

**STAGE TWO
APPLICATION**

MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Stage Two Application for Initial Approval
as an In-State Degree-Granting Institution

Name of Proposed Institution

Mailing Address of Proposed Institution

If a specific facility is yet to be identified, please provide as a minimum, the county or city in which you plan to operate.

Person to Contact for this Application:

Title:

Organization:

Mailing Address

Telephone Number:

Email:

**Office of Academic Affairs
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 N. Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
(410) 767-3300**

acadprob.mhec@maryland.gov

STAGE TWO APPLICATION

Under the *Code of Maryland Regulations* (COMAR) 13B.02.02.06, there are two stages that a prospective institution shall complete before the Secretary of Higher Education may grant institutional approval to operate. The application process may take up to six months after the receipt by the Maryland Higher Education Commission of a completed Stage One and Stage Two application. The prospective institution shall complete the first stage before it may start the second stage.

(a) Submission of the **Stage Two Application** requires:

(1) The institution's demonstration that it is in compliance with COMAR 13B.02.02 – *Minimum Requirements for Degree-Granting Institutions*. Specifically, this includes the following areas: (1) Organization and Administration, (2) Mission and Goals, (3) Admissions, (3) Graduation Requirements, (4) Faculty, (5) Library and Learning Resources, (6) Student Services and Activities, (7) Facilities, (8) Finances, and (9) Catalog and Other Publications;

(2) a financial guarantee posted by the institution (per. COMAR 13B.02.02.07) after the evaluation visit (see also page 3, Financial Guarantee);

(3) evidence of sufficient insurance (see COMAR 13B.02.02.06J(c)); and

(4) a license to operate as a business entity in the State issued by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation or other appropriate State office (see COMAR 13B.02.02.06J(e) and page 3, License to Operate).

(b) **First Visit**. If the Secretary is satisfied that the documentation submitted in the application satisfies the requirements of Stage Two, the Secretary will appoint an evaluation team to conduct an on-site evaluation visit to the institution in order to verify that the prospective institution complies with the regulations.

(1) The prospective institution is responsible for all financial obligations related to the on-site visit.

(2) The evaluation team is advisory to the Secretary and will include MHEC staff, at least one member affiliated with an out-of-State institution, and the appropriate segmental executive (or designee) as an *ex-officio* observer.

(3) The team will prepare a report to the Secretary on the extent to which the prospective institution is compliant with the regulations.

(c) An application is considered complete once the required documentation is submitted [i.e., Stage Two Application], and evaluation visit has been held with its report sent to the Secretary, and the institution has made the required financial guarantee.

(d) If based upon the evaluation team report, and other available information, the Secretary is satisfied that the prospective institution is in compliance with the regulations, the Secretary shall grant approval to operate subject to any conditions he might make. The Secretary's certificate of

approval shall also specify the degrees, formal awards, instructional program, and location being approved.

(e) Second Visit. At the end of the institution's first instructional year the Secretary shall appoint an evaluation team to conduct an on-site visit to ensure that the institution is in compliance with the Regulations and any other conditions upon which the Secretary based the institution's approval to operate.

I. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION.

This questionnaire, properly completed with the supporting documentation and a completed page one cover sheet, shall serve as the **Stage Two Application** for approval to operate in Maryland under the *Code of Maryland Regulations* (COMAR) 13B.02.02. **CHECK EACH ITEM AS ATTACHED.**

Insurance. The institution shall provide evidence of sufficient insurance or self-insurance to maintain the solvency of the institution in case of loss by fire or other causes; to protect the institution in instances of personal or public liability; and to ensure continuity of the institution. COMAR 13B.02.02.06J(c)

License to Operate. The institution must obtain and submit to the Maryland Higher Education Commission a license to operate as a business entity in the State of Maryland issued by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation [301 West Preston Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201 or on-line at: www.dat.state.md.us] or other appropriate State office. COMAR 13B.02.02.06J(e)

Financial Guarantee for a Nonpublic Degree-Granting Institution (submitted after the evaluation report). COMAR 13B.02.02.07 Nonpublic institutions seeking to offer an Associate degree or higher shall provide a surety bond or letter of credit issued by a surety company or banking institution authorized to transact business in Maryland with a credit rating satisfactory to the Commission in an amount:

(a) Adequate to provide refunds for students for current tuition and fee liability and to cover the administrative cost associated with the instrument claim but:

- (1) Not less than \$500,000 for an institution offering a Baccalaureate degree or higher.
- (2) Not less than \$300,000 for an institution offering an Associate degree.

