
Principles of Good Practice in Overseas International Education Programs for Non-U.S. Nationals

*August 2012/January
2023*

Developed in cooperation with

COUNCIL OF REGIONAL ACCREDITING COMMISSIONS

Preface

The Presidents/Executive Directors of the regional institutional accrediting bodies of the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions subscribe to the following principles of good practice in overseas international education programs for non-U.S. nationals. Each regional institutional accrediting body will apply these principles consistent with its own accrediting standards.

Background

This policy is designed to provide the framework for the review of overseas instructional locations, including branch campuses, of affiliated institutions at which credit-bearing programs are offered to non-U.S. nationals. It applies both to those institutions which have established their own instructional sites abroad and to those which offer instruction through a contractual relationship with a non-accredited entity. Non-credit courses or courses offered primarily to U.S. nationals, such as study-abroad programs, are not encompassed by this policy.

The principles of good practice follows the basic assumption that regardless of the program's location overseas, the accredited institution is responsible for the program's quality in accordance with the Commission's Accreditation Standards and Policies. The accredited institution also bears the responsibility to assure that any international entity does not claim for itself or infer any accredited status other than that held by the accredited institution.

Implementation

It is the responsibility of an institution to notify the Commission about its intention to establish an overseas program before it becomes operational. Institutions who seek the establishment of an additional location overseas should also refer to the Commission's *Policy on Substantive Change* and *Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Accredited Institutions* for further guidance on relevant requirements.

Principles of Good Practice

Institutional Mission

1. The international program is rooted in the U.S. institution's stated mission and purposes and reflects any special social, religious, and ethical elements of that mission.
2. The faculty, administration, and governing board of the U.S. institution understand the relationship of the international program to the institution's stated mission and purposes.

Authorization

3. The international program has received all appropriate internal approvals where required, including system administration, government bodies, and accrediting associations.
4. The international program has received all appropriate external approvals where required, including system administration, government bodies, and accrediting associations.
5. The U.S. institution documents the accepted legal basis for its operations in the host country.

Instructional Program

6. The U.S. institution specifies the educational needs to be met by its international program.
7. The content of the international educational program is subject to review by the U.S. institution's faculty.
8. The international education program reflects the educational emphasis of the U.S. institution, including a commitment to general education when appropriate.
9. The educational program is taught by faculty with appropriate academic preparation and language proficiencies whose credentials have been reviewed by the U.S. institution.
10. The standard of student achievement in the international program is equivalent to the standard of student achievement on the U.S. campus.
11. The international educational program where possible and appropriate is adapted to the culture of the host country.

Resources

12. The institution currently uses and assures the continuing use of adequate physical facilities for its international educational program, including classrooms, offices, libraries, and laboratories, and provides access to computer facilities where appropriate.
13. The U.S. institution has demonstrated its financial capacity to underwrite the international program without diminishing its financial support of the U.S. campus. Financing of the international program is incorporated into the regular budgeting and auditing process.

Admissions and Records

14. International students admitted abroad meet admissions requirements similar to those used for international students admitted to the U.S. campus, including appropriate language proficiencies.
15. The U.S. institution exercises control over recruitment and admission of students in the international program.
16. All international students admitted to the U.S. program are recognized as students of the U.S. institution.
17. All college-level academic credits earned in the international program are applicable to degree programs at the U.S. institution.

18. The U.S. institution maintains official records of academic credit earned in its international program.
19. The official transcript of record issued by the U.S. institution follows the institution's practices in identifying by site or through course numbering the credits earned in its off-campus programs.

Students

20. The U.S. institution assures that its institutional program provides a supportive environment for student development, consistent with the culture and mores of the international setting.
21. Students in the international program are fully informed as to services that will or will not be provided.

Control and Administration

22. The international program is controlled by the U.S. institution.
23. The teaching and administrative staff abroad responsible for the educational quality of the international program are accountable to a resident administrator of the U.S. institution.
24. The U.S. institution formally and regularly ~~reviews~~ evaluates all faculty and staff associated with its international program.
25. The U.S. institution assesses its international program on a regular basis in light of institutional goals and incorporates these outcomes into its regular planning process.

Ethics and Public Disclosure

26. The U.S. institution can provide to its accrediting agencies upon request a full accounting of the financing of its international program, including an accounting of funds designated for third parties within any contractual relationship.
27. The U.S. institution assures that all media presentations about the international program are factual, fair, and accurate.
28. The U.S. institution's primary catalog describes its international program.
29. The U.S. institution does not sell or franchise the rights to its name or its accreditation.
30. The U.S. institution assures that all references to transfer of academic credit reflects the reality of U.S. practice.
31. The U.S. institution assures that if U.S. accreditation is mentioned in materials related to the international program, the role and purpose of U.S. accreditation is fairly and accurately explained within these materials.

Contractual Arrangements

32. The official contract is in English and the primary language of the contracting institution.
33. The contract specifically provides that the U.S. institution controls the international program in conformity with these guidelines and the requirements of the U.S. institution's accreditations.

34. The U.S. institution confirms that the foreign party to the contract is legally qualified to enter into the contract.
35. The contract clearly states the legal jurisdiction under which its provisions will be interpreted will be that of the U.S. institution.
36. Conditions for program termination specified in the contract include appropriate protection for enrolled students.
37. All contractual arrangements must be consistent with the ~~regional commissions' document, "Commission's Policy on Contractual Relationships ~~W~~with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations."~~

Adopted February 1990; Edited October 2006, January 2007, August 2012; Revised January 2023

~~--- end --- **Adopted February 12, 1990 by the Executive Directors
of the Regional Institutional Accrediting Bodies:**~~

~~Middle States Commission on Higher Education~~

~~Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of
Schools and Colleges~~

~~Higher Learning Commission of North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities~~

~~Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools~~

~~Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges~~

~~Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges~~