**Section 1050.50 Review of Existing Units of Instruction, Research and Public Service**

*The Board of Higher Education is authorized to review, periodically, all existing programs of instruction, research and public service at the State universities and colleges and to advise the appropriate board of control if the contribution of each program is not educationally and economically justified.* [110 ILCS 205/7]

a) Units of Instruction Approved after December 23, 2008

1) Third Year Progress Report

Three years after approval of a new program, the institution shall provide a program progress report to the Board as part of the institution's annual report. The third year progress report shall describe the institution's performance in meeting program objectives and show where any improvements are necessary. The placement of a program in voluntary temporary suspension will not negate the requirement of submitting a third year progress report.

2) Third Year Status as Determined by the Institution

A) Program in Good Standing: The institution is meeting the program objectives as outlined in the original application that was submitted during the program approval process.

B) Program Flagged for Review: The institution is not meeting the program objectives as outlined in the original application that was submitted during the program approval process. In that event, the institution shall flag the program for review and shall submit a plan for improvement. The plan will outline the steps to be taken, benchmarks indicating adequate progress, and a timeline indicating step completion and/or benchmark achievement points.

C) Additional Requirement for Programs in which State Licensure is Required for Employment in the Field: In the case of a program in which State licensure is required for employment in the field, a program can be found to be in good standing if the institution is able to provide evidence that program graduates are eligible to take the appropriate licensure examination and pass rates are maintained as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction. If there is no such evidence, the institution shall report the program as flagged for review.

3) Upon completion of the third year progress report or the annual interim report required for programs flagged for review:

A) If the program is in good standing, the institution will add the program to the eight-year program review cycle as provided in subsection (b).

B) If the program has been flagged for review, the institution shall submit annual interim reports until the status of good standing is achieved. A flagged program will no longer be considered a Board approved program beyond the fifth anniversary of its original approval. If no required annual interim report is submitted for a flagged program, the Board will interpret the absence of an annual interim report as an indication that the institution has terminated the program and the program will no longer be considered a Board approved program.

C) Annual interim reports on flagged programs shall:

i) Delineate actions taken to resolve the issues or improve the program;

ii) Identify areas for further action or improvement; and

iii) Describe how the program will be monitored to ensure continued improvement until the next review.

D) An institution may request approval to place a program in voluntary temporary suspension. That status does not negate the requirement for submitting annual interim reports and does not negate the limitation of five years duration as a program flagged for review.

4) Community Colleges

Community colleges may be deemed compliant with the program review process by participating in a comparable review required by the Illinois Community College Board. This will not abrogate the Board of Higher Education's authority to request reviews of community college programs.

b) Existing and newly approved units of instruction that have been identified as being in good standing will be reviewed on an eight-year cycle.

1) Eight-year Program Review Process

Programs deemed to be in good standing will be reviewed by the institution on a staggered eight-year cycle, with the institution determining the schedule for individual programs, but requiring that each program be reviewed at least once every eight years. Each institution will implement a program review process that best meets its unique needs and that is consistent with Board requirements as contained in this subsection (b) for the eight-year cycle. Institutions have the discretion to use findings from specialized program accreditations and other reviews as the basis of the program review as long as the findings are not more than two years old. When an existing report or review is to be used, the institutions will inform the Board of the process prior to the review. While the institution is responsible for developing its unique program review procedures, it shall include, at a minimum, the following components:

A) A statement of program goals and intended learning outcomes;

B) An end- or near-end-of-program assessment of student learning, in addition to course-by-course assessments;

C) Multiple performance measures, if necessary, that reflect the uniqueness of academic programs and disciplines;

D) Feedback from key stakeholders (e.g., current students, alumni, employers and graduate schools);

E) Evidence of a formal feedback or improvement mechanism (i.e., a regular review process in place) and that the results are used to improve curriculum, instruction and learning;

F) Improvements to its capacity to efficiently and effectively deliver programs using technological innovation and comprehensive data systems; and

G) Findings and recommendations for improvement, suspension or closure.

2) Status Report

A) Upon the conclusion of the eight-year review, the institution shall provide to the Board a summary report that contains, at a minimum, the following:

i) Description and assessment of any major changes in the program, including changes in the discipline or field, student demand, societal needs, institutional context for offering the degree, and other elements appropriate to the discipline;

ii) Major findings and recommendations, including evidence of student learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement;

iii) Actions taken since the last review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular changes; and

iv) Actions to be taken as a result of this review, including changes in instructional resources and practices, curriculum and assessment of student learning.

B) The institution shall determine the status of the program. A program may be in one of three categories: in good standing; flagged for review; or under temporary suspension.

