

Minimum Standards and Criteria Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission (NPEC) Institutions

- Minimum Standards and Criteria for NPEC Institutions are derived from the Georgia Code 20-3-250.6 and are approved by the Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission (NPEC).
- Pursuant to the Georgia Code 20-3-250.5 (d), NPEC has established separate divisions for degree-granting institutions and nondegree-granting (certificate granting) institutions. The differences in the Standards between degree-granting institutions and nondegree-granting (certificate-granting) institutions are addressed in the text of the Minimum Standards and Criteria.
- The actual benchmark used by evaluators in assessing institutions and their programs is a composite of knowledge of other institutions of higher education, both public and private, that offer similar programs. In addition, evaluators are aware of the standards applied by various professional organizations and accrediting commissions. The Minimum Standards provide the framework for the professional judgment made by NPEC professional staff members and evaluation committee members. The criteria subsumed under each Standard are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance.
- For institutions that do not have campuses in Georgia, NPEC Authorization to offer online, distance, or correspondence programs is available only to those that are nationally or regionally accredited by a United States based accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education, whether or not such institutions wish to establish campuses in Georgia. Institutions that are not so accredited may only be granted permission to offer online, distance, or correspondence education to residents of Georgia if they first establish a campus within the State, and subsequently offer adequate on-ground programming for a period of time.
- Responses to individual statements within the Minimum Standards by applicants are taken to be attestations that documents, situations, and criteria have been met or exist. If asked, the applicant must provide such documentation as is required to substantiate these attestations.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| <u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u> | |
| <u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u> | <u>1</u> |
| <u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u> | <u>2</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 1: ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION</u> | <u>3</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 2: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM</u> | <u>6</u> |
| ADMISSION | 6 |
| CURRICULUM | 7 |
| INSTRUCTION | 9 |
| DURATION AND INTENSITY | 10 |
| CREDENTIAL FOR SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF PROGRAM OF STUDY | 11 |
| <u>STANDARD 3: FACULTY</u> | <u>13</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 4: PHYSICAL FACILITIES</u> | <u>16</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 5: LEARNING RESOURCE SYSTEM</u> | <u>18</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 6: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS</u> | <u>20</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 7: SUPPORTING SERVICES</u> | <u>21</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 8: FINANCIAL RESOURCES</u> | <u>23</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 9: REFUND POLICY</u> | <u>25</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 10: COMPLAINT PROCEDURE</u> | <u>28</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 11: PLACEMENT</u> | <u>29</u> |
| <u>STANDARD 12: ADVERTISING, PROMOTION, AND RECRUITMENT</u> | <u>30</u> |

| Standard One: Organization and Administration | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| The organization and administration of the institution reflect the professional and academic competence of those in leadership positions and ensure ethical practice and academic quality controls in the governance of the program(s) offered. | | |
| Criteria | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | | |
| <p>1. The institution ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the chief executive officer, trustees, owners, administrators, supervisors, staff, and instructors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are of good reputation and character; ○ list and can document only degree credentials from institutions nationally or regionally accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education; for those educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided, including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service; • each educational director meets the requirements established by NPEC for such position. | Yes No | |
| <p>2. The institution has filed a formal application with NPEC, including fees, assurances, and a catalog which includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the designation of the degree(s) and/or program(s) that it proposes to offer; • a copy of its enrollment agreement and/or student contract (required for certificate programs offered by any institution); • a published organizational structure of the institution, e.g., manuals, functional administrative councils, faculty committees and student committees; • documentation that its programs have academic requirements comparable to similar programs at other institutions; • documentation that it has direct control over and responsibility for all aspects of programs offered, including faculty, administration, curriculum, instruction and admissions. | Yes No | |
| <p>3. The non-profit institution can prove that it has a legally constituted governing body (e.g., board of directors) that has legal responsibility for the operation of the institution and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publishes names of individuals making up the governing body; • maintains records of all official meetings. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> | | |

