



NC-SARA and Exclusive Distance Education

By Mia Hairston, CETL Staff

The continual shift in educational landscape has called for stakeholders including educators, legislators and the U.S. Department of Education to establish a means of uniformity, accessibility and provision surrounding post-secondary distance education nation-wide. This has led to the founding of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA). SARA is a set of agreements honored across participating regions and educational institutions to streamline and regulate distance education programs.

The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements, better known as NC-SARA is the private organization established in 2013 to fulfil the responsibility of improving the quality of distance education programs. NC-SARA is committed to providing program expansion & accessibility, assuring cost savings for members, improving uniformity and coordination efforts between states, and collaborating with 4 regional compacts. Detroit Mercy is one of 2,300 educational institutions who participate voluntarily as a NC-SARA participant and member of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact.

In compliance with the annual NC-SARA requirements, the University will begin the data-collection process within the next few months. Faculty or staff members who serve as designated lead of online academic programs will receive communication from the CETL to assist in verifying and obtaining the most accurate information to document our online programs. We look forward to working with you on this important collaboration.

NC-SARA FACTS

In 2020 nearly 6 million students were enrolled exclusively in distance education programs at NC-SARA participating institutions.

Data Reporting is a requirement of all NC-SARA participating institutions and is an effective measure toward ensuring efficient and consistent insight across distance education programs.

Participating educational institutions must adhere to strict student consumer protections amongst additional requirements such as good financial standing and maintaining of accreditation(s) to remain members.

[Visit the NC-SARA website by clicking here.](#)