

# Clock/Credit Hour Conversion or Substantial Increase or Decrease in Clock or Credit Hours Required for a Program

Substantive Change Application

Institution:       City, State:

Name of person completing this application:

Title:       Phone:       Email:

Date Submitted:

*When to Apply for Approval*

An institution should submit this application when making any of the following changes related to clock or credit hours:

• Converting 10% or more of the clock hours awarded for completion of an academic program to credit hours.

• Converting 10% or more of the credit hours awarded for completion of an academic program to clock hours.

• Increasing or decreasing the total number of clock or credit hours required for successful completion of a degree program by 25% or more since the institution’s most recent HLC accreditation review (comprehensive evaluation, Assurance Review or Show-Cause Evaluation Visit).

• Increasing or decreasing the total number of clock or credit hours required for successful completion of a certificate program by more than 50% since the institution's most recent HLC accreditation review.

*General Instructions*

This completed form will constitute your request for approval of a substantive change. This form will be the basis for review of this application. The questions are designed to elicit brief, succinct, detailed information, rather than a narrative or references to extensive supporting documents. Do not attach other documents unless they are specifically requested in the questions and are germane to the request. Excluding attachments, the completed application form should be no more than 12–15 pages on a single classification of change. The total submission, including attachments, should not exceed 200 pages.  
  
If the person completing this application is not the CEO, CAO or the Accreditation Liaison Officer of the institution, it is understood that the person completing and submitting this application has consulted with and informed those individuals and has been authorized to submit this form on the institution’s behalf.  
  
Please note: HLC plans to update its application forms annually, on or about September 1 of each year. However, if an application form was accessed more than 90 days prior to filing, please visit [hlcommission.org/change](https://www.hlcommission.org/change) to ensure that there have been no changes to the form in the intervening time.  
  
Submit the completed application as a single PDF file at [hlcommission.org/upload](https://www.hlcommission.org/upload). Select “Change Requests” from the list of submission options to ensure the application is sent to the correct HLC staff member.

## Part 1: General Questions

1. **Requested Change(s).** Concisely describe the change for which the institution is seeking approval.
2. **Does another characteristic of the change requested in this application also require prior HLC approval?** (Example: contractual arrangement, new academic program, new additional location, etc.)

No

Yes

If yes, please briefly explain the second type of substantive change requiring prior HLC approval and submit the relevant application form separately (or indicate the date on which it was submitted):

1. **Classification of Change Request.***Note: not every substantive change requires prior review and approval. Visit* [*hlcommission.org/change*](https://www.hlcommission.org/change) *to make certain that current HLC policy requires the institution to seek approval.*

An institution submitting more than one change request should complete multiple applications, one for each type of change. Change requests may be related to the following topics:

• [New academic programs](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-academic-programs.html), including degree and certificate programs

• [New Pell-eligible prison education programs](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-pell-eligible-prison-education-programs.html) (also referred to as PEPs)

• [Changes to existing academic programs](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-clock-credit-hours-program-content-and-length-of-term.html) involving credit/clock hours, method of delivery

or length of term

• Opening or closing [additional locations or branch campuses](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-off-campus-activities.html)

• [Provisional Plans](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/provisional-plans-and-teach-outs.html) (with or without Teach-Out Agreements, as applicable)

• [Teach-Out Agreement](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/provisional-plans-and-teach-outs.html) if closing a campus or additional location that provides 100% of at least   
 one program

• Access to HLC’s [Notification Program for Additional Locations](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-off-campus-activities.html)

• Initiating or expanding [distance education offerings](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-distance-or-correspondence-education.html)

• Initiating or expanding [correspondence education offerings](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-distance-or-correspondence-education.html)

• Offering programs through [competency-based education](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-competency-based-education.html) (credit-based, direct assessment

or hybrid)

• Initiating or modifying [contractual arrangements](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-contractual-arrangements.html)

• Change in [mission](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-mission-or-student-body.html)

• Change in [student body](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-mission-or-student-body.html)

1. **Special conditions.** Indicate whether any of the conditions identified below fit the institution (Yes or No). If Yes, explain the situation in the space provided.
2. Is the institution, in its relations with other institutional or specialized accrediting agencies, currently under or recommended for a negative status or action (e.g., withdrawal, probation, sanction, warning, show-cause, etc.)?
3. Is the institution now undergoing or facing substantial monitoring, special review, or financial restrictions from the U.S. Dept. of Education or other federal or state government agencies?
4. Has the institution’s senior leadership or board membership experienced substantial resignations or removals in the past year?
5. Is the institution experiencing other pressures that might affect its ability to carry out the proposal (e.g., a collective bargaining dispute or a significant lawsuit)?
6. **Internal Approvals.** Attach documentation of internal (faculty, board) approvals that the institution has obtained for the proposed change. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC.** If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed (e.g. applicable regulation, statute or correspondence).
7. **State Approvals.** Attach documentation of state approvals that the institution has obtained for the proposed change. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC.** If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed (e.g. applicable regulation, statute or correspondence).
8. **System Approvals.** If applicable, attach documentation of system approval that the institutions has obtained for the proposed change. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC.** If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed (e.g. applicable regulation, statute or correspondence). Check the box below if the institution is not part of a system.

Not Applicable

1. **Foreign Country Approval(s).** If applicable, attach documentation of foreign country approval(s) that the institution has obtained for the proposed change. Documentation must be written in or translated to English. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC.** If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed. Check the box below if the proposed change is not related to offerings in a foreign country.