| | | |
|---|---------------|--|
| <p>The for-profit institution can prove that it is legally incorporated and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can provide the names of all owners, officers and major stockholders; • maintains records of all official meetings. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>4. The institution provides an orientation for each new employee which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • familiarization with the institution and its objectives; • institutional policies and procedures; • institutional policy regarding ethics in recruiting and customer service; • compensation and benefits; • job requirements. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>5. The institution can document that the qualifications of directors, administrators, supervisors and instructors meet the educational qualifications established by NPEC.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>6. The degree-granting institution has designated a director who is responsible for the administration of the institution and has sufficient education and experience including the following qualifications that can be documented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an earned baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education (for an individual that has been educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service); • at least one year of actual administrative or supervisory experience; • at least two years of applied work experience or training/education. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>The certificate-granting institution has designated a director who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is responsible for the administration of the institution and has sufficient education and experience including at least two of the following qualifications that can be documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ an earned baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education (for an individual that has been educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service); ○ has at least two years of actual administrative or supervisory experience involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of a curriculum sufficient to prepare students for specific job entry levels; • the selection of an instructional staff competent in subject matter and teaching techniques to implement the curriculum; ○ at least two years of applied work experience involving the same responsibilities and training or education in educational administration and methods as well as sound business practices. | <p>Yes No</p> | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>7. The institution's administrators, directors, owners, and instructors are qualified to perform their duties by documented evidence of training, preparation and experience.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>8. The degree-granting institution employs a full-time chief academic officer who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is responsible for the educational program(s); • holds a doctoral degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education or a degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education higher than any degree awarded by the institution (for an individual that has been educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service). <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>The certificate-granting institution employs a full-time educational program supervisor who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is responsible for the educational program(s); • has a higher level of credential or training than that which is being offered and has at least three of the following qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two years teaching experience in a specific field for which training is offered at the institution; ○ two years employment as a supervisor in a specific field for which training is offered at the institution; ○ a relevant baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education (for an individual that has been educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service); ○ at least two years of related work experience in a field for which training is offered at the institution; ○ experience in designing, managing, and supervising instructional programs. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>9. The degree-granting institution offering graduate programs ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate provisions have been made for a separate identity for the graduate programs(s) under the direction of a designated administrative officer who has sufficient education and experience to perform such duties; • appropriate policies and regulations that affect the graduate curricula and requirements are formulated by the graduate faculty. | <p>Yes No</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p> | |

| Standard Two: Educational Program | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|
| The educational programs advance the philosophy and purposes stated for the institution, including appropriate admission requirements, a curriculum of high quality and effective instruction. | | |
| Criteria The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| Admissions | | |
| 1. The institution's admission criteria compare favorably with those of generically similar programs. | Yes No | |
| 2. The degree-granting institution ensures that its admission requirements for all degree programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are clearly described and published; • require each applicant, at a minimum, to be high school graduate or equivalent; • include a policy for the collection of a score on a recognized standardized entrance examination; • include evidence of the ability to do college work for each admitted student. | Yes No N/A | |
| 3. The degree-granting institution's policy to allow special admissions to designated programs has been approved by the NPEC. | Yes No N/A | |
| 4. The degree-granting institution accepts only students who meet the basic entrance requirements. OR The degree-granting institution provides a noncredit special development program approved by NPEC for any student it accepts and enrolls who does not meet the entrance requirements. | Yes No N/A | |
| 5. The degree-granting institution's requirements for the granting of college-level credit for credit by examination and credit for life experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are defined, published and strictly enforced; | | |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limits the maximum amount of credit that can be awarded by examination, life experience and transfer credit to 75% of the total credit requirements for undergraduate degrees; 66% for graduate degrees; or some higher amount for either if recognized by a US-based national or regional accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education. | Yes No N/A | |
| 6. The graduate level degree-granting institution ensures that its admission requirements for graduate programs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> possession of a baccalaureate degree; transcripts of previous educational records; grade point average; course prerequisites (if any); evaluation by professionals in the field (if any); nationally recognized measures of aptitude and/or academic achievement; and interviews or an appropriate alternative. | Yes No N/A | |
| Curriculum | | |
| 1. The institution's curriculum is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> related to institutional purposes and is in keeping with financial and academic resources; established through a procedure that includes participation by the governing body, administration, faculty and advisory committees; continually evaluated with appropriate enhancements. | Yes No | |
| 2. The certificate-granting institution's curriculum guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> and lesson plan are available and used by each instructor for each course taught in a program of study; specifies sequential instruction beginning with basic information and progressing in depth; specifies objectives, content outline, instructional approaches, materials and equipment, number of hours of lecture, laboratory (hands on instruction) and practicum time, and method of evaluation; contains the program description published in the institutional catalog and includes the hours of instruction and credit. | Yes No N/A | |
| 3. The degree-granting institution's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> degree requirements for each level of study are clearly stated including a systematic means of awarding credit; degree designations are appropriate to the academic requirements of the program of study and are equivalent to those for generically similar programs of study. | Yes No N/A | |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| <p>4. The degree-granting institution's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program objectives are appropriate to the kind and level of degree offered as compared to generically similar programs (e.g., the development of skills, the provision for job-related training, the acquisition of knowledge and information, instruction in the application of knowledge and the level of competency expected.); • programs are designed to develop intellectual and creative capabilities as well as vocational skills. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>5. The degree-granting institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates that individual courses are clearly recognizable as appropriate to the level of education they support (associate degree, baccalaureate, master's level, doctoral level and are equal to those offered in generically similar programs); • ensures that an identifiable sequence of courses exists for each program offered and implemented, including appropriate prerequisites and hours required for each course; • ensures that well developed course syllabi and instructional guides have been developed and reviewed by established academic control authorities (e.g., department chairpersons, faculty committees, academic dean). | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>6. The institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offers evidence that appropriate exit criteria (as compared to generically similar programs) have been established for determining successful completion of course work and programs of instruction; • assesses the student's ability to apply the skills, competencies, knowledge and techniques that its program of instruction purports to teach as compared to generically similar programs; • makes provisions for the student to design and execute, under faculty supervision, a project equal to those required in generically similar programs. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>7. The institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has established a grading system (e.g., 4.0); • provides a readily available catalog that accurately describes the curriculum offered; • demonstrates that safeguards are taken to maintain the integrity of examinations given at the end of courses; • provides a permanent file for both credit and noncredit course descriptions. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>8. The degree-granting institution offering an associate degree ensures that a minimum of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 semester hours or 23 quarter hours are required in the specialty area for which instruction is offered; | | |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 semester hours or 23 quarter hours are required in general education and that at least one course must be required in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mathematics such as algebra, trigonometry, analytic geometry, calculus, statistics and other higher-level mathematics; ○ Science such as biology, botany, chemistry, ecology, physics; ○ Humanities such as English, literature, philosophy, logic, history of arts and sciences, philosophy, communications, composition, speech and drama, and combinations of such courses; ○ Social Science such as history, psychology, government and sociology. | Yes No N/A | |
| Instruction | | |
| 1. The institution budgets for its instructional programs. | Yes No | |
| 2. The institution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that instruction is related to the objectives of each course; • ensures that the instructional programs provide for the development of knowledge, skills and attitude appropriate to the objectives stated for those programs; • incorporates teaching methods and procedures to provide for individual differences of students to include meaningful interaction between students and faculty; • ensures that skill proficiency on the part of students is provided using sufficient simulated practice with appropriate equipment and surroundings similar to those encountered in actual practice. | Yes No | |
| 3. The institution ensures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructional materials are adequate to support the programs offered; • textbooks and resource materials used in the instructional program are current; • equipment used in the instructional program is current with industry standards and is in good working order with routine maintenance and safety checks; • textbooks, resource materials and equipment are in sufficient quantity to meet the maximum enrollment of the class. | Yes No | |
| 4. The institution demonstrates that any program, or program component, that is offered via an online, distance or correspondence medium is equivalent to programs offered through on-ground instruction. | Yes No N/A | |

