

---

# Institutional Accreditation Training and Updates 2017

---



New York State Board of Regents  
&  
Commissioner of Education

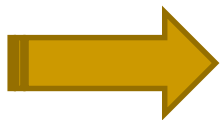
# Institutional Accreditation Training Series

New York State Board of Regents *and* Commissioner of Education

## Overview of Regulatory and Policy Updates

### *Includes:*

- Training in the Department's expectations and requirements for distance education courses and programs
- Coverage of a dedicated application for a change in scope of accreditation due to a "substantive change"
- Summary of updates to Regents Rules and related policies



Link to access full text of Regents Rules, Subpart 4-1:

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/lrp/rules.htm>

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Highlights of Changes to Regents Rules *Effective June 13, 2012*

- Established definitions for “distance education” and “teach-out plan.”
- Requires processes to verify that distance education students are the same as those who complete the work...requires processes to protect student privacy.
- Provisions for teach-out agreements were amended to incorporate teach-out plans.
- Institutions must publish the process and criteria for accepting transfer of credit from other institutions.

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Highlights of Changes to Regents Rules *(effective June 13, 2012)* *Continued*

- Appeal of adverse accreditation actions: added detail to allow for the consideration of new financial information.
- Added types of actions that constitute a “substantive change” at an institution.



For details of all changes, see the associated Regents item:

[www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/May2012/512brca4.pdf](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/May2012/512brca4.pdf)

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Highlights of Changes to Regents Rules *Effective July 3, 2013*

- Defined “representative of the public.”
- Established the institutional accreditation appeals board.
- Defined the maximum term of extension (12 months) for corrective action periods.
- Requires Regents prior approval of a substantive change in scope of accreditation...specifies that appeals of denials of a change in scope are heard by the accreditation appeals board... clarifies that a substantive change is not retroactive.

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Highlights of Changes to Regents Rules *(effective July 3, 2013)*

*Continued*

- Refined provisions for teach-out plans and agreements.
- Amended transfer-of-credit requirements to mirror Federal standards.
- Updated existing provisions re consideration of new financial information.



For details of all changes, see the associated Regents item:

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/613brca4.pdf>

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Highlights of Changes to Regents Rules *(effective March 9, 2016)*

- Removed outdated references to reporting.
- Made technical revisions to clarify steps in the accreditation process and the basis on which accreditation recommendations and actions are made.
- Clarified details for appealing an adverse or probationary action.



For details of all changes, see the associated Regents item:

[www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/216brca2.pdf](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/216brca2.pdf)

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Highlights: Updates to Related Accreditation Policies

*These policies supplement provisions of Subpart 4-1 of the Rules of the Board of Regents*

- **Student Achievement Benchmarks**

In consideration of standards described under section 4-1.4(b) of Regents Rules, information needed to assess compliance with student achievement benchmarks (such as graduation rates) may be accessed through such resources as State data available at

<http://eservices.nysed.gov/orisre/NYStotalParams.jsp>





# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Updates to Related Institutional Accreditation Policies

continued

- Policy on Significant Enrollment Growth

The agency **will** request additional reporting from institutions that exceed a 20 percent growth in headcount enrollment in a single institutional academic year (July 1 through June 30). The agency **may** request additional reporting when the rate of enrollment growth may affect the institution's capacity to comply with accreditation standards.



# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Updates to Related Institutional Accreditation Policies

continued

- **Policy on Significant Enrollment Growth** *continued*  
Additional reporting may include, but is not limited to, self-analyses of the growth and its effects on the institution; agency reviews of the institution's financial viability; agency assessment of concomitant growth in faculty, administrative, and other resources; and a compliance review.
- **Special provisions for distance education:** If an institution whose scope of accreditation includes distance education experiences an increase in headcount enrollment of 50 percent or more within one institutional fiscal year, the agency will report that information to the Secretary within 30 days of acquiring such data.

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Updates to Related Institutional Accreditation Policies

continued

### Other Policy Updates

- Public comment process
- Teach-out plans and closed institutions
- Review of complaints
- Notifications of accreditation actions
- Information provided to the U.S. Secretary of Education
- Actions taken by other states and accreditation agencies



For complete policies, see the Accreditation Handbook at

[www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/accred/accred-forinstitutions.htm](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/accred/accred-forinstitutions.htm)

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

- Section 4-1.5(d) of Regents Rules defines actions that require a change in the scope of an institution's accreditation. It also describes the process for considering such substantive changes.

