

SARA

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement



An Update: Moving Forward

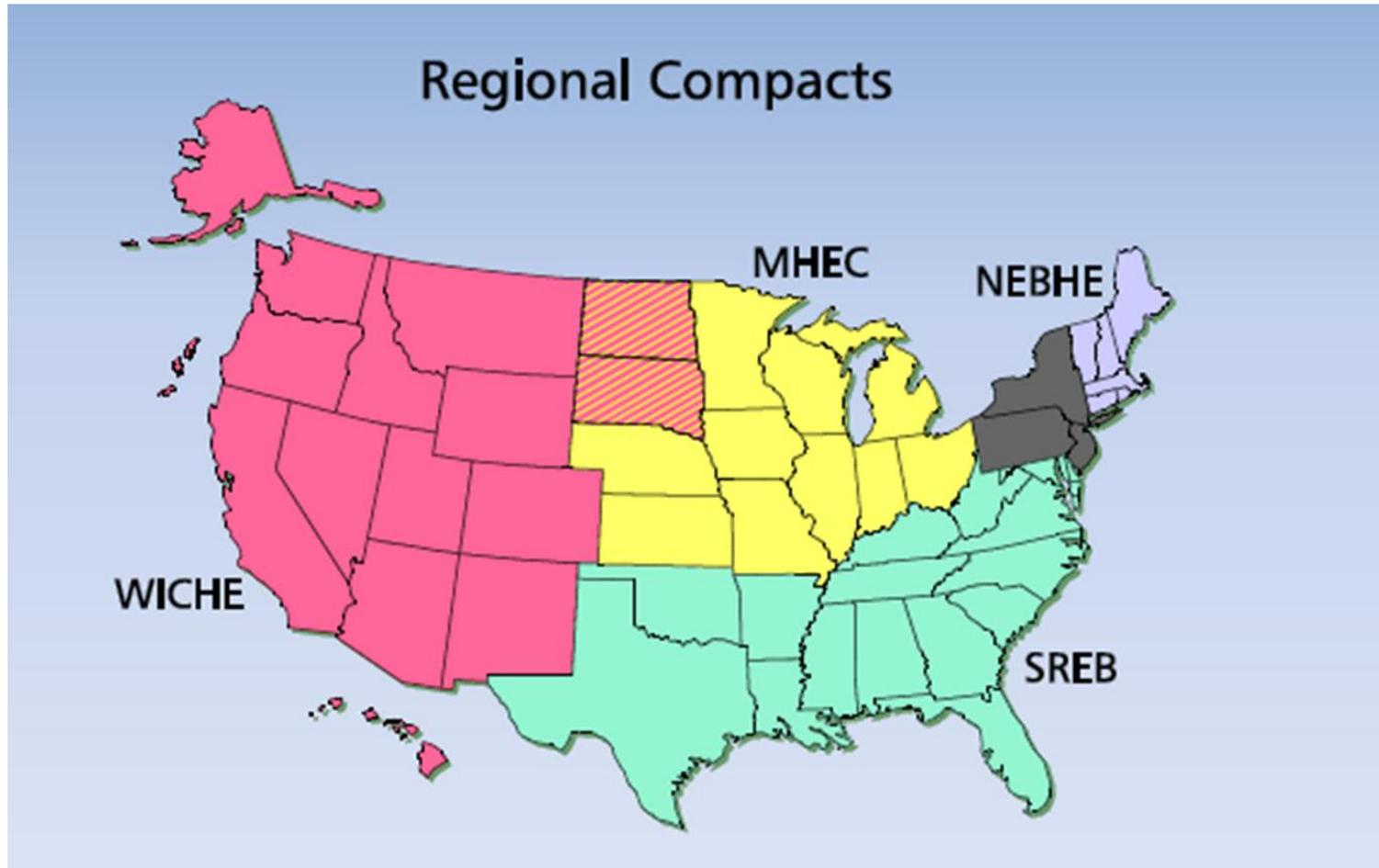
CHE Meeting – March 6, 2014

What is SARA?

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement:

- is a voluntary consortia of states
 - establishes national standards for institutions offering postsecondary distance education courses and programs
 - intends to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state
 - is overseen by a National Council (NC-SARA) and administered by four regional education compacts
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NC-SARA and the Four Regional Compacts



Where are we now?

