



*\*The Call for Comments period has closed. The Commission staff are processing the comments at this time and will make appropriate revisions to the document. The revised document will go out to our Membership for vote March 30-April 17, 2026.*

## Policy Call for Comments (January 12 - 30, 2026)

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education invites comment on the revised *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation (Fifteenth Edition)*.

**Title of Policy:** *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation (Fifteenth Edition)*

**Purpose of Policy:** The Mid-Atlantic Region Commission on Higher Education (MARCHE), doing business as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), is committed to ensuring that our standards continue to drive innovation and best support our institutions and their missions. In addition, our standards must remain aligned with our policies and procedures as well as federal regulation.

**Review Type:** Substantive Revision of Standards

**Review Description:** The Commission has proposed revisions to its *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation*. The document is attached to this summary for review.

The periodic review of *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation* is required by both federal regulation and Commission policy and procedures and ensures alignment with federal regulations and the Commission's own policies and procedures. The standards most recently underwent comprehensive revisions in 2014 and 2023.

In 2014, significant revisions included incorporating less prescriptive expectations, a stronger emphasis on student learning and outcomes, and reducing the Commission's standards from 14 to seven. In 2023, significant revisions included an enhanced emphasis on utilizing data to inform decision-making and institutional improvement, while remaining student and mission centered. In addition, the requirements of affiliation were reduced from 15 to four, and the *Evidence Expectations by Standard* companion to the standards was introduced.

The review process reflects the Commission's commitment to self-reflection and continuous improvement. It also is a practice upon which the Commission has relied, much like our institutions, to improve its work and ensure transparency, responsiveness, and integrity for the benefit of students, institutions, and the public.

All constituents, including institutions, students, and the public have opportunities to review proposed revisions, provide feedback, and engage throughout the process. We invite feedback through a variety of forums during this process, including the listening sessions held on November 5, 2025, December 12, 2025, January 5, 2026, and January 6, 2026, and through this call for comment process. In addition, constituents provided written comments following the November 5, 2025, listening session.

As always, the Commission is committed to ensuring a smooth transition for institutions between editions of the standards and continuity in self-study and other accreditation processes.

Institutions undergoing self-study during a standards revision will continue to use the standards in effect at the time that they began their self-study. Institutions that are providing follow-up must submit evidence under the standards in effect at the time of the request for follow-up. The proposed standards would become effective July 1, 2026. Institutions entering Self-Study Institute (SSI) and those with follow-up actions dated on or after July 1, 2026, would use the approved standards resulting from this review.

**Summary of Proposed Revisions:** The proposed revisions represent a deliberate shift toward enhanced clarity, reduced redundancy, and stronger alignment with current higher education developments, while remaining centered on institutional mission, academic rigor, student success, and continuous improvement.

The revisions simplify and streamline both standards and evidence expectations in response to constituent feedback. Building on prior revisions that reduced the number of standards and requirements of affiliation, the proposed draft further eliminates redundancies and duplicative reporting by removing all criteria and integrating the criteria and evidence under the standard. This eliminated evidence duplication across standards and allowed for the visual presentation of the standard and evidence to be presented differently.

In addition, the revisions now address additional areas that drive innovation and support students, institutions, and their missions, including:

- Transfer credit and student mobility
- Campus and student safety
- Information security strategy and infrastructure, including artificial intelligence
- Student success initiatives
- High-impact practices
- Academic integrity
- Institutional planning
- Workforce development, continuing education, or other similar initiatives

Finally, the proposed revisions offer greater clarity and support for meaningful assessment with clarifications on the use of data to support decision-making in addition to language and syntax adjustments. In the revision, we celebrate the following additional changes:

- Clarified that data should be disaggregated and analyzed as appropriate to institutional mission;
- Specified reporting timeframes for certain types of data;
- Clarified evidence should consider a diversity of ideas and perspectives; and
- Adjusted language and syntax to ensure standards remain clear and consistent

**Link to Provide Comments:** <https://www.msche.org/policies/20260112-call-for-comments-standards/>

**Deadline for Comments:** January 30, 2026

**Next steps:** Your feedback is critical!

- Call for comments: We are conducting a call for comments on our standards in accordance with Commission policy [Review of Commission Standards, Requirements of Affiliation, and Policies](#) and federal regulation 34 CFR § 602.21 *Review of Standards*. The proposed standards will be further revised as appropriate based on the feedback collected through this call.
- Commission discussion: At the March 11-12, 2026, meeting, the Commission will receive a report on feedback received through the comment period and will consider additional edits at that time.
- Institutional CEOs or Presidents vote: CEOs or Presidents from our institutions will vote to approve the revised *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation (Fifteenth Edition)* from March 30 – April 17, 2026, in accordance with the Commission’s policy [Review of Commission Standards, Requirements of Affiliation, and Policies](#).
- Commission vote: The final document will be presented for review and approval by the Commission at its June 24 – 25, 2026, meeting. Upon approval, the revised standards will become effective July 1, 2026, and apply to institutions entering Self-Study Institute in the fall of 2026.

**Questions:** Any questions about the draft standards should be directed to [policy@msche.org](mailto:policy@msche.org). Any questions about accessing the comment form or MSCHE website should be directed to [support@msche.org](mailto:support@msche.org).

# ***Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation Revision***

**Call for Comments Draft | January 12, 2026**

## **1 Minimum Requirements**

2 An institution interested in accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher  
3 Education (MSCHE) is required to demonstrate that it meets minimum requirements. In  
4 determining eligibility, the Commission considers an institution's legal authority to  
5 operate or licensure, standing with other accreditors, operational status, mission and  
6 related goals, governance and administrative structures, financial resources, and  
7 certifications of information. The minimum requirements are further defined in  
8 Commission policy and procedures.

## **9 Requirements of Affiliation**

10 To achieve and maintain MSCHE accreditation, an institution must demonstrate that it  
11 meets our requirements of affiliation. Compliance is expected to be continuous and will  
12 be validated periodically, typically at the time of institutional self-study and during any  
13 other evaluation of the institution's compliance. Once eligibility is established, an  
14 institution then must demonstrate on an ongoing basis that it meets the standards for  
15 accreditation.

16 1. The institution is authorized or licensed to operate as a postsecondary  
17 educational institution and to award postsecondary degrees; it provides written  
18 documentation demonstrating both Authorization or licensure is from an  
19 appropriate governmental organization or agency as required by each of the  
20 jurisdictions, regions, or countries in which the institution operates.

21 Institutions that offer only postsecondary certificates, diplomas, or licenses are  
22 not eligible for accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher  
23 Education.

24        2. The institution is operational, with students actively enrolled in its degree  
25        programs.

26        3. For institutions pursuing candidate for accreditation status or the grant of  
27        accreditation, the institution will graduate at least one class before the team visit  
28        for the grant of accreditation takes place, unless the institution can demonstrate  
29        to the satisfaction of the Commission that the lack of graduates does not  
30        compromise its ability to demonstrate that students have achieved appropriate  
31        learning outcomes.

