



Illinois Board of Higher Education

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Information for Institutions of Higher Education On How to Obtain Operating or Degree-Granting Authority

www.ibhe.org

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Please note that nothing contained within this document may be construed as "legal advice" from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, its Staff or its Legal Counsel. Some of the material found here has been condensed from statutes, regulations, court decisions, policies of the State of Illinois and of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and other sources. Users should always consult with appropriate licensed counsel if specific legal or factual issues are involved. The materials here are presented for informational purposes only.

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Introduction

This manual is designed to be used in conjunction with Illinois Administrative Code, Title 23, Ch. II, Sec. 1030 and 1050. This manual is intended to assist institutions in compliance with the Administrative Code. At any time the materials presented in this manual appear in conflict with either the Administrative Code or Compiled Statutes, the manual is superseded.

Definitions

AA: Associate in Arts/Associate of Arts

AAS: Associate in Applied Science/Associate of Applied Science

Accreditation: The process used to ensure education providers meet and maintain minimum standards of quality and integrity regarding academics, administration, and related services. Postsecondary accreditation is a voluntary process undertaken by associations of higher education institutions. Accreditation is either programmatic or institutional and either national or regional. The IBHE recognizes the U.S. Department of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation lists of recognized accrediting organizations.

1. IHEs applying for authorization to operate in Illinois must specify their accreditation status. New IHEs without accreditation from an accrediting authority recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation shall provide a clearly defined plan to move from candidate to affiliate status. The plan should include the name of the accrediting organization, the basic outline of the accreditation process, and the projected timeline for obtaining affiliate status within five years of the date of IBHE approval to operate.

Accreditation and Licensure Requirements: IHEs applying for authorization to operate in Illinois must specify their accreditation status.

1. IHE's must achieve affiliation status from an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation within 5 years of being granted IBHE operating authority.
2. Degree programs for which specialized accreditation is a requirement for the licensure or certification of graduates must achieve affiliation status from an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation within 5 years of being granted IBHE degree-granting authority.
3. Proposed programs must provide the skills required to obtain individual credentialing (certification, licensure, registration) needed for entry into an occupation as specified in the objectives of the proposed program.
4. When credentialing examinations are required for entry into an occupation as specified in the objectives of the proposed program, completion of the program must entitle the completer to sit for the examination.

Admission Requirements: A comprehensive listing of both objective and subjective criteria for consideration and admission to an institution and its programs.

AES: Associate in Engineering Science/Associate of Engineering Science

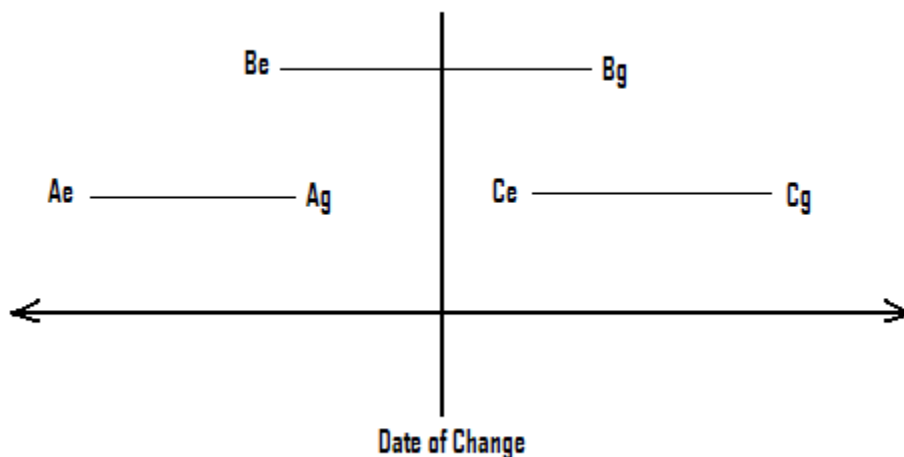
AFA: Associate in Fine Arts/Associate of Fine Arts

AGS: Associate in General Studies

Applicant: An IHE that has formally applied for operating or degree-granting authority with the IBHE.

Application: Process by which to seek approval to operate and/or grant degrees in Illinois, inclusive of the Notice of Intent, Application for Operating Authority, and Application for Degree-Granting Authority and all required documentation.

Application of changes to institutional or program name or designation: Requests to change the name or designation of an IHE or a program must be made in accordance with the guidelines found under Notification of Changes for Independent Colleges and Universities below. The change can be applied only upon receipt of approval from the Board. The graphic below demonstrates how such changes may be applied. The graphic indicates three students (A, B, and C) and their enrollment and graduation dates relative to the date of change. Student A enrolled and graduated prior to the date of change. The change cannot be applied to student A's record. Student C enrolled and graduated after the date of change. The change must be applied to student C's record. Student B enrolled prior to the date of change and graduated after the date of change. It is an institutional decision as to whether the change is applied in such cases. However, this decision must be applied to all such student, and not on a case-by-case basis. Institutions must inform the Board staff of their policy in applying the change under the student C situation.



Articulation: Process by which credits earned at one IHE are applied by another IHE.

Assessment of Student Outcomes: Assessment techniques involving the gathering of data through systematic observation of a behavior or process and evaluating that data based on a clearly articulated set of performance criteria to serve as the basis for evaluative judgments. Typical techniques include but are not limited to assignments, examinations, end of program projects/exams, and portfolio reviews.

Associate Degree: An award requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least two, but less than 4, years of full-time academic study; or more than 60, but less than 120, semester credit hours.

Baccalaureate Degree Completion Program: An organized program of study offered by a baccalaureate degree-granting institution in cooperation with an associate degree-granting institution and generally on the associate degree-granting institution's campus to provide the upper-division coursework needed to complete a bachelor degree. An IHE seeking approval to offer a baccalaureate degree completion program must already have authority to offer the equivalent bachelor degree in their home region.

Bachelor Degree: An award requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least 4, but not more than 5, years of full-time academic study, with at least 120, but less than 150, semester credit hours.

Board: Illinois Board of Higher Education

Catalog: Each IHE will annually provide the IBHE staff with a current catalog that meets the Publications and Information criteria outlined below.

Certificate of Approval: Letter from the IBHE giving an IHE approval to operate or grant degrees.

College: The term “college” should be employed in the name of an institution of higher education that provides degree instruction at the associate, baccalaureate, or graduate levels.

Credit Hour: A measure of academic credit earned for completion of a course or program of study. Since most Illinois institutions currently utilize semester credit hours, the IBHE generally uses “semester credit hours or the equivalent” to define requirements. One semester credit hour is operationalized as 15 contact hours per term. Equivalencies are based on this general measure (see “Semester Credit Hour” and “Quarter Credit Hour”).

Criteria for Approval: Criteria designed to measure the merits of an application for operating or degree-granting authority.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (G.P.A.): The average of a student’s earned grades calculated by point values assigned to letter grades that includes grades for all attempted regularly-graded coursework, including activity courses and forgiven coursework. This GPA may be used for financial aid or eligibility purposes; admission, retention, or graduation decisions; or to determine eligibility for graduation honors.

Curriculum: A sequentially organized series of educational experiences designed to culminate in the awarding of an academic degree or certificate.

Degree: An academic credential conferred by a postsecondary institution as official recognition for the successful completion of an organized program of study; any designation, appellation, series of letters or words, or other symbol that signifies or purports to signify the recipient has satisfactorily completed an organized academic program of study beyond the secondary school level.

Degree-Granting Authority: Board approved authority to grant specific degrees within the region of approval.

Diploma: An academic credential conferred by a postsecondary institution as official recognition for the successful completion of an instruction program that does not lead to a degree.

Distance Education: A planned learning experience in which the student and the teacher are located at a distance and instruction requires mediation. Distance Education requires special techniques of course design, instruction, and administration.

Doctorate – Professional Practice: An award requiring completion of an organized program of study that meets all of the following criteria: (1) completion of the academic requirements to begin practice in the profession; (2) at least 60 semester hours of postsecondary credit required for admission to the program; and (3) a total of at least six academic years of college work to complete the degree program, including prior required postsecondary work plus the length of the professional program itself.

Doctorate – Research and Scholarship: The highest award a student can earn for graduate study. An award requiring completion of an organized program of study beyond the master degree and representing the highest level of study in a discipline and resulting in the creation of new knowledge through research and scholarship.

Elective Courses: Credits required for graduation that do not represent specific course requirements in the Course of Study.

Elimination of a program: An IHE may choose to eliminate a program at any time and for any reason deemed appropriate under the policies of the institution. When a program is eliminated, it is removed from the IBHE Program Inventory, no students may be admitted, and no degrees may be awarded.

Enrollment Agreement: A contractual agreement between the institution and the student outlining admission, retention, and graduation requirements. The contract must provide consumer information including, but not limited to: institutional calendars with degree program start and end dates; an explanation of all criteria and requirements for retention, progress toward degree, and graduation of the student; the institution's tuition, cancellation, and refund policies; and a statement of the purpose and amount of any fees assessed.

