and Leah Matthews, DEAC Executive Director



Members of the DEAC Standards Committee

- David Srygley, Chief Academic Officer, Nations University – Chair of the Standards Committee
- Stephen Kemp, Chief Academic Officer, Antioch School of Church Planting
- Chris Caraway, Director of Operations, Sonoran Desert Institute
- Nate Breitling, Chief Academic Officer, Elmwood Institute
- Niccole Kopit, Chief Academic Officer, Laurus College
- Michael Wingert, Academic Dean and Associate Professor, Agora University
- Ebony Lawrence, Instructional Designer, Amazon (DEAC Commissioner)
- Jessica Park, Dean, School of Law, Abraham Lincoln University (DEAC Commissioner)
- Myk Garn, DEAC Commissioner, Public Member
- Robert Frankel, President, Genesis University (DEAC Commissioner)
- Susanne Thompson, President, Moreland University (DEAC Commissioner)

Committee Agenda



1. Call for Comment: Reduced Credit Bachelor's Degree
2. Call for Comment: Subscription Tuition
3. Annual Report Student Satisfaction Survey Questions
4. Technical/Conforming Amendments to Arbitration Policy

See: deac.org/public-notices/documents-out-for-public-comment/

Standard V.A General Program Requirements

The institution's programs are aligned with its mission. Program content, student learning outcomes, and standards of student performance are appropriate to the academic discipline and level of the credential conferred. Entry and completion requirements for each program are clearly defined and consistent with commonly accepted program expectations for awarding the credential. Program length for degree programs must adhere to the following minimum standards:

2. Applied Bachelor's degree – minimum of 90 semester hours or equivalent.



*Standards Committee
Recommendation:*

*Keep “applied
bachelor’s degree”
designation and
implement.*

Glossary Definition

Applied Bachelor's Degree

An undergraduate degree program that emphasizes practical learning that is designed to prepare students for immediate entry into specific career fields. Applied Bachelor's Degree programs require between 90 and 120 credits. ~~The program name of any Applied Bachelor's Degree programs must be clearly designated as such, e.g. "Applied Bachelor of Science" or "Bachelor of Applied Arts"~~. Applied Bachelor's Degree programs must meet both industry-based expectations and state requirements and must clearly communicate their intended career pathways to prospective students.



*Standards Committee
Recommendation:*

*Delete second
sentence and
implement.*

(new) Appendix XV: Subscription-Based Tuition



While institutions may adopt the subscription model, it is essential that a ~~refund~~ cancellation policy is implemented in compliance with state requirements or, in the absence of such requirements, in accordance with DEAC's cancellation policy standards ensuring fairness and transparency for students and aligning with the broader principles of equitable financial practices. The following guidelines outline key considerations for the implementation of a subscription-based tuition model.

The institution must establish Subscription Terms and Conditions under which the student elects to participate in the institution's subscription model, setting the general terms of recurring billing and cancellation.

*Standards Committee
Recommendation:
accept proposed
revisions to language
presented in Call for
Comment*

(new) Appendix XV: Subscription-Based Tuition



To maintain an active subscription, students must periodically reaffirm their subscription. This reaffirmation can be achieved through notifications prior to the start of each new subscription cycle, or at least annually. This process helps ensure that students remain informed of their financial commitments and ongoing participation in the program. ~~The reaffirmation process must be clearly communicated to the student at least once every 12 months.~~

~~Pausing Subscriptions~~

~~If the student chooses to pause their subscription, they must submit the request before the end of the current subscription period. Pauses should not exceed a predetermined maximum length (e.g., six months) and should allow the student to resume at the same point they left off upon resumption.~~

*Standards Committee
Recommendation:
accept proposed
revisions to language
presented in Call for
Comment*

New Language, not included in Call for Comment

Subscription Period Cancellation Policy

The institution must provide students a cooling-off period of no fewer than five (5) calendar days from the start of each subscription period, during which a full refund of that period's payment must be granted upon written or electronic notice of cancellation.

Students may cancel their subscription at any time by following the institution's published cancellation process. Upon cancellation, the student will receive written confirmation. Regardless of when cancellation occurs, access to courses and institutional services will remain active through the end of the current subscription period. After this period ends, the student's access to coursework, faculty interaction, and institutional resources will expire, and the student will be considered inactive unless they re-enroll or renew their subscription.



***Standards Committee
Recommendation:
consider additional
Call for Comment
period on this new
provision.***

Discontinuing Prescriptive Student Satisfaction Query in the Annual Report



Process and Procedures Section XVII, Interim Monitoring of Accredited Institutions

10. Student Achievement ~~Satisfaction~~ Benchmarks:

If an institution's student achievement data ~~satisfaction~~ show rate falls below 75 percent, or if completion and graduation rates that are not within the benchmark range for student ~~satisfaction~~ established by DEAC, the institution must explain the reasons for not meeting established benchmarks and document corrective actions taken and planned.

*Standards Committee
Recommendation:*

*Implement proposed
revisions*

Discontinuing Prescriptive Student Satisfaction Query in the Annual Report and SER



1. Did you achieve, or will you have achieved upon completing your studies, the goals you had when you started this course or program?
2. Would you recommend these studies to a friend?
3. All things considered, were you satisfied with your studies with us?

Discontinuing Prescriptive Student Satisfaction Query in the Annual Report and SER



- ~~1. Did you achieve, or will you have achieved upon completing your studies, the goals you had when you started this course or program?~~
- ~~2. Would you recommend these studies to a friend?~~
- ~~3. All things considered, were you satisfied with your studies with us?~~

Institution Assessment of Student Satisfaction (Proposed for Inclusion in SER Guidelines)



Student Satisfaction Data: Institutions should regularly gather and evaluate student satisfaction data to ensure that instructional and educational services meet expectations and support continuous improvement. Best practices include developing institution-specific survey tools that reflect the unique mission, programs, and student population served. Surveys should be administered on a recurring basis to a representative sample of students to capture meaningful feedback.

Results should be systematically analyzed to identify strengths as well as areas for improvement. Institutions are encouraged to establish clear benchmarks for satisfaction and to monitor trends over time. When results fall below the institution's student satisfaction threshold, findings should be used to inform concrete improvements in teaching, student services, or program delivery. Documentation of how student feedback leads to action is an essential part of demonstrating institutional effectiveness and responsiveness to student needs.



Technical and Conforming Amendment to Arbitration Procedures

Part Two, Process and Procedures, Section XIII Binding Arbitration

New: *DEAC complies with the arbitration requirements of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended ("HEA") at Section 496(e), 20 U.S.C. § 1099b(e). Under this provision, the Secretary does not recognize the accreditation of an institution unless the institution agrees to submit any dispute involving an adverse action to arbitration before initiating any other legal action. DEAC has established this process for initial arbitration pursuant to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. § 602.20(e) and the due process considerations of 34 C.F.R. § 602.25.*

If an institution ~~elects to~~ **disputes** the Commission's initiation of an adverse action or a Commission decision not to approve a substantive change beyond the appeals process administered by DEAC, **it may elect to submit the dispute to initial non-binding** ~~its dispute shall be resolved exclusively through binding arbitration.~~

Share your feedback with the Standards Committee!





Thank you.