

District of Columbia Education Licensure Commission

Strategic Plan

FY 2014-2016

Providing for the protection, education, and welfare of citizens of the District of Columbia and its students...

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“For more than 35 years, the ELC has made substantial contributions to the District of Columbia by ensuring that a variety of quality higher education institutions are accessible to residents.”- R. Roth

Message from the Executive Director

Access to high quality postsecondary education is a priority in the District of Columbia. As the needs of District students and employers have evolved, so has the landscape of institutions offering postsecondary educational programs. The work of the District’s Education Licensure Commission in ensuring the quality of postsecondary institutions remains vitally important. It is our vision to be a national leader in the regulation of postsecondary education.

In an effort to ensure that we are meeting the needs of students, approved institutions, and the public we continually engage in self-evaluation, customer feedback and strategic planning. The strategic planning process enables us to reflect on the accomplishments, strengths and areas for improvement, as well as map future strategies to adapt to current and emerging challenges. By identifying and prioritizing our activities and objectives we ensure we are working toward the same clear goals and measurable outcomes to the benefit of students, institutions and the District.

It is my pleasure to share with you some goals and plans the Commissioners and staff has developed as we consider the future of the Commission and its role in ensuring quality postsecondary education and training in the Nation’s Capital.

Special thanks to Mr. Michael Barrett of Resonance, LLC for facilitating our discussion and helping us find focus. Thank you to those institutional representatives whose ideas and insights provided via the feedback survey contributed valuable content for the discussion. Many thanks to Mr. Richard Roth and Dr. Tommie L. Robinson, Jr., immediate past Commissioners, for their decade of service to the Commission and for their wisdom and expertise shared in the development of this plan. Last, but not least I wish to express enormous gratitude to the Commissioners and staff for their dedication and commitment to work of the ELC.

Angela H. Lee, Executive Director
Education Licensure Commission

History & Background

The Education Licensure Commission ("ELC", the "Commission") is a five-member Mayoral appointed regulatory, consumer protection authority that was created in 1976. The Commission is responsible for public protection with regard to legitimate quality education in the District of Columbia. The Commission establishes standards for postsecondary educational operations, authorizes operations, approves programs, issues or denies licenses to, and oversees all private postsecondary educational institutions in the District of Columbia.

The Commission is the Mayor's only entity authorized to issue educational licenses and is charged with advising the Mayor and City Council regarding postsecondary educational needs of the District. The Commission is responsible for ensuring that institutions under its jurisdiction meet and comply with the standards and other requirements established by laws and regulations. The Commission investigates student and faculty complaints against educational institutions under its jurisdiction.

The Commission has additional functions that include, but are not limited to, regulating and enforcing postsecondary laws and regulations, maintaining the student records of institutions that close and have no other depository and issuing certified transcripts.

In 2014 the Commission processed 103 applications for licensure, granted 13 exemptions, processed 82 transcript requests, and responded to 3 complaints. The Commission actively investigates unlicensed activity and referred 1 institution for prosecution. There are 122 approved post-secondary institutions throughout the District.

Mission & Purpose

The mission of the Education Licensure Commission (ELC) is to ensure that quality postsecondary education and training exist in the District of Columbia. The ELC's mission is directly related to its established purpose which is to provide for the protection, education, and welfare of the citizens of the District of Columbia and its students enrolled in postsecondary training and education, by:

- Establishing minimum standards concerning the quality of postsecondary education, ethical and business practices, health and safety, and fiscal responsibility, to protect against substandard, transient, unethical, deceptive, or fraudulent postsecondary educational institutions and practices;
- Prohibiting the granting of false or misleading postsecondary educational credentials;
- Prohibiting misleading literature, advertising, solicitation, or representation by postsecondary educational institutions or their agents;
- Providing for the preservation of essential academic records;
- Advising the Mayor and Council of the District of Columbia as to the postsecondary educational needs of the District of Columbia; and
- Serving as the state approving agency for Veterans benefits.



Vision

The District of Columbia Education Licensure Commission strives to be a national leader in licensing, compliance monitoring, and enforcement and outreach that ensures students are protected and approved postsecondary institutions provide quality education and training programs.

Values

- **Accountability** – The ELC is accountable to the residents of the District of Columbia and will operate with transparency and encourage public participation.
- **Integrity** – The ELC will be honest, fair, and respectful in making unbiased and impartial decisions.
- **Consistency** – The ELC will strive to apply the laws and regulations under its jurisdiction accurately and consistently.
- **Professionalism** – The ELC will strive to recruit, train and retain qualified, effective, dedicated and skilled staff with a strong commitment to public service.

Goals & Objectives

The Commission has adopted the following goals and objectives for 2014-2016. As part of the ongoing strategic planning process, these goals and objectives will be evaluated and adjusted, as necessary, to ensure the Commission's structure is meeting the needs of students, approved institutions, and the public.

GOAL 1 - Identify and secure needed resources to increase operational efficiency.

- 1.1 Articulate and secure needed resources for development and advancement of the ELC work
- 1.2 Research options to better assist the ELC in evaluating the financial status of school seeking licensure
- 1.3 Develop internal capacity at ELC to accommodate impending increase in applications for distance education programs and state approving agency responsibilities for Veterans benefits

GOAL 2 - Build collaborations that enhance and promote the work of the ELC to ensure public protection.

- 2.1 Establish a liaison position with the City Council in order to develop a relationship and begin discussions regarding post-secondary needs in the District.
- 2.2 Develop a communications platform to increase the visibility and promote the importance of the ELC

GOAL 3 - Develop and/or refine laws and agreements to fully execute the scope of the Commission's legal authority.

- 3.1 Review current legal practices and refine to expedite processes for consumers
- 3.2 Revisit the fee schedule for all 1st time and renewing institutions in order to ensure a more equitable fee schedule

Commissioners

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