| | | |
|---|---------------|--|
| <p>5. The instructional programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for the on-ground institution require direct student – faculty interaction through classroom instruction, seminars, lectures, workshops, or residence on campus. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for the online, distance, or correspondence education institution require direct student-faculty interaction through an NPEC approved, formal plan by e-mail, internet, fax, telephone, videoconferencing or other real time means. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>6. The institution ensures that the size of classes is governed by criteria such as the nature of the course and the characteristics of the students involved.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>7. The institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as needed, provides corrective and remedial assistance as part of its instructional programs; • ensures that any developmental studies program is approved by NPEC. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>8. The institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • periodically evaluates and documents its long-range instructional outcomes through methods such as a follow up of graduates or a sampling of opinion of former students; • has a fully implemented system in place for evaluating and documenting student achievement such as periodic examinations and standardized achievement tests; • ensures that assignments are evaluated and returned to students within a stated time and with appropriate comments; • ensures that an ongoing method of evaluating student progress toward a program of study is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ explicit and readily available to each student; ○ is maintained as part of each student’s permanent file. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| Duration and Intensity | | |
| <p>1. The institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that course and time requirements in each program of study are clearly stated and adhered to, including major or minor concentrations, where applicable; • schedules courses so that students can complete their total program of study during the contracted length of time. | <p>Yes No</p> | |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| <p>2. The degree-granting institution ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the academic year approximates a plan of two semesters of 15 to 18 weeks of instruction or three quarters of 10 to 12 weeks of instruction; a credit hour is defined as credit for work in a class which meets for at least one 60 minute period (including ten minutes for change of classes) weekly for instruction and/or testing; two hours of laboratory work count as the equivalent of one hour of instruction and/or testing; the maximum number of hours allowed in specialized degree programs is specified; <p style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a credit hour for online, distance, or correspondence education requires comparable work to that required for a credit hour in a traditional class. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>3. Degree-granting institutions offering Associate Degree programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> require a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter hours or the equivalent in courses or through appropriate testing procedures. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>4. Degree-granting institutions offering Baccalaureate Degree programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> require a minimum of 120 semester or 180 quarter hours or the equivalent in courses or through appropriate testing procedures. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>5. Degree-granting institutions offering Graduate Degree programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> require work beyond the baccalaureate level for a minimum of 30 semester or 45 quarter hours or the equivalent in courses or through appropriate testing procedures. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| Credential for Satisfactory Completion of Program of Study | | |
| <p>1. The institution awards an appropriate education credential for satisfactory completion for each program of study.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>2. The certificate granting institution provides students who successfully complete the prescribed program of study with a certificate with the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the authorized name of the institution along with the city and state of the institution or the | | |

