



## Competency-Based Education Programs

(Including Credit-Based, Direct Assessment and Hybrid Programs)

### HLC's Review Process

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#### *Background Information*

Institutions planning to offer competency-based education (CBE) programs are required to seek prior HLC approval by completing and submitting this application. Institutions should understand the [Common Framework for Defining and Approving Competency-Based Education Programs](#) that was adopted by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) on June 2, 2015.

Institutions planning to offer CBE programs that are considered for Title IV eligibility should also be aware that the U.S. Department of Education requires that they obtain approval from their regional accrediting body prior to filing their applications with the Department.

Institutions are encouraged to understand the Department's expectations for accreditors as outlined in its guidelines published on [March 19, 2013](#), and on [December 19, 2014](#), which highlight that a course/credit-based competency-based program that requires approval by the accreditor is one where the program is organized or re-organized around competencies, not one where competencies have been added to existing courses.

Competency-based education has two principal approaches: (1) a credit-based approach and (2) a direct assessment approach.

HLC's policies and procedures for substantive change apply for these requests. Please refer to the [Institutional Change section of HLC's website](#) (<https://www.hlcommission.org/change>). In addition, HLC's Competency-Based Education Programs Substantive Change process must follow the following federal guidelines:

**Direct Assessment Programs.** An institution must seek prior HLC approval for every direct assessment program and hybrid program, as well as every concentration (or any subset) of each direct assessment program that it intends to initiate (for example, within MBA, an MBA in Finance, MBA in Accounting, or MBA in International Business, or within engineering, in chemical engineering, electrical engineering, or civil engineering, etc.). An institution must file one application for each program. If an institution plans various concentrations of a program, it must separately address each concentration in the application. If an institution later seeks to add a new concentration for a direct assessment program or hybrid program previously approved by HLC, it will need to file a new application and seek approval for that new concentration.

**Note:** Hybrid direct assessment programs are only eligible for Title IV federal financial aid if the institution has joined the Experimental Sites Initiative of the U.S. Department of Education that allows institutions to receive exemptions from regulations that would otherwise preclude such programs from eligibility.

**Credit-Based CBE Programs.** An institution must seek prior approval for its first two credit-based CBE programs. A credit-based CBE program requiring approval is one in which (1) the majority (51% or more) of the credits are offered through CBE or (2) the general education courses or the major courses are being converted to CBE and the program is organized around competencies.

Once HLC has approved the first two programs, an institution can add concentrations to the approved CBE programs, reformat other existing academic programs into CBE programs or add new academic programs in a credit-based CBE format provided that the institution does not add a program that would be a “significant departure” from its existing programs or would trigger the need for prior approval under HLC policies related to new academic programs.

Credit-based CBE programs that were offered prior to May 1, 2015, and reported to HLC through the survey sent in the spring of 2016 are included in the institution’s approvals. These programs are listed in an institution’s Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Report under Accreditation Stipulations.

Note: Since HLC’s process for evaluating CBE programs changed in 2015, credit-based CBE programs that were offered prior to May 1, 2015, and are included in the institution’s approvals do **not** count toward the first two programs approvals.

## Other Related Considerations and Essential Program Components

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Institutions should understand the difference between credit-based CBE and other initiatives, such as prior learning assessments, for example.

Proposed CBE programs are subject to federal definitions related to distance and correspondence education, and institutions should understand the significance of the interaction between students and faculty in these programs. If HLC finds that the proposed programs lack sufficient student-faculty engagement as outlined in the federal definitions of these concepts, HLC will require that the institution have appropriate HLC approvals for correspondence education prior to initiation of the proposed credit-based or direct assessment CBE programs in addition to the HLC approval required for credit-based or direct assessment CBE programs.

Institutions should also have carefully reviewed their credit hour policies and practices and made appropriate changes to encompass these new programs. Where the institution proposes reducing or eliminating “seat time” and credit-based units of measurement commonly used to enroll students and measure their progress, it must have determined “credit-hour equivalencies” for the program based upon its conventional assignment of credit hours across the institution.

