

SHEEO State Authorization Inventory

Connecticut

Please note: For purposes of this survey, the terms “authorize” and “authorization” are used generically to include approve, certify, license, regulate, recognize, empower, or similar actions relative to the operation, provision, or availability of postsecondary education in your state.

1. Agency and Contact Information

a. Agency Name:

The Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education

o Description:

The Office for Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education has licensing and program approval authority for independent and out-of-state degree-granting institutions of postsecondary education, as well as for proprietary vocational or technical schools which qualify for degree-granting status. For non-degree-granting institutions, both review and approval are delegated to the Executive Director of the Office.

o Contact:

Amy Hughes
Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education
860-947-1822
ahughes@ctdhe.org

o Please state who institutions should contact if they have questions about your agency’s authority, policies, or application process?

Patricia Santoro
Director of Academic Affairs
Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education
860-947-1822
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b. Links:

<http://www.ctdhe.org/>
<http://www.ctohe.org/>
<http://www.ctregents.org/>
<http://www.ctdhe.org/Regs/RegsAcad.htm>
<http://www.ctdhe.org/posa/posa.htm>

- c. The following agency also has responsibility for authorization in the state.
The Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education handles licensure and accreditation of public in-state institutions of higher learning.
- d. If the division of responsibility among these agencies is not clear, please explain.
The remainder of this form is in reference to the responsibilities of the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education.

2. Types of Educational Providers Authorized

- a. Please indicate the types of institutions that your agency authorizes, using the list below. Please answer “yes” or “no” to each item. Feel free to provide a short explanation of any ambiguity, including any necessary clarification of “in-state,” “out of state,” or other terminology.

- No Public, in-state degree granting institutions
- Yes Public, out-of-state degree granting institutions
- Yes Private, in-state, not-for-profit degree granting institutions
- Yes Private, out-of-state, not-for-profit degree granting institutions
- Yes Private, in-state, for-profit degree granting institutions
- Yes Private, out-of-state, for-profit degree granting institutions
- Yes Public, in-state, non-degree granting institutions
- Yes Public, out-of-state, non-degree granting institutions
- Yes Non degree, not-for profit institutions
- Yes Non degree, for-profit institutions
- Yes Religious institutions
- Yes Tribally-controlled institutions

Clarifying comments:

- b. Is an institution required to obtain approval from more than one agency to be authorized in your state (excluding purely programmatic approvals)? If so, please explain.
The necessity for approval from another agency would be dependent on any professional licensure requirements for the program’s intended occupational outcome.
- c. Is accreditation required for an institution to be authorized in your state?
 - o If yes, please explain:
In Connecticut for degree granting institutions, State approval leads first to licensure of a program and/or institution, followed by accreditation which is defined as the ability to confer the degree. All programs in-state must be accredited before students are to graduate from that program. Out of state programs with any type of physical presence must be licensed in

Connecticut. These institutions are not accredited by the State because the degree is awarded by the home institution in the home State. Connecticut requires that all out of state institutions be regionally accredited in order to offer programming in Connecticut that involves any type of physical presence.

- If yes, what type of accreditation is required? Please, check all that apply as appropriate.

Regional
 National
 Programmatic/specialized

Clarifying comments:

Out of State degree granting institutions are required to be regionally accredited to offer any programming that involves a physical presence. In-state degree granting institutions are required to be minimally accredited at the State level.

- d. Does your agency authorize specific academic programs offered by institutions or only institutions themselves?

Both programs and institutions require approval in the State of Connecticut.

- e. Programs in certain subject areas that may require separate approval.

Education

Connecticut State Dept. of Education

Nursing

CT Nursing Board of Examiners

Allied Health Professions and related programs

CT Dept. of Public Health, Scope of Practice

3. Exemptions

- a. Are certain institutions or programs exempt by law or policy from your state authorization requirements?

No.

- If yes, please describe which institutions or programs the exemption applies to and how it works? If available, please provide any pertinent web links.
- If yes, how does the institution or program claim an exemption? For example, is the exemption automatic as long as it meets specified criteria,

does the institution or program notify the agency and the exemption is granted, is there an application process, etc.?

- b. If an institution or program is exempt from state authorization, are there any other state requirements that an institution would need to fulfill in order to operate in your state (e.g., providing contact information, list of programs, etc.)?

N/A.

