



# INTERSTATE PASSPORT HANDBOOK

# **Interstate Passport<sup>®</sup> Handbook**

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# Interstate Passport® Handbook

## **Section 1: Interstate Passport Organizational Framework**

The Interstate Passport Handbook has been created to inform and assist institutions in becoming active members of the Interstate Passport Network (the Network). It describes the governance structure of the Network and the policies and common processes that enable implementation of the Interstate Passport program. This handbook is intended to be used for inter-institutional activities and is not intended to replace or supersede the existing policies of any institution or its governing board.

### **Section 1a: What is Interstate Passport?**

Interstate Passport, based at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), is a nationwide program that facilitates block transfer of lower-division general education based on learning outcomes rather than on specific courses and credits. (*See Overview, Appendix A.1.*) The basis of the program is 63 Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs)—what a student knows and can do—across nine areas of learning. The PLOs were developed initially by teams of faculty members from two and four-year institutions in seven WICHE states. Each learning outcome is supported by faculty-identified Proficiency Criteria (PCs), which are helpful examples of some of the ways in which faculty teach and assess learning at the lower-division level. The program's built-in quality assurance is based on students' academic progress data.

Member institutions construct a Passport Block, which is a menu of courses or other learning opportunities by which a student can demonstrate proficiency in the PLOs. The Passport Block is usually similar to – and sometimes identical to – the institution's own lower-division general education course options. Once a student demonstrates proficiency, by earning a C or better in all selected Passport Block course, a Passport is awarded. If transferring to another Network member institution, that learning will be recognized; no additional courses will be required to meet the receiving institution's lower-division general education requirements, even if the courses and the number of credits differ from those of the sending institution. (*see Appendices A.1 and A.2*)

The Interstate Passport Network is a consortium of public and private, regionally accredited, two-year and four-year institutions dedicated to providing an efficient process for students transferring from one institution to another and avoiding the need to repeat academic work already successfully completed. Its goals are to improve graduation rates, shorten time to degree, and save students money.

As members of the Interstate Passport Network, institutions agree not to unpack or review other institutions' Passport Blocks. Similarly, Passport transfer students are not required to repeat or take additional courses or learning experiences in order to satisfy the lower-division general education requirements at the receiving institution. However, receiving institutions may require students transferring in with a Passport to complete additional lower-division courses in the following circumstances. Some institutions may require certain prerequisites for entry into a specific program of study. Faith-based institutions may require the religion-related courses it requires of other students. A few state legislatures require a specific course in state history or civics for graduation.

The Interstate Passport program has been developed and rolled out in phases with funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina Foundation, and a U.S. Department of Education First in the World grant.

The foundational documents which form and govern the Network are found in their entirety in the appendices. A summary of each document is described below.

### ***Section 1a.1 Guiding Principles***

The Guiding Principles are not a legally binding agreement but rather a statement of operating principles to guide and facilitate cooperation between and among the Network member institutions. The Guiding Principles establish the basic values underlying Interstate Passport and are essential to the conduct of the program. *(Appendix A.3.)*