Consequently, institutions should be prepared to demonstrate that their CBE programs (regardless of the chief mode of delivery, whether credit-based, direct assessment or a combination of the two) include the following essential components, as documented in the design of the program and its regular evaluation:

- a) Faculty interaction with students is initiated on a regular basis by one or more faculty members who have subject matter expertise in the discipline of the course or program (and not performed

by success coaches, academic mentors, graduate students or other individuals even if they have some subject-matter expertise).

- b) Regular and substantive faculty interaction is explicitly designed in the curriculum and can be documented, and the quality of this interaction is evaluated in curriculum assessment and program review.
- c) Assessment of “credit hour equivalencies” for the competencies and student learning outcomes of the program in relation to the typical assignment of credit hours across the institution. (In order to corroborate this matter, all institutions that have not previously undergone a credit-hour evaluation in conjunction with a comprehensive evaluation will complete the Federal Credit Hour Worksheet and submit this form as part of the application. [If there are questions about whether an institution has previously completed a credit-hour review, contact the institution’s HLC staff liaison.])
- d) The elements of good practice described below.

## Elements of Good Practice in Competency-Based Education

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When determining whether to approve a competency-based program, HLC will expect institutions to demonstrate the following elements of good practice. These elements are derived from HLC’s [Criteria for Accreditation](#) and [Assumed Practices](#) and align with elements that it typically reviews in substantive change.

**Philosophy and Framework for Competency-Based Education.** The institution has a clearly defined purpose and philosophy undergirding its reason for developing and promoting competency-based education. It has clearly defined goals and a framework for its competency-based programs that ensures quality and learning.

**Structure and Coherence of the Program.** The institution has outlined the structure of the competency-based program and established clearly defined competencies related to the program and the learning outcomes that students must attain to be awarded the credential. The program has a clearly-defined beginning, middle and end, and the institution has a mechanism for monitoring student progress towards acquisition of competencies and attainment of the credential being awarded at the end of the program. Expectations for student work and the means for assessing the learning and competencies acquired through that work are clearly defined. The competencies required for the program build a unified body of knowledge that is consistent with a discipline or career path; that is, they are not taken as merely discrete units or for desultory purposes.

**Application of Academic Policies.** The institution has determined how its already-established academic policies in such areas as Satisfactory Academic Progress, academic discipline, probation and suspension apply to students in the competency-based program, and it makes appropriate amendments to its academic policies where appropriate. The institution shows how it determines when a student in the program is not making sufficient academic progress and should be moved to a traditional course-based format to complete his or her academic program or when other disciplinary action should be taken, including academic probation, suspension, or dismissal.

**Student Eligibility.** The institution has a mechanism for determining prior to matriculation in the competency-based program whether a student has the capacity to complete the program (as demonstrated by tests of computer skills and sufficient academic preparation, for example) and therefore is eligible to enroll in that program. Even an open-admissions institution should have such a mechanism for determining a student’s eligibility to enroll in a competency-based program.

**Information to Students.** The institution provides clear information to students outlining the structure and expectations of the program, tuition and fees, and academic policies that apply to students in the program. This information is clearly communicated to students prior to their matriculation.

**Student Support Services and Access to Academic Resources.** The institution offers student support services that appropriately guide students in these programs; they must have the same access to learning resources as traditional students. In addition, the institution is prepared to assist students who drop out of a competency-based program in making the transition back to a traditional course-based format so as to ensure that those students can continue to progress towards a degree or certificate.

