

Agenda Item V: (ACTION) Additions and modifications to the *SARA Manual*

- a. Section 8: Responding to Questions and to Requests to Modify SARA Policies
SARA Manual, Section 8.3, Significant Modifications

Background

Section 8: Responding to Questions and to Requests to Modify SARA Policies was added to the *SARA Manual* in May, 2015; revisions were made in January, 2016.

The WICHE-SARA regional steering committee has recommended additional language be included in Section 8.3. Recommended new language is in red and underlined; language recommended for removal is ~~struck through~~.

SARA Manual, Version 18.2, Section 8: Responding to Questions and to Requests to Modify SARA Policies

8.3 Significant Modifications

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Executive Director of NC-SARA to ensure broad consultation among the regional compacts, NC-SARA, and the SARA community at large in developing responses to requests for significant modifications to the *SARA Manual* and/or to the *Unified State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement*.

Requests for significant changes ~~should~~ may be addressed to the Executive Director of NC-SARA, who will work with the regional compacts, their SARA steering committees, the NC-SARA executive committee, and the NC-SARA Board to ensure consideration and resolution. Persons making such requests should provide a rationale supporting their request.

All proposed significant changes will first be considered by the home state and regional compact of the proposer, either through the compact's SARA Regional Steering Committee or whatever means the compact determines. NC-SARA and the other regional compacts shall be notified of the proposed change(s), and other compacts may also consider the issue(s). If at least two regional compacts request that the proposed changes be considered by NC-SARA, the Executive Director shall place the proposed changes on the agenda of the next NC-SARA meeting for Board consideration. Nothing in this section precludes the Executive Director's ability, in consultation with the Board Chair, to propose items for discussion by the NC-SARA Board.

In responding to and ultimately acting on such requests, regional and national SARA staff and oversight committees shall evaluate proposed changes in light of SARA's fundamental reliance on interstate reciprocity and trust, and on the fundamental purposes of SARA, which are to support high quality distance education, resolve problems encountered by students, and simplify and support the interstate offering of distance education using a model under which an institution's Home State is primarily responsible for what the institution offers under the aegis of SARA.

Other guiding principles for the review, clarification and modification of *SARA Policies* and agreements include:

- Broad consultation with key stakeholders;
- Maintaining consistency in policy and procedures;
- Transparency and openness; and
- Responsiveness to stakeholders and emerging policy issues.