32        4. The institution must communicate with the Commission in English, both orally  
33        and in writing, including all accreditation materials to support the multi-level  
34        accreditation decision-making process.

## Standards for Accreditation

### **Standard I: Mission and GoalsGovernance**

The institution is effectively governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals, defines its purpose within the context of higher education, serve its students and other constituencies, and consistently improve outcomes, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission. The institution has a legally constituted governing board that exercises fiduciary responsibility for the institution, and is ultimately accountable for the academic quality, integrity, planning, and fiscal well-being of the institution.

### **Standard II: Ethics and Integrity**

Ethics and, integrity, and a safe environment for learning and teaching are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

## **Standard III: Design, Delivery, and Assessment of the Student Learning Experience**

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all credential levels (program, certificate, and degree), regardless of instructional modality, program pace/schedule, or setting. All student learning experiences (credit or non-credit), regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, credential level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations designed, delivered, and regularly assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are rigorous and effective in teaching, qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do, sufficient in number, and provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation. Assessment of student learning and student achievement data demonstrates that the institution's students have achieved educational goals consistent with their program of study, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for higher education institutions.

## **Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience**

Across all student learning experiences, settings, levels (program, certificate, and degree), and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through has a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success. The institution uses data to improve student success or achievement of educational goals through increased retention, persistence, completion, or other valid and reliable measures.

## **Standard V: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

The institution's planning processes, resources allocation, and institutional improvement processes, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

35 **Standard I: Mission and Goals Governance**

36 The institution is effectively governed and administered in a manner that allows it  
37 to realize its stated mission and goals, defines its purpose within the context of  
38 higher education, serve its students and other constituencies, and consistently  
39 improve outcomes, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The  
40 institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the  
41 institution fulfills its mission. The institution has a legally constituted governing  
42 board that exercises fiduciary responsibility for the institution, and is ultimately  
43 accountable for the academic quality, integrity, planning, and fiscal well-being of  
44 the institution.

45 **Required Evidence**

- 46 • Sample publications with clearly defined mission statement
- 47 • Evidence of regular evaluation of mission statement and institutional goals
  - 48 o Date of last revision
  - 49 o List of mission review committee members and evidence of their involvement in
  - 50 mission review and revision
  - 51 o Evidence of participation and approval by governing body
  - 52 o Sample communications ~~or publications of the mission statement~~ and/or notification
  - 53 of changes to the mission to the institution's internal and external constituencies
  - 54 (select a sample from across the most recent four-year period)
- 55 • Evidence of alignment between elements of mission and institutional goals and unit and
- 56 institution level planning, resource allocation, program and curriculum development and the
- 57 definition of institutional and educational outcomes
- 58 • Sample budget requests or other documentation demonstrating alignment between budget
- 59 allocations and mission and institutional goals (select a sample from across a four-year
- 60 period). Most recent institutional strategic plan or institutional effectiveness plan, or other
- 61 documentation of strategic planning or goal setting
  - 62 • Date of last update
  - 63 • Goals with evidence of their relationship to mission (e.g., crosswalk, etc.)
- 64 • Evidence that the institution has set goals that consider diversity, equity, and inclusion
- 65 principles of perspectives
- 66 • Evidence of alignment between mission and strategic goals and diversity, equity, and
- 67 inclusion principles
- 68 • Student Headcount Data, disaggregated by relevant populations (Available in IPEDS and
- 69 collected in the AIU)
  - 70 • Fall Enrollment
  - 71 • 12 Month Enrollment
  - 72 • Graduate enrollment if applicable
- 73 • Human Resources Data, disaggregated by relevant populations (Available in IPEDS)
  - 74 • Faculty headcount
  - 75 • Administrative and staff headcount
- 76 • Evidence of budgetary support, allocation of resources, and implementation of programs to
- 77 support student learning outcomes and student achievement
- 78 • Expense Analysis of related expenses (four years), as applicable

79 • Evidence of strategic plan and mission development processes

80 • Description of the legally constituted governance structure, including a diagram of the legally  
81 constituted governance structure that clearly conveys the governance structure, outlines

82 roles and responsibilities, and articulates accountability for decision making by each

83 constituency (i.e. governing body, administration, faculty, staff, students, and any related

84 entities) of the institution

85 • Governing Documents includingsuch as bylaws, certificate or articles of incorporation,

86 operating provisions or agreements, filings, and any other foundationaling documents

87 • For institutions with related entities, documentation that the institution can operate as an  
88 academic institution with appropriate autonomy and independence from undue political,  
89 financial or other influence (Related Entities Policy and Procedures):

90 o A listing of the legal name, jurisdiction, form or organization of every related entity

91 that is part of the legal constituted governance structure

92 o Governing documents for all related entit(ies)

93 o Related Entities Required Disclosures Certification Statement

94 o Documentation of the structure, authority, and autonomy of the legally constituted

95 governing body including any related entities and all levels of ownership that are  
96 legally responsible for the institution

97 • Governing body or board policies and procedures manuals or compendium that are  
98 informed by principles of good practice in board governance

99 o Excerpts or bylaw provisions outlining search for and appointment of Chief Executive  
100 Officer (CEO)

101 o Excerpts or bylaw provisions describing the process for evaluating the Chief  
102 Executive Officer (CEO)

103 o Excerpts or bylaw provisions describing the process for board self-evaluation

104 o Excerpts or provisions for continuity of leadership or succession

105 o Board committee procedures

106 • Sample of Governing body meeting records (sample across most recent four-year period)

107 o Board and committee meeting agenda and minutes (sample across most recent four-  
108 year period)

109 o Excerpts documenting board review and approval of policy and bylaws

110 o Excerpts documenting strong fiscal management including review of annual financial  
111 statements

112 o Excerpts documenting board decision making

113 • Evidence that the governing body or board members have varied backgrounds,  
114 independence, and expertise to ensure the integrity of the institution and improve decision-  
115 making

116 o Affiliation and occupation of currenteach members

117 o Identify those members of the governing board who are remunerated by the

118 institution through salaries, wages or fees

119 o Identify board members who are creditors of the institution, guarantors of institutional

120 debt, or active members of businesses of which the institution is a customer

121 o Board member curriculum vitae (CVs) or biographies

122 o Documentation of regular and systematic board self-evaluation such as the

123 evaluation instrument, policy or procedures, with evidence of follow-up on any

124 concerns (available examples from the most recent four-year period)

125 • Qualifications of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to fulfill the responsibilities of the position  
126 and direct the institution toward attaining the mission and goals of the institution

127 o Curriculum vitae (CV) or resume for the chief executive officer including the officer's

