



Updates to HLC's Competency-Based Education Materials

Coming Soon!

2026

History

- Process to begin approving programs
- Development of C-RAC document
- Institutions that have been considered for approval

Upcoming Changes

- Guidelines document
- Revised definitions
- Revised application
- Credit Hour Worksheet – no longer required
- Hybrid definition – to be removed
- “Common Framework for Defining and Approving Competency-Based Education” developed by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) – retired

Definitions

Competency-based Education (CBE)

Education that is organized around competencies and requires students to demonstrate mastery of competencies.

An educational program offered through CBE may be a credit-based competency-based educational program or a direct assessment competency-based educational program.

Definitions

Credit-based Competency-based Educational Program

An educational program in which 50% or more of the credits required for the educational program are offered through CBE.

Direct Assessment Competency-based Educational Program

An educational program in which student achievement and completion for any portion of the educational program are based solely on a student's demonstrated mastery of competencies, rather than completion of credits.

Types of Requests

- Starting a direct assessment CBE program
 - Approval required
- Starting an institution's first two credit-based CBE programs
 - Approval required
- Starting a credit-based CBE program after the first two such programs have been approved
 - Notification required
- Starting a credit-based CBE program that is a significant departure from previously approved credit-based CBE programs
 - Contact HLC Liaison

Elements of an application

- Institutional Characteristics
- Planning for a new program
- Curriculum and Instructional Design
- Credit Hour and Equivalencies
- Institutional Staffing, Faculty and Student Support
- Evaluation of Student Success

Reflection and Questions

Questions?