(b) The surety bond or letter of credit shall be in place for:

- (1) Six years for an institution offering a Baccalaureate degree or higher.
- (2) Four years for an institution offering an Associate degree.

(c) If during the term of guarantee, the institution's current tuition and fee liability exceeds the level of the initial guarantee, the required level may be adjusted at the discretion of the Secretary.

(d) If the institution intends to cease or ceases operations, the institution shall use the balance of the financial guarantee with the approval of the Secretary or the Secretary's designee in order to (1) conduct an orderly closure of the institution; and (2) refund tuition monies owned to students.

Institutional Catalog. Please provide us with a **draft copy** of your proposed institutional catalog which can be used to respond to the questions found in Sections 4 (Graduation Requirements) and Section 10 (Catalog and Official Publications) below.

Certification.

I hereby certify that the answers given in this application and its attachments are accurate and complete and further agree to comply with the Annotated Code of Maryland and State regulations governing the minimum requirements for degree-granting institutions operating in Maryland (COMAR 13B.02.02).

Date

Signature of Chief Executive Officer

II. APPLICATION QUESTIONNAIRE.

1. Organization and Administration. An institution shall design its organization to bring together the institution's total resources in an effectively coordinated effort that will accomplish the institution's stated objectives. See COMAR 13B.02.02.13.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the space provided below, or create an attachment (labeled "A-1: Organization") to this application with your response to the following. Please provide a description of how your institution will be organized and administered. **This description will include:** (a) A list of your Governing Board members, their professional and corporate affiliations, and a description of the Governing Board's role in establishing policy, long-range planning, fostering institutional development, ensuring sound financial management, and in appointing and evaluating the Chief Executive Officer. (b) The name of your proposed Chief Executive Officer along with a description of his/her role, scope of authority, and qualifications. (c) The names and titles of your senior administrative leadership, including the Chief Academic Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Business Officer, and the Chief Student Affairs Officer, briefly indicating for each their duties, responsibilities, and qualifications. (d) Also include in your description an organizational chart for your institution.

2. Mission and Goals. An institution shall have a statement of its mission and goals. See COMAR 13B.02.02.14.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the spaces provided below, or create an attachment (labeled “A-2: Mission and Goals”) to this application and include your institution’s mission and goals statement. **An adequate statement will incorporate:** (a) a summary of the institution’s character and purpose; (b) a designation of the institution’s functional emphasis as instruction, research, or public service; (c) the degree levels offered and the relative emphasis given to undergraduate and graduate instruction; (d) the institution’s current or proposed Carnegie classification; (e) the constituencies served by the institutions; (f) a general description of the student body; and (g) the geographic origin of its students.

3. Admissions. An institution shall have a clearly stated admissions policy which is related to its objectives and resources. Such a policy will ensure that admitted students have the ability to benefit from their instruction and will also ensure nondiscrimination. See COMAR 13B.02.02.15.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the space provided below, or create an attachment to this application (labeled “A-3: Admissions”) with your institution’s proposed admission policy. **This policy will include descriptions of:** (a) how this policy correlates with your planned educational practices; (b) what provision will be made for placement testing, counseling, and professional staffing; (c) how will the institution ensure that the students it admits have the ability to benefit from their instruction; (d) the criteria to be used in admitting its students, including students who have not graduated from an accredited high school or received a high school equivalency certificate/diploma; and (e) your institution’s proposed transfer policy for students wishing to transfer into your institution.