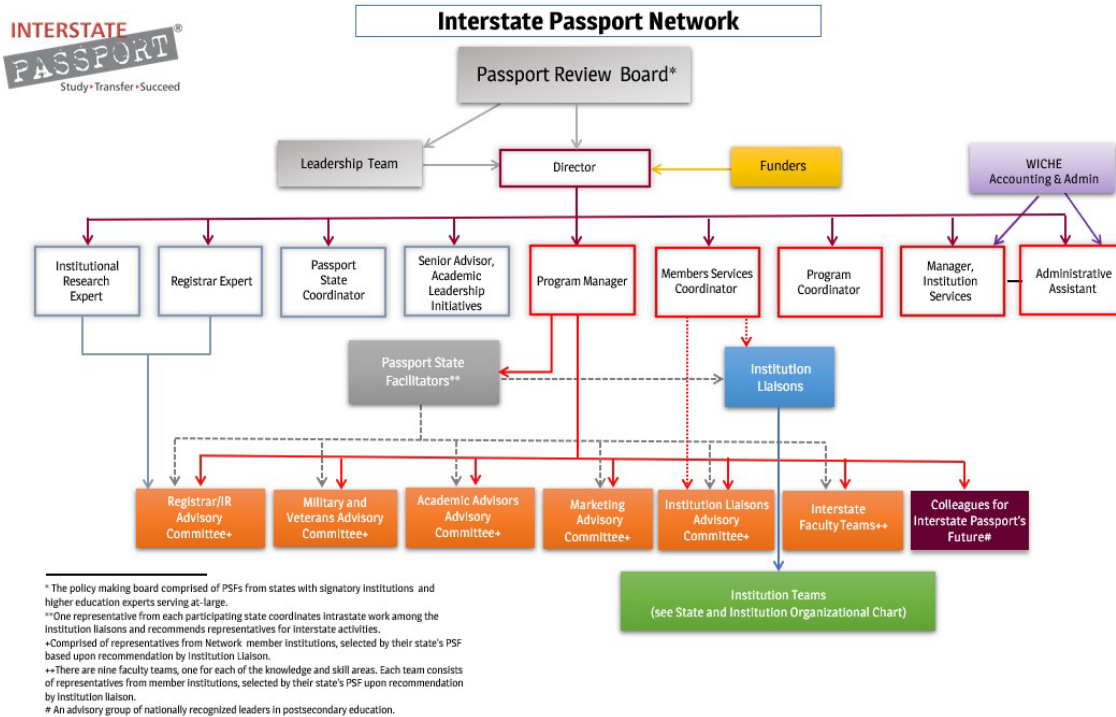
### ***Section 1a.2 Memorandum of Agreement***

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) forms the mutual agreement by which institutions join the Interstate Passport Network. The MOA identifies the rights and responsibilities of the member institutions, including, but not limited to, program governance, funding, administration and management. The MOA is signed by the campus officials deemed appropriate by each member of the Network. *(Appendix A.4.)*

### ***Section 1a.3 Bylaws***

The Bylaws contain the basic rules relating to Interstate Passport Network, the Passport Review Board and how it is governed internally, including membership, executive committee, officers, elections, and other matters pertinent to the efficient operation of the Network. *(Appendix A.5.)*

## Section 1b: The Interstate Passport Network



See Appendices B.1 and B.2 for the complete Interstate Passport Network Organizational chart.

### **Section 1b.1 The Passport Review Board**

The Passport Review Board (PRB) is the policy-making body with responsibility for overall direction of the Interstate Passport Network and Interstate Passport program. Two types of delegates serve on the Board: Passport State Facilitators who represent each member state, and at-large delegates, higher education experts who serve two-year renewable terms. (see Appendices B.3 and B.4)

The PRB is responsible for defining all policies and procedures for the Interstate Passport Network as outlined in the Bylaws, i.e., determining the need for faculty review and/or updating of Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Proficiency Criteria (PC); evaluating the overall performance of the Interstate Passport program as well as the performance of participating institutions on an annual basis and providing strategies for more successful participation in the Network as needed; and publishing the Annual Report on the Interstate Passport program's status.

### **Section 1b.2 Passport State Facilitators**

Each state with member institutions of the Interstate Passport Network has a designated Passport State Facilitator (PSF), who represents the Network members and their interests on the Passport Review Board. The PSF serves as the primary channel for all official communications between the state's participating institutions and organizations and the PRB. This individual casts the sole vote for participating institutions in the respective state on all matters brought for a vote to the PRB. (see Appendix B.5)

Each state with only prospective members of the Interstate Passport Network has an Affiliate Passport State Facilitator, who represents prospect members and their interests on the Passport Review Board. This individual does not have voting rights. This individual serves as the primary channel for all official



communications between the state's prospective member institutions and organizations and the PRB.

The PSF and Affiliate PSF attend the annual PRB meeting, participate on monthly conference calls with other PSFs and Interstate Passport staff, and support the Institution Liaisons within his/her state. PSFs are responsible for convening and facilitating conversations within and across institutions and responding to requests for information from institutions and other stakeholders.

The PSFs provide valuable feedback and analysis and work closely with staff to ensure the smooth implementation of the program in his/her state and across the Network. PSFs communicate any concerns from both faculty and other institution representatives to the PRB, which determines appropriate action including reconvening interstate faculty teams to revise and/or expand PLOs and examples of transfer-level proficiency criteria in one or more knowledge/skill area. For detailed description of responsibilities refer to Appendix B.3 PSF Role and Expectations. The list of current PSFs is available at <http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/facilitators>.

