

## Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Support Services

The institution offers instructional programs, library and learning support services, and student support services aligned with its mission. The institution's programs are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate for higher education. The institution assesses its educational quality through methods accepted in higher education, makes the results of its assessments available to the public, and uses the results to improve educational quality and institutional effectiveness. The institution defines and incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional programs and student and learning support services offered in the name of the institution.

### A. Instructional Programs

- 1. All instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education, are offered in fields of study consistent with the institution's mission, are appropriate to higher education, and culminate in student attainment of identified student learning outcomes, and achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education programs. (ER 9 and ER 11)**

#### *POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

The college catalog-program descriptions show that programs align to the mission, are appropriate to higher education, and culminate in student attainment of learning outcomes and achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, and/or transfer;

Program brochures and web pages that describe the same;

Curriculum policies or processes that demonstrate consideration of consistency with the institution's mission;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

(Data on student degree/certificate completion, transfer, and job placement are already included in the ISER section on Student Achievement and do not need to be repeated here as evidence that programs culminate in achievement of degrees, etc.).

#### *REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- All course and program offerings, whether traditional or distance education and/or correspondence education (DE/CE), align with the stated mission of the institution.
- Course and program offerings are appropriate for post-secondary education.
- Program descriptions include expected student learning outcomes and list the degrees and certificates that can be earned.
- The institution can supply data that students actually achieve degrees and certificates.

#### *FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- The baccalaureate degree field of study aligns with the institutional mission.
- Student demand for the baccalaureate degree program demonstrates its correlation with the institutional mission.

2. Faculty, including full time, part time, and adjunct faculty, regularly engage in ensuring that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. In exercising collective ownership over the design and improvement of the learning experience, faculty conduct systematic and inclusive program review, using student achievement data, in order to continuously improve instructional courses and programs, thereby ensuring program currency, improving teaching and learning strategies, and promoting student success.

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Documentation of the process for curriculum development, review, and approval—the workflow and persons responsible—for courses and for programs;

Approved course outlines of record that contain course descriptions, expected course learning outcomes, and course content at appropriate educational levels (pre-collegiate, lower division, or upper division);

Documentation of a rigorous review process for DE courses to ensure they meet expectations for effective DE teaching methods and regular and substantive interactions;

Documentation of a regular program review process, with timelines, workflow, and persons responsible;

Completed program review reports, with analysis of student learning assessment results and analysis of student achievement data, leading to improvement plans, and requests for resource allocations if needed;

Minutes from departmental, divisional, or other meetings where program reviews, program data, and improvement plans are discussed;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- Faculty are involved in curriculum development for courses and programs.
- Faculty ensure that course content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards of higher education.
- Faculty evaluate and discuss the relationship between teaching methodologies and student performance on a regular basis.
- Criteria used in program review include relevancy, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and planning for the future.
- The program review process is consistently followed for all college programs, regardless of the type of program (collegiate, developmental, etc.) and mode of delivery.
- Program review includes analysis of student achievement data (course completions and degree/certificate completions) and student learning data (SLO assessment results).
- The results of program review are used in institutional planning.
- Successive program reviews document improvements that have resulted from plans or goals developed in prior program reviews.

3. The institution identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures. The institution has officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that includes learning outcomes from the institution's officially approved course outline<sup>15</sup>.

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

- Approved course outlines of record, which contain student learning outcomes and perhaps suggested assessment methods in broad terms;
- Documentation of a regular cycle of learning outcomes assessment for courses and programs—with workflow, timelines, and persons responsible;
- Program review reports that contain assessment results/data and analysis;

<sup>15</sup> In preparation for the peer review visit, the institution should identify a random sampling of 5% of active courses for review. Peer reviewers on the visiting team will review officially approved course outlines of record (CORs) and syllabi for these courses to ensure they contain student learning outcomes (SLOs) and to ensure that the SLOs in the syllabi match the SLOs in the CORs.

- Sample assessment instruments and results from courses or programs;
- Written instructions or a template that guides faculty to include student learning outcomes among the course information on a syllabus;
- Syllabi from courses in a broad range of programs and disciplines, all containing SLOs that match the SLOs in the approved course outlines of record;
- Documentation of a regular process for review of syllabi—with timelines and persons responsible—to ensure syllabi contain accurate course information, including course SLOs;
- And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution has established a procedure for identifying student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees.
- Student learning outcomes are in place for the institution's courses, programs, certificates and degrees.
- All faculty regularly assess learning outcomes in courses and programs.
- Current, officially approved course outlines include student learning outcomes.
- All syllabi include student learning outcomes as listed on the officially approved course outlines.
- Learning outcomes for courses and programs offered as DE/CE match the learning outcomes for the same courses and programs when taught in traditional mode.
- Institutions have structures in place to verify all students receive a course syllabus.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- Learning outcomes for baccalaureate courses, programs, and degrees are identified and assessed consistent with institutional processes.

