



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

R. Scott Ralls, Ph.D.

President

May 12, 2011

TO: Financial Aid Administrators
Student Development Administrators
Chief Academic Officers

FROM: Dr. Sharon Morrissey, Senior Vice President
Chief Academic Officer

RE: State Authorization

The North Carolina Community College System Office has received many questions regarding US Department of Education's state authorization under the federal program integrity regulations. To date, several state-wide training sessions and dear colleague letters from the Department of Education have been issued regarding this topic. Even with these convening's and documents, there is much confusion regarding college compliance. Through our best efforts and work with our contacts at the US Department of Education and UNC General Administration, I would advise the following:

All North Carolina community colleges should have documentation showing they have made a good faith effort to obtain state authorization from states in which they operate by July 1, 2011. Colleges must seek authorization for all educational programs including distance education.

The Department of Education will not initiate any action to establish repayment liabilities or limit student eligibility for distance education activities undertaken before July 1, 2014, as long as the institution is making good faith efforts to identify and obtain necessary State Authorizations.

States seeking authorization to operate in North Carolina should contact The University of North Carolina General Administration (UNC GA). UNC GA is the state agency responsible for licensing all non-public, post secondary educational institutions wishing to conduct degree activity in North Carolina.

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Obtaining authorization is the responsibility of each individual institution. Therefore each college should carefully review the attached policies and guidelines related to state authorization. I will update you as additional information becomes available.

Attachments

C: Presidents
Van Wilson
Wanda White
Jennifer Frazelle