**Eligibility, Development, and Engagement of Faculty Members and Instructional Staff.** Faculty members with subject matter expertise in the student's discipline and in general education play a formative role in developing the student's academic program. While faculty with subject matter expertise may design the curriculum, these faculty members must also engage regularly with students during the competency-based program, provide expert assistance and academic support to students in the program, and have a meaningful role in directing and reviewing the assessment of competencies as well as the student learning outcomes. Program faculty should be "qualified faculty" (institutions should refer to the Commission's document, "Determining Qualified Faculty") and not simply "subject matter experts," graduate students, or other personnel. In addition, faculty should be well suited for delivering competency-based education by interest and experience and receive appropriate professional development and support from the institution in executing this role. While mentors or counselors may be assigned an important role in supporting or assisting students in direct assessment competency-based programs, they must not replace the essential role of faculty or instructors. For those programs that do assign mentors or counselors, the number of those individuals assigned to the program should be sufficient to work with enrolled students and must be qualified to advise students at the college level.

**Assessment of Student Learning.** The competency-based program relies upon a strong foundation for the assessment of student learning outcomes that has been established by the institution, with demonstrated capacity to assess student work at the course and program level in both general education and in the major. At all levels, assessment supports academic improvement. The comprehensive student learning outcomes and goals of the program are reviewed regularly and reflect concepts generally agreed on by the related discipline(s).

**Evaluation and Improvement Systems.** The institution ensures that it regularly reviews its competency-based programs, particularly in the initial years of those programs, to ensure that it identifies any areas of weakness in the programs and makes immediate improvements.

### **Distinguishing Direct Assessment Competency-Based Programs From Prior Learning**

**Assessment.** For those programs providing direct assessment options, applicants must show that direct assessments provided by the institution are clearly distinguished from the assessment of prior learning that may take place at the outset of the program. When students demonstrate competencies at the beginning of a program on the basis of prior learning, transcripts and other documents should make clear that those competencies are awarded as prior-learning credit. Once the institution has identified prior-learning credit for each student, other competencies should be awarded only after the student has completed the tasks, units, or modules that comprise the program's curriculum and that demonstrate mastery of the competencies defined by it.

**Institutional Contribution.** The institution offering the competency-based program is able to identify and articulate the educational contribution its curriculum provides to students in the program. This contribution may take the form of learning units or modules, substantive engagement with faculty, academic exercises or performances, tests and other demonstrations of student learning or other activities that either expand the student's knowledge beyond any prior learning that the student may have demonstrated at matriculation or that assist the student in documenting how prior learning translates to the attainment of competencies required for receiving an academic credential.

**Billing and Title IV.** While the institution may charge a fee for its assessment of a student's prior learning as well as its transcription of competencies, the institution charges tuition only for those courses, modules, components, and services that the institution contributes to the development or formation of the competency-based student or for the term or enrollment period in which the student is matriculated in the competency-based program. Similarly, the institution assists students in seeking Title IV student aid funds for those courses, modules or components of the educational program that the institution contributes to the development or formation of the student.

**Formal Processes for Evaluating Student Work.** The institution has a mechanism for determining how courses, units, modules and competencies in the competency-based program are equivalent to traditional courses and credit hours in a conventional credit-hour-based program, and how they are related to accepted expectations of academic achievement and rigor, as based on the following principles:

1. Student work performed in competency-based programs (e.g., demonstrated mastery of tasks, assignments, or competencies) must be equivalent or superior to student work performed in traditional courses (e.g., successful completion of tests, assignments, or projects).
2. Student learning outcomes and goals in competency-based programs offered by the institution must be equivalent or superior to student learning outcomes and goals defined by the discipline in a traditional academic program.
3. The application of student learning assessments (e.g., examinations; portfolios; projects; capstone presentations; other recognized demonstrations of mastery; etc.) must be equivalent or superior to the outcome assessments that are used in traditional courses.

**Transcription of Student Work.** The institution is able to demonstrate that students in the competency-based program are achieving at least the same outcomes and goals, and at the same academic level of rigor, as in traditional programs and courses offered by the institution. For direct assessment programs, the institution prepares and maintains a transcript for each student documenting both the competencies earned and the equivalent courses or credit hours based on the expectations noted above. The transcript is prepared and updated during the course of the student's academic program so that it is available in the event that a student transfers to another institution or drops out prior to completing the program. Such credit-hour equivalencies are also available at the program level for state and federal agencies and accrediting agencies that may need to review them. In addition, the transcript provides clear and sufficient information for other institutions and employers to understand the student's accomplishments.