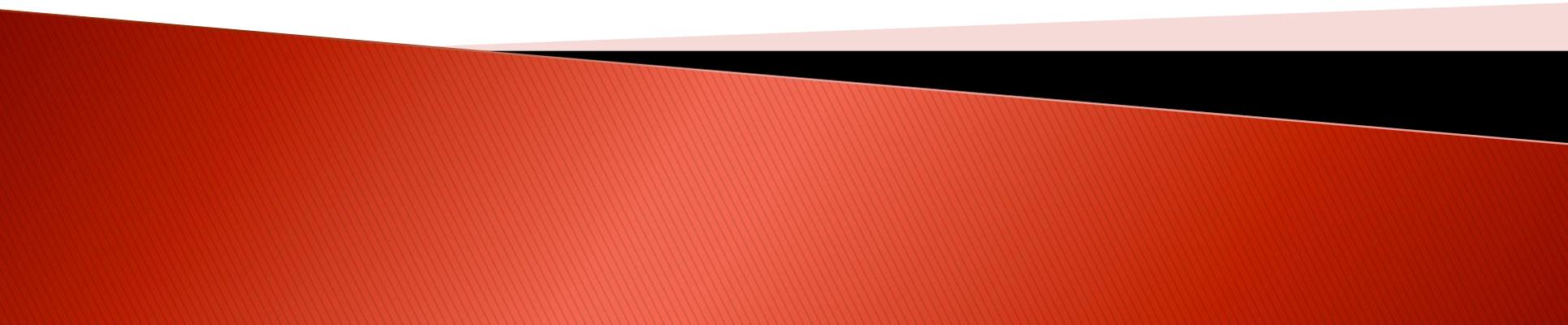
Regional compacts (including S-SARA) are beginning to evaluate and to determine whether states demonstrate adequate capacity and sufficient standards for authorization and oversight of institutions under SARA.

CHE will need to make a decision about participating in SARA by June 2014, with a targeted application (submitted to S-SARA) in September 2014.

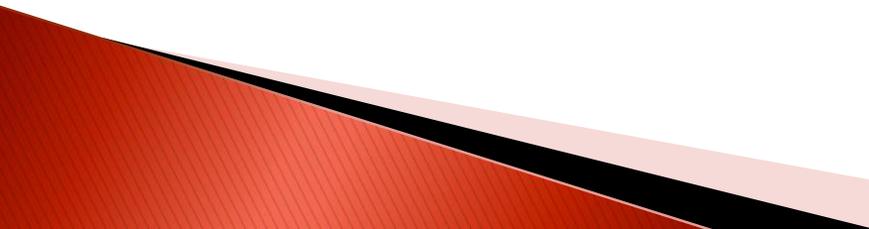
What does SC-CHE need to do?

- ▶ Meet with SC academic and political leaders
 - ▶ Determine if the state wants to participate
 - ▶ Review statutes and regulations for regarding CHE's authorization to participate
 - ▶ Develop policies and procedures that will allow CHE to accept applications from institutions
 - ▶ Adopt funding model
 - ▶ Develop and submit SARA plan to the regional compact (S-SARA)
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State Authorization and Public Universities in South Carolina



Implications for Universities (Using Clemson as an example)

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) approved Clemson for online delivery in February 2002
 - Clemson now has available online
 - 19 degree programs (six are only available online)
 - 2 undergraduate, 15 masters and professional masters, and 2 PhD degrees
 - 23 certificates
 - 10 undergraduate, 12 graduate, 1 post masters
 - Online programs increase accessibility and promote degree completion
 - State Authorization requires the university to contact every state and territory to determine their protocols, procedures, and fees for distance education and online (in particular) delivery
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Enrollment

This semester at Clemson:

894 courses are being taught online

4058 students enrolled

967 students are enrolled only in online courses

746 (78%) are in South Carolina

221 (22%) are in other states

Compliance with State Authorization

- 221 students in 35 states
- Clemson has received state authorization for 28 states as of today
- Clemson participates in the SREB electronic campus which does help with a few states, but we still need approval for New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania because of the number of students enrolled
- Penalty for non-compliance goes into effect July 1, 2014: Rules and Regulations on State Authorization in Federal Register (34 C.F.R. 600.9) do not clearly articulate the penalties; at a minimum reimburse the federal government for federal funds received by students in noncompliance states and penalties for misrepresentation ; plus finer from the state in which the student is located