4. Graduation Requirements. An institution will meet the applicable requirements set forth in the Regulations under COMAR 13B.02.02.16.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the spaces below. Refer to your institution's proposed catalog [see page 4 of this application] and indicate the page(s) which illustrate the institution's compliance with the following Graduation Requirements found in COMAR 13B.02.02.16:

| Graduation Requirements COMAR 13B.02.02.16 | Catalog Page(s) |
|--|-----------------|
| <p>(a) <u>.16 A(1)(2) & .16B(1)(2)</u> (1) <u>Associate degree</u>, consisting of not less than 60 and not more than 70 semester credit hours and a minimum average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale for graduation. (2) <u>Bachelors degree</u>, consisting of not less than 120 semester credit hours and a minimum average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale for graduation.</p> | |
| <p>(b) <u>.16A(3)(4) & .16B(3)(4)</u> (1) <u>Associate degree</u> will consist of a minimum of 30 semester credit hours of direct instruction. (2) <u>Bachelors degree</u> will consist of a minimum of 60 semester credit hours of direct instruction.</p> | |
| <p>(c) <u>.16A & .16B(5)</u> Credit for remedial education will not count towards the credit required for graduation.</p> | |
| <p>(d) <u>.16C</u> An institution shall have a policy concerning students who do not make adequate progress towards their degree / certificate.</p> | |
| <p>(e) <u>.16D</u> One semester hour of credit will be awarded for a minimum of 15 hours of 50 minutes each for classroom instruction. Laboratory or studio: 30 hours of 50 minutes each; practica, internships, etc. 45 hours of 50 minutes.</p> | |
| <p>(f) <u>.16E & F</u> Meet the General Education requirements for Independent or Public Institutions as found in COMAR 13B.02.02.16E and F.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">That is, no less than 20 semester hours at the <u>Associate level</u> and 40 semester hours at the <u>Bachelors level</u> of required Arts & Sciences Core Courses with at least one 3 semester hour course taken from each category.</p> <p><u>Categories of General Education Core Courses:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arts & Humanities 2. English Composition 3. Social & Behavioral Sciences 4. Mathematics 4. Biological & Physical Sciences | |
| <p>(g) <u>.16G</u> Credit for Practica, Clinical Experience, Internships, & Cooperative (1) <u>Associate degrees</u> may not award more than 30 semester hours for the minimum 60 hours required for the degree through credit offered in this manner. (2) <u>Bachelors degree</u> may not award more than 45 semester hours of the minimum 120 hours required for the degree through credit offered in this manner.</p> | |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>(h) <u>.16H</u> Credit for Prior Learning</p> <p>(1) <u>Associate degrees</u> may not award more than 15 semester hours for the minimum 60 hours required for the degree.</p> <p>(2) <u>Bachelors degree</u> may not award more than 30 semester hours for the minimum 120 hours required for the degree.</p> | |
| <p>(i) <u>.16I</u> Meet the minimum required semester hours (or years) and level of instruction for the Conferral of Formal Awards. (i.e., Degrees, Certificates)</p> | |
| <p>(j) <u>.16L & M</u> Meet the requirements for the Acceptance of Transfer Credit for Independent or Public institutions.</p> | |

5. Faculty. Faculty employed by a degree granting institution shall be competent on the basis of their formal education and professional experience to enable them, through effective instruction and other activities, to achieve the institution's educational objectives. See COMAR 13B.02.02.17.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please the requested information in the space provided below, or create an attachment to this application (labeled "A-4: Faculty") with your response to the following questions: (If complete and precise information is unavailable at this time, please provide projected staffing information including the faculty member's status as full or part-time).

(a) If possible, list all the faculty that are to teach in the first year (or cycle) of your proposed programs. [If complete and precise information is unavailable at this time, please provide projected staffing information including the faculty member's status as full or part-time.] For each faculty member provide the following information:

- (1) the course(s) the faculty might soon teach;
- (2) the degrees the individual holds and from which institutions;
- (3) the degrees areas of specialization; and
- (4) whether or not the faculty member will be full-time or part-time (adjunct).

(b) Please include a curriculum vitae/resume for each potential faculty member. For those faculty who are yet to be hired include a job description and minimal qualifications for that position. (Copies Attached? Yes No)

Full-time Faculty Member is defined as an employee: "(a) whose primary professional responsibility is instruction, research, scholarship, or service; (b) who performs those functions normally expected of a full-time faculty member at an institution of higher education, including curriculum development, student advising, and institutional service; (c) who is employed on an

annual or renewable contract of at least 9 months long that stipulates an annual salary; and (d) who is not employed full-time by another employer.” COMAR 13B.02.02.03B(11)

Will at least 50 percent of the of the classes offered in a normal academic year be taught by full-time faculty? Yes No

Full-time Faculty Waiver. **If No,** you will have to apply for a Full-time Faculty Waiver. In order to obtain a waiver under the Regulations (COMAR 13B.02.02.17K) , please respond to the following:

(1) Demonstrate that the unique role, scope, and mission of the institution require a waiver in order for the institution to operate.