Not Applicable

1. **Specialized Accreditation.** Complete this section only if specialized accreditation is required for licensure or practice in program(s) covered by this change application.

The institution has already obtained the appropriate specialized accreditation. Attach a copy of the letter from the agency granting accreditation.

The institution has begun the process of seeking or plans to seek specialized accreditation. Specify the name of the agency and the timeline for completing the process in the space below. (If approval is a multi-stage process, the institution should contact the HLC staff liaison to discuss the timeline before submitting this change application form.)

The institution does not plan to seek specialized accreditation. Provide a rationale for not seeking this accreditation in the space below.

1. **Changes Requiring Visits.** This section is not for HLC-mandated visits such as additional location confirmation visits or campus evaluation visits.

Complete this section only if the institution is already aware that the proposed change will need to be reviewed through a visit. The institution may submit Part 1 of the change request application to begin the process of scheduling a Change Visit or adding the proposed change to an already scheduled visit. The full application must be submitted at a later date. (If the institution is unsure whether a visit is required, leave this section blank and submit the full change application. HLC will advise the institution based on the information provided.)

1. Select the type of visit the institution is requesting:

Request to schedule a Change Visit.

Change Visits typically are scheduled approximately four months from the date an institution submits its change request. The full change application and other required materials will be due to HLC and the peer review team eight weeks before the visit date. See [Change Visit: Required Materials and Submission Procedures](https://www.hlcommission.org/change-visit) for more information.

Request to embed a Change Visit into an already scheduled visit.

**Note:** Such requests must be submitted at least six months before the visit date. HLC staff will determine whether to embed a Change Visit based on peer reviewer availability and the complexity of the scheduled visit, among other factors. HLC may not be able to accommodate all requests.

Specify type of visit and date scheduled:

The institution’s full change application should be submitted along with other materials required for the already scheduled visit.

1. Provide URLs to the institution’s Faculty/Staff Handbook and Catalog below. If the URLs are not available, please provide PDF versions of these documents when submitting other required materials prior to the visit.

Faculty/Staff Handbook URL:

Catalog URL:

## Part 2: Topic-Specific Questions

An institution should submit a separate application for each requested clock to credit conversion or substantial increase or decrease in the number of credit hours required for a program. Each program should be identified by using the [*Classification of Instructional Programs* terminology (CIP codes)](http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/). CIP codes are established by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics as a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity.

### Section A. Characteristics of the Change Requested

### *Complete this section for all requests.*

1. Identify the basic characteristics of the educational program(s) affected by the change as indicated below:
2. The full name of the program, the specific degree (if applicable) or the instructional level (if not a degree program), and the six-digit 2020 CIP code XX.XXXX of the program
3. The total number of clock or credit hours (indicate whether semester or quarter) currently required for completion of the program
4. Normal or typical length of time for students to complete the program
5. The proposed change in the program and the proposed effective date for the change in the program
6. If the proposed program is offered via alternative delivery method (hybrid, online, ITV, accelerated, etc.), identify the maximum number of credit or clock hours that may be currently earned in the program through each method.
7. Identify whether credit for evidence of prior learning (other than credit transferred from formal courses or awarded from Advanced Placement) is possible for this program, and if so, for what number of credits.

### Section B. Clock/Credit Hour Conversions

1. What is the college’s formula for clock hour/credit hour conversion? Please specify semester or quarter credit hours for each and include references to classroom hours, lab hours, etc., in reference to clock hours.
2. What is the rationale for the change?
3. List the courses in the program. Include brief descriptions of each course and Identify clock hours and credit hour conversions for each.
4. Outline the institution’s plans for transitioning the program from clock to credit hours and any academic implications from that conversion for students.

### Section C. Substantial Increase or Decrease in the Credit Hours to Complete Academic Program(s)

1. Identify the academic programs that will have an increase or decrease in credit hours. Please specify semester or quarter credit hours for each.
2. What is the rationale for the change?
3. List the courses in each program and their current and future credit hour designations. Include any new courses that may be added as a result of this change and indicate any courses that may be deleted from the program as a result of the credit hour change.
4. What will be the impact of the change on the objectives, structure, and time involved in the course? For example, if all courses are increasing from three hours to four hours, how is the institution ensuring that the objectives of each course are commensurate with a four-hour course and that students will have an appropriate amount of time in instruction, homework, etc.?
5. What will be the impact of the change on tuition and on the institution’s overall financial situation?
6. Outline the institution’s plans for transitioning the program to the new credit hour model and any academic implications from that change for students.

### Section D. Institutional Staffing and Faculty Support

### *Complete this section for all requests.*

1. What will be the impact of the change on number of faculty involved in providing the instruction for the program?
2. What will be the impact of the change on faculty workload?

### Section E. Student Support

### *Complete this section for all requests.*

1. What library and information resources—general as well as specific to the program(s)—and staffing and services are in place to support the revised program?

### Section F. Evaluation and Assessment

### *Complete this section for all requests.*

1. How will you monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness and quality of the program under the new credit hour model?
2. Explain how the results of evaluation will be used to improve the program’s curriculum, teaching, services, and operations.
3. How will you assess and improve the learning of students in the program to ensure that they achieve the levels of performance that you expect and that your stakeholders require?