128 name, title, and date of appointment

129                   ○ Evidence that the CEO was appointed by the governing board  
130                   ○ Evidence that the CEO has the authority and autonomy required to fulfill the  
131                   requirements of the position  
132                   ○ Documentation of regular and systematic evaluation of the CEO such as the  
133                   evaluation instrument with evidence of follow-up on any concerns (available  
134                   examples from the most recent four-year period)  
135                   ● Qualifications of the Administrative StaffSenior Administration or CEO/President's  
136                   Leadership Team to assist the CEO in fulfilling their roles and duties  
137                   ○ Curriculum vitae (CVs) or resumes, as applicable  
138                   ○ Analysis of qualifications, credentials, and professional experience consistent with  
139                   the mission of the organization and their functional roles  
140                   ○ Analysis of skills, time, assistance, technology, and information systems expertise  
141                   required to perform their duties  
142                   ● Human Resources Data (Available in IPEDS)  
143                   ○ Faculty headcount  
144                   ○ Administrative and staff headcount  
145                   Institutional and Unit Leadership Data  
146                   ● Organizational charts for institution, divisions, and units, as applicable, that are clearly  
147                   documented and outline roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making  
148                   ● Policies and procedures for the review of units, with evidence of assessment and  
149                   evaluation of the effectiveness of those policies  
150                   ● Documentation of an implemented, systematic, and sustained process to assess the  
151                   effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration (assessment instruments and  
152                   analysis of collected data)  
153                   ○ Some examples of surveys for other constituents include Student Survey of  
154                   Administration or Faculty or Survey of Administration Staff Survey of Administration  
155                   ● Consultant and taskforce reports, as applicable

## 156 **Standard II: Ethics and Integrity**

157 **Ethics and, integrity, and a safe environment for learning and teaching** are  
158 central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education  
159 institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be  
160 faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its  
161 policies, and represent itself truthfully.

### 162 **Required Evidence**

163                   ● Policies and procedures on:  
164                   ○ Academic and intellectual freedom  
165                   ○ Freedom of expression  
166                   ○ Intellectual property rights  
167                   ○ Copyright  
168                   ● Evidence of support of a climate of respect  
169                   ○ Policies and procedures

170                   ○ Evidence of regular and systematic campus climate assessments or surveys of a  
171                   variety of representative stakeholder groups, including sample communication or  
172                   publication of results  
173                   ○ Evidence of the consideration of results, follow up, or changes made to mission,  
174                   goals, strategic or operational priorities  
175           ● Evidence of fair and impartial policies and procedures for assuring grievances are  
176                   addressed promptly, appropriately and equitably  
177                   ○ Policy and procedures for faculty or staff complaints or grievances including the URL  
178                   and any other location where faculty and staff can access these documents  
179                   (*Complaints Involving Applicant and Member Institutions Policy and Procedures*)  
180                   ○ Policies and procedures for student complaints or grievances, including the URL and  
181                   any other location where students and the public can access these documents  
182                   (*Verification of ComplianceApplicable Federal Regulatory Requirement - Record of*  
183                   *Student Complaints and federal regulation 34 CFR § 668.43; Complaints Involving*  
184                   *Applicant and Member Institutions Policy and Procedures*)  
185                   ○ Documentation including the URL for the contact information that the institution  
186                   provides enrolled and prospective students for filing complaints with the institution's  
187                   accreditor and with its State approval or licensing entity and any other relevant State  
188                   official or agency that would appropriately handle a student's complaint (*Applicable*  
189                   *Federal Regulatory RequirementVerification of Compliance - Record of Student*  
190                   *Complaints and federal regulation 34 CFR § 668.43(b), Complaints Involving*  
191                   *Applicant and Member Institutions Policy and Procedures*)  
192                   ○ Institutional record of student complaints and resolution, most recent four-year time  
193                   period (*Complaints Involving Applicant and Member Institutions Policy and*  
194                   *Procedures; Applicable Federal Regulatory Requirement Verification of Compliance -*  
195                   *Record of Student Complaints and federal regulation 34 CFR § 602.16(a)(1)(ix)*)  
196                   ○ Institutional record of faculty or staff complaints and resolution (*Complaints Involving*  
197                   *Applicant and Member Institutions Policy and Procedures*)  
198           ● Evidence that the institution establishes and complies with a written conflict of interest policy  
199                   designed to ensure impartiality and the avoidance of the appearance of conflicts of interest  
200                   ○ Policies and procedures for conflicts of interest (for employees and governing board)  
201                   ○ Examples of implementation (e.g. training)  
202                   ○ Documentation or sample of disclosure or reporting of conflicts of interest or  
203                   ○ Examples of recusals from decision-making (e.g. forms or meeting minutes), if  
204                   applicable  
205                   ○ Evidence that a majority of the governing body or board members have no  
206                   employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution  
207           ● Policies and procedures related to hiring, evaluation, promotion, separation  
208                   ○ Analysis of data on hiring and promotion to assess the effectiveness of policies and  
209                   procedures  
210           ● Evidence of honest and truthful communications, marketing, and recruiting materials  
211                   ○ Policies and procedures for approving and disseminating information to internal and  
212                   external stakeholders  
213                   ○ Sample marketing, admissions, and recruiting materials  
214                   ○ Sample internal communications  
215                   ○ Expense Analysis of related expenses (most recent four years), as applicable  
216                    ■ Percent of budget \$ / % Marketing, advertising  
217                    ■ \$ / % Recruitment services  
218           ● Policies and procedures related to accessibility and affordability, including the URL for where  
219                   students and the public can find these documents (*Applicable Federal Regulatory*

220 Requirement Verification of Compliance – Required Information for Students and federal  
221 regulation 34 CFR § 668.43(a)(1-4):

- 222     ○ Availability of student financial assistance for those who qualify and the process for  
223         disbursements, repayment, and refunds
- 224     ○ Withdrawal policies
- 225     ○ Student refund policies
- 226     ● Documentation including URL where students and the public can find information on the  
227         cost of attendance and student financial aid data, such as:
  - 228         ○ Net price Calculator (URL)
  - 229         ○ Cohort default rate (3 year)
  - 230         ○ (%) students with loans (Institution)
  - 231         ○ Average student loan indebtedness (Institution)
- 232     ● Evidence of the public disclosure of required information for students and the public
  - 233         ○ Documentation including the URL of the public disclosure of required policies and  
234             procedures (Verification of Compliance Applicable Federal Regulatory Requirement  
235             – Required Information for the Public 34 CFR § 668.43, Public Disclosures Policy  
236             and Procedures)
  - 237         ○ Documentation including the URL of the public disclosure of required information for  
238             students and the public (Verification of Compliance Applicable Federal Regulatory  
239             Requirement- Required Information for Students 34 CFR § 668.43 and § 668.45,  
240             Public Disclosures Policy and Procedures)
  - 241         ○ Documentation including the URL of accurate representation of MSCHE  
242             accreditation status (Communication in the Accreditation Process Policy and  
243             Procedures; Public Disclosures Policy and Procedures; Verification of  
244             ComplianceApplicable Federal Regulatory Requirement - Standing with State or  
245             Other Accrediting Agencies 34 CFR § 668.43 and § 602.23(d))
- 246     ● Documentation of valid degree granting authority (DGA) and licensing (Verification of  
247             ComplianceApplicable Federal Regulatory Requirement - Standing with State or Other  
248             Accrediting Agencies 34 CFR § 668.43)
  - 249         ○ Valid legal charter, statute, constitutional provision, or other action from an  
250             appropriate organization or agency, or documentation of any exemption, and a  
251             proper license to operate from each jurisdiction in which the institution operates
- 252     ● Documentation that the institution is in good standing with other accrediting agencies  
253             (Applicable Federal Regulatory Requirement - Standing with State or Other Accrediting  
254             Agencies 34 CFR § 668.43):
  - 255         ○ List of USDE recognized accreditors with name of the accreditor, accreditation  
256             status, date of last renewal of accreditation, gatekeeper designation  
257             (Primary/Multiple Accreditation), scope (Institutional/Programmatic), effective year,  
258             number of years accredited (institutions should ensure this information is reported in  
259             the Institution Portal and updated regularly)
  - 260         ○ List of educational programs accredited by programmatic accreditors
  - 261         ○ Reports and documentation of the accreditor's most recent accreditation action  
262             including relevant correspondence
- 263     ● Documentation of accurate representation of the institution's scope of accreditation (Public  
264             Disclosures Policy and Procedures):
  - 265         ○ URL where the institution publicly discloses its scope of accreditation (credential  
266             levels, locations, alternative delivery methods) and substantive changes
    - 267             ○ Statement of Accreditation Status (SAS) (PDF format)
    - 268             ○ Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (ECAR) (to verify scope of accreditation  
269             with Title IV certification) if applicable