Entry Level Assessment and Placement: An evaluation conducted prior to enrollment that assists institutional faculty and administrators in making decisions that give students the best possible chance of success in attaining academic goals.

Experiential Learning/Credit: Learning attained outside the sponsorship of legally authorized and accredited postsecondary institutions. The term applies to learning acquired from work and life experiences, independent reading and study, the mass media, and participation in formal courses sponsored by associations, business, government, industry, the military, and unions.

Faculty: Any individual or group of individuals providing instruction, supervising curricular experiences, or evaluating experiential learning for credit. Qualified faculty consists of people who, by formal education and tested experience, know what students must learn.

1. The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff ensure students receive an education consistent with the objectives of the unit of instruction.
2. The involvement of faculty in the unit of instruction is sufficient to cover the various fields of knowledge encompassed by the curriculum, to sustain scholarship appropriate to the unit of instruction, and to ensure curriculum continuity.
3. Faculty should have completed a degree in the discipline they will teach or for which they will develop curricula at least one level above that of the courses being taught or developed.
 - a. Faculty teaching in terminal undergraduate programs should hold at a minimum the appropriate terminal degree determined by the discipline and demonstrate tested experience in the field.
 - b. Faculty teaching in undergraduate programs should hold a degree at least one level above that of the program in which they are teaching.
 - c. Faculty teaching general education courses should hold a masters degree or higher in the field of instruction.
 - d. Faculty teaching graduate programs should hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline.
 - e. Faculty overseeing doctoral education should demonstrate an understanding of research methodology appropriate to the program and degree.

- f. In a limited number of cases, such as practice-oriented disciplines or programs, tested experience in the field may be needed as much or more than formal educational preparation at a prescribed level.

Fall Semester: An academic term that begins in August or September and ends in December or January. Although IHEs are free to structure their academic terms to meet the needs of their students, reporting requirements often align with the traditional Fall/Spring semester model.

First Professional Certificate: An award requiring completion of an organized program of study designed for persons who have completed the Doctorate – Professional Practice degree.

First-Time/Full-Time Student: A student who enrolls for the first time in any recognized higher education institution at a full-time level (generally 12-15 semester credit hours). This excludes credit hours accumulated by Advance Placement and concurrent or dual enrollment prior to high school graduation.

Fiscal Resources: The financial commitments needed to support the unit of instruction.

1. The financial commitments to support the unit of instruction must be sufficient to ensure the stated objectives can be attained and the faculty, staff, and support services necessary to offer the unit of instruction can be acquired and maintained.
2. Projections of revenues necessary to support the unit of instruction must be based upon supportable estimates of general revenue, student tuition and fees, private gifts, and/or governmental grants and contracts.

For-Profit: Also known as “proprietary”; For-Profit IHEs are legally constituted entities whose primary objective is to actively engage in providing postsecondary education for commercial or monetary profit purposes. Illinois independent institutions may be either Not-for-Profit or For-Profit.

Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTE): The workload of a hypothetical student taking 15 semester credits or its equivalent per semester. Raw headcounts overstate instructional workload because many students attend part-time. To arrive at a better measure of workload, headcount enrollments are converted to FTE. To arrive at student FTE, headcount enrollment is adjusted for the number of units students actually take. For budget purposes, FTE should be used instead of headcount enrollments.

Full-Time Student: For the purpose of applications for degree-granting authority, a full-time student is one enrolled in a minimum of 12 semester credit hours per semester in an academic year or a minimum of 6 semester credit hours in a summer session. A full-time graduate student is one enrolled in a minimum of 6 semester credit hours per semester in an academic year or a minimum of 4 semester credit hours in a summer session. Quarter hour equivalents apply.

GECC: General Education Core Curriculum; the 37-41 semester credit hour general education component of the Illinois Articulation Initiative. Details may be found at www.iTransfer.org/IAI.

General Education: A standard curriculum required in all undergraduate programs. The general education curriculum provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines and emphasizes the learning of facts, values, understandings, skills, attitudes, and appreciations believed to be meaningful concerns that are common to all students by virtue of their involvement as human beings living in a global society.

Each associate degree curriculum must include a specific general education component consisting of coursework in communication, mathematics, social and behavioral sciences, life and physical sciences (must include a laboratory component), and humanities and fine arts within the following parameters:

1. Associate in Arts and Associate in Science: the general education component required will represent at least 37 semester credit hours or the quarter-hour equivalent for completion.
2. Associate in Applied Science: the general education component required will represent at least 15 semester credit hours or the quarter-hour equivalent for completion.
3. Associate in Fine Arts (statewide model): the general education component required will represent at least 25 semester credit hours or the quarter-hour equivalent for completion.
4. Associate in Engineering Science (statewide model): the general education component required will represent at least 19 semester credit hours or the quarter-hour equivalent for completion.
5. Associate in General Studies: the general education component required will represent at least 20 semester credit hours or the quarter-hour equivalent for completion.

Each baccalaureate degree curriculum must include a specific general education component consisting of at least 37 semester credit hours of coursework in communication, mathematics, social and behavioral sciences, life and physical sciences (must include a laboratory component), and humanities and fine arts.

General Education Development Test (GED): Recognized high school diploma equivalency exam.

Grandfathered: A term sometimes applied to statutory exemptions or to the IHEs that are exempted by statute.

Headcount: The headcount enrollment is the number of students who are registered during a defined period of time.

Higher Education Region: There are ten Board-approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts.

Home Campus: Home campus is also known as “in-region”. In-region is defined as the approval region within which an institution’s original operating authority was granted. There are ten IBHE approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts.

Honorary Degree: Degree awarded upon an individual who has made outstanding contributions to society through intellectual, artistic, scientific, professional, or public service accomplishments. The following criteria shall guide institutions in selection of individuals to receive honorary degrees and in the awarding of such degrees.

1. An institution shall confer honorary degrees only at the highest level for which it is authorized to award earned degrees.
2. Any such honorary degree conferred shall be distinguishable from earned degrees.
3. Institutions desiring to confer honorary degrees shall do so only after receiving approval from the IBHE based upon a written request setting forth the proposed honorary degrees to be awarded, the criteria by which the recipients are to be selected, and the format of the diploma or certificate to be awarded.
4. Institutions may confer a number of honorary degrees not to exceed five during any fiscal year. During any five-year period, the number of such awards may not exceed a ratio of one honorary degree to each one thousand earned degrees conferred by the institution during the same period.
5. Institutions shall not confer honorary degrees upon any faculty member, administrator, or other official associated with the institution until such individuals have been separated from the institution for two or more academic semesters.

6. Institutions shall not confer honorary degrees based upon quid pro quo arrangements, either for contributions promised or received, or for any other mutually beneficial arrangement between the institution or an official of the awarding institution and the recipient.

IAI: The Illinois Articulation Initiative; an agreement among some 100 Illinois IHEs intended to foster seamless transfer among participating institutions. Details may be found at www.iTransfer.org.

IBHE: Illinois Board of Higher Education

IHE: Institution of Higher Education

Illinois Articulation Initiative: The Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI); an agreement among some 100 Illinois IHEs intended to foster seamless transfer among participating institutions. Details may be found at www.iTransfer.org.

In-Region: In-region is also known as “home campus”. In-region is defined as the approval region within which an institution’s original operating authority was granted. There are ten IBHE approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts.

Independent Institution of Higher Education: A private, denominational, or other non-public postsecondary degree-granting college or university

Institution of Higher Education (IHE): Postsecondary degree-granting college or university.

Internships/Apprenticeships: An institution that participates in internships or apprenticeships or other programs related to business, industrial, or trade groups or organizations shall meet applicable federal, state, and local governmental rules, regulation, and guidelines.

Liberal Studies degrees: Liberal Studies degrees are generally designed to allow for baccalaureate degree completion in non-traditional circumstances. The IBHE is extremely conservative in approving such degrees and generally will do so only when the preponderance of evidence suggests both a serious need and a sufficiently-diverse and qualified faculty able to serve the degree.

Library Resources: Each IHE shall maintain a library or learning resource center with a collection of reference works and other learning resources adequate to meet the specific needs of its curricula and students. This collection shall be kept up to date through a planned program of acquisition and deletion.

Limited Physical Presence: Any public or private person, group of persons, partnership or corporation that is located outside of the state of Illinois which is or contemplates offering instruction in Illinois above the high school level is not required under either the 1945 Act or the 1961 Act to obtain a certificate of approval or operating or degree authorization if such institution has a limited physical presence in the state. No such institution shall be considered to have limited physical presence for any geographic location and program in Illinois unless it has received a written finding from the Board that it has such a limited physical presence. In determining whether an institution has a limited physical presence the Board shall require the following:

- A) Evidence of authorization to operate in at least one other state; and
- B) Evidence of accreditation by a body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and/or the Council for Higher Accreditation; and
- C) Evidence that the institution will offer ten percent or less of coursework, as measured by academic credits, for a degree program in the State of Illinois, or evidence that the institution is

offering degrees through one hundred percent asynchronous on-line instruction from an out-of-state site or sites; and

- D) Evidence that the institution is not providing core academic support services, including but not limited to admissions, evaluation, assessment, registration, financial aid, academic scheduling, and faculty hiring and support, in the State of Illinois.

