Program Approval – New Approval for Institutions to go online without previous approval

3/20/20

Issue
When an institution converts the modality of its courses from face-to-face to online delivery, there may be a required approval process from a program accreditor in addition to the institution’s institutional accreditor. Some courses and programs are specialized including programs that lead to licensure or certification. Those courses may require approval by the programmatic accreditor to convert a face-to-face course to online.

Impacted
Institutions that have not already received approval to offer distance education may be impacted. Institutional staff directly impacted may include directors of distance education, academic leaders with program authority, institutional compliance officers, subject matter experts, and those tasked with working with accreditors.

Effective Dates
When the institution converts face-to-face courses to online courses or attempts to develop a clinical experience alternative, the institution must adhere to any program accreditor approval requirements.

Background
Specialized academic programs and programs leading to professional licensure or certification may also be subject to approval by a programmatic accreditor in addition to the institution’s general accreditor. The various programmatic accreditors have developed responses to address the needs for the specialized programs and the need for educational continuity due to COVID-19.

The programs leading to professional licensure or certification must also be aware of any requirements for state licensing board approvals for didactic learning and clinical placements.

Recommended Action(s)

- **Identify courses** – List courses that have been converted to online format due to COVID-19.
- **Analyze list of courses** – determine which courses are subject to programmatic approval.
- **Review & comply with any requirements** - Assess steps and comply with program accreditor requirements, if any.
- **Document** – Make a record of all changes to maintain educational continuity.

Resources

- [COVID-19 Guidance Weblinks - Programmatic Accreditors](#) - list of accreditor websites
- List of all currently CHEA-recognized accrediting organizations