

TRACS SCHOOL – ELIGIBILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

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Checklist of TRACS application eligibility requirements as per [TRACS Steps Towards Accreditation: Institutional Eligibility Requirements](#). Institutions demonstrate eligibility by providing documentation exhibits for each criterion listed below. We advise reviewing [TRACS Demonstrating Compliance: Evaluative Criteria and Typical Documentation](#) for an explanation of each criterion and recommended exhibit documentation.

TRACS Application Eligibility Criteria	Check the box that applies		
	Institution Meets Criterion	Institution Does Not Meet Criterion	Taking Steps Towards Meeting Criterion
1. FAITH STATEMENT			
1.1 - The institution has a Faith Statement which is readily available and included in appropriate official publications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 – MISSION AND NAME			
2.1 - The institution has a Mission Statement which is current and comprehensive, an accurate guide for the institution’s operations, approved and periodically reviewed by the institution’s Board, communicated to the institution’s constituencies, and accurately reflective of its Faith Statement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 – INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES			
3.1 - The institution has adopted clearly defined written Institutional Objectives which are consistent with the institution’s mission, stated in measurable terms, and approved and periodically reviewed by the institution’s Board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 – INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY			
4.1 - The institution operates with integrity and is represented accurately and honestly to students, the public, and to TRACS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 - OPERATIONAL AUTHORITY			
5.1 - The institution has legal authorization to operate from all appropriate governmental agencies (state, federal, territory, country) in which it is located and has filed copies of such authorizations with TRACS. If a governmental requirement conflicts with a TRACS Standard, the institution will be deemed in compliance with the TRACS Standard as long as it is in compliance with the governmental requirement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 - If the institution offers courses and/or programs via Distance Education, the institution has legal authorization to offer such courses and/or programs in the locations wherever the Distance Education student declares his/her residency. Further, the institution’s Distance Education offerings meet all applicable TRACS Accreditation and Federal Requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 – ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE			
6.1 - It must have been legally operating continuously and providing instruction as an institution for at least the two years prior to application.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2 - The institution’s Board appoints and periodically evaluates a full-time Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is not the Chair of the institution’s Board or a Chair of any of its sub-committees, and who is granted the legal authority to fulfill the tasks defined in the written job description for this position as the individual responsible for carrying out published Board policies and procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.3 - A full-time Chief Academic Officer (CAO) is in place who has the credentials, experience, and competence to lead the institution’s educational programs toward quality outcomes and the CAO is periodically evaluated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7 - PUBLICATIONS			
7.1 - The institution's publications are approved by the board or administration, as appropriate, and include at least the following: Board Manual, Policies Manual, Catalog(s), Faculty Handbook, Student Handbook.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 – EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS			
8.1 - The institution has at least one academic program at the diploma, certificate, associate, bachelor, masters, and/or doctoral level (based on at least 60 semester credit hours or equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the bachelor level, or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the graduate or professional level).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.2 - The curriculum clearly relates to the mission and objectives of the institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.3 - Academic programs have adequate enrollment to facilitate student interaction appropriate to quality instruction and to financially sustain the program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.4 - Undergraduate academic degree programs offered include an appropriate general education core. General education courses are not narrowly focused nor are they directed toward a specific occupation or profession. Undergraduate bachelor's degree programs include a minimum of 30 semester hours, with at least 3 semester hours, in each of the humanities/fine arts, behavioral/ social sciences, and natural science/math. Associate degree programs include a minimum of 15 semester hours in general education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 – FACULTY			
9.1 - The institution employs a sufficient number of full-time, academically, and spiritually qualified faculty for the programs it offers to teach and perform related duties, such as advising, and the curricular oversight needed for the institution to fulfill its mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 – STUDENT SERVICES			
10.1 - The institution offers an array of student services that are appropriate to its mission and objectives and which address the needs of its students regardless of location or the mode of delivery of educational programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 – FINANCIAL OPERATIONS			
11.1 - The institution's finances are adequate to support the staffing, facilities, equipment, materials, and support services for the approved programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.2 - A certified external audit of the institution's financial statements is conducted each year under the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Government Auditing Standards and in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America or comparable auditing standards for institutions located in foreign jurisdictions. Final audit reports along with all management letters are submitted to the TRACS office annually within 5 months of the close of the institution's fiscal year. (See definition of Certified External Audit.) Audits demonstrate a recent history of financial stability. (See Definition of Financial Stability.) Institutions organized as non-profit or not-for-profit entities must have their audits prepared using the "net asset" model of accounting consistent with the policies and procedures provided by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) in its document, Audit and Accounting Guide: Not-for-Profit Organizations: 2017, or any later enacted version, or comparable international guidance for such audits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.3 - The institution demonstrates credit lines or other liquid reserves adequate to ensure operations at all times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12 – INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT			
12.1 - The institution has developed and implemented a comprehensive Assessment Plan which includes all aspects of the institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.2 - The institution provides a systematic assessment of whether or not student learning outcomes at the institution, program and course levels are appropriate to its educational mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 – STRATEGIC PLANNING			
13.1 - The institution has developed and implemented a comprehensive, Board approved Strategic Plan which is based on both internal and external factors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 – LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES			
14.1 - The institution furnishes library and learning resources and related services appropriate to support the institution’s mission, academic programs, and administrative functions. These resources and services are made available to all students regardless of location or mode of course delivery.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.2 - The institution employs an adequate number of professionally qualified staff who oversee the institution’s library and learning resources and related services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 – FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT			