Lower-Division Coursework: Courses generally taken in the freshman and sophomore year. Although numbering systems vary from institution to institution, lower division courses are generally identified with a number beginning with 1 or 2 (i.e., 101, 1000, 201).

Master Degree: An award requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least one, but no more than two, full-time academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree and consisting of at least 30, but less than 60, semester credit hours.

Mediated Instruction: The delivery of instruction at a distance facilitated by technology, such as via teleconferencing, video-conferencing, or internet instruction. Mediate instruction may be either synchronous or asynchronous. IHEs may provide mediated instruction as part of an approved program when such mediated instruction does not constitute a physical presence. For this purpose, the gathering together of students in one location for synchronous delivery of mediated instruction may be exceptions to the physical presence rules. IHEs wishing to provide mediated instruction should provide the Board staff with a detailed plan so that a decision may be reached as to application and/or reporting requirements.

Need: The programs or units of instruction proposed by public institutions must be educationally and economically justified based on the educational priorities and needs of the citizens of Illinois and the Higher Education Region.

NEPR: New Educational Program Request; replaced by the Application for Degree-Granting Authority.

New Campus: A new site that houses a range of instructional, administrative, and support services is considered a new campus and requires authority to operate from the IBHE. If an IHE decides to open a new facility, regardless of the proximity to existing, authorized facilities, and the new facility provides instructional, administrative, and support services, the IHE must apply for new operating authority from the IBHE. IHEs planning to open a new facility should provide the Board staff with a detailed plan so that a decision may be reached as to application and/or reporting requirements.

New Location: A "new location" is defined as a site that is out-of-region. Out-of-region sites are those located outside of the region within which an institution's original operating authority was granted. Approval to grant a degree within a new approval region entitles an institution to do so throughout the region, and not solely at the site for which the institution initially applied. However, if the IHE wishes to establish a new facility, operating authority may be required (see also New Campus).

New Unit of Instruction: One or more of the following:

1. Any new organized program of study beyond the secondary level that results in the formal award of a degree to a student.
2. Any organized program of study beyond the secondary level that is offered in a new region and results in the award to a student of a degree for which the IHE already has authority to offer elsewhere.
3. Any new formally organized administrative entity that would have a continuing instructional mission, including but not limited to a campus, branch, college, school, department or division.

New Unit of Public Service: Any new formally organized administrative entity that would have a continuing public service mission, including but not limited to a school, department, division, institute or center.

New Unit of Research: Any new formally organized administrative entity that would have a continuing research mission, including but not limited to a school, department, division, institute, or center.

Not-for-Profit (NFP): Also known as “nonprofit”, Not-for-Profit IHEs are legally constituted entities whose primary objective is to actively engage in providing postsecondary education without any commercial or monetary profit purposes. Illinois independent institutions may be either Not-for-Profit or For-Profit.

NOI: Notice of Intent

Notice of Intent (NOI): Provides public notice that an institution is planning to apply for operating and/or degree granting authority. Such notices are published by the Board for no less than 30 days prior to any action by the Board on the related application. NOIs are valid for one calendar year from the date of submission to the Board.

Operating Authority: Approval from the IBHE to operate within a specific region of approval. Operating authority allows an IHE to conduct higher education business, but does not include authority to offer or grant degrees.

Operating Authority Only: Out-of-State IHEs may request operating authority for the purpose of providing services in Illinois as part of a unit of instruction, research or public service for which they have authority to grant degrees in their home state and for which they will provide no instruction in Illinois. Institutions with a limited physical presence may be exempted from requiring IBHE operating authority.

Operating and Degree-Granting Authority: A private person, group of persons, partnership or corporation contemplating offering degrees or instruction in Illinois above the high school level, either in residence or correspondence, that is not authorized to offer degrees or instruction by the IBHE must request authority to operate and to grant no less than one postsecondary degree. An Illinois institution is granted operating authority for the entire state. However, degree-granting authority is granted within the framework of 10 higher education regions. In order to reconcile statewide operating authority with regional degree-granting authority, the IBHE adheres to a policy that demarcates the offering of a degree at 10% of the credit requirements. In other words, an independent Illinois institution that has operating authority may offer courses in any location across the state without express IBHE approval so long as the aggregate of courses does not constitute 10% or more of a degree program. All such offerings must be reported to the IBHE.

Public Universities: When the Illinois public universities were created by the Illinois General Assembly, each institution was granted operating authority for the entire state. Since this operating authority predates the IBHE, it is considered “grandfathered” under current statutes regulating higher education in Illinois. The IBHE has statutory authority to approve new degree programs proposed by Illinois institutions and does this within the framework of 10 higher education regions. In order to reconcile statewide operating authority with regional degree-granting authority, the IBHE adheres to a policy that demarcates the offering of a degree at 50% of the credit requirements. In other words, an Illinois public university may offer courses in any location across the state without express IBHE approval so long as the aggregate of courses does not constitute 50% or more of a degree program.

Orientation: Mandatory training for institutional representatives seeking to apply for operating and/or degree-granting authority from the IBHE for the first time.

Out-of-Region: Out-of-region is also known as “new location”. Out-of-region sites are those located outside of the region within which an IHE’s original operating authority was granted. There are ten Board approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts. Approval to grant degrees within a new approval region entitles an IHE to grant degrees throughout that region, and not solely at the site at which the IHE initially applied. However, if the IHE wishes to establish a new facility, operating authority may be required (see also New Campus).

Out-of-State Institutions: A private person, group of persons, partnership or corporation that is authorized to offer degrees or instruction above the high school level, either in residence or correspondence, by at least one state other than Illinois.

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate: An award requiring completion of an organized program of study requiring 18 semester credit hours beyond the bachelor degree and is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree, but does not meet the requirements of academic degree carrying the title of “Master”.

Posthumous Degree: Nonacademic degree awarded to a deceased student who may not have completed all requirements for graduation. Posthumous degrees must clearly be indicated as such on any and all documentation.

Post-Master Certificate: An award requiring completion of an organized program of study requiring 24 semester credit hours beyond the master degree and is designed for persons who have completed a master degree, but does not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctor’s level.

Program Assessment: Each IHE shall have a systematic, institution-wide program review process for evaluating all instructional, student services, and academic support programs. Program assessments of the effectiveness of an educational degree program usually encompass student learning, faculty research, scholarship, service, and assessment resources.

Program Information: The information the IHE provides to students and the public should accurately describe:

1. The unit of instruction offered
2. The objectives of the unit of instruction
3. Length of the unit of instruction
4. Residency requirements, if any
5. Schedule of tuition, fees, and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the unit of instruction
6. Cancellation and refund policies
7. Other material facts concerning the institution and the unit of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll

Program of Study: See “Curriculum”.

Program Phase Down: An IHE may choose to place a program on phase down status when enrollments are deemed insufficient to maintain the program. Under the phase down status, no new students may be admitted to the program. Once the program reaches zero enrollments, the program is eliminated.

Proposed Program: Academic program being submitted by an applicant seeking degree-granting authority.

Proprietary: Also known as “for-profit”; For-Profit IHEs are legally constituted entities whose primary objective is to actively engage in providing postsecondary education for commercial or monetary profit purposes. Illinois independent institutions may be either Not-for-Profit or For-Profit.

Quarter Credit Hour: A measure of academic credit earned for completion of a course or program of study. Since most Illinois institutions currently utilize semester credit hours, the IBHE generally uses “semester credit hours or the equivalent” to define requirements. One semester credit hour is operationalized as 15 contact hours per term. Equivalencies are based on this general measure. One quarter credit hour is equivalent to 0.67 semester credit hours. Conversely, one semester credit hour is equivalent to 1.5 quarter credit hours.

Reasonable and Moderate Extension (RME): An approved unit of instruction, public service, or research may be modified by a public university within parameters indicated in the Table Definitions for New Programs and Reasonable and Moderate Extension.

Recognized National Accrediting Organization: An accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation as a reliable authority as to the quality of higher education institutions.

Regional Accrediting Agency: A nationally-recognized accrediting agency whose geographic scope has been defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Each regional accrediting agency (regional accreditor) is a voluntary non-governmental organization that establishes criteria for educational quality. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities accredits institutions in Illinois.

Remedial/Developmental Courses: Zero-level courses that do not carry college credit and are designed to raise students’ competency in the subject area to the collegiate level. Such courses may not be used to fulfill graduation requirements.