(2) After making this demonstration the institution shall then provide the following:

(i.) Designate by name the faculty members whose primary responsibility is instruction, scholarship, research or service who will perform the duties normally required of full-time faculty.

(ii.) Document that these designated faculty members substantially participate in the development or implementation of one or more of the following activities at the institution requesting the waiver: (A) Academic Programs, (B) Professional Programs, (C) Research Programs, (D) Service Programs, (E) Admission or Admission Policies, (F) Academic Advising, (G) Faculty Appointments, or (H) Institutional Governance.

(iii.) Document that the full time faculty, as a group, participate in all of the activities listed in (2)(ii.) above.

(iv.) Document that the designated faculty shall perform the requirements of full-time faculty under Section C of the regulations – i.e., at least one-third of the classes offered shall be taught by full- time faculty of the parent institution.

(3) **Documentation includes**, but is not limited to: (i) minutes of meetings; (ii) contractual obligations; or (iii) job descriptions.

(4) Your request will be considered at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

6. Library & Learning Resources. A library/learning resource center shall provide print and non-print materials, services, media, and related equipment and facilities designed to facilitate and improve learning and to foster inquiry. It shall be available to students, faculty, and the community as appropriate and include such functions as the institution’s mission and goals may require. See COMAR 13B.02.02.18.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the spaces provided below, or create an attachment to this application (labeled “A-6: Library”) to this application with your responses to the following questions:

(a) The collection. Briefly describe how the institution intends to comply with, and budget for, the following collection requirements to be accessible on the date when the first students are enrolled:

| BVEs=Bound Volume Equivalents | Associate Degree Granting | Baccalaureate Degree Or Higher Degree Granting |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| (1) Basic Collection | 5,000 BVEs | 10,000 BVEs |
| (2) Additional to the Basic Collection for each: | | |
| (A) FTE Faculty Member | 100 BVEs | 100 BVEs |
| (B) FTE Student | 12 BVEs | 15 BVEs |
| (C) Undergraduate Program | 350 BVEs | 350 BVEs |
| (D) Master’s Degree Program | | 3,000 BVEs |
| (E) Doctoral Degree Program | | 25,000 BVEs |

(b) Professional Staff. List the library and learning resources staff, their titles, and qualifications. Please indicate plans for monitoring library usage and providing reader services.

Library Collection Waiver. In extraordinary circumstances, an institution may request a waiver of the minimum collection required by the regulations [COMAR 13B.02.02.18B(2)]. **Are you requesting such a waiver?** Yes No

(1) If yes, this request shall be considered at a regularly scheduled meeting of both the Education Policy Committee and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The waiver may be granted if justified by the institution demonstrating in the application:

(i.) the specialized or technical nature of the institution’s curriculum; or

(ii.) an executed contract or contracts with another library or libraries ensuring students adequate access to another appropriate collection either through location or through information technology.

7. **Student Services.** An institution shall ensure that all students have access to a well developed program of counseling, testing, advisement, orientation, financial aid, career development, placement, health services, food dispensing, and a college bookstore. The institution may determine the specific organization of these services as long as provision for the services noted in this section of the Regulations are made. See COMAR 13B.02.02.19.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the spaces provided below, or create an attachment (labeled “A-7: Student Services”) to this application with your responses to the following questions:

(a) How do you plan to implement the requirements for Student Services required by COMAR 13B.02.02.19A & B?

(b) Describe how the institution will keep complete and accurate records of admission, enrollment, grades, scholarships, transfer of credits, transcripts, graduates, and other essentials in accordance with standard practice.

(c) Regarding student records describe the security measures (document security plan) the institution intends to take to ensure the confidentiality, physical, and electronic security of its record-keeping system.