**External Contractors.** If the institution has contracted with an external organization to provide some or the entire competency-based program, including course materials provided to students, the institution ensures that it retains sufficient control of the development and implementation of the program. The Commission's policies for approval of contractual relationships requires the institution to seek approval of the contract at the same time it seeks approval to initiate a direct assessment competency-based program.

# Competency-Based Education Programs

(Including Credit-Based, Direct Assessment and Hybrid Programs)

## Substantive Change Application

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Institution:                      City, State:

Name of person completing this application:

Title:                       Phone:                       Email:

Date Submitted:

The questions are designed to elicit brief, succinct, detailed information, rather than a narrative or references to extensive supporting documents. Do not attach other documents unless they are specifically requested in the questions and are germane to the request. Excluding attachments, the completed application form should be no more than 10–12 pages on a single classification of change. The total submission, including attachments, should not exceed 200 pages.

If the person completing this application is not the CEO, CAO or the Accreditation Liaison Officer of the institution, it is understood that the person completing and submitting this application has consulted with and informed those individuals.

Please note: HLC plans to update the change forms annually, on or about September 1 of each year. However, if an application form was accessed more than 90 days prior to filing, please visit the [Institutional Change section of HLC’s website](https://www.hlcommission.org/change) (https://www.hlcommission.org/change) to ensure that there have been no changes to the form in the intervening time.

Submit the completed application as a single PDF file using HLC’s [Document Submission form](http://www.hlcommission.org/document_upload/) (http://www.hlcommission.org/document\_upload/).

### Part 1: General Questions

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1. **Requested Change(s).** Concisely describe the change for which the institution is seeking approval.

2. **Is this application being submitted in conjunction with another application?**

- No
- Yes

If yes, please explain:

3. **Classification of Change Request.**

*Note: not every institutional change requires prior review and approval. Visit the [Institutional Change section of](#)*

[HLC's website](https://www.hlcommission.org/change) (<https://www.hlcommission.org/change>) to make certain that current HLC policy requires the institution to seek approval.

An institution submitting more than one change request should complete multiple applications, one for each type of change. The types of change requests include:

- Change in mission
- Change in student body
- Competency-based education (credit-based; direct assessment; hybrid) programs
- Consortial arrangement
- Contractual arrangement
- Substantially changing the clock or credit hours required for a program
- Change in academic calendar (e.g., quarters to semester) or change in credit allocation
- Teach-out agreement if closing location provides total degree programs
- Distance or correspondence education
- New programs
- Certificate programs
- Branch campuses and additional locations

4. **Special conditions.** Indicate whether any of the conditions identified below fit the institution (Yes or No). If Yes, explain the situation in the space provided.

a) Is the institution, in its relations with other regional, specialized, or national accrediting agencies, currently under or recommended for a negative status or action (e.g., withdrawal, probation, sanction, warning, show-cause, etc.)?

b) Is the institution now undergoing or facing substantial monitoring, special review, or financial restrictions from the U.S. Dept. of Education or other federal or state government agencies?

c) Has the institution's senior leadership or board membership experienced substantial resignations or removals in the past year?

d) Is the institution experiencing financial difficulty through such conditions as a currently declared state of exigency, a deficit of 10% or more, a default or failure to make payroll during the past year, or consecutive deficits in the two most recent years?

e) Is the institution experiencing other pressures that might affect its ability to carry out the proposal (e.g., a collective bargaining dispute or a significant lawsuit)?

5. **Approvals.** Mark whether each type of approval is required prior to implementing the proposed change.

• **If approval is required:** Attach documentation of the approval.

• **If approval is not required:** Attach evidence that approval is not needed.

