



New Academic Program Approval Glossary of Terms

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GLOSSARY OF DEFINITIONS RELATED TO ACADEMIC PROGRAM APPROVAL

Academic Programming

Academic Program - combination of courses and related activities organized for the attainment of broad educational objectives that lead to a certificate, diploma, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, specialist degree, or doctoral degree.

Academic Program Implementation - occurs when the first student matriculates into a program and enrolls in any course specified in the program of study.

Area - primary field of study, typically consisting of more credit hours than a major that does not require a minor and can be completed in lieu of a major-minor combination.

Classification of Instructional Programs code (CIP code) - a six-digit code in the form of xx.xxxx that identifies instructional program disciplines and supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity as required for federal reporting.

Closed Program - academic program that is no longer offered by an institution and has been removed from the institution's catalog and the program inventory.

Concentration - set of courses designed to develop expertise within a major or area at the master's level.

Core - set of courses required by all students within a major or area. It also refers to the set of courses required by all students within a track, concentration, or specialization.

Major - primary area of study defined by a set of course and/or credit hour requirements within a specified discipline or with a clearly defined multi-disciplinary focus.

Minor - secondary area of study that is separate from the major and is defined by a set of course and/or credit hour requirements within a specified discipline or with a clearly defined multi-disciplinary focus.

New Academic Program - a program not previously offered at an institution or one that was previously offered but has been suspended for five or more years or has been closed.

Program of Vocational-Technical and Occupational Nature - certificate, diploma, or associate degree programs (i.e. AAS) designed to prepare students to enter the workforce

immediately after graduation in occupations that typically do not require a baccalaureate degree or above.

Specialization - set of courses designed to develop expertise within a major at the doctoral level.

Suspended Program - academic program that no longer accepts new students as of a specified date but allows current or previously accepted students to complete the program. The program can be reopened within five years without going through the new academic program approval process. After five years, if the program has not been reopened, it will be considered a closed program.

Track - set of courses designed to develop expertise within a major or area at the undergraduate level.

Transfer-Oriented Degree - award (i.e., A.A. or A.S.) that normally requires at least 60 semester credit hours that prepares students for entrance into upper-division coursework associated with a bachelor's degree.

Academic Program Delivery Methods

100% Distance Learning Program - academic program in which all of the required courses in a program occur when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous.

Accelerated Course - course that can be completed in less than a traditional semester.

Accelerated Program - use of accelerated courses, credit for prior learning, and/or other methods to allow students to complete the program in less than the usual amount of time.

Collaborative Program - academic program under the sponsorship of more than one institution or organization and contains elements of resource sharing agreed upon by the partners. None of the participating institutions delivers the entire program alone, and the partnering institutions/organizations share responsibility for the program's delivery and quality. The credential awarded may indicate the collaborative nature of the program.

Competency-Based Educational Program - outcome-based program that assesses a student's attainment of competencies as the sole means of determining whether the student earns a degree or a credential. Such programs may be organized around traditional course-based units (credit or clock hours) that students must earn to complete their educational program, or may depart from course-based units (credit or clock hours) to rely solely on the attainment of defined competencies. (SACSCOC)

Cooperative (Work Study) Program - academic program that provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government. *(IPEDS)*

Correspondence Education - education provided through one or more courses in which the institution provides instructional materials and examinations by mail or electronic transmission to students who are separated from the instruction. Interaction between the instructor and the student is not regular and substantive and is primarily initiated by the student. *(IPEDS)(Similar to SACSCOC)*

Credit for Prior Learning - college credit for the college-level knowledge and skills gained from non-college instructional programs or life experiences, including but not limited to employment, military experience, civic activities, and volunteer service. Credit is evaluated through nationally standardized exams in specific disciplines, challenge exams for specific courses at individual institutions, evaluations of non-college training programs, and individualized assessments.

Credit Hour - an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than: (1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10 to 12 weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in (1) for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. *(34 CFR 600.2)*

Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Program - instructional program that, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, uses direct assessment of student learning relying solely on the attainment of defined competencies, or recognizes the direct assessment of student learning by others. The assessment must be consistent with the accreditation of the institution or program using the results of the assessment. *(SACSCOC)*

Distance Learning Course - formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous.

Distance Learning Program - formal educational process in which the majority (more than 50%) of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVD's, and CD-ROMs if used as part of the distance learning course or program. *(SACSCOC definition of distance education)*

Dual Degree Program - academic program in which students study at two or more institutions and each institution grants a separate academic award bearing only its name, seal, and signature. (SACSCOC)

Embedded Program - consists of required courses of a lower-level degree or credential that are part of a higher-level degree or credential. Such programs usually do not admit students directly, and therefore, students may not be enrolled in these programs. Students are awarded a lower-level degree or credential as these programs serve as an exit option for students who do not complete the requirements for the higher-level degree or credential.

