

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

NORTHWEST IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE Voluntary Application for Postsecondary Registration in Iowa May 12, 2016

STAFF ACTION:

Approve Northwest Iowa Community College College's voluntary application for postsecondary registration in Iowa for a two-year term that begins on May 12, 2016 and ends on May 12, 2018.

Registration Purpose

Northwest Iowa Community College (NCC or "the College") lawfully operates a postsecondary, degree-granting institution in Iowa under an exemption from registration in Iowa Code §261B.11(1)(f): "Colleges and universities authorized by the laws of this state to grant degrees." However, NCC has elected, voluntarily, to seek official designation by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission as a registered school under Iowa Code Chapter 261B and associated rules in Iowa Administrative Code 281-Chapter 21 that are in effect as of the date of this report.

Institutional Information

NCC is a private, non-profit postsecondary institution that provides instruction via face-to-face and distance education delivery modalities from its main campus located at: 603 West Park Street, Sheldon, Iowa 51291. The College's chief executive officer is NCC President Dr. Alethea F. Stubbe at the same address. The designated Iowa contact person for NCC is Gretchen Bartelson Dean of the Center for Teaching and Learning, also at the same address.

Physical facilities: The NCC campus contains adequate physical facilities for its residential program. There are nine multi-functioning buildings on campus each containing various resources, some of which are:

- Student Services
- Career Center
- Dining Room
- Offices & Classrooms
- Learning Center
- Library
- Student Center
- Residence Halls
- Recreation Center

A map of the campus is available online at: <http://www.nwicc.edu/alumni-community/stuff-to-do/map.aspx>.

Instructional Methodology: NCC offers courses and programs via in-person instruction, distance education, and hybrid programs utilizing both face-to-face instruction and

online instruction. Online courses are taught using the Pearson-Learning Studio learning management system called eCollege. eCollege is comprehensive, on-demand, online learning solution available for the delivery of fully online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses. Using eCollege students can manage their courses and content and participate in either asynchronous or synchronous instruction. Synchronous instruction using eCollege allows for live chat and video conferencing.

Accreditation: NCC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, a regional accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of Education. In addition, NCC has programmatic accreditation from the following entities:

- The Iowa Department of Education accredits NCC as an associate degree-granting institution.
- The National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) accredits the Automotive Service Technology programs.
- The Iowa Board of Nursing approves the Nursing programs (PN, Extended PN, and ADN).
- The American Registry of Radiologic Technicians (ARRT) approves the Radiologic Technology program.
- The Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) accredits the Health Information Technology program.

Federal Stafford Loan Cohort Default Rate: The most recent official data from the federal Department of Education has determined NCC's federal Stafford Loan default rate for fiscal year 2012 at 10.2%. The national average default rate of all schools during that time is 11.8%.

Graduation Rate (the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students who graduated or transferred-out within 150% of the normal time for program completion of students who began their studies in 2011 as reported to the federal Department of Education): NCC reports a graduation rate of 54%.

Average Loan Debt upon Graduation: NCC provided average loan debt upon graduation for students who borrowed in 2014-2015 as \$10,716 for students who completed a two-year program.

Record Preservation: NCC stores documents securely in electronic databases or in fireproof file cabinets. Digital data is backed-up daily and stored off-site in a secure location. All online course materials are housed in the learning management system, eCollege, and are accessible by appropriate college personnel. All materials and records are available back to the first offered online course in fall 2000. All student records are primarily digital. Digital records are housed in a software student information system (Ellucian) and is backed up daily and housed at a secure off-campus facility. All other on-campus electronic files are also backed up daily and stored off campus. NCC is in the process of converting all paper other files to electronic to be stored off campus, but those are currently stored in in fireproof cabinets.

Transcript Requests: Any current or former student wishing to obtain a transcript may do so in person or online by contacting:

- ✓ Beth Sibenaller-Woodall
Registrar's Office
603 West Park Street
Sheldon, IA 51201
beths@nwicc.edu
- ✓ Information is available at: <http://www.nwicc.edu/prospective-students/academics/transcript.aspx> .

