



**Fully Online Distance Education Program Registration
Maryland Higher Education Commission
MSAR #10646
Submitted December 1, 2018**

Executive Summary

Education Article §11-202.2(g) of the Annotated Code of Maryland requires the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to submit to the Governor, and in accordance with §2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly, an annual fully online distance education program registration report. This report shall include:

- I. The number of institutions of higher education that apply for registration under this section;
- II. The type and size of the institutions that apply;
- III. The number of institutions approved for registration;
- IV. The number of institutions denied registration;
- V. The number of Maryland students enrolled in institutions required to register under this section;
- VI. The results of the requirements of §11-202.3 of this subtitle;
- VII. The number of institutions found to be in violation of the requirement to register under this section;
- VIII. Any fines imposed, and in what amounts, on institutions that violate this section; and
- IX. Any fine revenues collected from institutions for violation of this section.

Overview

Effective January 1, 2016, the State of Maryland became a full participant in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). As such, an institutional participant in SARA is exempt from the requirements for the Registration of Online Programs in Maryland (COMAR13B.05.01). Additionally, effective January 1, 2016, Maryland's definition of operate in Maryland (COMAR 13B.02.01.03B(12)(c)) was amended to allow an out-of-state institution to place no more than 10 students in a single program, physically present at a single site in the State in a supervised internship, practicum, or field experience as a required part of a degree or certificate program. If more than 10 students from a single program are placed at a single site in the State in a supervised internship, practicum, or field placement, then the institution must submit an application for a certificate of approval to operate in Maryland.

Membership in SARA has completely altered the online education landscape in the United States and in Maryland. Presently, there are 49 SARA member states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands with approximately 1,900 participating institutions, an increase of almost 300 institutions over 2017. Only California is not SARA member state. All SARA member institutions may register online Maryland students with no Maryland registration. With the majority of institutions participating in SARA, the number of out-of-state registration applications for Maryland has dropped precipitously for the current year and three years in a row.

During the reporting period from November 1, 2017, through October 31, 2018, MHEC received a total of 58 registration applications including 3 initial applications and 55 renewal applications.

Responses

I. Number of institutions that applied in the reporting period: **58** (3 initial and 55 renewals)

II. Type and size of institutions that applied:

Types of institutions that applied for registration with the Maryland Higher Education Commission

Type	Number of applicants for registration
Public	6
Private for-profit	26
Private not-for-profit	26

Sizes of institutions that applied for registration with the Maryland Higher Education Commission¹

Size and Number of Institutions		Size and Number of Institutions	
Very small two-year ² :	4	Small two-year ³ :	0
Medium two-year ⁴ :	0	Large two-year ⁵ :	1
Very large two-year ⁶ :	0	Very small four-year, primarily nonresidential ⁷ :	6
Very small four-year, primarily residential ⁸ :	1	Very small four-year, highly residential ⁹ :	0
Small four-year, primarily nonresidential ¹⁰ :	1	Small four-year, primarily residential ¹¹ :	3
Small four-year, highly residential ¹² :	1	Medium four-year, primarily nonresidential ¹³ :	8
Medium four-year, primarily residential ¹⁴ :	3	Medium four-year, highly residential ¹⁵ :	3
Large four-year, primarily nonresidential ¹⁶ :	8	Large four-year, primarily residential ¹⁷ :	2
Large four-year, highly residential ¹⁸ :	2	Medium four-year ¹⁹ :	0
Not classified:	5	Special Focus Institution:	9

¹ Based on Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

² Fall enrollment data show full time equivalent (FTE) enrollment of fewer than 500 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

³ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 500–1,999 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

⁴ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 2,000–4,999 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

⁵ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 5,000–9,999 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

⁶ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

⁷ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and/or fewer than 50 percent attend full time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

⁸ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 50 percent attend full time.

⁹ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 80 percent attend full time.

¹⁰ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 1,000–2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and/or fewer than 50 percent attend full time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

¹¹ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 1,000–2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 50 percent attend full time.

¹² Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 1,000–2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 80 percent attend full time.

¹³ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 3,000–9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and/or fewer than 50 percent attend full time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

¹⁴ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 3,000–9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 50 percent attend full time.

¹⁵ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 3,000–9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 80 percent attend full time.

¹⁶ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and/or fewer than 50 percent attend full time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

¹⁷ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 50 percent attend full time.

¹⁸ Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus and at least 80 percent attend full time.

III. Number of institutions approved for registration in the reporting period: **58**

IV. Number of institutions denied registration: **0**

V. Number of Maryland students enrolled at institutions required to register: **7,646**

VI. Results of the requirements of §11-202.3 of this subtitle:

§11-202.3

At least twice a year, the Commission shall peruse federal databases and other information sources to determine whether there are Maryland students who are enrolled in a fully online distance education program offered by an institution of higher education that is required to register with the Commission under § 11-202.2 of this subtitle, but that has failed to register with the Commission.

With continued and increasing participation in SARA by out-of-state institutions, the number of out-of-state institutions offering online distance education to students required to register has decreased. To date California is the only state that does not participate in SARA.

