Policy on Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

(First Reading June 2011)

Background

Title IV of the Higher Education Act 1965, as amended, 34 CFR Part 668, subpart O, enables eligible students with intellectual disabilities to receive Federal Pell Grants, Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants and Work-Study funds, if they are enrolled in a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities (CTP programs). Institutions must be participating in federal student financial aid programs for their CTP programs to be eligible for federal student aid programs.

Policy

An accredited institution which offers a CTP program and applies to have the program participate in Title IV must notify the Commission of its CTP program. The notice must include the institution’s response documenting how it meets the regulatory requirements regarding a CTP program. Information about the CTP program must be included in the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (formerly Self Study Report) at the time of the Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review (formerly Comprehensive Institutional Review).

Policy Elements

The notice that institutions are required to submit to the Commission regarding a CTP program must include information about how the program meets the regulatory requirements as listed below.

1. The CTP program must:
   (a) be delivered to students physically attending the institution;

   (b) be designed to support students with intellectual disabilities who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction at an institution of higher education in order to prepare for gainful employment;

   (c) include an advising and curriculum structure;

   (d) require students with intellectual disabilities to have at least one-half of their participation in the program, as determined by the institution, focus on academic components through one or more of the following activities:
      i. taking credit-bearing courses with students without disabilities
      ii. auditing or otherwise participating in courses with students without disabilities for which the student does not receive regular academic credit
iii. taking non-credit-bearing, non-degree courses with students without disabilities

iv. participating in internships or work-based training in settings with individuals without disabilities; and

(e) provide students with intellectual disabilities opportunities to participate in coursework and other activities with students without disabilities;

The institutions must also provide:

2. its policy for determining whether a student enrolled in the program is making satisfactory academic progress;

3. information about the number of weeks of instructional time and the number of semester or quarter credit hours or clock hours in the program, including the equivalent credit or clock hours associated with non-credit or reduced credit courses or activities;

4. a description of the educational credential offered (e.g., degree or certificate) or identified outcome or outcomes established by the institution for all students enrolled in the program.