Semester Credit Hour: A measure of academic credit earned for completion of a course or program of study. One semester credit hour is generally earned for 15 contact hours per term. Each contact hour is expected to require three hours of additional work outside the classroom for preparation and assignments (see “Credit Hour” and “Quarter Credit Hour”).

Staff: All employees of the IHE with the exception of faculty. Support personnel, including counselors, administrators, clinical supervisors, and technical staff, must possess and demonstrate the educational background and experience necessary to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

Support Services: Facilities, equipment, and instructional resources (e.g., laboratory supplies and equipment, instructional materials, computation equipment) necessary to provide quality instruction; library holdings and acquisitions necessary to support quality instruction and scholarship; and provisions for the guidance and counseling of students, the evaluation of student performance, the continuous monitoring of progress of students toward the degree or certificate objectives, the placement of graduates, and appropriate academic record-keeping.

Temporary Out-of-Region Degree-Granting Authority: Upon notification to the Board staff, public colleges and universities may offer temporary programs meeting the following criteria:

1. The unit of instruction is approved for offering in-region and the academic standards of the in-region unit are maintained at the out-of-region site;
2. The out-of-region unit of instruction is offered under contract to a single business, service organization, or government agency, and enrollment is restricted to employees of the contracting business, organization or agency;

3. The contractual arrangement assures that the out-of-region unit of instruction is self-supporting; that is, no State resources are required to support it; and
4. The out-of-region unit of instruction is offered to a single group of entering students for a single cycle not to exceed three years.

Temporary Suspension of a Program: An IHE may elect to place a program on temporary suspension when enrollments are insufficient to maintain the program. Temporary suspension status reporting requirements do not supersede new program review and reporting requirements.

1. Temporary suspension status will be indicated in the IBHE Program Inventory.
2. The IHE may request the IBHE remove the program from temporary suspension status at any time enrollments are deemed sufficient to maintain the program.
3. Temporary suspension status may be maintained for no more than 5 years.
4. On the five-year anniversary of temporary status, the program status will be indicated as Expired in the IBHE program inventory.
5. IHEs seeking to offer a program indicated as Expired in the IBHE inventory must apply for new degree-granting authority.

Undergraduate Certificate (1-2 years): A postsecondary award, certificate or diploma requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least one, but less than two, full-time equivalent academic years; or designed for completion in at least 30, but less than 60, semester credit hours, or in at least 900, but less than 1800, contact hours.

Undergraduate Certificate (2-4 years): A postsecondary award, certificate or diploma, requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least two, but less than four, full-time academic years; or designed for completion in at least 60, but less than 120, semester credit hours, or in at least 1800, but less than 3600, contact hours.

University: The term “university” should only be used in the name of an institution of higher education when the institutional structure includes two or more distinct colleges (i.e., College of Business, College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences) providing instruction at the baccalaureate and graduate levels, and is involved in public service activities, scholarship, and research.

Upper-Division Coursework: Courses generally taken in the junior and senior year. Although numbering systems vary from institution to institution, upper division courses are generally not identified with a number beginning with 0 or 1 (i.e., 091, 101, 1000).

Withdrawal of Application: At any time during the process, the applicant may withdraw its application.

Procedures for Obtaining Operating or Degree-Granting Authority

Institutions requiring approval

Public Institutions – Any campus under the governance or supervision of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University, the Board of Trustees of Chicago State University, the Board of Trustees of Eastern Illinois University, the Board of Trustees of Governors State University, the Board of Trustees of Illinois State University, the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University, the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University, the Board of Trustees of Western Illinois University, or the Illinois Community College Board must receive Illinois Board of Higher Education approval prior to the establishment of any new unit of instruction, research or public service.

Independent Institutions

Institutions requiring approval under the 1945 act: any private person, group of persons, partnership or corporation which is or contemplates offering degrees and instruction in Illinois above the high school level, either in residence or correspondence. Such institutions include:

1. Institutions which were not established and offering degrees in Illinois prior to July 17, 1945; or
2. Institutions which result from a merger of other institutions, whether or not the merged institutions were in existence prior to July 17, 1945; or
3. Institutions which offer a majority of coursework, as measured by academic credits, for a degree program out-of-region, whether or not the institution was in existence prior to July 17, 1945; or
4. Institutions which have terminated operation and subsequently wish to resume operations as degree-granting institutions, whether or not the former institution was in existence prior to July 17, 1945. An institution that continues to exist, but ceases to enroll students, is considered to have terminated operations.

Institutions requiring approval under the 1961 act. Any private or public person, group of persons, partnership or corporation that is or contemplates offering degrees and instruction in Illinois above the high school level, either in residence or correspondence, providing such institution is not an Illinois public tax supported higher education institution, a labor union training program or a business trade or other corporate in-service training program. Such institutions include:

1. Institutions that were not operating or authorized to operate in Illinois on August 14, 1961; or
2. Institutions that result from a merger of other institutions, whether or not the merged institutions were authorized to operate on August 14, 1961; or
3. Institutions that offer 10 percent of coursework, as measured by academic credits, for a degree program out-of- region, whether or not the institution was authorized to operate on August 14, 1961; or
4. Institutions that have terminated operation and subsequently wish to resume operations as degree-granting institutions, whether or not the former institution was in existence prior to August 14, 1961. An institution that continues to exist, but ceases to enroll students, is considered to have terminated operations.

In plain English: The 1945 Private Colleges Act requires institutions wanting to operate in Illinois seek approval to do so. It also grandfathered institutions in existence at the time the Act went into effect. The 1945 Act deals exclusively with Operating Authority and does not deal with

degree-granting authority. At the time, colleges operated primarily from a “campus”, i.e., a physical, brick and mortar location. Therefore, the Act sought to define just what level of activity away from that campus constituted creating a new campus – hence the 50% rule. The bottom line is that any institution seeking to offer programs in Illinois for the first time must apply for operating authority.

The 1961 Degree Act requires independent institutions of higher education to seek approval to offer new degrees. It grandfathers institutions in existence at the time the Act went into effect, but only for new degrees offered in their original region of operating authority. All independent institutions that received initial operating authority after 1961 must seek approval for all new degrees regardless of the region.

Application Process

Illinois Community Colleges: The IBHE and the Illinois Community College Board have developed an application process that integrates the approval criteria utilized by both boards into a single application process. This process begins with application to the ICCB and utilizes forms maintained by the ICCB. Illinois community colleges wishing to offer new programs should contact the ICCB for detailed instructions.

Illinois Public Universities and Independent Colleges and Universities:

Registration to submit – All IHEs must register to utilize the electronic application process.

1. To register, visit the Academic page of the IBHE website (www.ibhe.org).
2. Each IHE may register only one user. Each user will have a unique Login ID and Password.

Orientation – Prior to submitting an application for the first time, one or more representatives from the IHE must take part in an orientation session.

Notice of Intent – The Chief Executive Officer of the IHE seeking a Certificate of Approval or Authorization to Operate a Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institution in the State of Illinois will make this intention known by writing to the Board. This Notice of Intent will be posted for comment on the IBHE website for no less than 30 days prior to any action on the part of the Board to approve or reject the application.

Application for Operating or Degree-Granting Authority – Institutional representatives shall complete the application supplied by the Board. The application requests information and supporting evidence to demonstrate the IHE meets the criteria established.

Staff Analysis – Following the receipt of the formal application and accompanying documentation, staff will review and analyze all materials.

Site Visit – Following completion of the application analysis, a site visit may be arranged in order to verify and supplement the information provided about the propose institution or program. The site visit may include interviews with prospective administrators, students, faculty, and/or board members and observations of facilities, record systems, financial data, and/or curricular resources.

External Consultants – At the discretion of the Executive Director of the Board, Board staff may utilize the services of external consultants to assist the staff in verification and/or evaluation of the documentation submitted or obtained in the application or through the site visit.

Staff Report – Following the staff analysis, including any site visits or external consultant reviews, Board staff will prepare an analysis of the findings and develop a recommendation to the Board regarding the institutional application. This recommendation will be shared with the applicant.

Staff may recommend either:

1. That the IHE be issued a Certificate of Approval and/or Authorization to Operate subject to annual reporting and the implementation and maintenance of the conditions under which approval/authorization was recommended; or
2. That the IHE be denied a Certificate of Approval and/or Authorization to Operate.

Staff Recommendation to the Board – The Executive Director of the Board will submit the staff recommendations to the Board for action at a regular meeting. The Chief Executive Officer of the applicant IHE or a designee will be invited to attend the meeting and comment on the recommendation. In the event the staff recommendation is negative, the applicant shall be given an opportunity to respond in writing no less than 15 days prior to the meeting. If a response is provided, it will be transmitted to the Board at the same time as the staff recommendation.

Board Action – Following the Board’s decision to issue a Certificate of Approval and/or Authorization to Operate or to deny a Certificate of Approval and/or Authorization to Operate, a letter signifying the action will be sent from the Executive Director of the Board to the Chief Executive Officer of the IHE. A letter of approval will serve as the official Certificate of Approval/Authorization to Operate the IHE in the State of Illinois.