In the instance that we determine that an institution is noncompliant or nonresponsive with registration requirements, MHEC staff will investigate such institution's Web site to determine if it has revised and published its policies on enrolling Maryland students after having received notice that registration with our office is required. Following the successful results of the investigatory letters that were sent out by MHEC, a number of institutions have voluntarily contacted MHEC staff to inquire about out-of-state online registration procedures or to announce their participation in SARA. We continue to identify which institutions are located in a SARA state and are a SARA approved institution, to determine whether an institution should be identified for further enforcement action.

To illustrate the impact of the implementation of SARA in 49 states it is important to present information related to SARA participants enrolling Maryland students. Table 1 presents the enrollments of Maryland students in institution from other states that are participating members of SARA. These 887 SARA participating out-of-state institutions enrolled 32,052 Maryland students. There was an increase of 168 out-of-state institutions enrolling Maryland student from 2016-2017.

Table 1: 2017-2018 Maryland Students Enrollment in Out-of-State SARA Institutions

State Enrolling Maryland Students Online for 2017 - 2018	Number of Maryland Students Enrolled in Online Courses	Number of Institutions Enrolling Maryland Students in Online Courses
Alabama	898	18
Alaska	6	3
Arizona	5,020	20
Arkansas	31	6
Colorado	1,245	26
Connecticut	161	11
District of Columbia	3,982	10
Delaware	802	4
Florida	1,063	37
Georgia	1,307	25
Hawaii	10	2
Idaho	167	5
Illinois	456	33
Indiana	1,319	25
Iowa	125	16
Kansas	341	28
Kentucky	207	22
Louisiana	82	15
Maine	134	7
Michigan	191	28
Minnesota	1,233	24
Mississippi	51	11
Missouri	354	27
Montana	7	3
Nebraska	161	16
Nevada	12	2
New Hampshire	1,585	7
New Jersey	342	18
New Mexico	54	12
New York	1,138	41
North Carolina	169	26
North Dakota	63	7
Ohio	852	38

State Enrolling Maryland Students Online for 2017 - 2018	Number of Maryland Students Enrolled in Online Courses	Number of Institutions Enrolling Maryland Students in Online Courses
Oklahoma	58	13
Oregon	215	14
Pennsylvania	1,441	63
Rhode Island	36	4
South Carolina	83	18
South Dakota	58	8
Tennessee	80	32
Texas	274	50
Utah	1,271	8
Vermont	174	6
Virginia	2,751	36
Washington	65	11
West Virginia	1,872	19
Wisconsin	103	20
Wyoming	3	2
Totals	32,052	887

Massachusetts and Puerto Rico became SARA members in 2018.

Maryland has 26 institutions participating in SARA with 25 reporting enrollment from other states. Table 2 presents the enrollment of students from other states in online courses at Maryland institutions. Maryland enrolled 12,979 students from the other 52 participating SARA states, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. These results are for the 2017-2018 reporting period. Information for Tables 1 and 2 were extracted for this report from the NC-SARA 2017-2018 Enrollment Report.

Table 2: 2017-2018 Out-of-State Student Enrollment in Maryland SARA Institutions

Maryland SARA Institution	Maryland SARA Enrollment from Other States
Anne Arundel Community College	52
Capitol Technology University	165
Cecil College	18
Frederick Community College	New
Frostburg State University	94
Goucher College	30
Harford Community College	18
Howard Community College	10
Johns Hopkins University	4,488
Loyola University Maryland	18
Maryland Institute College of Art	25
McDaniel College	87
Montgomery College	59
Morgan State University	43
Notre Dame of Maryland University	39
Salisbury University	28
SANS Technology Institute	306
Stevenson University	132
Towson University	26
University of Baltimore	54
University of Maryland - Baltimore	143
University of Maryland - Baltimore County	56
University of Maryland - College Park	346
University of Maryland - Eastern Shore	2
University of Maryland - University College	6,736
Washington Adventist University	4
Total Maryland SARA Institutions	12,979

VII. Number of institutions found to be in violation of the requirement to register: 0

In the past, a number of institutions were found to be in violation of the requirement to register as a result of MHEC's investigatory efforts summarized in Section VI. They were deemed in violation since it was determined that these non-registered institutions were already enrolling Maryland residents in fully online programs. However, as of this report, no institutions have been found to be in violation of these requirements and most institutions have joined SARA and are no longer required to register as out-of-state institutions. Consequently, no fines have been imposed on any institutions to date.

VIII. Any fines imposed, and in what amounts, on institutions that were found to be in violation: 0

IX. Any fine revenues collected from institutions found to be in violation: 0

Conclusion

Since 2015, MHEC has seen continued decreases in the number of applications submitted through the out-of-state online registration process as a result of Maryland's participation in SARA. However, students enrolling in online courses and/or programs have significantly increased with the implementation of and participation in SARA. To date, 49 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico have joined SARA. There are approximately 1,900 current individual colleges and universities that participate in SARA.

Maryland's SARA application was approved in 2015 and renewed in 2017. MHEC began implementing the agreement on January 1, 2016. Currently, 26 Maryland institutions participate in SARA enrolling 12,979 out-of-state students in Maryland programs. MHEC continues to manage the corresponding decrease in revenues for both online registration and out-of-state certificates of approval. MHEC has offset a portion of these losses by charging in-state institutions an annual participation fee for SARA. A contractual Online Education Analyst position coordinates both the online registration process and SARA portal agency responsibilities at MHEC.