Student Learning Resources:

- NCC implements mandatory advising where a student is assigned a dedicated advisor to ensure students are on track academically with their programs and review academic progress towards career goals.
- NCC participates in the TRIO program which was initiated by the federal government to help students overcome financial barriers to higher education. Through the TRIO program NCC offers the following free services: academic advising; career planning; personal counseling; and tutoring.
- Library services include the option to chat with a librarian in real time online or email questions. Library resources are electronically available online to residential and online students.
- Free tutoring is available to all students including online students with the option of taking developmental courses to improve in a subject area.

Curriculum Evaluation and Development: Program evaluation is conducted in a five-year cycle, but annual progress is reported on stated learning outcomes. The program advisory committees at NCC review program curriculum annually and make recommendations based on current industry standards. This information is used by program faculty to update learning outcomes for the programs and to improve student learning outcomes. The components of the NCC program review process are grouped into five phases.

1. Administrative Phase: This is the preparation stage. Deans and program instructors gather the review team and review the process of program review.
2. Data-collection Phase: All data collection takes place during the second stage, including survey and descriptive data.
3. Evaluation Phase: This is the point where time is spent analyzing data and writing the initial report.
4. Division/Operational Planning & Budgeting: Once the program is reviewed it is analyzed for budgeting and planning priorities within the broader context of the college.
5. Feedback Phase: The evaluation is shared with the Executive Council and the Board of Trustees.

A complete description of NCC's curriculum evaluation and development is found at:

- ✓ <http://www.nwicc.edu/Post/sections/254/Files/HLC%20Report-FINAL.pdf>.

Programs Offered Under Registration

(Note: The programs listed below are only those for which NCC may need coverage under the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) policies and rules. However, NCC's registration authorization to operate at a location in Iowa is at the institutional level; thus, the Commission authorizes the institution to offer all of its programs in Iowa).

The estimated total charge for tuition, fees, books, and supplies applicable to each program is listed below.

Residential Programs Offered at the NCC campus in Sheldon, Iowa

Diploma Programs

- Practical Nursing - \$8,906.

Associate Degree Programs

- Nursing - \$9,311.
- Radiologic Technology - \$16,666.

Distance Education Programs

Certificate Programs

- Pharmacy Technician - \$1,674.

Diploma Programs

- Business - \$7,762.
- Health Records - \$7,808.
- Pharmacy Technician - \$7,776.
- Powerline Technology - \$7,218.

Associate Degree Programs

- Arts - \$13,720.
- Agriculture - \$14,737.
- Computer Science - \$13,718.
- Health Information Technology - \$15,654.

Field Experiences

Structured field experiences are a required part of the curriculum for the following programs:

- Nursing programs: Clinical experience is spent in a variety of hospitals, medical centers and community-based health settings. Clinical hours can be completed at schools in the region or elsewhere in the U.S.
- Radiologic Technology program: This program requires at least 23 credit hours to be completed at clinical sites. Clinical hours can be completed at schools in the region or elsewhere in the U.S.

Registration Compliance

As required by Iowa Code §261B.4, NCC disclosed its policy on refunding tuition charges students who fail to complete the enrollment period for which they were charged. The policy is found in the NCC Catalog on the website at:

- ✓ http://www.nwicc.edu/Post/eMag/NCC_Catalog/index.html#/20/ at 19.

Administrative rules specifically require the school to comply with the requirements of Chapter §261.9(1) “e” through “h” by implementing the following policies.

- Iowa Code §261.9(1)(e) requires a school to maintain and disseminate a drug and alcohol abuse policy that includes sanctions for violation of the school’s policy and information about the availability of drug or alcohol counseling or rehabilitation. Iowa Code §261.9(1)(f) requires a school to maintain and disseminate a sexual abuse policy that includes information about counseling opportunities and reporting instances of sexual abuse to school officials and law enforcement. NCC provided compliant policies that address both of these requirements. These policies are disclosed to students in the NCC Catalog and to the public on the College’s website at the following location:
 - ✓ http://www.nwicc.edu/Post/eMag/NCC_Catalog/index.html#/8/ at 8 – 10.
- Iowa Code §261.9(1)(g) requires a school to maintain a special policy concerning institutional charges for members of the Iowa National Guard or reserve members of the U.S. Armed Forces, or the spouse of such a member if the member has a dependent child, when the service member or spouse must withdraw from the school because the service member or spouse has been called to active (Iowa) state or federal military duty or service. NCC provided a policy that is compliant to staff that is disclosed to withdrawing students by the Registrar’s Office.
- Iowa Code §261.9(1)(h) requires a school to develop and implement a policy for employees who, in the course of their employment, attend, examine, counsel, or treat a child and who suspect the physical or sexual abuse of that child. NCC provided a compliant policy to staff as part of its registration application. NCC discloses the policy to employees in the handbook Procedure Manual for Personnel.