- c. Does your state constitution or do your state laws provide any exemptions for religious institutions?

No.

- Are all religious institutions exempt (please describe)?
- Are religious institutions that award only religious degrees or certificates exempt (please describe)?
- Are certain religious institutions exempt that meet other criteria (please describe)?

4. Authorization of Distance Education

- a. Does your agency require purely (100%) distance education programs, including online or correspondence study programs that enroll residents of your state, to be authorized without regard to physical presence?

No. See 10a-34-24 of the Connecticut State Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Learning.

<http://www.ctdhe.org/Regs/RegsAcad.htm>

- b. If not, does your agency determine whether an institution must be authorized based on a physical presence or “operating” standard?

Yes, see 10a-34-24.

<http://www.ctdhe.org/Regs/RegsAcad.htm>

5. Physical Presence Policy – Common “Triggers”

Please contact the Director of Academic Affairs, Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education for registration implications.

- a. If your agency uses a physical presence standard, how does your agency define physical presence? If available, please provide a link to that policy or a citation to the relevant regulation giving that standard.

- b. Please specify whether any of the following activities would constitute a physical presence or signify “operating” in your state, assuming that the named activity is the institution’s sole activity in your state. **Please answer “yes” or “no” to each question. In addition you may provide a short explanation of any ambiguity.**
- Permitting a student to complete an internship, externship, field experience, or clinical practicum organized by the institution?
 - Does this apply only to distance education students or more generally?
 - Permitting a student to complete an internship, externship, field experience, or clinical practicum found by the student acting independently?
 - Does this apply only to distance education students or more generally?
 - Employing full-time faculty in the state to provide instruction via distance education programs to students in the state?
 - What about adjunct faculty?
 - Employing full-time faculty in the state to provide instruction via distance education programs solely to students outside of the state?
 - What about adjunct faculty?
 - Having a contract/agreement between the institution and in-state institutions or in-state entities to provide services for students (i.e. library, gym, computer centers, etc.)?
 - Organized, consistent, on-the-ground recruiting of students in the state by employees or agents of the institution?
 - What if the agent is only recruiting students in the state on an occasional basis (i.e. at job fairs)?
 - Advertising in local media sources that are largely viewed by residents of the state?
 - Advertising in national media sources that can be accessed by residents of the state?
 - Having computer servers or other equipment located in the state?

- Hosting short term, face-to-face, seminars or conferences in the state where students meet in person?
 - Employing mentors, tutors, or preceptors in the state to aid students, who are residents of the state, on an individual basis?
 - Requiring a student to take a proctored exam at a location or with an entity in the state prescribed by the institution?
 - Requiring a student to take a proctored exam with an entity in the state chosen by the student but approved by the institution?
 - Other [please explain]
- c. Of the activities or conditions listed above that alone would not constitute a physical presence, are there any that if combined would create a physical presence?

6. Application Process

- a. Please provide a short description of the application process to obtain state authorization. If available, please provide web links to the specific references to all applicable state laws, regulations, manuals, forms, or other pertinent documents.

The application process is described in the Connecticut State Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Learning.

The website is under construction and should be fully functional by September 1, 2011. Before September 1st, please refer to www.ctdhe.org, and then after the first refer to www.ctohe.org. You may also contact our office to obtain the appropriate application and circulation list.

- b. Generally, how long does it take to approve applications (assuming that the agency has received all required information from the institution)? Please provide a typical range if appropriate.

According to regulations, submissions should be received by this office 9 months before planned implementation or expiration. See 10a-34-4 and 10a-34-5.

- c. What is the authorization duration?

According to 10a-34-4(g), licensure of a new institution or program may be granted for a period not to exceed three years, thereafter renewable for periods not to exceed three years. 10a-34-5(e) states that accreditation of an institution or program by the Board may be granted for a fixed term not to exceed 5 years.

