



## South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

Nonpublic Postsecondary Institution Licensing

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### PROCEDURES FOR DEGREE-GRANTING INSTITUTIONS SEEKING INITIAL LICENSURE OR SEEKING AN AMENDMENT TO ADD PROGRAMS OR TO ADD SITES

#### I. LETTER OF INTEREST/INTENT

- A. Institutions that plan to seek initial licensure or amendments to add programs or to add sites submit a letter of interest/intent summarizing information about the institution, the proposed program(s), and the need for the program(s). A letter of interest/intent is valid for two years from its date of submission to the Commission. After two years, the letter must be updated and resubmitted. It is preferred that the letter of intent be submitted to the staff electronically. It should not exceed three pages in length for each program and must address the following:
1. The proposed degree title and concentration;
  2. A brief statement of the purposes and objectives of the program;
  3. Whether the application will be for (1) recruiting SC residents into programs offered on-line or on-ground, (2) establishing a branch campus on-ground in SC, or (3) establishing a new institution offering programs on-line or on-ground;
  4. If applicable, a statement of institutional and program accreditation and the states in which the programs are approved; and
  5. A proposed date of implementation.
- B. The staff posts pending licensing activities on the Commission's web site as public notice.

#### II. REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

- C. If the institution believes that it can meet the required standards and desires to apply for licensure, the institution should proceed by submitting the letter of intent, completing the application, assembling the required documentation, and submitting those documents to the License staff. The License staff will provide the inquiring institution with the necessary information and forms germane to the process. The director responsible for licensing may require a conference to discuss the standards required of the institution and the procedures for implementing licensure.
- D. The License staff will review the application and documentation. If it is determined that a review is appropriate, the License staff and/or team may proceed with a 'paper review' and/or make a visit to the institution's facilities in accordance with Regulation 62-15. The purpose of the review is to confirm the documentation furnished by the institution and to ascertain whether or not the institution meets the licensing standards. The examination may be accomplished by:
1. Commission staff, or

2. A committee of examiners selected by the License staff and approved by the director responsible for licensing. It will include at least one member of the Commission staff, and may include administrators and/or faculty members of the public or private sectors or both with experience at appropriate levels. The Committee may also include other qualified, appropriate persons.
- E. Within 30 days after the review/visit, the examining staff member or committee chairperson will prepare and submit a report to the director responsible for licensing. The report will include a recommendation regarding the institution's application for licensure. All recommendations will be advisory. The recommendation accompanying the examiners' report should be that the Commission:
1. License the institution for a period of five years unless there is reasonable cause for a licensing period of less than five years, but not less than one year, (or in the case of an amendment to add a program or a site, for a period concurrent with the license period for the primary location) subject to annual staff visits and/or evaluation, as appropriate, and reporting as requested by the Commission, or
  2. License the institution to proceed with specific functions based on the ability of the institution to meet the requirements for licensure within a specified period of time and subject to follow-up review by a subsequent team or the staff of the Commission as appropriate, or
  3. Not license the institution but recommend that the institution continue its efforts to comply with licensing criteria and reapply later, or
  4. Not license the institution and recommend that the institution either disband or appropriately modify its operation. If the recommendation is that the institution not be licensed, the institution may choose to withdraw its formal request for licensing.
- F. The director will evaluate the recommendation and forward a copy to the institution. The institution will be invited to discuss the report and recommendations and present any further information pertinent to the application. If the institution desires a meeting, the chairman of the examining committee and members of the License staff will normally attend the conference to present the committee's report and to respond to any questions concerning.
- G. The director will submit the recommendation of the examining committee to the Commission, the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL).
- H. CAAL will consider the recommendation. Representatives of the institution must attend the committee meeting to discuss the report and recommendation, present any further information pertinent to the application, and answer questions from the members of the Committee and others attending. The Committee will formulate a recommendation to be presented to the full Commission. Notice, hearings, and other related process matters and subsequent procedures will be conducted in compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 23 of Title 1, *South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976*, as amended. The meetings are public and those present may comment and ask questions.
- I. The CAAL chairman will submit the recommendation of the Committee to the full Commission. The Committee recommends that representatives of the institution attend the Commission

meeting. The Commission will make a decision on the institution's request for licensing. Notice, hearings, and other related process matters and subsequent procedures will be conducted in compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 23 of Title 1, *South Carolina Code of Laws*, 1976, as amended. The meetings are public and those present may comment and ask questions.

- J. If the Commission makes the decision to license an institution or to grant an amendment, the staff will issue a license for each location specifying the courses or programs the institution is authorized to offer, the specific site where the courses or programs may be offered, and the degrees the institution is authorized to award.

**TIMELINE**

Inquire of licensing staff about the schedule for meetings and deadlines for the intent and application. Typically the CAAL meets in the afternoon of the Commission meetings in February, April, September, and December. The Commission typically meets the first Thursday of each month. Submission of the proposal may be delayed to future Committee/Commission meetings if more time is required for review, especially in cases where the institution does not have evidence that it has an acceptable system of program review and evaluation.

Proposals will go forward to the CAAL in its 'next' cycle after the application and review are complete. The staff, Committee, or Commission may require additional review and information-seeking meetings. Receipt of the intent/application by the due date does not guarantee that the item will be included in the next cycle of meetings.

<b>INTENT DUE</b>	<b>APP DUE</b>	<b>CAAL MEETING</b>	<b>CHE</b>
<b>9/1</b>	<b>10/1</b>	<b>12/1/2011</b>	<b>1/5/2012</b>
<b>11/1</b>	<b>12/1</b>	<b>2/2/2012</b>	<b>3/1/2012</b>
<b>1/3</b>	<b>2/1</b>	<b>4/5/2012</b>	<b>5/3/2012</b>

Representatives of the institution must attend the Committee meeting to discuss the proposal and recommendation, present any further information pertinent to the application, and answer questions from members of the Committee or others attending. Although the Commission now uses a 'consent agenda,' we strongly recommend that institutions also have representatives at the Commission meeting.

### Review Expenses

Contact a CHE licensing staff member to discuss an estimate of review expenses. In addition to licensing fees to the Commission, the institution is responsible for travel and honoraria expenses of examination team representatives for initial licensure and subsequent program reviews or renewals. An estimate of travel and honorary expenses must be paid to CHE with the licensing fee. Teams typically include three members for initial licensure. Institutions are responsible for expenses that exceed prepaid estimates.

#### Example:

\$3,000 (\$1,000 travel expenses for each team member)

\$4,500 (\$500 per day, minimum three days for each team member)

#### Licensing Staff Contact Information:

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