



NC-SARA Quarterly January 2026; Announcements, Updates, News and More for SARA-Participating Institution



Issue 5

January 2026

Announcements, Updates, News and More for SARA-Participating Institutions

SARA Policy Modification Process 2026 - Submission Period Now Open

Beginning January 21, 2026, the [SARA Policy Modification Process portal](#) is open for proposed modifications to SARA policy.

The deadline for submitting proposals is February 10, 2026 at midnight Mountain Time.

Individuals or organizations wishing to submit proposals to modify SARA policy are encouraged to review information on the [SARA Policy Modification Process website](#) prior to submitting a proposal. Important documents on the webpage include a calendar with key dates for 2026 and instructions and guidance for submitting a proposed SARA Policy Modification Process proposal.

Even if you do not submit a proposal, we encourage you to monitor the portal for proposal developments throughout the cycle. Updates will be provided throughout the year about specific steps and key dates in the 2026 cycle. We look forward to your engagement in this important process!

Seeking New Members for the SARA Institution Advisory Committee

New members are being sought for the SARA Institution Advisory Committee (IAC). This is a standing group that provides insight from their SARA-participating institution experience and leadership in postsecondary distance education in general. At each meeting the group considers new initiatives, discusses timely issues, and provides feedback with the goal of strengthening and enhancing the SARA participation experience.

Committee meetings are held approximately once a quarter for an hour. To be

considered for membership, you must represent a current SARA-participating institution that is not on SARA provisional status. We also seek to balance institution sector, size, and regional education compact representation.

To formally indicate your interest, please complete the form by [clicking here](#) and an NC-SARA staff member will be in touch.

Data Reporting Information - Coming Soon!

NC-SARA will release the 2026 Data Reporting Handbook and templates in the next few weeks. For the first time, we will also be accepting revisions to previously submitted data. Please watch your email for important information regarding the handbook and the revision submission process, and register for the [2026 Data Reporting Webinar on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 12 P.M. Mountain Time](#).

Strategic Plan Website

NC-SARA is currently in the process of developing its strategic plan for 2027-2031. We have recently launched a [website](#) providing updates on the process, including feedback from stakeholder surveys conducted in summer of 2025. To learn more about the NC-SARA strategic plan, please visit the [NC-SARA website](#).

SARA Source Updated

[SARA Source](#), the electronic catalog of distance education programs offered by SARA-participating institutions, has now been updated to reflect programs that graduated students in the 2023-2024 academic year. This information may be helpful for institutions and states looking to develop teach-out plans and agreements, as well as for institutions involved in new program development. SARA Source now includes more than 23,000 programs from over 2,350 institutions.

ICYMI - Summary of Approved 2025 SARA PMPs (Webinar)

In November 2025, a [webinar](#) was held to provide updates about actions taken at the Fall 2025 NC-SARA Board Meeting, focused on the outcomes of voting on SARA Policy Modification Process (PMP) proposals that were approved by the regional education compacts through their Regional Steering Committees (RSCs). Presenters provided an overview of each of the nine (9) proposals approved by the Board and discussed the implementation timeline and considerations for SARA-participating institutions and SARA State Portal Entities (SPEs). We encourage you to [watch the recording](#) if you were unable to attend live, and continue to look out for updates as new and modified policy goes into effect this year.

State & Federal Developments

NC-SARA will continue to monitor policies impacting state authorization at the state and federal level, communicating with states and institutions via emails and webinars. If you have any questions, please contact your [SARA State Portal Entity staff](#).

2026 Calendar of Important SARA Dates

A new page of the [NC-SARA website](#) was created so you can easily find key important dates, many of which are pertinent to an institution's SARA participation. Look for updates moving forward.

Missed a previous newsletter?

NC-SARA will be posting previous versions of this quarterly newsletter on the

[SARA Learning Station](#) webpage (scroll to the bottom of the page for past issues).

SARA Learning Station

The [SARA Learning Station](#) is your one-stop shop to access NC-SARA's resources for learning about SARA, including quick-start guides, SARA 101, and other online courses for those who are new and experienced with SARA. Learning resources for institutions have been developed in collaboration with our regional compact partners and [SARA SPEs](#). Institutions should always check with their SARA SPE for any state-specific requirements.

NC-SARA Webinars

While we would love for you to join our webinars live, if your schedule doesn't allow it or if you want to revisit any portion of these programs, please look for the recording and slides to be posted on our [Webinars webpage](#) soon after each program date.

SARA State Portal Entity (SPE)

You can find the current contact information for your state's SARA SPE(s) on our [SPE Contacts webpage](#).

SARA-Participating Institutions

You can find all actively-participating SARA institutions in each SARA member state and territory at any given time in the [SARA-Participating Institution Directory](#).

Distance Education News and Research

[A Decade of Data: How SARA Is Strengthening Protections and Expanding Access for Distance Learners | WCET Frontier](#)

[Fall 2024 IPEDS Data: Profile of US Higher Ed Online Education | On EdTech Newsletter \(Phil Hill & Associates\)](#)

[Distance Learners Want Meaningful Engagement in the Classroom, Too | Online Learning Consortium](#)

[Centering Student Belonging in Online Programs \(Case Study\) | Urban Institute](#)

***We welcome your thoughts, ideas, and questions.
Thank you for reading!***



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