Graduation (Online Programs)

- Over the past five years (2008-09 through 2012-13)
 - Masters of Public Administration: 56
 - Masters of Youth Development Leadership: 63
 - Masters of Human Resource Development: 146
- Since approved for Online Delivery (2011-12 through 2012-13)
 - Masters of Biological Sciences: 46
 - Masters of Industrial Engineering: 70
 - Masters of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management: 21

These are significant increases in graduation numbers for Biological Sciences (14 graduates) and PRTM (18 graduates) the three years before online delivery.

Current Process for State Authorization By Institution

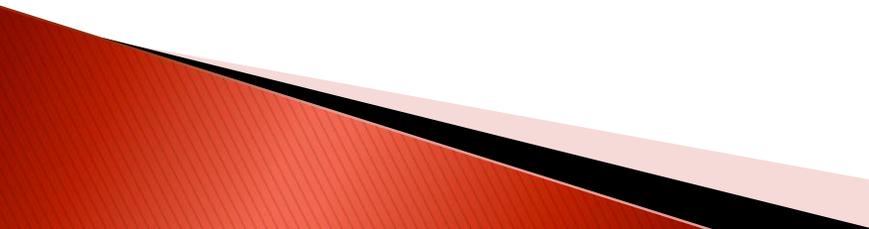
- Administrative staff have been hired to monitor and maintain our state authorization
 - The state policies change, and annual reviews of policies and procedures are required
 - Some state fees are prohibitively expensive for Clemson to admit one or two students
 - Complex proposals and in some cases, travel to meetings in each state are required during the review process
- Clemson will need to restrict admission to our online graduate programs to students residing in states where we have authorization

From the Institution's Perspective

- Institutions already seek approval in SC for delivery of new programs and major modifications—the process is in place
 - SACSCOC, our regional accrediting body, has procedures to approve institutions when they initiate online delivery of programs
 - Federal reporting requirements are already in place
 - Best practices have been established by SREB (Southern Regional Education Board)
 - CHE might be able to use these same standards in developing the reporting standards
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Positive Outcomes to Participating in SARA

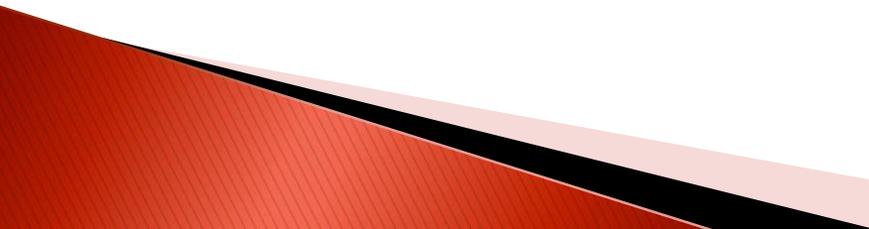
If South Carolina participates...

- All public institutions will have the same access to participate in online education delivery of courses and degree programs
 - While many large institutions have moved forward with state authorizations, not all SC state institutions have had the staff or the resources to do so
 - Competition in the online market place already exists; if SC public institutions are to remain competitive SC needs to join SARA
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Anticipated Advantages of SARA

- One set of clear and consistent guidelines will be available for all public institutions in SC, instead of 49 sets of divergent state guidelines
 - Recruitment and advising definitions in SARA will support more student-centered efforts for online delivery
 - Clemson and other state institutions will work with just one state, South Carolina (through CHE), instead of each institution applying separately to 49 states
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Potential Challenges with SARA Participation

- ▶ **More importing than exporting of academic programs in SC (at least, initially)**
 - ▶ **Consistency of implementing and applying NC-SARA standards from state to state and nationally (i.e., consumer protection)**
 - ▶ **Workload and monitoring responsibilities for CHE staff would increase and oversight of public, nonpublic postsecondary, and independent institutions**
 - ▶ **“Unintended” consequences for states and institutions participating in SARA**
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Moving forward: next steps...