Nature of Authorization to Operate

Initial authorization to operate in Illinois shall be for five years. In the fifth year of operation, the Executive Director of the Board may instruct staff to conduct a review. The Board may deny a continuation of the initial approval if the IHE:

1. Fails to implement and maintain the conditions that were presented in its application and that formed the basis upon which authorizations were granted; or
2. Fails to maintain sound fiscal status; or
3. Fails to achieve affiliation status from an accreditation agency within the IHE’s proposed timeline for obtaining accreditation.

Nature of Degree Granting Authority

Initial authority to grant a specific degree shall be for five years. In the fifth year of the program, the Executive Director of the Board may instruct staff to conduct a review. The Board may deny a continuation of the initial approval if the IHE or the relevant program:

1. Fails to implement and maintain the conditions that were presented in its application and that formed the basis upon which authorizations were granted; or
2. Fails to maintain sound fiscal status; or
3. Fails to provide evidence that program graduates are entitled to sit for the appropriate licensure examination and evidence of an appropriate pass rate on the exam when such licensure is required for employment in the field.

Publications and Information

1. An IHE may state that it is approved or authorized to operate in the State of Illinois only after such approval has been officially granted and received in writing from the Board.

2. An IHE shall not advertise or state in any manner that it is “accredited” by the Board. Granting Certificates of Approval to Operate, Authorizations to Operate, and Authorizations to Award Specific Degrees is the function of the Board, rather than accreditation.
3. No IHE shall publish or otherwise communicate to prospective students, faculty, staff, or the public misleading or erroneous information about the operating or degree-granting status of a given IHE.
4. Recruitment and informational materials of an IHE that has received only Approval and/or Authorization from the Board to Operate shall indicate the IHE is not yet authorized to award degrees.
5. All such information will be made readily available to the public, including through any electronic media employed by the IHE (such as websites) without limits to access (such as requirements to register, provide personal information, or input a password).

Awarding of Degrees – IHEs shall not award new degrees until one year after authorization by the Board to do so unless specific written authority to do so is granted by the Board staff.

New Application – Any IHE that withdraws an application or whose application is denied approval must file a new application in order to be given subsequent consideration for approval.

Maintenance of Approval

Annual Reports – Each approved IHE shall meet the reporting requirements as outlined in the Reports and Reporting Timeframe Table.

Reviews – The staff of the Board may conduct reviews and/or visitation of approved IHEs as necessary to ensure the conditions for approval are implemented and maintained.

Complaints Concerning Institutions – The staff of the Board shall initiate an investigation upon receipt of a verified written complaint and may initiate an investigation in response to oral or written information concerning any of the following:

1. Alleged violation of any of the conditions governing issuance of the Certificate of Approval;
2. Alleged failure to comply with any of the rules adopted by the Board;
3. Alleged fraudulent conduct on the part of any person conducting the IHE or any person, acting within the scope of his/her employment, by the IHE, on account of which conduct any student ever enrolled in the IHE has been injured or has suffered financial loss.

During the investigation, staff may place a temporary hold on the IHE’s applications to the Board. The hold will be for a specified period of time unless the Board begins the process for revocation as provided in Administrative Rules, at which time the hold will continue until the Board decision is made.

Revocation of the Certificate of Approval

1. Grounds for Revocation Include:
 - a. Violation of any of the conditions governing issuance of the Certificate of Approval;
 - b. Failure to comply with any of the rules adopted by the Board;
 - c. Fraudulent conduct on the part of any person conducting the IHE or any person, acting within the scope of his/her employment by the IHE, on account of which conduct any student ever enrolled in the IHE has been injured or has suffered financial loss.
 - d. Failure to operate as an IHE for one continuous 12-month period and/or the IHE has been abandoned.

2. Procedures for Revocation
 - a. Following the Board staff investigation of the institutional degree practices, the staff may recommend to the Board revocation of the authorization to operate and/or award specific degrees.
 - b. If the Board votes to revoke authorization to operate and/or award specific degrees, the IHE may request a hearing. The Board has the option to waive a hearing if the IHE has not operated for one continuous 12-month period or the IHE has been abandoned.
 - c. The Board shall designate a Hearing Officer who shall schedule and conduct a hearing.
 - d. The Hearing Officer shall make a written report of findings and recommendations to the Board. The Board will make a final determination and will notify the IHE of its decision.
 - e. Following a Board decision to revoke authorization to operate and/or award specific degrees, the Certificate of Authority will be rendered invalid.
 - f. A closed IHE must arrange for its student records to be maintained in a safe and suitable place.
3. Sale, Purchase or Transfer of Operating or Degree-Granting Authority
 - a. At no time may an IHE sell, purchase, or transfer a Certificate of Approval.
 - b. In the event that the merger, sale, purchase, or transfer of assets involving an IHE results in a change to the status of incorporation relative to the IHE holding the Certificate(s) of Approval, the resulting corporation must apply for new approvals through the IBHE.

Institutions Operating without Proper Authority

When the IBHE staff becomes aware of any private person, group of persons, partnership or corporation operating as an IHE without proper authority granted by the IBHE:

- a. Staff will open a case file and begin gathering documentation, including all correspondence and any evidence of operating activities;
- b. Staff will inform the institution (CEO or representative) of the statutory requirements and the process for seeking operating and degree-granting authority. The institution will be given 14 days to present a Notice of Intent and 60 days to present a completed application. If no contact information is available, staff will inform the Office of the Illinois Attorney General of the situation and provide the AG with all documentation in the case file;
- c. If the institution fails to meet either the NOI or Application deadlines in 1.b, staff will send a cease and desist letter. The institution will be given 5 business days to stop all advertising, including websites, and 30 days to stop all other operations.
- d. If the institution presents an NOI and Application, the institution will be afforded all due consideration under administrative code.
- e. If the institution fails to comply with the cease and desist, staff will inform the Office of the Illinois Attorney General of the situation and provide the AG with all documentation in the case file.
- f. If an institution's application is denied, staff will inform the institution and request they cease and desist per timeline in item 1.c.

Criteria for Approval

Public Colleges and Universities

The Illinois Board of Higher Education will evaluate new units of instruction, research or public service by applying the following criteria:

1. Criteria applicable to all units of instruction, research or public service
 - a. Mission and Objectives
 - i. The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with the mission of the IHE.
 - ii. The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with what the unit title implies.
 - b. Academic Control
 - i. The design, conduct, and evaluation of the unit of instruction, research or public service are under the direct and continuous control of the sponsoring IHE's established processes for academic planning and quality maintenance.
 - ii. Control of curricular design, conduct, and evaluation must involve the faculty of the IHE.
 - c. Faculty and Staff
 - i. The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff ensure the objectives of the unit of instruction, research, or public service are met.
 - ii. The academic preparation and experience of the faculty and staff, as evidenced by the level of degrees held, professional experience in the field of study, and demonstrated knowledge of the field, ensure they are able to fulfill their academic responsibilities.
 - iii. The involvement of faculty in the unit of instruction, research or public service is sufficient to cover the various fields of knowledge encompassed by the unit, to sustain scholarship appropriate to the unit, and to assure curricular continuity and consistency in student evaluation.
 - iv. Support personnel, including but not limited to counselors, administrators, clinical supervisors, and technical staff, that are directly assigned to the unit of instruction, research or public service have the educational background and experience necessary to carry out their assigned responsibilities.
 - d. Support Services
 - i. Facilities, equipment, and instructional resources (e.g., laboratory supplies and equipment, instructional materials, computational equipment) necessary to support high quality academic work in the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained.
 - ii. Clinical sites necessary to meet the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained.
 - iii. Library holdings and acquisitions, owned or contracted for by the IHE, that are necessary to support high quality instruction and scholarship in the unit of instruction, research or public service, are conveniently available and accessible and can be maintained.
 - e. Fiscal Resources
 - i. The financial commitments to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are sufficient to ensure the faculty and staff and support services necessary to offer the unit of instruction, research or public service can be acquired and maintained.
 - ii. Projections of revenues necessary to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are based upon supportable estimates of state appropriations, local tax support, student tuition and fees, private gifts, governmental grants and contracts, and other revenue streams.
 - f. Statewide Needs and Priorities

- i. The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically justified based on the educational priorities and needs of the citizens of Illinois
 - ii. The unit of instruction, research or public service meets a need that is not currently met by existing IHEs and units of instruction, research or public service.
 2. Criteria applicable only to units of instruction
 - a. Curriculum
 - i. The caliber and content of the curriculum assure the objectives of the unit of instruction will be achieved.
 - ii. The breadth and depth of the curriculum are consistent with what the title of the unit of instruction implies.
 - iii. The admission, retention, and graduation requirements for the unit of instruction are consistent with the stated objectives of the unit of instruction.
 - iv. Provision is made for guidance and counseling of students, evaluations of student performance, continuous monitoring of progress of students toward their degree objectives and appropriate academic record keeping.
 - b. Program Information
 - i. The information the IHE provides for students and the public accurately describes:
 1. The unit of instruction, including objectives, length, and residency requirements if any
 2. Schedule of tuition, fees and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the unit of instruction
 3. Cancellation and refund policies
 4. Student rights and responsibilities
 5. Such other material facts concerning the IHE and unit of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll.
 6. Such information shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment.
 7. Such information will be available through any electronic media employed by the IHE (such as websites) without limits to access (such as requirements to register, provide personal information, or input a password).
 - c. Accreditation and Licensure
 - i. Appropriate steps have been taken to assure that professional accreditation needed for licensure or entry into a profession as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction is maintained or will be granted in a reasonable period of time.
 - ii. Proposed programs must provide the skills required to obtain individual credentialing (e.g., certification, licensure, registration) needed for entry into an occupation as specified in the objectives of the proposed program.
 - iii. When credentialing examinations are required for entry into an occupation as specified in the objectives of the proposed program, completion of the program must entitle the completer to sit for the examination.
 3. Criteria applicable only to units of instruction to be offered out-of-region
 - a. The unit of instruction is approved for offering in the original region of approval
 - b. There is no substantive difference between the approved and proposed units of instruction in regard to the approval criteria listed above.