270                   ○ Student headcount data at each branch campus, additional location, and other  
271                    instructional site  
272                   ○ For all additional locations and branch campuses, evidence that student learning,  
273                    student support, and academic services are comparable to those at other sites  
274   • Evidence of robust campus security infrastructure and clear communication systems:  
275                   ○ Policies, procedures, or campus safety standards  
276                   ○ Description of proactive measures for the prevention of crime and violence  
277                   ○ Emergency preparedness plans (including plans in place for disruptions to classes)  
278                   ○ Reporting on all applicable federal and state campus safety incidents and plan  
279                    requirements, including but not limited to Clery Act Reporting and all corresponding  
280                    state requirements  
281                   ○ Documentation of the appropriate management of safety incidents, including  
282                    outcomes of internal or external investigations that lead to documented  
283                    improvements in safety  
284   • Evidence of robust information security infrastructure (*Information Security and Privacy*  
285                   *Policy and Procedures; Information Security Incident Response Procedures; Use of Artificial*  
286                   *Intelligence Policy and Procedures*:  
287                   ○ Policies, procedures, or information security protocols such as privacy, access  
288                    control, data management, acceptable use, artificial intelligence, incident response,  
289                    data recovery, as applicable to the institution  
290                   ○ Policies and procedures for the maintenance and retention of student records  
291                   ○ Policies and procedures regarding the protection of privacy for students (i.e. FERPA;  
292                    data privacy; data security)  
293   • Documentation of the policy development and revision process (e.g., internal control office,  
294                    “policy on policies,” etc.), with evidence of periodic evaluation of institutional policies and  
295                    their implementation, and revision, where warranted

## 296 **Standard III: Design, Delivery, and Assessment** 297 **of the Student Learning Experience**

298 An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized  
299 by rigor and coherence at all credential levels (program, certificate, and degree),  
300 regardless of instructional modality program pace/schedule, or setting. All  
301 student learning experiences (credit or non-credit), ~~regardless of modality,~~  
302 ~~program pace/schedule, credential level, and setting~~ are consistent with higher  
303 ~~education expectations~~ designed, delivered, and regularly assessed by faculty  
304 (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are rigorous  
305 and effective in teaching, qualified for the positions they hold and the work they  
306 do, sufficient in number, and provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities,  
307 resources, and support for professional growth and innovation. Assessment of  
308 student learning and student achievement data demonstrates that the  
309 institution’s students have achieved educational goals consistent with their  
310 program of study, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for  
311 higher education institutions.

312 **Required Evidence**

- 313     • Documentation that certificate, undergraduate, graduate and/or professional programs  
314         leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential are assigned a  
315         reasonably approximate number of credit hours (or other value) for the amount of work  
316         completed by a student, are appropriate to the objectives of the degree or other  
317         credential with sufficient course content and program length, and are aligned with  
318         current and emerging workforce needs (*Credit Hour Policy and Procedures*):
  - 319             o Policy, procedures, and/or methodologies employed for assignment of credit hour  
320                 (or other value) for all types of courses, disciplines, programs, credential levels,  
321                 formats, and modalities
  - 322             o Documentation of the evaluation process the institution utilizes to verify length of  
323                 academic period and compliance with credit hour requirements or other value
  - 324             o Evidence and analyses demonstrating that these policies and procedures are  
325                 consistently applied across programs, course locations, regardless of delivery  
326                 mode or teaching/learning format
  - 327             o Documentation including the URL and any other source of information where  
328                 students and the public can access the policy and procedures with evidence that  
329                 such information is regularly evaluated to ensure accuracy (*Applicable Federal*  
330                 *Regulatory Requirement Verification of Compliance – Assignment of Credit Hours*  
331                 34 CFR § 668.8(k) and (l))
  - 332             o Analysis of labor market data and demands, employer partnerships, and  
333                 outcomes related to post-completion placement and earnings
- 334     • Faculty/Instructional Staff Qualifications, as aligned with institutional policy and  
335         procedures:
  - 336             o Faculty/Staff Handbook(s)
  - 337             o Policies and procedures on faculty qualifications
  - 338             o Policies and procedures on promotion and tenure guidelines
  - 339             o Human Resources Data (Available in IPEDS)
    - 340                 ■ Faculty or other appropriate instructional professionals headcount
    - 341                 ■ Administrative and staff headcount
  - 342             o Titles, most advanced degree, field of experience, and current teaching load (in  
343                 credits per semester or quarter, and in hours per week) of full-time instructional  
344                 staff
  - 345             o Percentage of faculty with terminal degrees
  - 346             o Other data
- 347     • Faculty or Other Appropriate Instructional Professionals/instruct workload data, such as:
  - 348             o Enrollment data by class /class size
  - 349             o Average academic credit hours taught per faculty member
  - 350             o Student to staff ratio
  - 351             o Student to faculty ratio
  - 352             o Other data
- 353     • Documentation on practices related to the evaluation of teaching:
  - 354             o Policies and procedures for evaluating the teaching of students
  - 355             o Sample instrument(s) for course evaluations, teaching observations, etc. and  
356                 most recent four-year trend analysis of collected data

§57        o Evidence of the regular assessment and evaluation and assessment of the

358        effectiveness of these policies and procedures, consideration of results and

§59        follow-up on any findings

360        • Course or academic program approval procedures and sample approval documentation

361        (including but not limited to syllabi or course content)

362        • Evidence of the regular review of academic programs (representative sample of program

363        and unit reviews conducted during the most recent four-year timeframe)

364        • Specialized accreditation reports or other annual reports, and analysis and results of

365        follow-up on any findings, as applicable

366        • Expense Analysis of related expenses (most recent four-years), as applicable

367            o \$ / % core expenditure for instruction

368            o \$ / % core expenditure for research

369            o \$ / % core expenditure for public service

370            o Instructional expense per student FTE

§71        • Evidence of faculty and other professionals training in curriculum development,

