



**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

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**Policy on
Teach-Out Plans and Teach-Out Agreements**

Federal regulations implementing the Higher Education Opportunity Act require that accrediting agencies require a teach-out plan from an institution in the event of any of the following:

- a) the Department of Education notifies the accreditation agency of an emergency action or action to limit, suspend or terminate institutional participation in federal financial aid against the institution; or
- b) if the Commission acts to withdraw, terminate, or suspend the accreditation of an institution; or
- c) if the institution notifies the Commission that the institution intends to cease operations; or
- d) if a state or other government authorizing authority notifies the accrediting agency that an institution's license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked; or
- e) the institution notifies the Commission that it intends to close one or more locations that provide 100% of at least one degree program; or
- f) An institution will cease instruction in one or more degree programs before all students have a reasonable opportunity to graduate.

Should any of the above occur, the institution should immediately contact Commission staff regarding the development of a teach-out plan. A teach-out plan is a written plan that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution of higher education ceases to operate or ceases instruction in one or more degree programs before all students have completed their program of study.

In most cases a teach-out plan will include a teach-out agreement. For these purposes, a *teach-out agreement* is defined as “a written agreement between accredited institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students if one of those institutions stops offering an educational program before all students enrolled in that program complete the program.” This policy has been developed to implement that requirement for those institutions which determine to enter into such agreements.

An agreement will be approved if it:

1. is consistent with applicable standards (See Standard 4.11);
2. is offered by an institution that has the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that provided by the closed institution
3. provides for the equitable treatment of students by ensuring that
 - Students are provided, insofar as possible without additional charge, all of the instruction promised by the closed institution prior to its closure but not provided to the students because of the closure;
 - specifies additional charges, if any, and provides for notification to the students of any additional charges; and
 - The teach-out institution is geographically proximate to the closed institution and can demonstrate compatibility of its program structure and scheduling to that of the closed institution.

If the Commission approves a teach-out plan that includes a program that is accredited by another recognized accrediting agency, it will notify that agency of the plan's approval.

In the event that an institution plans to teach-out its students prior to closure, the institution is required to submit a teach-out plan to the Commission for its approval prior to implementation. The plan will be approved if it is with an institution accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency, and

1. is consistent with applicable standards (see Standard 4.11)
2. provides that the institution will maintain the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that promised to the students upon enrollment;
3. demonstrates the institution's stability and the ability to carry out its mission and meet all obligations to existing students; and
4. offers the program to students without additional charge over what had been previously in place.

In the event of a planned closing of a candidate or accredited institution, the Commission will work with the U.S. Department of Education and the appropriate State agency, to the extent feasible, to ensure that students are given reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional charge.

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