Independent Colleges and Universities

The Illinois Board of Higher Education will evaluate new units of instruction, research or public service by applying the following criteria:

1. Criteria applicable to all units of instruction, research or public service
 - a. Mission and Objectives
 - i. The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with the mission of the IHE.
 - ii. The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with what the unit title implies
 - b. Academic Control
 - i. The design, conduct, and evaluation of the unit of instruction, research or public service are under the direct and continuous control of the sponsoring IHE's established processes for academic planning and quality maintenance.
 - ii. Control of curricular design, conduct, and evaluation must involve the faculty of the IHE.
 - c. Faculty and Staff
 - i. The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff ensure the objectives of the unit of instruction, research, or public service are met.
 - ii. The academic preparation and experience of the faculty and staff, as evidenced by the level of degrees held, professional experience in the field of study, and demonstrated knowledge of the field, ensure they are able to fulfill their academic responsibilities.
 - iii. The involvement of faculty in the unit of instruction, research or public service is sufficient to cover the various fields of knowledge encompassed by the unit, to sustain scholarship appropriate to the unit, and to assure curricular continuity and consistency in student evaluation.
 - iv. Support personnel, including but not limited to counselors, administrators, clinical supervisors, and technical staff, that are directly assigned to the unit of instruction, research or public service have the educational background and experience necessary to carry out their assigned responsibilities.
 - d. Support Services
 - i. Facilities, equipment, and instructional resources (e.g., laboratory supplies and equipment, instructional materials, computational equipment) necessary to support high quality academic work in the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained.
 - ii. Clinical sites necessary to meet the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained.
 - iii. Library holdings and acquisitions, owned or contracted for by the IHE, that are necessary to support high quality instruction and scholarship in the unit of instruction, research or public service, are conveniently available and accessible and can be maintained.
 - e. Fiscal Resources
 - i. The financial commitments to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are sufficient to ensure the faculty and staff and support services necessary to offer the unit of instruction, research or public service can be acquired and maintained.
 - ii. Projections of revenues necessary to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are based upon supportable estimates of student tuition and fees, private gifts, and other revenue streams.
2. Criteria applicable only to units of instruction
 - a. Curriculum
 - i. The caliber and content of the curriculum assure the objectives of the unit of instruction

- will be achieved.
- ii. The breadth and depth of the curriculum are consistent with what the title of the unit of instruction implies.
- iii. The admission, retention, and graduation requirements for the unit of instruction are consistent with the stated objectives of the unit of instruction.
- iv. Provision is made for guidance and counseling of students, evaluations of student performance, continuous monitoring of progress of students toward their degree objectives and appropriate academic record keeping.
- b. Program Information
 - i. The information the IHE provides for students and the public accurately describes:
 - 1) The unit of instruction, including objectives, length, and residency requirements if any
 - 2) Schedule of tuition, fees and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the unit of instruction
 - 3) Cancellation and refund policies
 - 4) Student rights and responsibilities
 - 5) Such other material facts concerning the IHE and unit of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll.
 - ii. Such information shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment.
 - iii. Such information will be available through any electronic media employed by the IHE (such as websites) without limits to access (such as requirements to register, provide personal information, or input a password).
- c. Accreditation and Licensure
 - i. Appropriate steps have been taken to assure that professional accreditation needed for licensure or entry into a profession as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction is maintained or will be granted in a reasonable period of time.
 - ii. Proposed programs must provide the skills required to obtain individual credentialing (e.g., certification, licensure, registration) needed for entry into an occupation as specified in the objectives of the proposed program.
 - iii. When credentialing examinations are required for entry into an occupation as specified in the objectives of the proposed program, completion of the program must entitle the completer to sit for the examination.
- 3. Criteria applicable only to units of instruction to be offered out-of-region
 - a. The unit of instruction is approved for offering in the original region of approval
 - b. There is no substantive difference between the approved and proposed units of instruction in regard to the approval criteria listed above.

ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES ON UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Adopted September 1990

Transfer and Articulation

Amended September 1994, May 1997, and May 2006

Associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions are equal partners in providing the first two years of baccalaureate degree programs in Illinois. While each institution is ultimately responsible for the quality of the programs it provides, both associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions are expected to work together to assure that their lower-division baccalaureate programs are comparable in scope, quality, and intellectual rigor.

Any student admitted in transfer to an Illinois baccalaureate degree-granting institution should be granted standing comparable to current students who have completed the same number of baccalaureate-level credit hours and should be able to progress toward baccalaureate degree completion at a rate comparable to that of students who entered the baccalaureate institution as first-time freshmen. To assure students of comparable treatment, it is expected that:

1. Students admitted in transfer who have earned an Associate in Arts or an Associate in Science degree from a regionally accredited Illinois community or junior college whose general education requirement for the degree incorporates the Illinois General Education Core Curriculum will have met the receiving institution's all-campus, lower-division general education requirement for the baccalaureate degree (or for a second associate degree). A receiving institution may, however, require admitted transfer students to complete an institution-wide and/or mission-related graduation requirement that is beyond the scope of the Illinois General Education Core Curriculum.
2. Students admitted in transfer who have satisfactorily completed the Illinois General Education Core Curriculum at any regionally accredited Illinois college or university prior to transfer should be granted credit in lieu of the receiving institution's all-campus, lower-division general education requirement for an associate or baccalaureate degree. A receiving institution may, however, require admitted transfer students to complete an institution-wide and/or mission-related graduation requirement that is beyond the scope of the Illinois General Education Core Curriculum.
3. Under the following circumstances, public institutions and all other participating institutions will offer transfer students the option of satisfying lower-division general education requirements by completing a GECC curriculum while enrolled in the receiving institution.
 - a. When the transfer student has completed a statewide articulated associate degree such as the AFA, AES, AAT; or
 - b. When the transfer student has been granted 30 semester hours of transfer credit by the receiving institution without having completed the GECC. (Although not specified, the nature of lower-division curricula indicates that 30 semester hours of *transfer credit* from an IAI institution will likely incorporate GECC credits.)
4. Students admitted in transfer who have met program entry requirements and have satisfactorily completed courses described in an Illinois Articulation Initiative Baccalaureate Major Curriculum Recommendation at a regionally accredited Illinois college or university should be granted credit towards fulfilling the receiving institution's comparable lower-division requirements for that

specific major. Where admission is competitive, completion of a Baccalaureate Major Recommendation does not guarantee admission.

Presidents and chief academic officers of associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions should provide leadership in implementing state policies on transfer and articulation and in resolving issues of mutual concern. To this end, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, in conjunction with the Illinois Community College Board, will regularly convene the presidents of baccalaureate and associate degree-granting institutions and system academic leadership to assess the status of state policies on transfer and articulation and to resolve any issues that arise.

Program faculties from both associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions should take primary responsibility for developing and maintaining course and program articulation agreements and for promoting compatibility between associate and baccalaureate curricula.

Associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions should work together to expand opportunities for students to complete baccalaureate degrees. Through formal partnerships, associate and baccalaureate institutions should jointly encourage baccalaureate degree completion and provide information on the transfer process, guidance in program and course selection, and orientation to the academic environment to prospective transfer students. Dual admission, "2+2," and similar articulation and transfer agreements should be developed to facilitate the transfer of students.

Colleges and universities should assure that transfer students have the same opportunities as other students to participate in the social, cultural, and academic support services necessary for their integration into the campus community.