Student Consumer Information: In its registration application, the College affirms its willingness to comply with the requirements of Iowa Code §261.9, as stipulated by Iowa Code §261B.4(8). Chapter 261.9 requires disclosure to students of information about the school’s programs, charges, tuition refund policies; whether a certificate or diploma awarded by the school is applicable toward a degree program the school offers, and the identity of the school’s accrediting agency. These disclosures are in place and available to students through NCC’s Catalog, which is available to students through the NCC webpage and various other readily accessible NCC web pages, including those that address each specific program.

- ✓ http://www.nwicc.edu/Post/eMag/NCC_Catalog/index.html#/1/.
- ✓ <http://www.nwicc.edu/prospective-students/tuition/tuition-fees.aspx>.
- ✓ <http://www.nwicc.edu/prospective-students/academics/programs-of-study/>.

Iowa Code §261B.7 states that, while a school must not represent that it is “approved” or “accredited” by the Commission or the State of Iowa, a registered school must disclose that the school is registered by the Commission on behalf of the state of Iowa and provide the Commission’s contact information for students who wish to inquire about the school or file a complaint. NCC will disclose the Commission’s contact information for student complaint purposes and provides a direct link to the Commission’s constituent complaint form.

✓ <http://www.nwicc.edu/compliance/>.

Financial Responsibility: NCC submitted the audit report of an independent accounting firm Williams & Company P.C. Certified Public Accountants dated December 14, 2015, covering the institution’s financial position through June 30, 2015. The accounting firm stated its opinion that the school’s financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the school’s financial position and that the school’s accounting practices are in accordance with the U.S. generally accepted accounting practices.

Full-Time Iowa Resident Faculty Member or Program Coordinator: NCC employs 140 full-time and permanent part-time, Iowa-based faculty members. Additional information about faculty appears below.

Instructional/Supervisory Staff Qualifications: NCC maintains information about faculty in its academic catalog. A sampling of faculty qualifications is listed below.

- Radiologic Technology program: Of four faculty members reviewed, one holds a Master of Science in Radiation Sciences, two hold baccalaureate degrees, and one holds an Associate of Applied Science degree.
- Automotive Service Technology program: Of three faculty members reviewed, one holds a baccalaureate degree, and two hold an Associate of Applied Science degree.
- Powerline programs: Of three faculty members reviewed, one holds an Associate of Applied Science degree, and two hold Powerline diplomas.
- Nursing programs: Of five faculty members reviewed four hold master degrees in nursing and one holds a baccalaureate in nursing.

Commitment to Iowa Students and Teach-Out: By executing an electronic signature on the registration application, NCC President Dr. Alethea F. Stubbe committed to the delivery of programs NCC offers and agreed to provide alternatives for students to complete programs at NCC or another school if the College closes a program, or closes before students have completed their courses of study.

Compliance with Iowa Code Chapter 714

§714.18 – Evidence of Financial Responsibility

NCC is exempt from the financial responsibility (i.e., bonding) requirements of Iowa Code §714.18. The College qualifies for the following exemption listed in Iowa Code §714.19(1) because NCC is authorized by the laws of Iowa to grant degrees.

§714.23 – State Tuition Refund Policy

The Iowa tuition refund policy does not apply to NCC because it is a public school.

Compliance with Iowa Code Chapter 261F

NCC posts on its website a Code of Conduct for Educational Loans http://www.nwicc.edu/Post/sections/53/Files/FA_Code_of_Conduct.pdf that addresses provisions of Iowa Code Chapter 261F. NCC's Code of Conduct appears to be an accurate and comprehensive reflection of Iowa Code provisions that govern certain aspects of business relationships between private education loan lenders and school personnel who have responsibilities related to education loans. NCC does not provide information on private loans on its website and if a student requires a private loan NCC directs the student to the internet or the student's personal bank to independently obtain any necessary private loan.