4. **If the institution offers pre-collegiate level curriculum, it distinguishes that curriculum from college level curriculum and directly supports students in learning the knowledge and skills necessary to advance to and succeed in college level curriculum.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

The college catalog;

Documents that record course sequences from pre-collegiate to college-level;

Pre-collegiate prerequisite courses noted in catalog descriptions of college-level courses;

College-level course outlines of record that identify necessary prerequisite skills or knowledge, and pre-collegiate course outlines of record that contain the requisite skills as outcomes;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- Criteria and processes have been developed and are used for decision-making in regards to offering developmental, pre-collegiate, continuing and community education, short-term training, or contract education.
- The college has a process and criteria for determining the appropriate credit type, delivery mode, and location of its courses and programs.
- There is alignment between pre-collegiate level curriculum and college level curriculum in order to ensure clear and efficient pathways for students.
- Catalog information for courses clearly delineates whether a course is pre-collegiate or college-level. Course sequencing from pre-collegiate to college-level is clearly described. Course numbering protocols indicate the level of courses.

5. **The institution's degrees and programs follow practices common to American higher education, including appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. The institution ensures that minimum degree requirements are 60 semester credits or equivalent at the associate level, and 120 credits or equivalent at the baccalaureate level. (ER 12)**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Catalog pages that accurately and clearly describe the number of credits required for degrees and certificates;

Course and/or program development, review, and approval procedure that contains criteria used by faculty and others for determining appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning;

Policy on the minimum number of credits required for a degree or certificate;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution demonstrates the quality of its instruction by following practices common to American higher education and has policies and procedures in place to define these practices.
- The college follows established criteria to decide the breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning of each program it offers.
- All associate degrees at the college require successful completion of a minimum of 60 semester credits.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- A minimum of 40 semester credits or equivalent or total upper division coursework, including the major and general education, is required. The minimum total number of semester credits required is 120.
- The academic credit awarded for upper division courses within baccalaureate programs is clearly distinguished from that of lower division courses.
- The instructional level and curriculum of the upper division courses in the baccalaureate degree are comparable to those commonly accepted among like degrees in higher education and reflect the higher levels of knowledge and intellectual inquiry expected at the baccalaureate level.

- Student expectations, including learning outcomes, assignments, and examinations of the upper division courses demonstrate the rigor commonly accepted among like degrees in higher education.
- The program length and delivery mode of instruction are appropriate for the expected level of rigor.

**6. The institution schedules courses in a manner that allows students to complete certificate and degree programs within a period of time consistent with established expectations in higher education. (ER 9)**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Enrollment management plans that take into consideration time to completion and program pathways;  
 Student achievement data reports that evaluate the effectiveness of enrollment management and pathways plans;  
 And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution schedules classes in alignment with student needs and program pathways, allowing students to complete programs within a reasonable period of time.
- The institution uses data to evaluate the degree to which scheduling facilitates completion for their diverse students' needs.
- The institution reflects on time-to-completion data in program review and institutional evaluation, and devises plans to improve completion rates.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- Baccalaureate courses are scheduled to ensure that students will complete those programs in a reasonable period of time.

**7. The institution effectively uses delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services that reflect the diverse and changing needs of its students, in support of equity in success for all students.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Institutional reports on diverse and changing needs of students and resulting plans for developing or improving delivery modes, teaching methodologies, and learning support services;  
 Policy and/or procedure for DE/CE course and/or program approval;  
 Minutes from committee meeting when DE/CE approval procedure is followed;  
 Course outlines of record and syllabi from courses that are taught both in traditional mode and in DE/CE mode;  
 Examples of DE/CE course materials, assignments, activities, and assessments;  
 Institutional evaluation or program review of DE/CE and related learning support services;  
 Program reviews that disaggregate student learning assessment data and student achievement data by mode of delivery. When achievement gaps are noted between delivery modes, program reviews include plans to improve teaching methodologies and/or learning support services in support of *equity* in success;  
 And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution demonstrates it understands and is meeting the needs and learning styles of its students, by identifying students by subpopulations.
- The institution has established protocols to determine the appropriate delivery modes for its diverse student populations.
- The institution has established and follows a policy and/or procedure for approving courses and programs for DE/CE. The procedure ensures that DE/CE courses and programs comply with federal definitions of distance education (with regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included as part of a student's grade) and correspondence education (online activities are primarily "paperwork related," including reading posted materials, posting homework and completing exams, and interaction with the instructor is initiated by the student as needed).

