

Procedures for Determining Student Location

DEFINITIONS

State Authorization: obtaining state or U.S. territory approval to offer certain distance education activities in the state/territory.

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA):

NC-SARA is an agreement among member states, districts and territories that established comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education. George Mason University is a NC-SARA institutional participant through SCHEV.

100% Online (Distance Education) Course: a course noted in Banner, George Mason University's student system of record, as 100% online. Online CEU courses are identified and maintained by the Office of Continuing and Professional Education.

Out-of-State Learning Placement (OOSLP): As defined by NC-SARA: "experiential learning placements such as, but not limited to, clinical rotations, internships or student teaching offered by SARA participating Institutions in locations outside their Home State." Reported to NC-SARA for all such placements, regardless of the student's location (as defined below).

Student: Any person enrolled for at least 1 credit or 1 CEU at the University.

Student location: For NC-SARA reporting purposes, the student's physical location is the U.S. state/territory or other international location that they identify during the registration process for that semester as the location where they will be residing during the semester. Reported to NC-SARA only if all coursework is 100% online.

COMPLIANCE

The Director of Accreditation in the Office of the Provost is responsible for overseeing the University's compliance with NC-SARA policy and state authorization regulations. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, in conjunction with the Director of Accreditation, is responsible for reporting Physical Location and Out-of-State Learning Placements to NC-SARA. Responsibilities and compliance related to professional licensure disclosures are outlined in University Policy 3015 – Professional Licensure Disclosures.

Student Location

At the time of registration, all students are presented with a screen that states:

"Federal regulations require George Mason University to verify your physical location while taking courses this semester. Please indicate the state or country in which you anticipate being physically located while taking Mason courses this semester. If you

anticipate being outside the United States, please indicate the country. Note: you may select either a state/territory or a nation, not both.”

Students are presented with a dropdown box of states or countries. Data is stored in Banner.

If a student’s physical location changes during the semester, the student can go into Patriot Web and update their physical location.

Out-of-State Learning Placements

No action is required of students for this reporting requirement.

Deans’ offices of each college/school are required to collect the Out-of-State Learning Placements of their students. Units must collect the state of placement and the major of the student. Furthermore, units must follow the current NC-SARA guidelines:

- Placement started within the calendar year being reported;
- Placement is outside of Virginia;
- Placement involved the physical presence of the student at the out-of-state location; AND
- One or more of the following is true:
 - Placement is an activity required for degree completion
 - Placement is an activity required for professional licensure
 - Placement is offered for credit
 - Placement is offered for a fee

Professional Licensure Disclosures

Regarding academic programs that have been designed to prepare students for professional licensure/certification or such programs that are advertised as preparing students for professional licensure/certification, Federal Law requires George Mason University (in certain situations) to disclose information to potential and current students regarding the alignment of the individual’s selected educational program with the educational requirements for licensure/certification in their state. For such disclosure purposes, the student’s state is determined by default to be the state/territory associated with their permanent mailing address.

No action is required of students, unless they need to change their permanent residence. Students can notify the University of a change in residence by updating their information in PatriotWeb. Following a change of address, the University shall provide disclosures to students according to Federal regulations.

Last Update: March 3, 2021