372        instruction, and course design; course and programmatic assessment

§73        • Documentation of sufficient student learning experiences and resources to support both

374        the institution's programs of study and the academic progress of all students:

375            o Academic catalog including URL with description of degree requirements and

376            expected time to completion

377            o List of all educational programs with enrollments (only when enrollment is greater

378            than twenty students to protect student identity), undergraduate or graduate

379            o Advising or degree program sheets for all programs

380            o Sample syllabi

381            o Master syllabus

382            o Trend analysis of data on the academic progress of all students populations, by

383        credential level at both institution and program levels, such as:

384               ▪ Average time to degree (time elapsed from enrollment to completion

385            and/or time actively enrolled by semester)

386               ▪ Average number of credits per program

387               ▪ Average credits upon graduation (all credits completed or credits toward

388            degree)

389               ▪ Other

390        • If applicable, description evidence and analysis of other credit-bearing educational

391        offerings and trend analysis of data on participation and completion, analyzed and

392        disaggregated by relevant populations as appropriate to mission

393            o Dual or Concurrent Enrollment (Early College)

394            o Prison Education Programs (PEP)

395            o Career and Technical Education (CTE)

396               o Non-credit programs

397               o English as a Second Language (ESL) programs

398               o Other

399        • Evidence and analysis of the nature and breadth of library/learning resources available

400        on-site, at main campus, branch campuses, additional locations, and other instructional

401        sites, and electronically, with documentation that resources take into account all

402        instructional locations and formats:

403            o Total library FTE staff (Available in IPEDS)

404            o Total physical library collections (Available in IPEDS-Academic Libraries Survey)

405            o Total electronic library collections

406                   o Policies and procedures for how the institution provides for access to and  
407                   utilization of a broad range of library/learning and other information resources to  
408                   support its academic programs, learners, and faculty  
409                   o Description of the nature and scope of bibliographic instruction, information  
410                   literacy, and other programs for educating students and faculty in the use of  
411                   information resources  
412                   o Copies of formal agreements with other institutions for the use of their  
413                   information resources and/or reference services  
414                   • For institutions that offer online/distance education courses or programs, documentation  
415                   that demonstrates comparable quality and support to courses and programs in other  
416                   modalities:  
417                   o Policies and Procedures related to:  
418                    ▪ Faculty qualification requirements for teaching distance education  
419                    courses or programs  
420                    ▪ Ensuring student identify verification in distance or correspondence  
421                    education courses (Applicable Federal Regulatory Requirement -  
422                    Verification of Student Identity 34 CFR § 602.17(g))  
423                    ▪ Protection of privacy (i.e., FERPA) for students enrolled in distance  
424                    education and correspondence courses (Applicable Federal Regulatory  
425                    Requirement - Verification of Student Identity 34 CFR § 602.17(h))  
426                    ▪ Notifying students at the time of registration or enrollment about any  
427                    projected additional charges associated with student identity verification  
428                    including any required travel to campus (Applicable Federal Regulatory  
429                    Requirement- Verification of Student Identity 34 CFR § 602.17(h))  
430                    ▪ Ensuring student access to faculty and regular and substantive interaction  
431                    between instructional staff and students  
432                    ▪ Ensuring student access to academic and technology support services  
433                   o Distance Education Data  
434                    ▪ Number and percentage of faculty qualified to teach online  
435                    ▪ Number of instructional design staff  
436                    ▪ Distance Education Student Headcount (Available in IPEDS)  
437                    ▪ Description and number of distance education courses and programs  
438                    ▪ Number and % students enrolled in distance education courses  
439                   o Distance Education Support Services for Students  
440                    ▪ Description of delivery of programs or courses (Learning Management  
441                    System, etc.)  
442                    ▪ Description of support services that are being provided for students,  
443                    including academic and technology support  
444                    ▪ Description about how students will access educational resources  
445                    ▪ Data on utilization of support services provided to students  
446                   o Distance Education Learning Management System (LMS)  
447                    ▪ Description of Learning Management System, etc.  
448                    ▪ Analysis of the scope and quality of instruction delivered by Online  
449                    Program Managers (OPMs)  
450                    ▪ List of educational programs delivered by OPM(s)  
451                    ▪ Agreements and/or contracts with OPM(s), noting any new contracts or  
452                    changes to terms and conditions of existing contracts  
453                    ▪ Description of additional student services offered by OPM (e.g. delivery of  
454                    instruction, recruiting and marketing services, support services, faculty  
455                    training /qualifications/ compensation, instructional design)

456                   o Evidence of the assessment of effectiveness of instructional design and  
457                   information technology support for faculty/instructional staff

- 458                  • Expense Analysis of related expenses (most recent four-years), as applicable:
  - 459                    o \$ / % core expenditure, instruction
  - 460                    o \$ / % core expenditure, research
  - 461                    o \$ / % core expenditure, public service
- 462                  • For institutions that offer undergraduate education, documentation of a general  
463                  education program (free standing or integrated into academic disciplines) that offers  
464                  sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expands  
465                  cultural and global awareness, and offers a curriculum designed so that students acquire  
466                  and demonstrate essential skills and career readiness:
  - 467                    o Documentation of curriculum maps, catalog descriptions of coherence of courses  
468                    with general education learning outcomes
  - 469                    o Documentation of the evaluation of institution or general education student  
470                    learning outcomes with evidence of appropriate rigor and coherence
  - 471                    o Description of the process for assigning educational experiences to the general  
472                    education curriculum
  - 473                    o Description and date of last revision of general education program
  - 474                    o List of new courses taught within the general education program during the most  
475                    recent four-year period
- 476                  • In non-US-United States (non-U.S.) institutions that do not include a general education  
477                  program, evidence that students can demonstrate essential skills and career readiness
- 478                  • For institutions that offer graduate and professional education, documentation of  
479                  opportunities for the development of research, scholarship, creative activity and  
480                  independent thinking:
  - 481                    o Policy and procedures related to independent research, thesis, master's paper,  
482                    dissertation, fieldwork or internship
  - 483                    o Policies and procedures on Graduate Assistantships
  - 484                    o Indicators of graduate student success
  - 485                    o Documentation of graduate-level student learning outcomes, analysis and use of  
486                    assessment results or follow-up when warranted
  - 487                    o (%) faculty with terminal degrees, appropriate to discipline (for faculty teaching  
488                    graduate courses), as aligned with institutional policies and procedures
  - 489                    o Expense Analysis of related expenses\$ / % of core expenditures on research  
490                    (most recent four years), as applicable or other related expenses
- 491                  • For institutions that offer non-credit, basic skills or developmental courses, experiential  
492                  learning, workforce development, or other non-credit offerings:
  - 493                    o Policies and procedures
  - 494                    o Rationale for non-credit, basic skills or developmental courses, experiential  
495                    learning, workforce development, community or continuing education, or other  
496                    non-credit programs
  - 497                    o Evidence that offerings are taught by faculty and/or other appropriate  
498                    instructional professionals with appropriate experience or credentials
  - 499                    o Evidence of the effectiveness and value of courses, programs, non-degree  
500                    credentials, and other non-credit programs
  - 501                    o Articulated evidence of student knowledge, skills, and/or competency levels for  
502                    non-credit offerings

