


SARA

State Authorization
Reciprocity Agreement for
Distance Education

**We're Way Past the
"Easy Stuff" -- The
Continuing Evolution of SARA**

NASASPS April 5, 2017



Presenters:




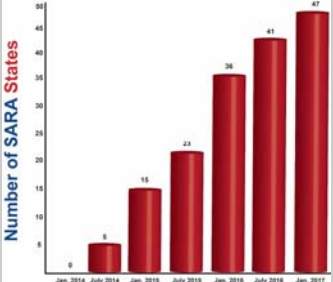
Marshall A. Hill
Executive Director, NC-SARA



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Director
Student Access Programs
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SARA Member States

Date	Number of SARA States
Jan 2014	6
July 2014	15
Jan 2015	23
July 2015	36
Jan 2016	41
July 2016	47

The Current SARA Landscape

Approved as SARA sites

Participating Institutions

Date	Number of Institutions
Jan 2014	18
April 2014	28
June 2015	168
July 2015	388
Jan 2016	628
July 2016	968
Jan 2017	1208
March 2017	1308

Participating Institutions

Institutions by SIZE

- Fewer than 2,500 FTE (45%)
- 2,500 - 9,999 FTE (36%)
- Greater than 10,000 FTE (19%)

Participating Institutions

SECTOR	Percentage
Public	73%
Private/Non-Profit	24%
Independent/ For-Profit	3%
Tribal	0%

As of January 18, 2017

Business/Financial Status of the SARA Initiative

- NC-SARA is now a free-standing 501(c)(3) non-profit entity, with fully separate business functions
- SARA work by all SARA partners (NC-SARA, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB and WICHE) is now fully dependent on fee revenue
- Current and projected revenues are sufficient to support SARA
- Consequently, NC-SARA has determined to keep fees at current levels through June, 2018

SARA Goals: How are we doing?

SARA establishes a **state-level reciprocity process** that is making state authorization:

- **more efficient, effective, and uniform** in regard to necessary and reasonable standards of practice that could span states;
- **more effective** in dealing with quality and integrity issues that have arisen in some online/distance education offerings; and
- **less costly** for states and institutions and, thereby, the students they serve.



**Remember:
SARA reconciles
different interests**




- Institutions' goals
- Regulators' concerns
- Others
 - Accreditors
 - Regional compacts
 - National Commission
 - US Department of Education

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**“Past-the-Easy-Stuff”
challenges**

- Reconciling SARA's physical presence provisions with changing institutional practices – a never-ending issue
 - Experiential learning and physical presence
 - Why deal with experiential education at all?
 - Beneficial for students
 - Many states regulate it
 - Required for some degree programs (allied health, etc.)
- Programs intended to lead to licensure

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**“Past-the-Easy-Stuff”
challenges**




- Complaint resolution (SARA requirements vs actual state practice)
- USED's 12/2016 rules and their intent regarding their definition of "state authorization reciprocity agreement"
- Yes, SECRRRA is indeed going away! (June 30, 2017)
- Communications
- California, Florida and Massachusetts
- Some continued objections to SARA's allowing for-profit institutions to participate

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What's Ahead for SARA?

- Add additional states and institutions
- Enrollment reporting and publication:
 - SARA institutions reported their out-of-state enrollments in May, 2016; results published in September;
 - Spring 2017 reporting set for May 22-June 14
- Under consideration
 - Student-focused information and assistance
 - Voluntary database of distance ed programs offered by SARA institutions

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Now That We're Past the "Easy" Stuff...

- Continue to add states and institutions
- Implications and implementation of IRS 501 (c)(3) status for NC-SARA
 - Establish independent budgeting, accounting, auditing, IT systems, employee benefits plans
 - Establish appropriate staffing levels
- Responding to "down-in-the-weeds" questions and policy issues
 - Physical presence
 - Experiential learning
 - Etc., etc., etc.



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Additional Resources




- SARA
www.nc-sara.org
- State Authorization
<http://wcet.wiche.edu/initiatives/state-authorization-network>
- State contacts
<http://sheeo.org/projects/state-authorization-postsecondary-education>

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Questions?

As always, feel free to contact info@nc-sara.org with any additional questions or comments

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