15.1 - The institution provides, maintains, and controls adequate facilities and equipment (both on and off-campus) that appropriately serve the needs of the educational programs, support services, and other mission related activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 – HEALTH AND SECURITY			
16.1 - Appropriate health and security measures, including an Emergency Plan, are in place for all institutional facilities and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 – FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS			
<p>17.1 Credit Hours: The institution’s award of credit hours and length must meet national norms and federal requirements.</p> <p>The institution is responsible to award credit hours in accordance with accepted practices in higher education and in compliance with the Federal definition of a credit hour which is as follows: “A credit hour for Federal purposes is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates some minimum amount of student work reflective of the amount of 7 worked expected in a Carnegie unit: key phrases being ‘institutionally established,’ ‘equivalency,’ ‘reasonable approximate,’ and ‘minimum amount.’”</p> <p>The institution must have policies determining credit hours awarded for course and programs. Determining a credit hour should be equivalent to the following: (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours.</p> <p>The institution must demonstrate peer review of a credit hour for courses regardless of mode of delivery. TRACS staff, peer evaluators, and/or the TRACS Accreditation Commission will review the assignment of a credit hour to determine the reliability and accuracy of the assignment and process. - §600.2, §602.24(f)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.2 - Program Length and Cost: The institution’s programs must be appropriate to the institution’s mission and objectives and must demonstrate that program lengths are comparable to accredited institutions of higher education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Program-specific fees and tuition must be published and appropriate for the program length and objectives. - §602.16(a)(1)viii</p>			
<p>17.3 - Student Complaints: Institutions must record student complaints. Records must be kept of student complaints received, the process for addressing the student complaints, and the manner in which the student complaint was handled in accordance with the institution’s policies and procedures. The institution’s student complaint policy must include, at a minimum: a method for receiving confidential student input, clear step-by-step procedures for due process, an appropriate office that securely maintains all information and records of complaints, appeals, proceedings, and instructions for filing a complaint with TRACS and any other relevant government agencies. - §602.16(a)(1)ix</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.4 - Transfer of Credit Policies: The institution has published policies and procedures for accepting transfer of credits. Published policies include criteria for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit transfer, credit by examination, experiential learning, prior learning assessment, advanced placement, and professional certificates. Policies and practices must ensure that course work is at the collegiate level. The institution is responsible for the quality of course work and credit given on the transcript. The policies and procedures must be published and communicated to those who administer the policies. Articulation agreements must be disclosed and the institution listed with which the agreement is made. - §602.24(e)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.5 - Distance Education and Correspondence Education: The institution demonstrates that programs and courses offered via Distance Education and Correspondence Education are in compliance with the Federal definition. of Distance Education and Correspondence Education (Title IV funds are available for Distance Education only):</p> <p>Distance Education Definition: Education that uses one or more of the technologies listed to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed above.</p> <p>Correspondence Education Definition: Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor; interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student; correspondence courses are typically selfpaced; and correspondence education is not distance education. - §602.3</p> <p>[NOTE: This definition for Correspondence Education is provided to ensure that the institution’s Distance Education meets the definition of Distance Education and does not fall to the level of Correspondence Education. Correspondence Education is not reviewed by TRACS and is not included in an institution’s scope of recognition with TRACS.]</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.6 Verification of Student Identity: An institution offering Distance Education as stated in Federal definitions must have a process to verify that the student who registers for a Distance Education program or course is the same student who participates in, completes, and receives credit. Methods to verify the</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>student include but are not limited to: a secure login or passcode, proctored examinations, or new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying the identity of the student.</p> <p>Institutions must notify the student at the time of registration of any additional charges associated with the verification of student identity. - §602.17(g)1</p>			
<p>17.7 - Student Privacy: The institution has a written procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in Distance Education programs or courses. - §602.17(g)2</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.8 - Public Information: The institution makes the following information available to students and the public through the institution’s Catalog(s), website and/or other methods: academic calendar, grading policies, refund policies, admission policies, program requirements, and information regarding tuition and fees. - §602.16(a)(1)vii</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.9 - Advertising and Recruitment Materials: The institution’s advertising and recruitment materials must accurately represent the institution’s practices and policies. - §602.16(a)(1)vii</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.10 - Fraud and Abuse: The institution must not engage in fraud or abuse and practices or procedures that are designed to deceive students or falsify information to students. - §602.27(6)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.11 - Student Achievement: The institution’s assessment of student achievement includes, at a minimum, the collection and analysis of retention rates and graduation rates for Associate and Bachelor programs. Additionally, as appropriate to its mission and program specific expectations, the institution’s assessment of student achievement includes the collection and analysis of course completion rates for Certificate programs, job placement rates, transfer rates, pass rates for state or other licensing examinations, and other appropriate measures. Student achievement information is made available to the public on the institution’s website and/or via other appropriate means in an easily accessible and understood format. (IER) - §602.16(a)(1)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>17.12 - Title IV Participation: The institution maintains and demonstrates compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the most recent Higher Education Act as amended.</p> <p>In evaluating the institution’s compliance with Title IV program responsibilities, the TRACS Accreditation Commission will rely on documentation forwarded to TRACS by the U.S. Secretary of Education supported by letters of authorization on file from relevant agencies indicating certification of eligibility and Federal Aid audits - §602.16(a)(1)x, §602.27(a)6,7</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TRACS ELIGIBILITY REFERENCES

- [TRACS Steps Towards Accreditation Publication](#)
- [TRACS Demonstrating Compliance: Evaluative Criteria and Typical Documentation Publication](#)
- [TRACS Resources Page](#)

Need assistance with your institution’s TRACS initial accreditation? We are glad to help. Visit our [TRACS Accreditation Page](#) for the application process information and additional reference guides. Visit [TRACS Accreditation Consulting](#) for a list of the services we provide. Request a complimentary consultation. [Bayside Projects Consulting](#).