- o Description of all other non-credit educational offerings and trend analysis of data on participation in these programs, disaggregated and analyzed as appropriate to mission
- For institutions that utilize third-party providers for the delivery of student learning opportunities (credit or non-credit) or assessment of student learning services, evidence that there is adequate management, oversight, review, and approval of third-party providers (*Third-Party Providers Policy and Procedures*):
  - o Policies, procedures, or guidance for the process of review and approval of third-party providers
  - o Comprehensive list of current third-party providers delivering non-credit programs and assessment of student learning services
  - o Sample of current written agreements and/or contracts with third-party providers for both credit and non-credit student learning opportunities and student learning assessment services
  - o Evidence that the institution is transparent, makes all required public disclosures, and accurately represents the role of the third-party provider in marketing materials
  - o Evidence that the institution retains oversight of third-party providers over the life of the agreement
  - o Complete list of Evidence of continued oversight of written arrangements and that required approvals have been obtained through the substantive change process, including a list of current third-party providers delivering instruction and education-related services for a portion of a credit-bearing educational program, including name of provider, name of program, percent of program instruction delivered by the third-party, list of services offered by the third-party, as applicable, (Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and federal regulation 34 CFR § 602.22(a)(3)(J))
  - o Documentation including the URL of required disclosure of educational programs when a portion is delivered by a third-party provider, as applicable (*Public Disclosures Policy and Procedures; Applicable Federal Regulatory Requirement* 34 CFR § 668.43(a)(12)(i-iv))
  - o Evidence of regular and systematic evaluation and assessment of third-party providers to monitor and ensure the integrity, quality and effectiveness of these arrangements, the consideration of results, and follow-up when warranted
- Evidence of the regular evaluation and assessment of student learning experiences for educational programs at institutional and unit levels for the improvement of student learning outcomes, student achievement, and institutional and program-level educational effectiveness
  - o Policies and Procedures
  - o Documentation of assessment approaches
  - o Sample of assessment instruments and analysis of collected data
  - o Analysis and consideration of assessment results or follow-up when warranted

545 **Standard V: Educational Effectiveness**

546 **Assessment**

547 ~~Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's~~  
548 ~~students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study,~~  
549 ~~degree level (program, certificate, and degree), the institution's mission, and appropriate~~  
550 ~~expectations for institutions of higher education.~~

551 **Standard IV: Support of the Student**

552 **Experience**

553 ~~Across all student learning experiences, settings, levels (program, certificate, and~~  
554 ~~degree), and instructional modalities, t~~~~The institution recruits and admits~~  
555 ~~students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its~~  
556 ~~mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention,~~  
557 ~~persistence, completion, and success through has~~  
558 ~~a coherent and effective~~  
559 ~~support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality~~  
560 ~~of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and~~  
561 ~~fosters student success. The institution uses data to improve student success or~~  
562 ~~achievement of educational goals through increased retention, persistence,~~  
~~completion, or other valid and reliable measures.~~

563 **Required Evidence**

- 564 • ~~Evidence of clearly stated, ethical policies, practices and processes to recruit, admit,~~  
565 ~~retain, and facilitate the success of students~~
  - 566 o Policies and Procedures
    - 567 □ Admissions philosophy and practices
    - 568 □ Ethical recruiting practices
    - 569 □ Ethical marketing practices
  - 570 o Admissions profile using multiple data points such as: Number of inquiries, applications, admits, yield rates, deposit-payers, and newly enrolled degree-seeking students, disaggregated and analyzed as appropriate to mission
  - 571 o Admissions and Test Scores survey (Available in IPEDS)
  - 572 o Evidence of regular evaluation of admissions practices, and the effectiveness of policies, and procedures, consideration of results by key stakeholders, and corrective action when warranted
  - 573 o Sample enrollment agreements, as applicable
  - 574 o Sample marketing materials
- 575 • Student Handbook
- 576 • ~~Enrollment projections including clear parameters and assumptions on which they are~~  
577 ~~based~~
- 578 • ~~Retention Rates (Available in IPEDS)~~

583 • Graduation Rates (100%, 150%, 200%) (Available in IPEDS; AIU Indicator)

584 • Evidence that the institution shares accurate and comprehensive information on the cost  
585 of attendance and student financial aid and provides support services for students to  
586 understand debt and repayment (*Public Disclosures Policy and Procedures*)  
587 o Undergraduate financial aid profile (Available in IPEDS Student Financial Aid survey)  
588 o Graduate financial aid profile, as applicable  
589 o Brochures and other publications on financial aid  
590 o Documentation including the URL where students and the public can find information  
591 on the cost of attendance and student financial aid data, such as:  
592     ▪ Cost of attendance, including tuition, fees, and expenses  
593     ▪ Net price  
594     ▪ Net price Calculator (URL)  
595     ▪ (%) students with loans (undergraduate)  
596     ▪ Discount rate  
597     ▪ Other  
598 o Data on debt and repayment such as:  
599     ▪ Student loan cohort default rates, three year (e.g. College Scorecard)  
600     ▪ Tuition and fees per student FTE (Available in IPEDS Student Financial  
601         Aid survey (undergraduate))  
602     ▪ Average student loan indebtedness (undergraduate)  
603     ▪ Students with Pell grants (Available in IPEDS- Student Financial Aid  
604         survey)  
605     ▪ Average Pell grant (Available in IPEDS – Student Financial Aid survey)  
606 o Trend analysis of attendance and completion of financial aid counseling sessions or  
607 other services designed to educate students

608 • Evidence of a process to identify students who are not adequately prepared and provide  
609 additional support in attaining appropriate educational outcomes  
610 o Policies and procedures for placement for incoming or current students into  
611 preparation programs or courses  
612     o Basic Skills  
613     o Developmental Education  
614     o Other  
615 o Basic Skills/ Developmental Education Data, as applicable, including the following:  
616     ▪ (%) of first-time students enrolled in DevEd during the Fall  
617     ▪ (%) Basic skills placement  
618     ▪ (%) Basic skills mathematics and writing course pass rates;  
619     ▪ (%) first-year retention for students placed in one or more basic skills  
620 courses

621 • Evidence of effective orientation, advisement and counseling programs and services  
622 o Policies and procedures for orientation, advisement, and counseling programs and  
623 services  
624 o Trend analysis of data on attendance, participation, and completion of orientation  
625 and/or other services  
626 o Documentation of training for faculty or other appropriate professionals to properly  
627 advise both incoming and outgoing transfer students (Transfer of Credit, Prior  
628 Learning, and Articulation Agreements Policy and Procedures)

629 • Expense analysis of related expenses (most recent four years), as applicable  
630     o \$ / % Core expenditures, student support  
631     o \$ / % Core expenditures, academic support  
632     o \$ / % Core expenditures, institutional support