Internal (faculty, board) approvals	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
System approvals	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
State approval	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Foreign country(ies) approvals	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

*For Distance or Correspondence Education only:*

Process in place to ascertain and secure state approval(s) as required  Yes  No

6. **Specialized Accreditation.** Complete this section only if specialized accreditation is required for licensure or practice in program(s) covered by this change application.

- The institution has already obtained the appropriate specialized accreditation. Attach a copy of the letter from the agency granting accreditation.
- The institution has begun the process of seeking or plans to seek specialized accreditation. Specify the name of the agency and the timeline for completing the process in the space below. (If approval is a multi-stage process, the institution should contact the HLC staff liaison to discuss the timeline before submitting this change application form.)
- The institution does not plan to seek specialized accreditation. Provide a rationale for not seeking this accreditation in the space below.

7. **Changes Requiring Visits.** This section is not for HLC-mandated visits such as additional location confirmation visits or campus evaluation visits.

Note: Complete this section only if the institution is already aware that the proposed change will need to be reviewed through a visit. The institution may submit Part 1 of the change request application to begin the process of scheduling a Change Visit or adding the proposed change to an already scheduled visit. The full application must be submitted at a later date. (If the institution is unsure whether a visit is required, leave this section blank and submit the full change application. HLC will advise the institution based on the information provided.)



a) Select the type of visit the institution is requesting:

Request to schedule a Change Visit.

Change Visits typically are scheduled approximately four months from the date an institution submits its change request. The full change application and other required materials will be due to HLC and the peer review team eight weeks before the visit date. See [Change Visit: Required Materials and Submission Procedures](#) for more information.

Request to add a proposed change to an already scheduled visit. **Note:** Such requests must be submitted at least six months before the visit date.

Specify type of visit and date scheduled:

The institution's full change application should be submitted along with other materials required for the visit.

b) Provide URLs to the institution's Faculty/Staff Handbook and Catalog below. If the URLs are not available, please provide PDF versions of these documents when submitting other required materials prior to the visit.

Faculty/Staff Handbook URL:

Catalog URL:

## Part 2: Topic-Specific Questions

An institution should submit a separate application for each requested program. Each proposed new program should be identified by using the [Classification of Instructional Programs terminology \(CIP codes\)](#). CIP codes are established by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics as a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity.

Attach the "Substantive Change Application, Part 1: General Questions" as page one of your application. That completed form and your answers to the questions below will constitute your request for approval of a substantive change. This form will be the basis for review of this application.

Application for (check one):

Credit-based CBE program(s)

Direct assessment program

Hybrid program

### Section A. Characteristics of the Change Requested

1. Identify the basic characteristics of the proposed educational program as indicated below:

a) The full name of the proposed program, the specific degree (if applicable) or the instructional level (if not a degree program), and the six-digit CIP code XX.XXXX of the program (CIP codes, program name, and additional description [optional])

b) The total credit hours (For a **credit-based** program, the total credit hours [indicate whether semester or quarter] for completion of the program; for a **direct assessment** program, the total credit hours upon which “credit-hour equivalencies” will be based; for a **hybrid program**, the percentage of the program that will be regular credit-based courses and the percentage of the program that will be either competency-based or direct assessment. *Note: Institutions proposing a hybrid program that includes direct assessment must be a current participant in the U.S. Department of Education’s Experimental Sites Programs in order for the program to be supported by Title IV federal financial aid. See Section C, Question 9)*

c) Normal or typical length of time for students to complete the program (or equivalent measurement of expected duration)

d) Proposed initial date for implementation of the program

e) Primary target audience for the program (e.g., full-time, part-time, traditional college age, working adults, transfer students, military personnel, or particular ethnic group)

f) Whether the program will be part of contractual arrangement (see HLC’s website for a [definition of contractual arrangements](#))

No

Yes

**Important:** If yes, complete the [Contractual Arrangement Screening Form](#) for each planned involvement to determine whether additional HLC approval is required.