### What Constitutes a Substantive Change?

- 1) any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution;
- 2) any change in the legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution;

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### What Constitutes a Substantive Change?

- 3) the addition of courses or programs of study at a degree level different from that which is included in the institution's current accreditation;
- 4) a change from clock hours to credit hours;
- 5) a substantial increase in the number of clock hours or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program;
- 6) the addition of courses or programs that are a significant departure from the existing offerings, or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the department last evaluated the institution for accreditation;

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### What Constitutes a Substantive Change? *continued*

- 7) the establishment of an additional location or branch campus, as such terms are defined in section 4-1.2 of Regents Rules;
- 8) if the accreditation granted to the institution enables the institution to seek eligibility to participate in title IV, HEA programs, the entering into a contractual agreement with an entity not certified to participate in title IV, HEA programs, that offers more than 25 percent of one or more of the institution's program of study;

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### What Constitutes a Substantive Change? *continued*

- 9) the establishment of an additional location at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program;
- 10) the acquisition of any other institution or any program or location of another institution; or
- 11) the addition of a permanent location at a site at which the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### Substantive Change Process

- A Regents-accredited institution that initiates a substantive change is required to apply to the agency for a change in the scope of its accreditation.

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/accred/accred-forinstitutions.htm>

- *State authorizations must occur first.* "State authorization" encompasses the State institutional authorization and program registration requirements under which NY institutions of higher education operate, regardless of institutional accreditation status. Any required State authorizations/registrations must occur BEFORE Regents institutional accreditation actions.



# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### Substantive Change Process



State authorization and program registration actions do ***not*** constitute notification or application for a change in scope of institutional accreditation. State authorization and Regents institutional accreditation process are separate and distinct, in keeping with Federal requirements.

***No Retroactive Approvals:*** The effective date of any substantive change is the date the Commissioner and Board of Regents approve the substantive change.

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### Substantive Change Process

- The agency **may** conduct a site visit in connection with the review of any proposed substantive change.
- Site visits are **required** to establish branch campuses; additional locations; and changes in ownership that effect a change in control of the institution.
- In addition, the Department may conduct a review (as defined under section 4-1.5 of Regents Rules) at its discretion for good cause based on (but not limited to) information provided in an application for a change in scope of accreditation;

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### Substantive Change Process

*The Department may conduct a review at its discretion for good cause based on (but not limited to)...*

- significant growth at the institution;
- complaints relating to the institution's compliance with state or accreditation standards;
- adverse or probationary actions taken by other recognized accrediting agencies;
- federal or state financial aid audits, reviews, or actions;
- loss of financial viability;

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### Substantive Change Process

*The Department may conduct a comprehensive review or a compliance review at its discretion for good cause based on (but not limited to)...*

- loss of state approval;
- inadequate student performance;
- and/or other developments that suggest the basis for the institution's previous recognition may no longer provide evidence of the institution's capacity to comply with accreditation standards.

# 2017 Institutional Accreditation Training Series

## Changes in Scope of Accreditation—Substantive Change

*continued*

### Substantive Change Process

- *Application content:* should focus on demonstrating that the proposed change does not adversely affect the institution's capacity to meet accreditation standards.
- Institutions may respond to the draft substantive change report.
- The Commissioner and Board of Regents make the determination concerning approval or disapproval of the application for a change in the scope of accreditation.

---

# Definition of Distance Education

## § 4-1.2(p)

(p) ***Distance education*** means education that uses ***one or more of the following technologies*** to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and ***to support regular and substantive interaction*** between the students and the instructor, either ***synchronously or asynchronously***:

(1) the internet;

(2) one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;

(3) audioconferencing; or

(4) video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subdivision.

---

# Standard: Institutional Mission §4-1.4(a)

- The institution has ***a clear statement of purpose, mission, and goals*** that is reflected in the policies, practices, and outcomes

***Example of compliance:*** If the institution offers distance education courses or programs, the institution's distance learning activity is consistent with the institutional mission.