(d) Does the institution have a published statement of rights, privileges, and responsibilities of students? Yes No How will it make this statement available to its students through the catalog, student handbook, or other appropriate means? _____

(e) Provide a copy of the proposed student grievance procedures to assure fair and timely review of student complaints. (Copy attached? Yes No)

8. **Facilities.** Because the effective operation of an institution depends largely upon the physical atmosphere of its surroundings, the cleanliness, state of repair, and attractive appearance of the institution’s grounds and buildings shall provide an adequate and effective educational environment. See COMAR 13B.02.02.20.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the spaces provided below, or create an attachment (labeled “A-8: Facilities”) to this application with your responses to the following questions:

(a) Has a specific location for the institution's facilities been identified? Yes No

(b) **If Yes**, have the proposed facilities been inspected and approved for use as classroom/laboratory/dinning/ residential space and been found in compliance with local and State ordinances pertaining to fire, safety, and health standards? Yes No

(1) **If Yes**, please provide a copy (copies) of the Certificate(s) of Compliance.

(2) **If No**, please submit the certificate 30 days prior to the actual start of classes.

(c) Please provide an general overview of the institution's facilities and describe any special instructional facilities and equipment (computers, audio-visual equipment, simulators, etc.) that will be used and available to your students.

(d) Describe what provisions are being made for periodic repair and maintenance of buildings and grounds? What measures are being taken for campus security and fire protection? If dangerous or toxic materials are being handled, what provisions are being made for safe storage, handling and disposal?

(e) Describe the office (and conference) space available to full and part-time faculty and administrators?

9. Finances. An institution shall operate in accordance with sound principles of financial management. It shall expend its revenue, consistent with the institution's goals and objectives, to provide adequately for instruction, administration, learning resources, student services, maintenance, equipment, and supplies. The institution shall have appropriate financial planning to ensure adequate controls over expenditures in accordance with sound principles of financial management. Its accounts shall be maintained in accordance with recognized national standards regarding institutions of higher education. COMAR 13B.02.02.21

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please enter the requested information in the space provided below, or create an attachment to this application (labeled "A-9: Finances") with a response to the following. Describe the institution's existing or proposed financial process which includes the functions stipulated in COMAR 13B.02.02.21F(1)-(6).

10. Catalog and Official Publications. An institution shall publish in print or electronically on a regular and continuing basis an official catalog that describes the institution and its program and course offerings accurately and completely. See COMAR 13B.02.02.22.

✓ **INSTRUCTIONS.** Please refer to your institution’s proposed catalog [see page 4 of this application] and indicate in the spaces provided below, the page number(s) which illustrate the institution’s compliance with the following Catalog and Official Publications Requirements: COMAR 13B.02.02.22B:

| Catalog and Official Publications Requirements COMAR 13B.02.02.22B | Catalog Page(s) |
|--|-----------------|
| (1) Date of Publication. | |
| (2) The current (or projected) academic calendar. | |
| (3) A comprehensive table of contents and appropriate indices. | |
| (4) A statement of the origin and the objectives of the institution. | |
| (5) A roster of the official governing board. | |
| (6) If available, a complete roster of faculty and administrators showing earned degrees and the granting institutions. | |
| (7) The entrance requirements, academic regulations, support services, graduation requirements, and general procedures. | |
| (8) The financial policies of the institution, including all costs, schedule of payments, and refunds of all types of charges for academic and other services. | |
| (9) A detailed description of all types of financial assistance available from the institution, including private, State, and federal programs. | |
| (10) A description of each course and each program and its prerequisites, if applicable, to be offered during the year or years for which the catalog is issued. | |
| (11) A clear indication if a particular course is not offered regularly. | |
| (12) A full description of Student Support Services required in COMAR 13B.02.02.22B(12). | |
| (13) A statement of student rights and responsibilities including student grievance procedure and a contact office for resolution of complaints. | |
| (14) A statement of nondiscrimination, student privacy and provisions for barrier-free access to the handicapped in accordance with State and federal regulations. | |
| (15) For public institutions, the Commission’s Student Transfer Policies found in COMAR 13B.06.01. | |

Please Submit All Information To:

Maryland Higher Education Commission
Office of Academic Affairs
6 N. Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
(410) 767-3300
acadprob.mhec.@maryland.gov (for electronic submissions)