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> corporate owner of the institution; • the students full name; • the title of the program completed; • the signature of the institution's director; • the date the certificate was issued; • the official seal of the institution. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>3. The degree-granting institution provides students who successfully complete the prescribed degree with a diploma with the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the authorized name of the institution or the corporate owner of the institution; • the students full name; • the title of the degree completed; • the signature of the institution's president; • the date the degree was issued; • the official seal of the institution; • the city and state of the institution (required for unaccredited schools only). | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>4. The institution does not use the official State Seal of Georgia on its certificate/diploma.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>5. The institution which is neither graduate degree-granting nor nationally or regionally accredited by a national or regional accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education awards honorary degrees or titles only with approval by NPEC.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> | |

| Standard Three: Faculty | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|
| <p>The education, experience, responsibilities and performance of the faculty ensure that students will receive an education consistent with the objectives of the course(s) or program(s) of study. (Faculty includes instructional staff, librarians, counselors, and others who provide program services to students. Faculty functions include approval of academic policies, program planning and evaluation, academic advisement, consulting with students on assignments and related intellectual matters, instruction and evaluation of student work).</p> | | |
| Criteria | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| <p>The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard.</p> <p>1. The institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides a specific written plan for selecting faculty members; • provides written criteria for faculty members that reflect appropriate minimums of previous preparation and experience for the duties to be undertaken; • maintains a file for each faculty member that contains data validating each individual's academic and professional competence; • publishes rules and regulations relating to faculty members; • evaluates each faculty member's performance and effectiveness at least once annually; • makes available to prospective students a published list of faculty members, including their qualifications; • provides a faculty/student ratio sufficient to support the number of students enrolled, the quality of instruction and student access to faculty. | Yes No | |
| <p>2. The institution ensures that the number of full and/or part-time faculty members is appropriate to the size and objectives of the institution and is representative of the principal areas of instruction.</p> | Yes No | |
| <p>3. The institution notifies NPEC of any unusual turnover of faculty or staff within thirty (30) days.</p> | Yes No N/A | |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| <p>4. The certificate-granting institution employs faculty members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whose duties involve teaching, advising students and maintaining attendance and academic records; • that have demonstrated competency in the specific field for which training is offered, as evidenced by one of the following that can be documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a baccalaureate degree with a major in the specific field of instruction from an institution accredited by an United States-based accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education; for those educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided, including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service; ○ two years teaching experience in the specific field of instruction; ○ active state licensure or certification relevant to the specific field of instruction; ○ two years work experience in the specific field for which training is offered. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>5. The degree-granting institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employs a sufficient number of faculty members to provide individualized instructional services to each student including evaluation and correction services for examinations and necessary consultation for research projects; • ensures that a sufficient student/faculty ratio allows an appropriate level of contact between faculty and students; • ensures that faculty members provide effective teaching and learning appropriate to the subject being taught; • ensures that faculty members have input regarding courses taught, the development and approval of curriculum materials and the monitoring of part-time faculty work; • provides evidence that standards for part-time faculty members are appropriate to the level of instruction offered and that these standards are equivalent to those for full-time faculty members. • ensures that teaching loads do not exceed an average of 20 quarter credit hours (or equivalent) with consideration given to committee work, independent research, advising, etc. • ensures that all faculty members who teach can be documented to hold a master's degree from an institution accredited by a United States-based accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education or equivalent in training and/or experience and a reasonable number have a doctorate or terminal degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| <p>7. The on-ground degree-granting institution ensures that faculty members are geographically located to directly serve students and are available for sufficient lengths of time to provide instruction and/or advising.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>8. The graduate degree-granting institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that the graduate faculty is determined by a well-defined set of criteria based on qualifications and proficiencies required in programs offered; • ensures that each faculty member holds the highest earned degree in his or her discipline (experience and high productivity may be an acceptable substitute for the doctorate in some instances); • ensures that faculty members have the following educational credentials that can be documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Master's degree from an institution accredited by a United States-based accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education (for those educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided, including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service); ○ Doctoral degree from an institution accredited by a United States-based accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education (for those educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided, including evaluation by an approved credential evaluation service); | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |

| Standard Four: Physical Facilities | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|
| The institution provides adequate and appropriate space, equipment and instructional materials to ensure a quality educational experience for students. | | |
| Criteria The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| 1. Physical facilities are appropriate and adequate for the programs offered. | Yes No | |
| 2. All areas of the institution are properly lighted and adequately equipped, heated and ventilated and are in compliance with all local ordinances and with state and federal laws and regulations such as zoning, fire, building and sanitation codes. | Yes No | |
| 3. Instructional areas, including adequate space and utilities in classrooms, laboratories and shop areas, are provided for safe and orderly instruction. | Yes No | |
| 4. Non-instructional areas, including support services for administrative functions, storage and maintenance areas, restrooms, offices and lounges, are provided. | Yes No | |
| 5. The equipment, buildings, and grounds are well maintained. | Yes No | |
| 6. Provisions are made for emergency medical treatment and include readily available first-aid supplies with written procedures and orientation for staff and students. | Yes No | |
| 7. The institution provides for campus security, fire protection and traffic control and those responsible for such tasks are clearly defined. | Yes No | |

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>8. The institution that provides housing ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is appropriate, safe and in compliance with all local ordinances and with state and federal laws and regulations such as zoning, fire, building and sanitation codes; • it is accurately described in its promotional literature; • a housing administrator is named to oversee all operations; • a fire marshal's report is posted on the premises which indicates no violations of safety codes; • reasonable security is provided for the safety of the students at all times; • custodial services are provided to assure cleanliness of the premises; • rules and regulations are posted in a conspicuous place; • mail services are available for students; • appropriate bathrooms are available for students. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|

| Standard Five: Learning Resource System | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|
| The institution provides an adequate learning resource system which includes all materials that support a student's educational experience and enhance an institution's educational program such as libraries; texts; electronic resources; learning resource laboratories and centers; library consortia and interlibrary loan agreements; computers; internet access; research databases; and other similar resources and equipment. | | |
| Criteria The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| 1. The institution's learning resource system regardless of location, means of delivery, organization (centralized or decentralized) is easily and readily accessible to students and faculty during and beyond classroom hours. | Yes No | |
| 2. The institution's learning resource system includes materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commensurate with the level of education provided; • appropriate to the courses of study in sufficient quantity and scope to meet the educational objectives of each program such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ relevant and current texts and periodicals; ○ research journals and databases; ○ standard works of reference; ○ multi-media and/or electronic resources; ○ electronic library resource technologies; ○ other resource materials necessary to adequately serve students. | Yes No | |
| 3. The institution's learning resource system materials are integrated into its curriculum and program requirements as a mechanism to enhance the educational process and to facilitate positive learning outcomes for students. | Yes No | |
| 4. The institution's learning resource system is managed by qualified institution personnel with sufficient experience to provide oversight and supervision. | Yes No | |
| 5. Qualified institution personnel orient, train and assist students and faculty in the use of the learning resource system in a manner that supports learning objectives. | Yes No | |
| 6. The institution has written policies and procedures for the on-going development of its learning resource system as part of its institutional improvement program. | Yes No | |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| 7. The institution demonstrates sufficient support and budgetary allocations for the learning resource system. | Yes No | |
| 8. The institution ensures that its students are adequately served and have ready access to sufficient and appropriate learning materials. | Yes No | |
| 9. The degree-granting institution's learning resource system is coordinated by an individual with appropriate education and experience in learning resources (a Master of Library Science degree is preferred). | Yes No N/A | |

| Standard Six: Institutional Effectiveness | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Provisions have been made for both short-and long-range evaluation of the programs offered by the institution. | | |
| Criteria The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| 1. The institution provides a written plan to determine the effectiveness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of the institution based on the philosophy and stated objectives of the institution; • of each program of study based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the stated objectives of the program; ○ retention rates; ○ graduation rates; ○ job placement rates; ○ other applicable indicators provided by NPEC. | Yes No | |
| 2. The institution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducts periodic evaluations to determine long-range and general effects of instruction through such methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ as a follow up of graduates; ○ a sampling of opinions of non-completing students; ○ job placement surveys; • provides sufficient resources, including funds and staff, for engaging in continuous study of its purposes, processes and programs; • provides evidence that findings are used to modify aspects of the institution. | Yes No | |
| 3. The institution ensures that currently enrolled students evaluate the faculty, courses, policies and procedures. | Yes No | |
| 4. The institution provides continuous evaluation of curricular offerings and requirements, including evaluation by practitioners acquainted with other exemplary programs. | Yes No | |
| 5. The institution ensures that students who complete a program of study acquire the competencies the program purports to teach by using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objective measures administered by the institution; • external examinations. | Yes No | |