---

# Examples of Compliance: Programs of Study §4-1.4(c)

- Integrity of credit

(iii) The institution, in offering coursework through distance education or correspondence education, ***must have processes in place to verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student*** who participates in and completes the course and receives the academic credit for the course, using methods that may include but are not limited to a secure login and pass code; proctored examinations; and other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identity. Institutions must also use ***processes that protect student privacy*** and notify students of any projected ***additional student charges*** associated with the verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

---



---

# Examples of Compliance:

## Programs of Study §4-1.4(c)

- Distance learning courses and programs are ***expected to produce the same learning outcomes*** as comparable classroom-based programs.
- The policies and procedures for the verification of student identity in distance education courses are ***adequate and effective***.
- The processes used ***protect student privacy*** are judged to be effective and adequate.
- ***Charges associated with the verification of student identity are clearly identified in publications*** and presented to students at the time of registration or enrollment.
- The ***same academic standards*** and requirements are applied to programs offered on campus and through distance learning.

---

# Examples of Compliance:

## Faculty §4-1.4(d)

- If the institution offers distance education courses or programs, the institution recognizes that ***teaching in the distance learning environment requires different pedagogical and communication strategies*** to function effectively.
- The institution has developed and implemented a process for ***sustaining faculty professional development in distance learning.***

# Examples of Compliance: Resources §4-1.4(e)

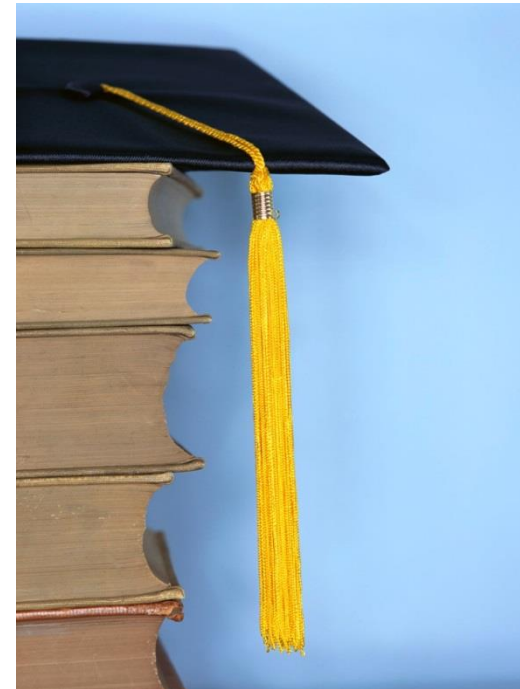
- The institution has ***committed sufficient resources to its distance learning programs*** and services to ensure their effectiveness.
- The institution has in place ***a comprehensive, viable technology plan*** for distance learning.
- The institution ***provides adequate library and information resources***, services and support for academic programs, including training on information literacy. These resources and services are ***accessible at a distance*** on a timely basis.



# Examples of Compliance: Administration

## § 4-1.4(f)

- The institution has clearly identified **a single office or officer with responsibility for assuring the quality of all distance education** across the institution.
- The institution **ensures the administration of its distance learning programs by knowledgeable personnel** with adequate time and resources to accomplish this task.



---

## Example of Compliance:

### Support Services § 4-1.4(g)

The institution provides distance learners with ***adequate academic support***, including academic advisement, technical support, and other student support services normally available on campus.

## Example of Compliance: Admissions

### § 4-1.4(h)

The ***admissions and registration processes are readily accessible to distance students***, and materials clearly describe how access is obtained.

---

---

# Examples of Compliance: Consumer Information § 4-1.4(i)

- Distance ed courses/programs **are clearly and accurately represented** and include the nature of the learning experience, program and faculty responsibilities, the nature of interaction opportunities, techniques and requirements.
- Materials describing distance ed courses/programs define any specific student background, knowledge, and **skills needed to undertake distance ed courses**, and list required and recommended technical equipment and software.

---

# Institutional Accreditation Training and Updates 2017

---



*Thank you!*

Direct questions to:  
[accreditor@nysed.gov](mailto:accreditor@nysed.gov)