- The college regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its delivery modes and uses results to guide improvements.
- The college regularly assesses the changing needs of its students and uses the results of such assessments to plan or improve delivery modes, teaching methodologies, and learning support services.
- The college provides equitable learning support services for DE/CE students and traditional on-campus students.

**8. The institution validates the effectiveness of department-wide course and/or program examinations, where used, including direct assessment of prior learning. The institution ensures that processes are in place to reduce test bias and enhance reliability.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Documented procedures for department-wide course or program assessments and for evaluating students' prior learning;

In-house or external reports with data analysis that verifies that department-wide assessments are free of bias;

Documentation of the existence of an IRB at the institution, one of whose tasks is to verify that department-wide assessments are free of bias;

If the college uses third-party assessments, it can provide verification from the vendor that the assessments are free of bias;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- Programs and departments have clear structures in place to determine pre-requisite criteria and to ensure their consistent application.
- If appropriate, programs and departments have protocols to evaluate students' prior learning.
- The institution has established protocols to ensure the use of unbiased, valid measures of student learning.

**9. The institution awards course credit, degrees and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education. If the institution offers courses based on clock hours, it follows federal standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions. (ER 10)**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Faculty documents that show which course-level assessments/assignments link to which student learning outcomes. Documentation may be noted on syllabi, in gradebooks, or on other documents;

When appropriate, course outlines of record that connect course level SLOs to program level SLOs;

A policy or other document that explains the meanings of grades;

A policy and/or procedures that assure award of credit for educational experiences is based on achievement of stated student learning outcomes;

Course outlines that state a minimum of hours of work per unit of credit awarded;

A policy or other document that verifies the institution follows federal standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution can demonstrate that at the course level, passing grades on assignments or exams link directly to students' demonstration of achieving learning outcomes.
- The institution can demonstrate that course credit is awarded based on students' demonstration of achieving learning outcomes.
- The institution awards credits consistent with accepted norms in higher education.
- The achievement of stated programmatic learning outcomes is the basis for awarding degrees and certificates.
- The institution demonstrates that it follows federal standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions in the awarding of credit.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- Baccalaureate degrees and the course credit in those programs are based on student learning outcomes. These outcomes are consistent with generally accepted norms and equivalencies in higher education, especially in relation to upper division courses.

**10. The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of**

**its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission. (ER 10)**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

- A policy on Transfer of Credit;
- Documented procedures for review of transcripts, including persons responsible (by position);
- Catalog pages that describe transfer of credit;
- Other documents, such as a Student Handbook, that describe transfer of credit;
- Catalog pages and other documents that describe transfer services available to students;
- Articulation agreements or transfer agreements with other institutions;
- And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution has approved policies and procedures to address the transfer of classes from and to other institutions, and these policies and procedures are clearly communicated to students.
- Transfer of coursework policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.
- The institution has developed, implemented, and evaluated articulation agreements with institutions where patterns of students enrollment have been identified.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- Policies for student transfer into the baccalaureate program ensure that all program requirements are fulfilled, including completion of the minimum required semester units, prerequisites, experiential activities, and general education.

**11. The institution includes in all of its programs, student learning outcomes, appropriate to the program level, in communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, the ability to engage diverse perspectives, and other program-specific learning outcomes.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

- A policy or other document that identifies the above as institutional learning outcomes, or that includes the above within general education (GE) outcomes;
- Course outlines of record that include related institutional or GE learning outcomes among course level learning outcomes;
- Program or degree information in the college catalog or other documents that include learning outcomes related to the above;
- Program reviews or other assessment reports that document student achievement of the above learning outcomes;
- Institutional evaluation or planning documents that report and/or broadly analyze student achievement of the above learning outcomes;
- Educational planning documents or templates (commonly used by academic advisers) that include all required courses for a degree, including courses that satisfy institutional (or GE) learning outcomes;
- A transcript evaluation process for graduation applicants that assures student achievement of the above learning outcomes;
- And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution has adopted programmatic learning outcomes in communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills,

ethical reasoning, the ability to engage diverse perspectives, and other program-specific learning outcomes.

- These learning outcomes are regularly assessed and results are used to drive program improvements.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- Student learning outcomes in the baccalaureate program are consistent with generally accepted norms in higher education and reflect the higher levels expected at the baccalaureate level.