| Standard Seven: Supporting Services | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|
| The institution provides services to students who are enrolled or who have been enrolled which are appropriate to its purposes and which assist the students in the educational process. | | |
| Criteria The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| <p>1. The institution minimally furnishes the following written information to students before accepting payment of fees; the aggregate of which should be contained in a document which is defined as a "catalog":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current course listings and descriptions of individual courses; • listing of faculty and their qualifications; • grading policy; • rules of operation such as days/times when open; • policies on attendance requirements, make-up work, delay or delinquency in meeting course requirements and standards of satisfactory academic progress; • a conduct policy which includes a statement on conditions for the dismissal and reentrance of students who violate such policy; • a policy regarding "academic probation", including the process by which students are removed; • a policy regarding readmission of students dismissed or suspended for academic reasons; • an orientation program which acquaints new students with policies, functions and personnel of the institution; • guidelines for transfer of credit to and from the institution, credit by examination and residency requirements; • descriptions of financial aid services and/or scholarship availability if offered; • refund policy; • grievance policy. | Yes No | |
| <p>2. The institution maintains student records to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a written record of the previous education and training of each student supported by transcripts and other transfer credit documentation; • the enforcement of a published attendance policy in which daily attendance and absences are recorded by instructors in a standard format; • the housing of grades and attendance records in a central location by the institution as a part of each student's permanent record; | | |

| | | |
|--|--------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a published grading scale used by instructors; • a progressive uniform system of reporting the mastery of skills for courses or programs that require mastery of skills; • the recording of the progress and grades of each student throughout each course or program of study; • the accurate, complete, and current documentation of each student financial record; • the accessibility of student's records for each student. | Yes No | |
| <p>3. The institution provides for the storage, retrieval, confidentiality and adequate protection of student academic records for forty-five years including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the protection of hard copies of student academic records against pilferage, fire and tampering by storage in a two-hour fireproof vault or via a second copy off-site; <p style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the protection of electronic copies of student academic records via an on-site and off-site location. | Yes No | |
| <p>4. The institution ensures that qualified instructors are available for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student inquiries about course assignments, grades, etc.; • evaluation and correction services for examinations; • consultation for research projects. | Yes No | |
| <p>5. The institution provides professional personnel to assist students with their educational and vocational planning.</p> | Yes No | |

| Standard Eight: Financial Resources | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|
| The institution is financially sound and capable of fulfilling its commitments to students. | | |
| Criteria | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| <p>The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard.</p> <p>1. The institution provides the appropriate fees and surety bonding.</p> | Yes No | |
| <p>2. The institution adheres to generally accepted accounting principles in the maintenance of its financial records and provides an income/expense statement and a balance sheet using the financial form provided by NPEC.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>The institution provides a formal independent financial audit prepared by a certified public accountant. If the institution's Georgia operation is a branch or subsidiary of a larger corporation, an audited financial statement for the previous fiscal year prepared and certified by an independent, certified public accountant for the corporation is provided.</p> | Yes No | |
| <p>3. The authorized institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has unrestricted funds available in the amount of one year's projected expenses; • is not totally dependent on an increase in fees or enrollment in order to remain solvent in the current year and the immediately ensuing year; • has funds to operate which are not limited to current tuition or accounts receivable. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>The institution which is seeking authorization has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • filed a financial statement prepared prior to application for authorization by an independent, certified public accountant showing the assets and liabilities of the institution; • provided an estimate of income which exceeds expenses for the first year of operation, using reporting forms provided by NPEC; • unrestricted funds in the amount of one year's projected expenses available. | Yes No | |
| <p>4. The institution keeps financial records that separately identify all income and expenditures including but not limited to tuition, fees, and income from ancillary sources.</p> | Yes No | |

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| <p>5. The institution that is a component of a business which also maintains non-instructional enterprises or functions ensures that income and expense records are maintained separately for the various functions.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>6. The institution whose fiscal information indicates that it is not financially sound has submitted a plan for financial recovery.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |

| Standard Nine: Refund Policy | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|
| <p>The refund policy is reasonable and proper for refunding unused portions of tuition, fees, housing or residential hall charges in the event a student withdraws from or fails to begin a course or program of study. The refund policy is described in clear, concise language in the institutional catalog, student handbook, enrollment agreement, and website.</p> | | |
| Criteria | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| <p>The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard.</p> | | |
| <p>A. Schools which are nationally and/or regionally accredited by a US-based accrediting association recognized by the United States Secretary of Education may use their own refund policy.</p> | | |
| 1. The institution specific refund policy must be submitted annually to NPEC. | | |
| 2. NPEC reserves the right to require any school to adopt the NPEC policy if sufficient student complaints occur relative to an existing accredited school's refund policy and the NPEC policy is more lenient toward the student. | | |
| <p>B. If (A) above does not apply to your institution, you are required to adhere to the following guidelines.</p> | | |
| 1. The institution specific refund policy must be submitted annually to NPEC. | | |
| 2. The institution ensures that all monies paid by a prospective student, including nonrefundable application fees, are refunded if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student requests a refund within three (3) business days after signing a contract; <li style="text-align: center;">OR • no contract is signed and prior to classes beginning the student requests a refund within three (3) business days after making a payment. | Yes No | |
| 3. The institution ensures that deposits or down payments are credited as tuition payments unless clearly identified on receipt by the institution as application or other fees. | Yes No | |
| 4. The institution that charges an application fee ensures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount (\$100 maximum) is stated in the catalog; • it is charged only once; | | |

