



The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement

Adopted by the College Delegate Assembly
December 2017

SECTION 8: Student Achievement

Student learning and student success are at the core of the mission of all institutions of higher learning. Effective institutions focus on the design and improvement of educational experiences to enhance student learning and support student learning outcomes for its educational programs. To meet the goals of educational programs, an institution provides appropriate academic and student services to support student success.

1. **The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success.** (*Student achievement*) [CR]

2. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:
 - a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.
(*Student outcomes: educational programs*)
 - b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs.
(*Student outcomes: general education*)
 - c. Academic and student services that support student success.
(*Student outcomes: academic and student services*)

SECTION 9: Educational Program Structure and Content

Collegiate-level educational programs emphasize both breadth and depth of student learning. The structure and content of a program challenges students to integrate knowledge and develop skills of analysis and inquiry.

General education is an integral component of an undergraduate degree program through which students encounter the basic content and methodology of the principal areas of knowledge. Undergraduate and graduate degrees develop advanced expertise in an integrated understanding of one or more academic disciplines or concentrations.

The institution is responsible for delivering an appropriate portion of the academic experiences applicable to the degrees or credentials awarded.

- 1. Educational programs (a) embody a coherent course of study, (b) are compatible with the stated mission and goals of the institution, and (c) are based on fields of study appropriate to higher education.** (*Program content*) [CR]
- 2. The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. The institution provides an explanation of equivalencies when using units other than semester credit hours. The institution provides an appropriate justification for all degree programs and combined degree programs that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit.** (*Program length*) [CR]
- 3. The institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the undergraduate level that:**
 - (a) is based on a coherent rationale.**

(b) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree program. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent.

(c) ensures breadth of knowledge. These credit hours include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/ fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/ mathematics. These courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession.

(General education requirements) [CR]

4. At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for an undergraduate degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. *(Institutional credits for an undergraduate degree)*
5. At least one-third of the credit hours required for a graduate or a post-baccalaureate professional degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. *(Institutional credits for a graduate/professional degree)*
6. Post-baccalaureate professional degree programs and graduate degree programs are progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs, and are structured (a) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (b) to ensure engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training. *(Post-baccalaureate rigor and curriculum)*
7. The institution publishes requirements for its undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate professional programs, as applicable. The requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. *(Program requirements)*