- 633     • Current Student Enrollment Profile, disaggregated and analyzed as appropriate to  
634         mission
  - 635             ◦ If applicable, international student enrollment data
    - 636                     ▪ Number of foreign/international students enrolled in degree programs
    - 637                     ▪ Number of foreign/international students enrolled in non-degree programs
- 638     • Evidence of trend analysis of student achievement data to improve outcomes, analyzed  
639         and disaggregated as appropriate to mission, such as the following:
  - 640             ◦ Retention Rates (Available in IPEDS)
  - 641             ◦ Graduation Rates (100%, 150%, 200%) (Available in IPEDS; AIU Indicator)
  - 642             ◦ Transfer Rates (Available in IPEDS)
  - 643             ◦ Post-Completion Placement rates, as applicable
  - 644             ◦ Alternative completion measures including but not limited to:
    - 645                     ▪ Student Achievement Measure (SAM)
    - 646                     ▪ Outcomes Measures (OM) (Available in IPEDS)
    - 647                     ▪ Degrees Awarded, by credential level annually (Available in IPEDS)
    - 648                     ▪ Pass Rates on standardized examinations
    - 649                     ▪ Data on Earnings (e.g. College Scorecard for some institutions)
    - 650                     ▪ Other
- 651     • Evidence the institution has processes designed to support ease of transfer to or from other  
652         institutions and minimize the loss of credit (*Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and*  
653         *Articulation Agreements Policy and Procedures*)
  - 654             ◦ Policies and procedures for making decisions about the transfer of credits earned at  
655                 other institutions (regardless of modality) (*Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and*  
656                 *Articulation Agreements Policy and Procedures and Applicable Federal Regulatory*  
657                 *Requirement - Transfer of Credit Policies and Articulation* and federal regulation 34  
658                 CFR § 602.24(e) and 668.43(a)(11))
  - 659             ◦ Policies and procedures for awarding credits for prior learning, experiential learning,  
660                 prior non-academic learning, competency-based assessment, and other alternative  
661                 learning approaches
  - 662             ◦ Documentation including URL, catalog, or other public location of public disclosure of  
663                 transfer of credit policies and procedures (*Applicable Federal Regulatory*  
664                 *Requirement - Transfer of Credit Policies and Articulation Agreements and §*  
665                 *602.24(e)*)
  - 666             ◦ Analysis of transfer data (Available in IPEDS)
    - 667                     ▪ Demonstration of the reduction of loss of transfer of credit through data  
668                         analyses
    - 669                     ▪ Completions by program (only when enrollment is over ten students to  
670                         protect student identity) (Available in IPEDS-Completions survey)
  - 671             ◦ Documentation including URL and other public locations of the public disclosure of  
672                 the list of institutions with which the institution has established an articulation  
673                 agreement (e.g. high schools, other colleges), with evidence of regular updates  
674                 (*Applicable Federal Regulatory Requirement- Transfer of Credit Policies and*  
675                 *Articulation 34 CFR 668.43(a)(11)(ii)*)
- 676     • Evidence and analysis of responsible management of sports programs ensuring the quality  
677         and safety of the athletic experience (*Athletic Programs Guidelines*)
  - 678             ◦ Policies and Procedures for athletics, such as:
    - 679                     ▪ Mission Statement
    - 680                     ▪ Guiding Principles
    - 681                     ▪ Statement of Purpose
    - 682                     ▪ Branding and Marketing

683                   ■ Academic Standards  
684                   ■ Sportsmanship and Ethical Content  
685                   ■ Other  
686                   ○ Student-Athlete Handbook outlining requirements for students  
687                   ○ Student Headcount by sport or activity, disaggregated and analyzed as appropriate  
688                   to mission  
689                   ○ Data on student-athlete scholarships  
690                   ○ Average GPA of students by sport or activity  
691                   ○ Evidence of compliance with applicable rules and policies of the institution, any  
692                   athletic league, any national organization if the institution is a member, or legal  
693                   requirements that are otherwise applicable to the institution, and Title IX  
694                   ● For institutions that utilize third-party providers for student support services, evidence that  
695                   there is adequate management, oversight, review, and approval of third-party providers  
696                   (Third-Party Providers Policy and Procedures):  
697                   ○ Comprehensive list of current third-party providers delivering student support  
698                   services  
699                   ○ Sample of current agreements and/or contracts with third party providers for student  
700                   support services, where appropriate  
701                   ○ Evidence that the institution is transparent, makes all required public disclosures,  
702                   and accurately represents the role of the third-party provider in marketing materials  
703                   ○ Evidence that the institution retains oversight of third-party providers  
704                   ● Analysis of the scope and quality of services offered by Online Program Managers (OPMs)  
705                   ○ List of educational programs delivered by OPM(s)  
706                   ○ (%) of educational program offered by OPM(s)  
707                   ○ Agreements and/or contracts with OPM(s), noting any new contracts or changes to  
708                   terms and conditions of existing contracts  
709                   ○ Description of services offered by OPM (e.g. delivery of instruction, recruiting and  
710                   marketing services, support services, faculty training /qualifications/ compensation,  
711                   instructional design)  
712                   ○ Evidence of regular and systematic periodic assessment evaluation and assessment  
713                   of third-party providers to monitor and ensure the integrity, quality, and effectiveness  
714                   of these arrangements, consideration of results, and follow-up when warranted  
715                   ● Documentation Evidence(assessment instrument and analysis of collected data) of the  
716                   regular and systematic evaluation and assessment of student support services, the  
717                   consideration of results, and follow-up when warranted  
718                   ○ Policies and Procedures  
719                   ○ Documentation of assessment approaches  
720                   ○ Sample of assessment instrument(s) and analysis of collected data  
721                   ○ Analysis and use of assessment results or follow-up when warranted

722 **Standard V: Educational Effectiveness**  
723 **Assessment**

724 Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's  
725 students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study,

726 ~~degree level (program, certificate, and degree), the institution's mission, and appropriate~~  
727 ~~expectations for institutions of higher education.~~

728 **Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and**  
729 **Institutional Improvement**

730 The institution's planning processes, resources allocation, and institutional  
731 improvement processes, and structures are aligned with each other and are  
732 sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its  
733 programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and  
734 challenges.