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ unless the applicant has completed one program of study and is applying to enter an unrelated program; ○ the applicant previously withdrew from the institution; ● if it is non-refundable, the fee is clearly identified as such in the catalog; ● if a student withdraws from the institution for any reason, the student is not liable for any unpaid portion of the application fee. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>5. The institution that charges for fees, books and supplies which are in addition to tuition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● identifies in the catalog the specific purposes for the charges; ● refunds any unused portion of the fees if a student withdraws before completing fifty (50) percent of the period of enrollment except for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ items that were special ordered for a particular student and cannot be used or sold to another student; ○ items that were returned in a condition that prevents them from being used by or sold to new students; ○ non-refundable fees for goods and/or services provided by third party vendors. | <p>Yes No</p> <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>6. The institution adopts a policy that ensures that only one of the following criteria is used to calculate refunds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the date on which the student has begun the official withdrawal process as prescribed by the institution; ● the last date of attendance by the student; ● the last date of academically significant interaction for asynchronous programs of study. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>7. The institution will assess no administrative and/or withdrawal fee of a student who withdraws from the institution.</p> | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>8. The institution ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● refunds are based on tuition paid for segments of the instructional program as described by the institution in the enrollment agreement, i.e., quarter, semester, module, or term, in no case more than twelve (12) months; ● if the institution's refund policy is more favorable to the student than NPEC's, it will refund the student the greater amount; ● refunds are made in full to the student within forty-five (45) days of the date of withdrawal; ● refunds are determined based on the proration of tuition and percentage of program completed at withdrawal, up until 50% of the program; ● if a student withdraws after completing 50% of the program, no refund of tuition is required; ● this policy only applies to full withdrawals, and it is up to the institution to determine policies for refunds for partial (course) withdrawals. | <p>Yes No</p> | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>9. The institution has adopted a policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for addressing extenuating circumstances such as student injury, prolonged illness or death, or other circumstances which prohibit completion of the course or program of study; • that establishes a process for determining a settlement which is reasonable and fair to the student and the institution. | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>10. The institution that cancels or changes a program of study or course (time or location) in such a way that a student who has started the program or course is unable to continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes arrangements in a timely manner to accommodate the needs of each student enrolled in the program; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refunds all money paid by the student for the program of study or course if alternative arrangements determined by NPEC to be equitable to both the institution and the student are not possible. | <p>Yes No</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p> | |

| Standard Ten: Complaint Procedure | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|
| The institution continuously posts in a conspicuous place and publishes in the catalog, student handbook and website the procedures for filing a complaint. | | |
| Criteria | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | | |
| 1. The institution's procedure for filing a student complaint is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • posted in a central area that is free and accessible to all students; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ written in English, paper size at least 8½ x 11", and at least number 18 font size print; • routinely used in announcements to students; • included in the catalog, student handbook and website. | Yes No | |
| 2. The institution's procedure for filing a student complaint includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructions to the complainant; • the sequential steps available to the student; • the time limitations for filing and resolving a complaint; • the title of the individual (i.e. Director, President) who makes the final institutional decision; • the right of appeal of the final institutional decision to NPEC (including the name, address, telephone number and website of NPEC, http://gnpec.org/consumer-resources/). | Yes No | |

| Standard Eleven: Placement | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|
| The institution has made provisions for a systematic program of job placement which it makes available to its students and graduates. | | |
| Criteria | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | | |
| 1. The institution has established procedures for placement assistance including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructions on resume preparation, job searches, interview skills and related topics offered near the end of each program of study; • helping students to find and accept job interviews; • the maintenance of an extensive ongoing employer contact list for students within the career field of education/training. | Yes No | |
| 2. The institution maintains placement records that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placement activities for each graduate; • a follow-up system for collecting, recording and maintaining employment information on graduates of all programs on an annual basis for at least one year for the purposes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ verification to NPEC that the successful completion of an educational program leads to employment; ○ program modification by faculty members; ○ institutional planning. | Yes No | |