Extended Campus Program - academic program offered at any center, branch, campus, or other site at which postsecondary degree or non-degree work is offered, in addition to the parent campus. It refers to locations both within and outside an institution's area of geographic responsibility.

Joint Program - academic program in which students study at two or more institutions and the institutions grant a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the participating institutions. (SACSCOC)

Modularized Program - academic program in which the majority (more than 50%) of the coursework is offered in modules. (SACSCOC)

Module - standalone segment/component of a parent course for which content (description, requisites, outline, competencies, and activities/experiments) has been determined and credit assigned. The sum of constituent segments is equal to the credit of the parent course. Credit is awarded upon successful completion of all modules comprising the parent course.

Degrees and Credentials

Advanced Practice Doctorate - program of study beyond the master's degree designed to meet the workforce and applied research needs of a profession. It requires close cooperation between institutions and employers to ascertain employers' needs. The degree may or may not be necessary for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. It can be classified as either *doctor's degree—professional practice*, if it meets those criteria, or *doctor's degree—other* for IPEDS reporting.

Associate's Degree - award that normally requires at least 2 but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college work based on at least 60 credit hours. (*combination of IPEDS and SACSCOC*)

Bachelor's Degree - award that normally requires at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent. This includes all bachelor's degrees conferred in a five-year cooperative (work-

study) program and degrees in which the normal four years of work are completed in three years. (*combination of IPEDS and SACSCOC*)

Degree - award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition for the successful completion of a program of studies. (*IPEDS*)

Doctor's Degree – highest award a student can earn for graduate study. (*IPEDS*)

Doctor's Degree – Other – doctor's degree that does not meet the definition of a doctorate of research/scholarship or a doctorate of advanced practice. (*IPEDS*)

Doctor's Degree – Professional Practice – doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. The degree is awarded after a period of study such that the total time to the degree, including both pre-professional and professional preparation, equals at least six full-time equivalent academic years. (*IPEDS*)

Doctor's Degree Research/Scholarship - a Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. (*IPEDS*)

Master's Degree - an award that requires the successful completion of a program of study of at least the full-time equivalent of 1 but not more than 2 academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree. This degree requires the successful completion of at least 30 semester hours beyond the bachelor's degree. (*combination of IPEDS and SACSCOC*)

Professional Science Master's Degree – a type of master's degree that consists of two years of non-thesis academic training in science, mathematics, or technology and contains a professional component that may include internships and cross-training in business, management, regulatory affairs, computer applications, and communications. The program is designed with the input of one or more employers.

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate – an award that requires completion of an organized program of study beyond the bachelor's degree. It is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree, but does not meet the requirements of a master's degree. (*IPEDS*)

Post-Doctor's Degree-Professional Practice Certificate – an award that provides advanced training and enhances knowledge in important areas of clinical or research specialization and specialty practice for individuals who hold a professional degree.

Post-Master's Certificate – an award that requires completion of an organized program beyond the master's degree, but does not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctoral level. (*IPEDS*)

Postsecondary Certificate or Diploma (at least one but fewer than two academic years) – an award that requires completion of an academic program below the baccalaureate degree in at least one but fewer than two full-time equivalent academic years, or is designed for completion in at least 30 but fewer than 60 semester or trimester credit hours, or in at least 45 but less than 90 quarter credit hours, or in at least 900 but less than 1,800 contact or clock hours. (*IPEDS*)

Postsecondary Certificate or Diploma (at least two but fewer than four academic years) – an award that requires completion of an academic program below the baccalaureate degree in at least two but fewer than four full-time equivalent academic years, or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 semester or trimester credit hours, or in at least 90 but less than 180 quarter credit hours, or in at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact or clock hours. (*IPEDS*)

Undergraduate Certificate or Diploma (9-29 semester credit hours) – A program of study that requires completion of an academic program below the baccalaureate degree in less than one academic year and is designed for completion between 9-29 semester or trimester credit hours, or between 13-44 quarter credit hours, or between 300-899 contact or clock hours, by a student enrolled full time

Undergraduate Certificate or Diploma (less than 9 semester credit hours) – a program of study that requires completion of an academic program below the baccalaureate degree in less than one academic year and is designed for completion in less than 9 semester or trimester credit hours, or in less than 13 quarter credit hours, or in less than 300 contact or clock hours, by a student enrolled full time.

Specialist Degree – an award that normally requires 60 semester hours of concentrated and approved graduate coursework beyond the bachelor's degree. It is generally offered in the field of education to acknowledge completion of advanced graduate study designed to help individuals meet licensure requirements or develop additional knowledge and skill beyond the master's degree but not at the doctoral level.