

UF eCampus and the Online/Distance State Authorization Process

The United States Department of Education regulation 4 C.F.R. § 600.9(c) requires each state to apply for and receive authorization to provide online/distance education courses in other states.

The authorization requirements, as well the application processes, vary on a state-by-state basis. The Distance & Continuing Education (DCE) department works with faculty and staff members across all colleges and departments within the University of Florida who have or may establish programs regarding existing and future applications in a concerted effort to comply with this regulation.

DCE also works to support the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) in identifying and updating an index of state legislation and application requirements. If adopted, SARA would establish standards for reciprocity agreements that colleges and universities from around the country would have to meet, but provide the advantage of a singular application to provide online/distance education in all 50 states. The SARA process essentially flips the entire state authorization model. Rather than requiring institutions to seek approval from all states that require it, institutions would be evaluated solely by an entity in their home states. The home states would rely on standards accepted by all participating states, and the home state approval would be recognized by all member states.