| Standard Twelve: Advertising, Promotion and Recruitment | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Advertising, promotional and recruitment activities and materials that might affect the decision of a student to enroll in the institution are appropriate and available for review. The institution or its agents engage in advertising, sales, collection, credits, or other procedures that are truthful, reliable and fair. | | |
| Criteria | Institution Self Evaluation | Comments |
| The following criteria are used by professional staff members and evaluation committees as indicators of compliance for the standard. | | |
| <p>1. The institution ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • its full name, location and contact information is included in all advertising and promotional media such as brochures, bulletins, catalogs, mass media and internet/web-based ads; • all tuition, fees and other charges are stated in the school catalog, recruitment brochures and enrollment agreement; • during the processing of a new application or an application for a change of ownership, it does not advertise, recruit, register or provide information to prospective students; • it does not use the word "free" to describe any item or service included as a part of the school's programs, placement services, preliminary testing or interviews. | Yes No | |
| <p>2. The institution uses advertising or promotional literature that is factual including but not limited to photographs and faculty listings.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>The institution does not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give false, misleading or exaggerated impressions about the institution, its personnel, its courses and services, or the conditions, programs and opportunities for its graduates; • represent directly or by implication that there is a substantial demand for persons completing any of the programs unless it can document such claims with valid data; • make use of the word "guarantee"; • induce students to change their plans after they have enrolled in another institution. | Yes No | |
| <p>3. The institution clearly indicates in its advertising, promotion and recruitment activities that it offers only educational and/or vocational training and advertises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in classified columns of newspapers, directories, print publications, or on internet/web-based information sites ONLY in sections designated for and headed "education", "school", or "instruction"; • using only testimonials and placement data that reflect current practices, conditions or employment opportunities in the field; | Yes No | |

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using letters of endorsement, commendations or recommendations only when verifiable prior consent is obtained; <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>The institution does not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use advertisements or promotional material classified, designated or captioned, "men/women wanted to train for...", "help wanted", "employment", "business opportunities" or words or similar terms which directly or indirectly imply that employment is being offered; • advertise any educational programming under any publication or web site's job category headings regardless of the title/designation of the category; • use the Certificate of Authorization from NPEC as an endorsement. | | |
| <p>4. The institution assumes full responsibility for the actions, statements and conduct of its agents including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the issuance of an agent's permit only to those persons of good reputation and character; • the maintenance of a personnel file on each person acting in the capacity of an agent which includes a current resume or vita and references from former employers; • constant and proper supervision of its agents and their work; • providing each agent with information about its courses, services, tuition, terms and operating policies; • the establishment of a code of ethics for its agents and evidence that the code has been reviewed by its agents; • the prohibition of its agents from overt and non-professional solicitation on streets, sidewalks, public transportation and in and around another institution unless that institution has given prior approval; • the prohibition of its agents from soliciting or recruiting students who are clearly ineligible or unsuited for the training offered; • documentation as to how the school determined the applicants' suitability for the training offered; • the prohibition of its agents from completing loan applications for prospective students; • the prohibition of paying its agents on a commission basis; • the option of paying agents a bonus for programs twelve months or less when a student has completed the program or at mid-term if the program is more than twelve months in length; • the prohibition of agents using any title which misrepresents their qualifications, duties and responsibilities; • the prohibition of agents to encourage any student to leave an educational institution where they are already in attendance. | <p>Yes No</p> | |

| | | |
|--|---------------|--|
| <p>5. Regarding student financial considerations, the institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offers federal, state or other loans, grants or scholarship assistance to students only when it demonstrates that it is an eligible institution for such loans, grants or scholarships; • does not deviate from its advertised cost of programs offered; • seeks prior approval by NPEC for any scholarships offered to students; • does not advertise or promote the use of loans for any purpose other than direct educational expenses; • does not describe or advertise advances and loans in any other terms such as stipends, allowances, scholarships or gifts; • adheres to NPEC's policy on the <i>Collection of Tuition and Fees from Students</i> (Georgia Rules 392-5-.05). | <p>Yes No</p> | |
| <p>6. Prior to enrollment, students are provided a catalog and/or other written materials which give accurate and current information about the school including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of only those courses/programs authorized by NPEC which are currently offered; • program descriptions sufficient to enable the student to understand the scope of, sequence of and length of time to complete a course or program of study; • description of directors, education supervisors' and instructors' qualifications, • description of the specific occupations for which each specialized program will prepare the student; • description of the facilities where instruction will occur; • program objectives which include entrance requirements, grading systems, length of the course or program of study, absence policies, make-up work policies, re-entrance conditions, and transfer of credit to other institutions; • description of all charges and/or fees that may be incurred by the student; • description of the cancellation and refund policy in accordance with the NPEC approved refund policy; • guidelines and expectations regarding student conduct, including conditions for dismissal; • explanation regarding requirements for graduation and procedures for obtaining grades and transcripts; • description of employment assistance provided to its graduates; • statements which describe the various licenses and/or accreditations recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education. | <p>Yes No</p> | |