

Closed School Toolkit

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Initiative

- This initiative developed a toolkit for teach-out agreements between closing and receiving institutions, including guidance documents based on input from institutional and state agency personnel.
- 8 institutional representatives & 2 state agency representatives participated
- The group met during 2020 (face-to-face and virtually)



TEACH-OUT TOOLKIT

An HLC Quality Awareness Initiative

Types of Closure

- Planned institutional closure
- Unplanned/abrupt institutional closure
- Branch campus or additional location closure
- Natural disasters (temporary or permanent)

Engaging State Agencies During Closures

- When required under state law
 - Closing institutions: notification typically required
 - Student records
 - Student lists
 - Receiving institutions: notification may be required
 - New academic program approval
 - Modifications to existing programs to allow transfer students
- When to contact
 - During the planning phase
 - Before the actual closure
 - When problems and barriers arise

Engaging State Agencies as Partners

- Record holders
 - Work to maintain and safeguard student records to facilitate transfer students
- Facilitate communications between
 - Students and schools
 - Accreditors, schools, and US Department of Education
- Limitations
 - Will not tell students where transfer
 - Will not waive statutory requirements

Closing Institutions

Best advice for closing institutions:

1. Communicate
2. Communicate, again!
3. Over communicate

Closing Institutions

After decision to close has been made, the following constituents need to be notified:

- 1. Agencies** – State, DOE, HLC, Specialized Accrediting Agencies, Veterans Affairs, Partnership Organizations
- 2. Faculty and Staff** – They are the ones that will get the most questions and help with the rumor mill
- 3. Students** – Need a variety of ways to reach out to students, as well as dedicated resources available to answer their questions

Closing Institutions

In order to reach all constituents (agencies, faculty, staff, students, alumni), the institutions needs to use different modes of communication:

- Email
- Snail mail
- Text blasts
- In-person scheduled meetings
- Dedicated hotline and email

Receiving Institution Perspectives

Planning Areas (student focused)

- Mission/Fit
- Accreditation (HLC, State, Programmatic)
- Academic Programs/Alignment
- Student Services
- Financial Aid/Scholarships
- Registration/Records
- Legal/Governance
- Alumni/Fundraising

Accreditation

- Higher Learning Commission
- State Expectations
- Programmatic Accreditors
- State Professional Licensure Boards
- Language
 - Teach Out vs Transfer
 - Change of Ownership, Merger,
 - Change of Control, Closure

Academic Programming

- Alignment
- Faculty Buy-in
- Curriculum Committee
- Teach Out vs Transfer
- Degree Completion
- Residency Waivers
- Program Waivers
- Credit/Quarter Hours

Student Services

- Housing, Food Insecurity, Financial Issues, Insurance
- New Culture, Location
- Counseling
- Costs – Aid, Scholarships, Bills, Collections
- Academic Records
- Academic Content, Preparedness
- Athletics
- Technology, SIS, LMS, Email

Resources

1. Governing Boards Contemplating a Decision that would Require a Teach Out
2. Assisting Students When your Institution is Required to Teach-Out Students
3. Assisting Students When your Institution Receives Students from a Teach Out
4. State Authorizing Agency Checklist for Institutions that are Required to Teach-Out Students
5. Checklist for Institutions Receiving Teach-Out Students

Timing Is Important

- Accreditors and state regulators have separate processes
- Check timeline requirements for notification and/or approvals

Grant Opportunities

- Philanthropic support available
- Support for students and outcomes
- Local and national focus

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<https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/provisional-plans-and-teach-outs.html>