**12. The institution requires of all of its degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy for both associate and baccalaureate degrees that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on faculty expertise, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum, based upon student learning outcomes and competencies appropriate to the degree level. The learning outcomes include a student's preparation for and acceptance of responsible participation in civil society, skills for lifelong learning and application of learning, and a broad comprehension of the development of knowledge, practice, and interpretive approaches in the arts and humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences. (ER 12)**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

- A policy or other document that states the institution's general education (GE) philosophy;
- Catalog pages that outline GE requirements for graduation, including GE requirements for the baccalaureate if the institution offers a BA, BS, or Bachelor of Applied Science;
- A Curriculum Handbook or other procedural document that outlines an approval process, including persons responsible, for accepting courses as satisfying GE requirements;
- Course outlines of record for GE approved courses that include relevant GE learning outcomes;
- Educational planning documents or templates (commonly used by academic advisers) that include all required courses for a degree;
- A transcript evaluation process for graduation applicants that ensures completion of GE requirements;
- Program reviews or other assessment reports that analyze and evaluate student achievement of GE learning outcomes;
- Institutional evaluation or planning documents that report and/or broadly analyze student achievement of GE learning outcomes;
- And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution has a faculty developed rationale for general education that serves as the basis for inclusion of courses in general education and is listed in the catalog.
- The institution has a general education philosophy, which reflects its degree requirements.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- At least 36 semester units or equivalent of lower division general education is required, including at least nine semester units or equivalent of upper division general education coursework.
- At least nine semester units or equivalent of upper division general education coursework is required.
- The general education requirements are integrated and distributed to both lower and upper division courses.
- The general education requirements are distributed across the major subject areas for general education; the distribution appropriately captures the baccalaureate level student learning outcomes and competencies.



**13. All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. The identification of specialized courses in an area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core is based upon student learning outcomes and competencies, and includes mastery, at the appropriate degree level, of key theories and practices within the field of study.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Catalog information for each degree and certificate, including required courses within the discipline and/or related disciplines;

Other publications that contain the same information for each degree;

Appropriate level student learning outcomes recorded in the course outline of record for each course in the degree pathway;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- All programs include a focused study on one area of inquiry or discipline and includes key theories and practices appropriate for the certificate of achievement or associate's degree level.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- The baccalaureate degree program includes a focused study on one area of inquiry or discipline at the baccalaureate level and includes key theories and practices appropriate to the baccalaureate level.

**14. Graduates completing career-technical certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment standards and other applicable standards and preparation for external licensure and certification.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Catalog information for each degree and certificate, including required courses, preparation for external licensure or certification, and career opportunities;

CTE program websites;

Reports of licensure pass rates;

CTE program reviews or similar reports that include assessment data on student demonstration of technical and professional competencies;

Minutes of CTE faculty/professional advisory groups;

Course outlines of record of CTE and technical courses;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution verifies and maintains currency of employment opportunities and other external factors in all of its career-technical disciplines.
- The institution determines competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes based upon faculty expertise and input from industry representatives.
- The institution assesses student achievement of technical and professional competencies as captured in learning outcomes of career-technical courses and programs.
- CTE faculty and professional advisory groups discuss current employment standards and revise curriculum as needed.

- The institution's website maintains current information of external requirements and other factors related to career-technical degree and certificate programs and current information about employment opportunities.

*FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:*

- The CTE baccalaureate degree ensures students will be able to meet employment standards and licensure or certification as required in the field of study.

**15. When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Documented procedures for program elimination process;

If a program has been eliminated, the college can provide documentation that it has followed its procedures;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The institution has established procedures regarding program elimination, including the process for which enrolled students will be able to complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.
- Program elimination procedure is clearly communicated to students.

**16. The institution regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and community education courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location. The institution systematically strives to improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students.**

*POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE:*

Program review calendar and schedule for report submissions;

Program review reports that document plans for improvements and improvements that have been accomplished;

Institutional planning and evaluation documents that include plans for improvements and reports on improvements that have been accomplished, with accompanying data on student learning and student achievement;

And/or other documents that demonstrate the institution is aligned with this Standard.

*REVIEW CRITERIA:*

- The college has a process to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its courses and programs.
- The criteria used in program review include relevancy, appropriateness, and achievement of student learning outcomes, currency, and planning for the future.
- The program review process is consistently followed for all college programs, regardless of the type of program (collegiate, developmental, etc.).
- The results of program evaluation are used in institutional planning.

- Changes/improvements in programs have occurred as a result of the consideration of and are evaluated for their effectiveness.