- d. What does an institution need to do to maintain authorization?
Reapply, see regulation referral above.
- e. What kinds of information or data must an institution report to your agency as a condition for continued authorization? How frequently is this reported or updated? Is this information published or shared publicly?
Article Two of the Connecticut State Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Learning, sections 10a-34-9 through 10a-34-24, provides the standards which are reviewed for degree granting programs.
- f. Can an institution lose its authorized status? If so, how?
Please refer to Section 10a-34-8, Penalties.
- g. Can a multi-institutional system or college corporation apply to your agency for authorization on behalf of all of its component institutions? If so, please describe the process.
Each institution or branch is considered separately. Each program is reviewed at each institution.
- h. Would multi-institution public systems be treated the same as multi-location for-profit institutions?
The regulations are the same for all degree granting institutions, with the exception that planning assessment has specific requirements in regard to in-state public institutions in comparison to independent institutions. See 10a-34-4(e).
- i. What distinctive features in your authorization process would be useful for applicants to know (e.g., certain times during the year that you process applications for authorization, sharing of applications or information about proposed programs with institutions or other stakeholders in your state for comment)?
New program applications at degree granting institutions must be circulated to the Chief Academic Officers at the independent and public institutions in the State. The Advisory Committee on Accreditation does not meet in July and August.
- j. Is your agency currently planning to amend its application process by the end of 2011?
Yes.
- If yes, please provide a brief description of the anticipated change.
Applications are currently being revised.
 - If yes, when does the agency expect the change to be fully implemented?

7. Fees Associated with Authorization

- a. Is there an application fee to initiate the authorization process? If so, what is the fee or fee schedule? Please provide a web link if available.
No.
- b. Are there any other costs associated with the state authorization process (e.g. site visits, hiring a reviewer, surety bond, tuition recovery fund, agent licensing, etc.)?
The institution is responsible for any costs associated with an evaluation visit.
- c. What are the costs, if any, to renew authorization?
None.
- d. What costs are associated with receiving a waiver or exemption to authorization?
Not available.

8. Interstate Reciprocity

- a. Do your state regulations explicitly allow or prohibit interstate reciprocal agreements about authorization? If so, please describe.
N/A.
- b. What is the process, if any, to obtain a reciprocal agreement with your state?
N/A.
- c. Are there any reciprocal agreements currently in place or under consideration? If so, please list those agreements.
N/A.
- d. If interstate reciprocal agreements are not addressed in your regulations, would your agency consider establishing such agreements? Please elaborate.

9. Consumer Protection and Student Complaints

- a. Does your agency have a process for handling complaints about postsecondary institutions or programs?
 - o If yes, please describe the process or provide a web link to the material that describes the complaint process.
For degree granting institutions, students should contact the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education for specific instructions. For Post-Secondary Occupational School, a complaint form is available at <http://www.ctdhe.org/POSA/pdf/CP2ComplaintForm.pdf> .

- If yes, does this complaint process extend to institutions not authorized by the agency that may enroll residents of the state (such as explicitly distance education programs with no physical presence or exempt institutions)?
Case by case basis.
 - If available, please provide a web link to the complaint form.
Provided above.
 - Who is the contact person for receiving complaints? Please include name, title, address, phone, and email if available.
Contact the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education.
- b. If your agency has no formal process for handling complaints related to postsecondary institutions, what state agency would handle a complaint?

10. Enforcement

- a. If your agency finds that an institution or program is operating in your state without authorization, what is the resulting warning or enforcement action?
See Connecticut Statute, section 10a-34.
- b. Can an institution or program appeal a warning or enforcement action? If yes, please describe the process or provide web links to the regulations/policies.

11. Legislative or Regulatory Changes

- a. Is your agency or state legislature planning to amend its regulations or alter its physical presence policy by the end of 2011?
The agency's policies and procedures are always under review. Governor Dannel Malloy signed into law Public Act 11-48, which reorganizes a large segment of higher education in the state, including the regulatory process. It is uncertain how transfer of regulatory powers to the a new Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education with approval by the State Board of Education may affect the regulatory process or the interpretation of "physical presence" going forward.
 - If yes, please provide a brief description of the anticipated change.
 - If yes, when does the agency expect the change to be fully implemented?

- b. Is your agency or state legislature making changes in your state regulations or statutes so that institutions with locations in your state would be considered legally authorized in accordance with the federal institutional eligibility regulations?
 - If yes, please provide a brief description of the anticipated change.
 - If yes, when does the agency expect the change to be fully implemented?
- c. Is your agency or state legislature making any other changes in your state regulations or statutes with regard to state authorization?
 - If yes, please provide a brief description of the anticipated change.
 - If yes, when does the agency expect the change to be fully implemented?

12. Is there anything else about the authorization process in your state that we and others ought to know about?