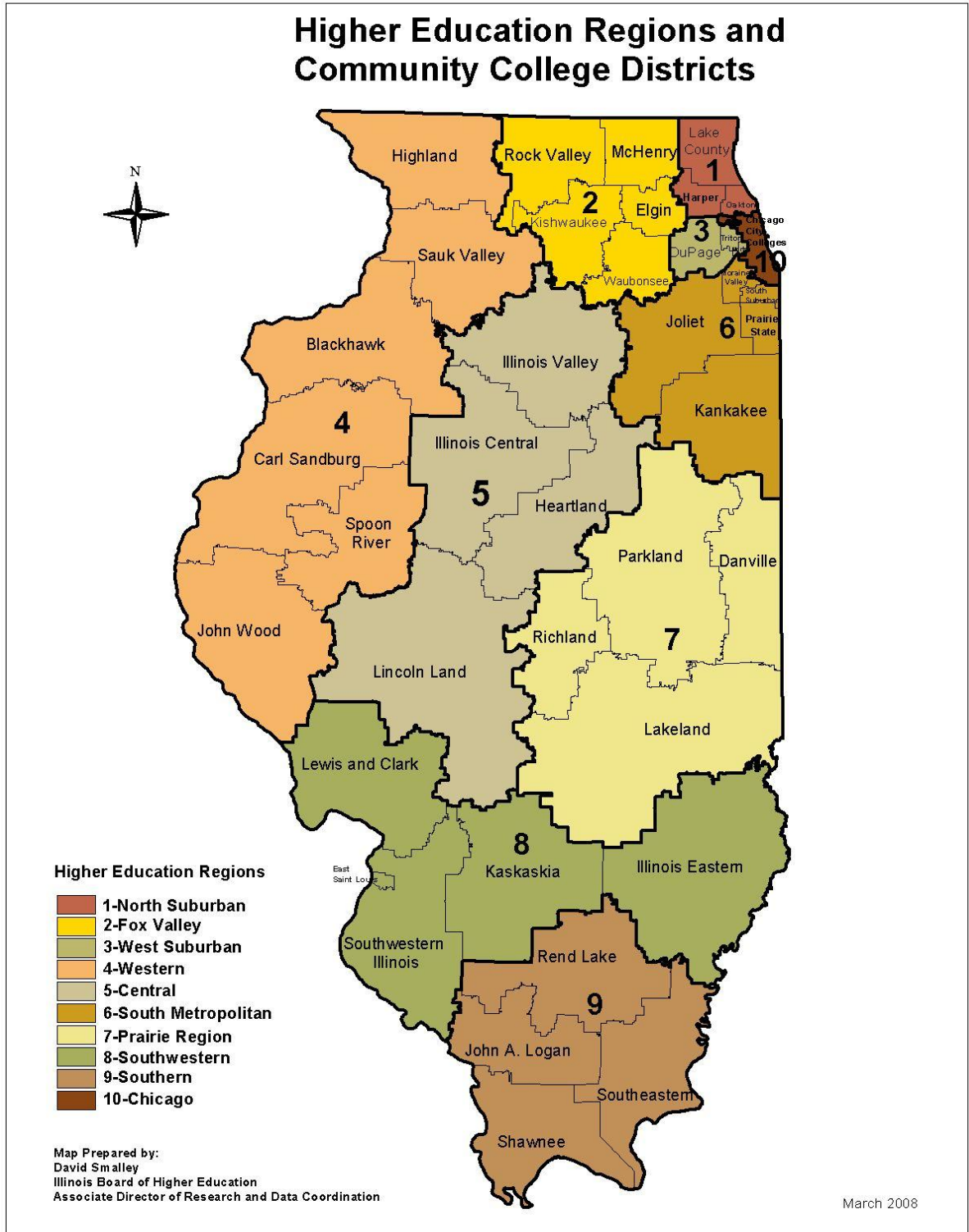
A statewide system for monitoring the academic progress of cohorts of community and junior college students who transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions shall be established by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in cooperation with the Illinois Community College Board and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. This information should serve as the basis for the regular review and improvement of the undergraduate curricula, support services, and articulation and transfer agreements of associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. The Illinois Board of Higher Education, in consultation with the Illinois Community College Board, will examine institutional and statewide trends in student transfer and degree completion and will use these analyses to make necessary modifications to policies on articulation and transfer.

Higher Education Regions

There are ten Board approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts.

Region Name	Region #	Community College District	Community College District #
North Suburban	1	Lake County	532
		Oakton	535
		Harper	512
Fox Valley	2	Elgin	509
		Kishwaukee	523
		McHenry	528
		Rock Valley	511
		Waubonsee	516
West Suburban	3	DuPage	502
		Morton	527
		Triton	504
Western	4	Black Hawk	503
		Carl Sandburg	518
		Highland	519
		John Wood	539
		Sauk Valley	506
		Spoon River	534
Central	5	Heartland	540
		Illinois Central	514
		Illinois Valley	513
		Lincoln Land	526
South Metropolitan	6	Joliet Junior	525
		Kankakee	520
		Moraine Valley	524
		Prairie State	515
		South Suburban	510
Prairie Region	7	Danville	507
		Lake Land	517
		Parkland	505
		Richland	537
Southwestern	8	Illinois Eastern	529
		Kaskaskia	501
		Lewis and Clark	536
		Southwestern Illinois	522
Southern	9	John A. Logan	530
		Rend Lake	521
		Shawnee	531
		Southeastern	533
Chicago	10	City Colleges	508

Illustration A Map of Regions



IBHE Program Inventory Definitions

Definition	Level
Undergraduate Certificate (1-2 years). A postsecondary award, certificate or diploma requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least one, but less than two, full-time equivalent academic years; or designed for completion in at least 30, but less than 60, semester credit hours; or in at least 900, but less than 1800, contact hours.	02
Associate Degree. An award requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least two, but less than 4, years of full-time academic study; or more than 60, but less than 120, semester credit hours	03
Undergraduate Certificate (2-4 years). A postsecondary award, certificate or diploma, requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least two, but less than four, full-time academic years; or designed for completion in at least 60, but less than 120, semester credit hours, or in at least 1800, but less than 3600, contact hours.	04
Bachelor's Degree. An award requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least 4, but not more than 5, years of full-time academic study, with at least 120, but less than 150, semester credit hours.	05
Post-Baccalaureate Certificate. An award requiring completion of an organized program of study requiring 18 semester credit hours beyond the bachelor's and is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree but do not meet the requirements of academic degrees carrying the title of "master".	06
Master's Degree. An award requiring completion of an organized program of study of at least one, but nor more than two, full-time academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree, and consisting of at least 30, but less than 60, semester credit hours.	07
Post-Master's Certificate. An award requiring completion of an organized program of academic study of 24 semester credit hours beyond the master's degree but does not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctor's level.	08
Doctor's Degree. The highest award a student can earn for graduate study. The Doctor's degree classification includes such degrees as Doctor of Education, Doctor of Juridical Science, Doctor of Public Health, and Doctor of Philosophy in any field.	09

<p>First Professional Degree. An award requiring completion of an organized program of study that meets all fo the following criteria: (1) completion of the academic requirements to begin practice in the profession; (2) at least 2 years of college work prior to entering the program; and (3) a total of at least 6 academic years of college work to complete the degree program, including prior required college work plus the length of the professional program itself.</p>	10
<p>First Professional Certificate (Post-Degree). An award requiring completion of an organized program of study designed for persons who have completed the first professional degree.</p>	11
<p>Organized Research and Public Service Centers and Institutes.</p>	19

Definitions for New Program and Reasonable and Moderate Extension (RME) as applied to Illinois Public Colleges and Universities

	Nature of Change	Required Action
1	Creation of a new, non-credit program or a program of study, composed of credit courses, that does not result in the formal award of a degree.	No reporting and no action
2	Creation of a new unit that does not have an instructional, research, or public service mission, including new units that might be named department, division, center or institute.	No reporting and no action
3	Addition of a new organized set of courses within a major (e.g., option, concentration, specialization, or sequence) to an existing degree program.	Annual Listing of Changes
4	Addition of an externally funded research or public service activity labeled as a center or institute because of grant requirements. The activity is temporary, not formally organized, and has no continuous mission.	Annual Listing of Changes
5	Addition of a new minor	Annual Listing of Changes
6	Change in degree title (e.g., the name of a discipline or major without changes in objectives or content, such as the change from "medical technology" to "clinical laboratory sciences").	Annual Listing of Changes
7	Change in the name of an administrative (including departments), research, or public service unit.	Annual Listing of Changes
8	Elimination, temporary suspension, or phase down of an existing degree program.	Annual Listing of Changes
9	Reorganization, restructuring, consolidation, elimination, and other changes of existing administrative (including departments), research, or public service units that does not result in an increase in subunits.	Annual Listing of Changes
10	Creation of a certificate program in a field in which there is a previously approved degree program (e.g., undergraduate certificates from a prior approved bachelor's program; post-baccalaureate certificates from a prior approved master's program; a post-master's certificate from a prior approved doctoral program; or post-degree, first-professional certificates from a previously approved first-professional degree in the field).	Annual Listing of Changes
11	Creation of a joint degree program from two previously approved programs.	Annual Listing of Changes
12	Creation of a new formally organized research or public service unit that has a temporary mission of up to five years. (Criteria for continuation and a date for submission and request for permanent approval should accompany the RME).	RME Request
13	Creation of a certificate program in a field or at a level in which there is not a previously approved degree program at that level or a higher level.	RME Request
14	Creation of a new program that results from the reorganization or restructuring of the curricular elements of an existing program that have over time evolved into separate and distinct programs (e.g., split into two, or	RME Request

	options have evolved into separate programs).	
15	Reclassification (change of CIP) of a program resulting from incremental changes or consolidation of two or more degree programs into a single program.	RME Request
16	Changes in degree designation at the same level (e.g., BA to BS, MA to MBA)	RME Request
17	Creation of a degree program (excluding certificate programs) in a new field or at a new level (based on CIPS or IPEDS definitions).	Board Action Required
18	Creation of new units of instruction, research, or public service that involve a change or expansion in mission, including programs, departments, colleges, centers or institutes, or other formally organized units	Board Action Required
19	Creation of a new campus	Board Action Required

