



## **State Authorization Addressing Federal Online/Distance Education Requirements**

The Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation (MCCA) has statutory authority (Title 37, Chapter 101, Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended) and duty to approve all colleges and universities or other entities that offer one or more postsecondary academic degrees and are domiciled, incorporated or otherwise located in the State of Mississippi.

All postsecondary educational institutions domiciled, incorporated or otherwise located in the State of Mississippi must have MCCA authorization prior to offering postsecondary instruction in the State. Examples of what triggers “otherwise located” include, but are not limited to:

1. The institution maintains a telephone number with a Mississippi area code;
2. The institution maintains a postal address (either physical or PO Box) with a Mississippi zip code;
3. The institution maintains an Internet URL that originates in Mississippi or utilizes an ISP that is based in Mississippi;
4. The institution advertises that a future institution will be domiciled, incorporated, or otherwise located in the State.

In the event a question arises as to whether an institution falls within the “otherwise located” category, the institution must contact MCCA and request a determination regarding same. Final decisions related to what constitutes “otherwise located” will be made by the Commission.

### **Institutional Self-Assessment**

Institutions are asked to self-assess as to whether the programming they offer entails any one or more of the activities listed above.

### **Institutions Engaging in NO Activities**

Institutions that engage in NONE of the above activities should address a letter to MCCA that states the following:

“Name of Institution located at Legal Mailing Address has reviewed the conditions which would cause it to be required by the State of Mississippi’s Commission on College Accreditation to be authorized. Resultant from this review, Name of Institution stipulates that it engages in none of the listed activities.”

The body of the letter should also indicate the name and contact information for the individual to whom any return information should be directed.

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The letter must be written on institutional letterhead stationery, signed by either the institution's president or legal counsel, notarized, and mailed to:

Menia Dykes  
Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation  
3825 Ridgewood Road  
Jackson, MS 39211

Having received and reviewed this letter, MCCA will return to the institution (by name) a statement indicating that no further action is needed by the institution to provide online programming to Mississippi residents under the procedures in effect as of the date of issuance of the statement. The statement will be in effect from the date of issuance or until the institution engages in any activity which would cause an authorization to be required, whichever occurs first.

### **Institutions Engaging in ONE or MORE Activities**

Institutions that engage in ONE or MORE of the activities listed above should access the MCCA website (<http://www.mississippi.edu/mcca/>) for information about submitting an application for accreditation, and should inform MCCA in writing at the address listed above that such an application is forthcoming. Any institution required to apply must cease and desist further enrolling of any Mississippi residents as students or any student located in Mississippi while receiving instruction from the institution until authorization is issued.

### **Further Questions**

Questions pertaining to the content of this document should be directed to Menia Dykes at [mdykes@mississippi.edu](mailto:mdykes@mississippi.edu) or 601.432.6372.