- **If contractual approval is required:** Complete the full contractual application and submit it in conjunction with this application.
- **If approval is not required:** Attach the confirmation email from HLC to this application.

g) Whether the program will be part of a consortial arrangement (see HLC’s website for a [definition of consortial arrangements](#))

No

Yes

**Important:** If yes, complete the [Consortial Arrangement Screening Form](#) for each planned involvement to determine whether additional HLC approval is required.

- **If consortial approval is required:** Complete the full consortial application and submit it in conjunction with this application.
- **If approval is not required:** Attach the confirmation email from HLC to this application.

h) Whether the program will be offered as distance education or correspondence education (see HLC's website for [definitions of distance and correspondence education](#))

No

Yes

**Important:** If yes, check the institution's distance delivery stipulation in its [Institutional Status and Requirements Report](#). If this program does not fit within the institution's current stipulation, submit a [distance delivery application](#) in conjunction with this application.

## Section B. Institution's History With Alternative Delivery Programs

2. Briefly describe the institution's experience in delivering competency-based education prior to the development of this program.

3. Briefly describe the institution's experience with alternative delivery (distance, correspondence, accelerated, compressed format) programs and with degree-completion programs. List all programs and delivery methods.

4. Does the institution currently offer a program at the same instructional level and with the same 4-digit CIP code (XX.XX) as the proposed program? If so, identify the program currently offered and whether it is a degree program. Identify all delivery formats in which the program is currently offered (distance, correspondence, accelerated, compressed). Will the proposed program replace the program currently offered in any of its current formats?

5. Does the institution currently offer two or more programs at the same instructional level with the same 2-digit CIP code (XX.) as the proposed program? If so, identify the two such programs with the highest numbers of graduates during the past year, along with their numbers of graduates. Identify all delivery formats in which these two programs are currently offered (distance, correspondence, accelerated, compressed).

## Section C. Institutional Planning for Program Change

6. Describe the number of semester or quarter credit hours, or clock hours, that are delivered in the credit-based competency-based program(s) or, if a direct assessment program, which are equivalent to the amount of student learning being directly assessed for this program. If you are proposing a hybrid program, explain how student progress is measured in relation to credit hours or credit-hour equivalencies.
7. Describe the methodology the institution uses to determine the number of credit or clock hours to which the direct assessment or hybrid direct assessment program is equivalent; please coordinate this section with the information supplied on the Credit Hour Worksheet.
8. Explain how the institution's financial aid systems are configured to handle the management of credit-based competency based programs, direct assessment programs, and hybrid programs (if applicable), and whether the institution anticipates any challenges related to these systems. If the institution is an applicant to the Experimental Sites (ESI) program, please attach a copy of the application provided to the U.S. Department of Education that includes a description of the program(s) the institution intends to include in the ESI program.

#### **Section D. Curriculum and Instructional Design**

For the questions in the section, provide evidence of the institution's planning by responding to the following scenarios:

9. For undergraduate programs, consider an exceptional student with 58 credits who has transferred to your program with an excellent record of academic success across the liberal arts and who brings work experience in accounting that has earned 15 additional credits by means of a CAEL prior learning portfolio. How would such a student ideally progress through your program's curriculum, and what would be the financial expectations for such a student (including tuition, fees, and expenses)? Why would such a student choose this program over other online or face-to-face degree-completion programs?
10. For undergraduate programs, consider a marginal student who has struggled to accumulate 48 credits from several institutions across vastly different practice areas (e.g., early childhood education, land surveying, and occupational therapy), suggesting a disjointed and uneven academic history, complicated by mild learning disabilities and avoidance of liberal arts courses. Needing a great deal of academic and social support, the student lacks direction, focus, and a record of success. Describe how this student will be evaluated and assessed for short-term placement and long-term success in your program: what services will be provided and how would they be made available; how regularly would standard academic progress be evaluated and by whom? Finally, describe the cost of all services and options provided by the program.

