

## State Authorization Requirements for Distance or Correspondence Education



Northwest Mississippi Community College provides distance education programs and coursework to out-of-state students under the authority of an agreement with the Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation ([MCCA](#)). Mississippi, through its membership in the regional compact ([Southern Regional Education Board – SREB](#)), has joined the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements ([SARA](#)). SARA provides a reciprocity agreement that allows each member state the right to provide online education to residents of other member states without additional authorization required. All states are not currently members of SARA.

If you are a Northwest Community College (NWCC) student or prospective student who will not reside in Mississippi while enrolled in NWCC online programs or courses, please be aware that many states have prescribed an authorization process for out-of-state institutions delivering online programs to its state residents. Through such processes, states strive to ensure quality postsecondary education, to preserve the integrity of an academic degree and to instill greater consumer protection for its student citizens.

Northwest Mississippi Community College's participation in NC-SARA allows students from NC-SARA approved states to enroll in NWCC's online programs or courses. It is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state. If the state you reside in is not indicated as a NC-SARA state, please contact [elarning@northwestms.edu](mailto:elarning@northwestms.edu) for updated information and the current status of your state as well as programs and courses available for enrollment.

Colleges or universities in a SARA state only need their home state authorization to offer online education to any other SARA member state. Not every state has joined SARA, but most have. A current list of member states can be found [here](#).

### Accreditation

Northwest Mississippi Community College is accredited by SACSCOC to award the Associate in Arts and the Associate of Applied Science Degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Northwest Mississippi Community College.

NWCC holds membership in the American Association of Community Colleges, [the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges](#), the Mississippi Association of Colleges and the Southern Association of Community and Junior Colleges and Community Colleges of Appalachia. Additionally, NWCC is officially recognized by various occupational accrediting agencies, such as the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), 3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850, Atlanta, GA 30326; Phone (404)975-5000 and Mississippi Institutions for Higher Learning (IHL), 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211 or call 601-432-6198, <http://ihl.state.ms.us/nursing>.

For all accreditations follow this link: [http://www.northwestms.edu/index.php/?page\\_id=1050](http://www.northwestms.edu/index.php/?page_id=1050)

### **Out-of-State/Distance Student Complaint Procedure**

Northwest Mississippi Community College provides procedures for students to resolve complaints or grievances with the College; a copy of the student complaint procedure is located in the [College Bulletin](#). If your complaint is not resolved at the institutional level by filing a complaint pursuant to the student grievance policy, the College recognizes and accepts Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation (MCCA) oversight in resolving complaints from students taking distance education under the auspices of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). Out-of-state students residing in NC-SARA (National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement) states may submit complaints to the [MS-SARA portal agent](#). To file a complaint, a student should complete the complaint form available on the website [http://www.mississippi.edu/mcca/student\\_complaint\\_process.asp](http://www.mississippi.edu/mcca/student_complaint_process.asp). MCCA is located at 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211 and can be reached by telephone 601.432.6372.

### **Professional Licensure**

States and other government entities have established standards of practice for the occupations or professions they have chosen to regulate, and they provide legal permission to practice those professions only to individuals who meet those standards. If you are considering a program that leads to a professional license in your state, it is highly recommended that you first check with your State to verify if our program actually does meet the requirements of the state in which you intend to practice, as well seek guidance from the appropriate licensing agency in your home state before beginning the academic program located outside your state.

Northwest Mississippi Community College will make attempts to contact students who are residing out of state while enrolled in licensure programs to prompt them to check their state's requirements.