3) Community Colleges

Community colleges may be deemed compliant with the eight-year program review cycle by participating in a comparable review required by the Illinois Community College Board. This will not abrogate the Board of Higher Education's authority to request reviews of community college programs.

c) Units of instruction that have been reviewed as part of an eight-year review process and are not considered to be in good standing will be reviewed annually beginning December 23, 2008.

1) Programs Flagged for Review

If the program has been flagged for review, the institution shall submit annual interim reports until the status of good standing is achieved, but the program will no longer be considered a Board approved program beyond the fifth anniversary of the year the program was flagged for review. If no required annual interim report is submitted for a flagged program, the Board will interpret the absence of an annual interim report as an indication that the institution has terminated the program and the program will no longer be considered a Board approved program. Annual interim reports on flagged programs shall:

A) Delineate actions taken to resolve the issues or improve the program;

B) Identify areas for further action or improvement; and

C) Describe how the program will be monitored to ensure continued improvement until the next review.

2) Programs Placed in Temporary Suspension Status

An institution may place any approved program on temporary suspension after receiving Board approval. The institution shall provide an annual status report to the Board on any program under temporary suspension status. The Board will consider a program placed on temporary suspension status to be terminated if an annual status report is not received or if no reinstatement request is received within the first five years after the program was placed on temporary suspension. An institution may petition for reinstatement during the five-year period.

3) Community Colleges

Community colleges may be deemed compliant with the review process by participating in a comparable review required by the Illinois Community College Board. This will not abrogate the Board of Higher Education's authority to request reviews of community college programs.

4) Annual Report

Each authorized institution shall file annually with the Board its current catalogs. In addition, institutions must comply with any data requests to satisfy Board reporting requirements.

5) Complaints Concerning Institutional Degree Practices

The staff of the Board may initiate an investigation in response to written or oral information suggesting that changes have occurred in the conditions under which authorization to award degrees was given. During the investigation, there may be a temporary hold placed on the institution's applications to the Board for new program approvals and other programs. The hold will be for a specified period of time not to exceed six months, at which time the hold will continue until the Board decision is made.

6) Voluntary Relinquishing of Approval

A) Institutions may voluntarily relinquish their approvals for units of instruction, research or public service, and for reasonable and moderate extensions. The voluntary relinquishment shall be in writing and does not require a hearing or any other Board action to be effective.

B) Institutions relinquishing approval shall be required to provide for an appropriate repository of records and may be required to provide a student completion plan that must be approved by the Board.

7) Institutional Closure and Teach Out

An institution that is closing one or more units shall send to the Board the following:

A) Notice Required

i) Notice of the closure immediately by email or certified mail;

ii) The name, address and telephone number of the person who will be responsible for closing arrangements;

iii) A list of students affected and anticipated decisions regarding teach out for each student (e.g., graduation, transfer, remain at institution, and participate in teach out, etc.);

iv) Information on the remaining credit and other requirements outstanding for each student to complete the program;

v) Copies of the student-directed communication plan that includes the proposed timeline and methods for notifying students of teach-out options. Plans must include communication with any students who may be on approved leaves of absence or otherwise difficult to reach.

vi) Copies of the communication plans for informing faculty, staff and other institutional constituents.

B) Teach-Out Plan

i) After December 31, 2017, when a Board approved educational institution proposes to discontinue its operation, that institution shall cause to be created a teach-out plan acceptable to the Board. The teach-out plan shall fulfill the institution's educational obligations to its students. Should the institution fail to deliver or act on the teach-out plan, the Board is in no way responsible for providing the teach out.

ii) A school shall have written plans designed to protect the contractual rights of its students and graduates in the event the school closes or undergoes a change of status (e.g., if the school changes location or if its authority is revoked), including the right to complete the course of instruction in which the students or graduates enrolled.

iii) If students are receiving instruction prior to the school's closing, the school shall file a plan to ensure that the school's students will continue to receive training of the same quality and content as that for which they contracted.

C) Arrangements for transferring students to a public or another approved private institution shall be filed with the Board prior to any student transfer. Prior to approving the school's arrangements for completing its teaching obligations to students, the Board shall verify that students transferring will receive the same kind of program and instructional services as those for which they contracted.

D) Academic Records

In the event a school proposes to discontinue its operations, the chief administrative officer of the school shall arrange for all original or legible true copies of all such academic records of the institution to be maintained in a safe and suitable place as determined by the Board (such as a third party provider, a like institution, or the Board).

i) These records shall include, at a minimum, the academic records of each former student that are traditionally provided on an academic transcript, such as, but not limited to, courses taken, terms, grades and other such information.

ii) The institution shall make students aware of how to obtain transcripts from either the closed institution and/or new institution permanently retaining the records.

iii) The institution must release any holds on student records before operation is discontinued and the records are transferred.

(Source: Amended at 42 Ill. Reg. 120, effective December 19, 2017)