11. For graduate programs, provide an overview of the admissions requirements. Explain how the institution established learning outcomes for the program and communicated the expected process for attaining competencies in the program. If a professional or licensed program, how do those learning outcomes correspond to professional standards in the state?

12. Choose the typical full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and staff member in the proposed program and describe each one's role in terms of the number of students enrolled in the program. What is the expected typical weekly interaction between faculty and students? What is the expected typical weekly time commitment for students, including coaching, mentoring, teaching, assessing, documenting, etc., for a planned academic year or its equivalent?

13. If your institution will be offering credit-based competency-based instruction, direct assessment competency-based instruction, and instruction that offers a combination of these approaches, or hybrid formats, what factors do you use to determine the adequacy of your program to meet your students' needs and the appropriateness of the delivery options to meet the goals and desired outcomes of your program's academic discipline?

14. For direct assessment or credit-based programs, provide an inventory of competencies that will be expected of all students. If these are to be sequentially attained, indicate the intended sequence. Connect each competency to the faculty member(s) responsible for assigning the work and evaluating the credit or successful mastery of the competencies.

## **Section E. Institutional Staffing, Faculty and Student Support**

15. If the way the faculty are utilized in the proposed program is different from the way the faculty are utilized in the traditional, credit-hour based program, please explain.

16. How does the institution define a full-time student? Identify whether the students in the proposed program will be full-time or part-time, matriculated or non-matriculated, etc.

## **17. Establishment of Faculty and Their Credentials and Role**

- a) Identify the instructional personnel in the program. Refer to HLC's "[Determining Qualified Faculty](#)" document and [Assumed Practices](#) (B.2.a-d) to identify the instructional personnel's credentials and indicate which instructional personnel are subject-matter experts in the discipline of the proposed program and demonstrate the basis for that determination.

- b) Identify the role of each of the instructional personnel in the program, and referring to the Commission’s documents regarding faculty qualifications referenced above, specify how each functions in the implementation of the program.

18. Regular and Substantive Interaction Between Faculty and Students

- a) Regular

Identify every faculty member connected to the program with his/her credentials, title and experience in the academic discipline or field.

Name	Credential	Title	Experience in the Academic Discipline or Field

Does the faculty member initiate communication on some regular basis with the student in the course(s)? If yes, provide explicit examples of how and when this occurs.

Does the student have a responsibility to initiate communication with the faculty member on some regular basis that is at least equivalent to contact in a traditional classroom? If yes, provide explicit examples of how and when this occurs.

- b) Substantive

Describe the manner in which faculty respond to questions from students about academic content of the program. Describe the interaction between faculty and students in demonstrating competencies of the program material.

Demonstrate that in the tasks mastered to assure competency, faculty and students interact about critical thinking, analytical skills, written and oral communication abilities, etc., in the context of the course(s) in question with appropriate guidance by faculty.

Demonstrate that in the tasks mastered to assure competency, faculty and students interact about core ideas, important theories, current knowledge, etc., in the context of the course(s) in question with appropriate guidance by faculty.

## Section F. Evaluation and Assessment

19. How will the institution measure whether a student has demonstrated mastery of a competency area and is making satisfactory academic progress in the program, and how will the institution determine when a student has withdrawn or changed enrollment status?

20. Please explain the institution's process for assessing student learning outcomes. How will the institution conduct program review and to whom will the evaluation be delivered? What other measures for ensuring academic quality will be measured and assessed, and who will be involved in the process?

## Appendix A: Credit Hour Worksheet

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Date of most recent credit hour evaluation:

*A credit hour evaluation typically occurs as part of a comprehensive evaluation in the Standard (Year 4 or Year 10 review), AQIP (Year 8 review) or Open (Year 10 review) Pathway.*

If the institution has not completed a credit hour evaluation, please submit the [Credit Hour Worksheet](#) for for the institution's most current academic year with this application as an Appendix.