Notification of Changes for Independent Colleges and Universities

	Nature of Change	Required Action
1	Change of a program of study composed of credit courses that does not result in the formal award of a degree	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
2	Creation of a new unit that does not have an instructional or research component, including new units that might be named department, division, center or institute	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
3	Addition of a new organized set of courses within a major (e.g., option, concentration, specialization, or sequence) to an existing degree program.	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
4	Addition of a new minor	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
5	Change in a degree title (e.g., the name of a discipline or major without changes in objectives or content such as the change from “medical technology” to “clinical laboratory sciences.”)	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
6	Elimination, temporary suspension, or phase down of an existing degree program	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
7	Creation of a certificate program in a field in which there is a previously approved degree program (e.g., undergraduate certificates from a prior approved bachelor’s program; post-baccalaureate certificates from a prior approved master’s program; a post-master’s certificate from a prior approved doctoral degree program; or post-degree first-professional certificate from a previously approved first-professional degree in the field)	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
8	Creation of a joint degree program from two previously approved programs	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
9	Reclassification (change of CIP) of a program resulting from incremental changes or consolidation of two or more degree programs into a single program	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
10	Changes in degree designation at the same level (e.g., BA to BFA, MA to MBA)	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
11	Creation of a new instructional location within a higher education region for which the institution has approval to operate or offer degrees	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
12	Contracting with another entity to offer all or part of credit-earning instruction	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
13	Changes in admission, retention, or graduation requirements	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
14	Change of address	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
15	Any changes to conditions upon which approval to operate or grant degrees was granted by the IBHE	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
16	Loss of regional or national accreditation that would result in the loss of approval to operation in Illinois	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
17	Loss of authorization to participate in the federal Title IV Student Financial Aid programs	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required

18	Loss of authority from the Illinois Secretary of State to conduct business in Illinois	Report changes to Board Staff, further action may be required
19	New degree program	Submit Application for Degree-granting Authority, further action may be required
20	Creation of a new program(s) that results from the reorganization or restructuring of the curricular elements of an existing program that have, over time, evolved into separate and distinct programs (e.g., split into two, or options have evolved into separate programs)	Submit Application for Degree-granting Authority, further action may be required
21	Creation of a degree program (excluding certificate programs as defined above) in a new field or at a new level (based on CIPS or IPEDS definitions)	Submit Application for Degree-granting Authority, further action may be required
22	Offering a previously-approved program in a new higher education region	Submit Application for Degree-granting Authority, further action may be required
23	Creation of a new institution	Submit Application for Operating Authority, further action may be required
24	Change of ownership	Submit Application for Operating Authority, further action may be required

Reports and Reporting Timeframe

Report	Institution	Timeframe
Catalog	All	Annual
Academic Program Reviews	Public Universities	Annual on Eight-year Cycle
New Academic Program Review	All	Third Year after Approval
Temporary Suspension Report	All	Annual
Flagged Program Report	Public Universities	Annual until resolved
Baccalaureate Follow-Up Survey	Public Universities	Annual (3 Surveys rotate One Year out, Five Years Out, and Nine Years Out)
Cost Study	Public Universities	Annual
RAMP	Public Universities	Annual
Underrepresented Group Report	Public Universities	Annual
Student Financial Aid	All	Annual
Fall Enrollment Survey Part 1	All	Annual
Fall Enrollment Survey Part 2	All	Annual

Each institution will determine the program review process that best meets its unique needs and that is consistent with Illinois Board of Higher Education requirements and will inform the Board of the process.

The Board may accept as meeting the reporting requirements in subsections (a), (b), and (c) compliance with Illinois Community College Board institutional and program review requirements by any campus under the governance or supervision of the Illinois Community College Board.

Institutions have the discretion to use findings from specialized program accreditations and other reviews as the basis of the program review as long as the findings are not more than two years old.

1. Third Year Program Reviews

- a. Three years after Board approval of a new program, a progress report will be provided to the Board as part of the annual program review report. The progress report describes the institution’s ability to meet program objectives and shows where any improvements are necessary. Programs not making adequate progress toward achieving objectives stated in the original request for approval will submit a plan for improvement. The plan will outline the steps to be taken, benchmarks indicating adequate progress, and a timeline indicating when each step will be completed or benchmark will be achieved or both.
- b. Programs in which state licensure is required for employment in the field must provide evidence that program graduates are entitled to sit for the appropriate licensure examination and evidence of an appropriate pass rate on the exam. Programs that have not met this requirement will submit a plan for improvement. The plan will outline the steps to be taken, benchmarks indicating adequate progress, and a timeline indicating when each step will be completed or benchmark will be achieved or both.
- c. Programs flagged for attention or improvement by the institution under subsections (1) and (2) must report to the Board staff every year until the situation is corrected or resolved. Annual reports on flagged programs will:

- 1) Delineate actions taken to resolve the issues or improve the program;

- 2) Identify areas requiring further action or improvement;
 - 3) Describe how the program will be monitored to ensure continued improvement until the next review.
- d. Approval of programs flagged for attention or improvement by the institution under subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) will not be continued beyond the fifth anniversary of Board approval. The Board will consider a program terminated if no progress report is received each year or if benchmarks are not met by the fifth year.
2. Eight-Year Program Review Cycle

Institutional program reviews will occur on an eight-year cycle, with the institution determining the schedule for individual programs but allowing that each program be reviewed at least once every eight years. As part of the review process, institutions will prioritize programs flagged due to quality, viability, and/or other concerns.

While the institution is responsible for developing its unique program review procedures, it is expected that those processes will include, at a minimum, the following components:

- a. A statement of program goals and intended learning outcomes;
 - b. An end- or near-end-of-program assessment of student learning in addition to course-by-course assessments;
 - c. Multiple performance measures, if necessary, that reflect the uniqueness of academic programs and disciplines;
 - d. Feedback from key stakeholders (e.g., current students, alumni, employers, and graduate schools);
 - e. Evidence of a formal feedback or improvement mechanism (i.e., a regular review process in place) and that the results are used to improve curriculum, instruction, and learning;
 - f. Improvements to its capacity to efficiently and effectively deliver programs using technological innovation and comprehensive data systems; and
 - g. Findings and recommendations for improvement, suspension, or closure.
3. Annual Program Review Report

Upon the conclusion of the review, the institution shall provide the Board a summary report. This report will include the major findings and recommendations and the outcomes.

- a. Major Findings and Recommendations
 - 1) Description and assessment of any major changes in the program (i.e., changes in the discipline or field, student demand, societal needs, institutional context for offering the degree, and other elements appropriate to the discipline);
 - 2) Major findings and recommendations, including evidence of student learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement;
 - 3) Actions taken since the last review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular changes; and

- 4) Actions to be taken as a result of this review, including changes in instructional resources and practices, curriculum, and assessment of student learning.

b. Program Review Outcomes

The institution shall indicate the status of the program. A program is in one of three categories; “good standing”, “flagged for priority review”, or “temporary suspension”.

- 1) Programs flagged for priority review must report to the Board staff every year until the situation is corrected or resolved. Annual reports on flagged programs will:
 - a) Delineate actions taken to resolve the issues or improve the program;
 - b) Identify areas requiring further action or improvement;
 - c) Describe how the program will be monitored to ensure continued improvement until the next review.
- 2) An institution may elect to place an approved program on temporary suspension, not to exceed five years, when enrollments are insufficient to maintain the program or the institution decides to suspend enrollments in the program. Institutions will submit to the Board staff a brief progress report each year until the program is removed from temporary status or terminated. The institution may elect to remove the program from temporary suspension status at any time enrollments are deemed sufficient to maintain the program by submitting a letter of notification to the Board. The Board will consider a program terminated if no progress report is received each year or if no reinstatement notice is received within the five year period.