735 **Required Evidence**

- 737 Evidence of clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes  
738 that provide for constituent participation
  - 739 Documentation of planning processes
  - 740 Most recent institutional strategic plan or institutional effectiveness plan, or other  
741 documentation of strategic planning or institutional effectiveness planning
    - 742 Date of last update
    - 743 Goals with evidence of their relationship to mission (e.g., crosswalk, etc.)
- 744 Evidence of institutional and unit goals that are clearly stated, assessed, linked to mission  
745 and goal achievement, aligned with institutional improvement, and incorporate the results of  
746 institutional assessments
  - 747 Division/ unit goals and objectives
  - 748 Summaries or cross-walks of division/unit goals and objectives with key  
749 assessment results
- 750 Evidence of a financial planning and budgeting process that is aligned with mission and  
751 goals, and clearly linked to that the institution's budgeting process is aligned with the  
752 institution's strategic or institutional effectiveness plan:
  - 753 Budgeting policies and procedures
  - 754 Current fiscal year institutional budget or other comparable documentation
  - 755 Unit mission statements and budgets, as applicable
  - 756 Budget projections, including clear parameters and assumptions on which they are  
757 based
  - 758 Multi-year budget
  - 759 Diverse perspectives in the development and implementation of the institution's  
760 planning and resource allocation process
  - 761 Evidence of budgetary support, allocation of resources, and implementation of  
762 programs to support student learning outcomes and student achievement
- 763 Evidence that the institution's enrollment management planning process is aligned with the  
764 institution's strategic or institutional effectiveness plan
  - 765 Enrollment projections, including clear parameters and assumptions on which they  
766 are based
  - 767 [Strategic] enrollment management plan, as applicable

- Analysis of enrollment trends
- Evidence that the institution's long-term financial planning reconciles the financial plan to the institution's financial capacity and assesses risk factors
  - Financial planning policies and procedures
  - Long-term financial plans, three-five years, as applicable
  - Underlying assumptions of the financial plan and evidence of the viability of those assumptions
- If applicable, a clear, well-founded plan to reduce any deficits to yield a balance or surplus in a timely fashion
- Evidence of fiscal and human resources as well as physical and technical infrastructure adequate to support operations
  - Student Headcount Data, disaggregated and analyzed as appropriate to mission
    - Fall Enrollment (Available in IPEDS; Collected in the AIU Indicator)
    - 12 Month Enrollment (Available in IPEDS; Collected in the AIU Indicator)
    - Graduate Enrollment
  - Human Resources Data, disaggregated by relevant populations (Available in IPEDS)
    - Faculty headcount
    - Administrative and staff headcount
    - Other appropriate professionals or instructors for non-credit programs
  - Evidence of adequate resourcing at all branch campuses and additional locations, as applicable
  - Evidence of resource planning and analysis of resource utilization
  - Comprehensive plans for facilities, equipment, and supplies
    - Description of physical facilities, including space for instruction, library, student support services, and administrative services
    - Capital facilities master plan
    - Information technology master plan
    - Facilities condition analyses
    - Deferred maintenance costs and plans
    - Space utilization studies
    - Capital planning, budget and expenditures
    - IT expenditure and replacement cycle documentation
  - Debt management strategies or plans
  - Documentation regarding ownership (titles, mortgages, liens), and rental and lease agreements (contracts)
  - Copies of insurance policies currently in force (e.g. fire, casualty, and liability, crime, cybersecurity)
- Expense Analysis of related expenses (most recent four years), as applicable
  - \$ / % core expenditures, instruction
  - \$ / % core expenditures, public service
  - \$ / % core expenditures, research
  - \$ / % core expenditures, academic support
  - \$ / % core expenditures, student support
  - \$ / % core expenditures, institutional support
- Expense analysis for non-credit, experiential learning, workforce development, community education, or other non-credit programs (most recent four years)
- Evidence of documented financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability

818                   o Financial ratio analysis appropriate to institutional type:  
819                    ▪ Primary reserve ratio (expendable net assets / total expenses)  
820                    ▪ Net Operating Revenue Ratio (net operating income / total operating  
821                    revenue)  
822                    ▪ Return on Net Assets Ratio (change in net assets / total net assets)  
823                    ▪ Viability Ratio (expendable net assets / long-term debt)  
824                   o Analysis of other financial indicators used by the institution which may include:  
825                    ▪ Composite Financial Index (AIU Indicator)  
826                    ▪ Capitalization Ratio  
827                    ▪ (\$) Debt service, most recent four years  
828                    ▪ Tuition discount rate  
829                    ▪ Instructional expense per credit hour  
830                    ▪ Other  
831                   o Where possible, SEC 10K filings or Form 990  
832                   o Documentation of funding streams from related entities and analysis of the  
833                    institution's financial independence from a related entity  
834                   o Analysis of state and local appropriations, as applicable  
835                   o Bond Ratings, as available  
836                   o Annual financial audit for four most recent fiscal years, with governance and  
837                    management letters, where appropriate (Collected in the AIU)  
838                    ▪ Evidence confirming financial viability and proper internal controls  
839                    ▪ Any appropriate supporting documentation to assist with understanding  
840                    financial statements, such as annual audit for related entities including but  
841                    not limited to parent company, religious sponsor, or system administration  
842                    (*Related Entities Policy and Procedures*)  
843                    ▪ Evidence of corrective measures taken to address any material findings  
844                    cited in the audit or accompanying management letter  
845                    o Organizational charts for the institution, including divisions and units  
846                   • Analysis of the level of outsourcing key operational or business functions (departments  
847                   or units such as procurement, information technology, or human resources) which  
848                   otherwise are or could be carried out internally (Third-Party Providers Policy and  
849                   Procedures)  
850                    o Description of key business operations or functions that are outsourced and  
851                    justification or rationale for outsourcing as a continued strategy for the institution  
852                    o Sample of agreements and/or contracts with third-party providers to outsource  
853                    key business functions  
854                    o Evidence of regular and systematic evaluation and assessment of outsourcing  
855                    key business operations or functions to third-party providers, the consideration of  
856                    results, and follow-up or changes made when warranted  
857                   o For institutions that participate in Title IV student financial aid programs, evidence that  
858                   the institution meets its Title IV Responsibilities (Applicable Federal Regulatory  
859                   Requirement - Title IV Responsibilities and federal regulation 34 CFR 602.16(a)(1)(x))  
860                    o Program participation agreement (PPA), most recent  
861                    o Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (ECAR), most recent  
862                    o Heightened Cash Monitoring (HCM) Status, if applicable  
863                    o Three-year official cohort default rate (College Scorecard or Institution)  
864                    o Financial responsibility composite score / composite score index  
865                    o Most recent Program Review Determination Letter (Final Program Review  
866                    Determination Letter or Expedited-Determination Letter; correspondence)

- Single Audit (OMB Circular A-128; OMB Circular A-133, 2 CFR 200 Subpart F: Uniform Guidance)
- USDE Correspondence and institutional response related to limited, suspended, terminated eligibility to participate in title IV
- For Profit Institutions - 90/10 Rule – percentage of revenue from federal funds
- Evidence of on-time submission of financial and compliance audits to USDE
- Consultant and taskforce reports, as applicable
- Evidence of regular reporting on institutional performance on key performance indicators (KPIs)
  - Analysis of KPIs tied to strategic or institutional effectiveness planning
  - Review of KPIs by institutional stakeholders, including members of the board, senior staff, and collegial governance organizations
- Documentation of an implemented, systematic, and sustained institutional assessment process linking the evaluation and assessment process to budgeting, planning and resource allocation decisions
  - Evidence of consideration and use of appropriate assessment by key institutional and unit stakeholders for identifying opportunities for innovation and/or the improvement of educational effectiveness at division/unit levels
  - Evidence of discussion and use of evidence noted above by governing body, chief executive officer, staff, and faculty in budgeting, planning, and resource allocation

## **Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

**The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with a related entity, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.**