

Memorandum

June 15, 2017

To: State higher education regulators and other interested parties

From: Marshall A. Hill, Executive Director, NC-SARA *Marshall A. Hill*
David S. Spence, President, SREB *David S. Spence*

Subject: The ending of SECRRA (SREB's Electronic Campus Regional Reciprocity Agreement) and Florida's participation in SARA

Background

The Florida legislature has passed legislation enabling the state to apply to become a member of SARA. The governor signed that legislation June 9, 2017. Several additional steps are necessary before Florida institutions may participate in SARA.

The Postsecondary Reciprocal Distance Education Coordinating Council established by Florida's legislation must now meet and vote to have the state join SARA; the state would then submit its completed application to SREB for consideration and approval. SREB's approval must be secured before the state can invite its eligible institutions to participate in SARA and review and approve their applications. And finally, state-approved institutions must pay their respective fees to NC-SARA and the state of Florida before becoming SARA participants.

Although everyone involved is working to expedite this process, clearly, all those steps will not be completed before the June 30 end of SECRRA and the state authorization coverage it has provided for SREB-region institutions delivering distance education within the region. We believe it likely that many of these Florida institutions could become SARA participants by the end of the summer.

Effects on Florida institutions offering distance education in the SREB region

Florida institutions offering distance education in the region will therefore likely face a gap in needed state authorizations: their out-of-state distance education activities will no longer be covered by SECRRA, and they cannot yet be covered by SARA.

Under SECRRA, courses that students start by June 30, 2017, as listed on the Electronic Campus, will benefit from the reciprocity agreement of SECRRA. Courses that students begin on or after July 1, 2017, will not be covered by SECRRA-based agreements.

Our request

Under the circumstances, and in the absence of any definitive formal policy, while each state will exercise its own discretion, we ask that states do whatever they can to facilitate this transition between SECRRA-based and SARA-based institutional authorization to operate in their respective jurisdictions.