### ***Section 1b.3 Interstate Passport Staff***

WICHE staff members manage the operation of Interstate Passport and implement recommendations from the Passport Review Board. They coordinate the activities of the various interstate committees including the Passport State Facilitators, Institution Liaisons, Interstate Faculty Team Chairs and numerous other advisory committees.

### ***Section 1b.4 Advisory Committees***

Members of each advisory committee serve as key contacts in their states to inform and assist others in a similar role within their state on the Interstate Passport program. Advisory committees have been established for Institutional Liaisons, Military and Veteran Affairs, Registrars and Institutional Researchers, Campus Marketing, and Academic Advisors. Each committee includes one representative from an Interstate Passport state, with the exception of the Registrar/Institutional Research Advisory Committee, which is comprised of one registrar representative and one institutional researcher representative from each state.

The Interstate Faculty Team Chairs Committee consists of the chairs from each of the nine knowledge and skill area teams. These nine individuals convene to discuss common topics and concerns of their faculty committees and to draft strategies and/or policies for recommendation to the Passport Review Board. (*see Appendix B.6*)

Interstate Faculty and Skill Area Teams are responsible for ensuring that the Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) represent the best thinking about what students should learn through their lower-division general education experience, and that the Proficiency Criteria are examples of classroom best practices for teaching and assessing those outcomes.

Each PSF names a two-year and a four-year representative to each of the nine knowledge and skills area team. These representatives are chosen by the member institutions in each state in a process agreed upon by the institutions and coordinated by the PSF. Each team is convened on an annual basis to orient new representatives, assess the implementation of the PLOs and discuss current trends in its knowledge or skill area. Additionally, each team is responsible for reviewing, and, if necessary, revising the PLOs and PC for its own area on a regular five-year schedule. A team can also be convened in the interim by the PRB to consider specific concerns or issues as described in the *Procedure for Modifications to the Passport Learning Outcomes and Proficiency Criteria (see Appendix B.7)*.

### **Section 1b.5 Institution Liaisons**

Each member institution names an Institution Liaison to serve as the primary contact for the PSF and for WICHE staff on matters related to the institution's participation in the Network. This individual takes the lead in organizing institution staff and resources to prepare the institution to apply for membership in the Network. The Institutional Liaison then coordinates internal activities involving multiple departments and establishes policies and procedures for participation in the Interstate Passport program as outlined in the MOA. The Institution Liaison also recommends staff and faculty to the PSF for various interstate committees.

### **Section 1b.6 Interstate Passport Network Institution Team**

Member institutions establish institution teams to manage implementation and operations of Interstate Passport. Team members include a representative for academic advising, campus marketing, general education, registrar's office, institutional research, military and veterans' affairs, admissions/transfer and articulation, and others as needed. The work of this team is coordinated by the Institution Liaison. Members of these institution teams may also serve on interstate advisory committees. (*Appendix B.2*)

## **Section 2: Key Terms**

**Academic Progress Tracking (APT):** The process by which Interstate Passport® student performance is monitored. Network member institutions uploads to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) at the end of each term data on 1) the students awarded a Passport and 2) the academic progress of relevant transfer students (with and without a Passport) and native students with a Passport. Using the progress data, NSC calculates aggregate academic progress for each of the three populations reported by receiving institutions, sorts it by Network member sending institutions, and produces and delivers reports to the sending institutions about the performance of their former students, and aggregated information to the Passport Review Board to use in evaluating the overall program.

**Block credit transfer:** Allows credits earned to transfer en masse. Also known as block transfer, it is applicable to general education in the Interstate Passport program. Typically, Passports require 30-36 semester credits or 45-54 quarter credits, but may require more or fewer

**Passport:** A milestone of lower-division general education completion earned by a student who achieves the Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) at the transfer level of proficiency at an Interstate Passport Network member institution, and which is documented on the student record by the institution. Learning achieved via the Passport transfers as a block to another participating Network member institution; students with a Passport do not have to repeat or take additional coursework to meet the lower-division general education requirements.

- Currently, only one type of Passport is available—Passport Lower-Division General Education (Passport-LDGE)—which includes PLOs in nine knowledge and skill areas (oral communication, written communication, quantitative literacy, natural sciences, human cultures, creative expression, human society and the individual, creative thinking, and teamwork and value systems).

**Passport Block:** The list of lower-division general education courses and/or learning experiences by which the Passport Learning Outcomes are achieved. The faculty at each Passport institution is responsible for constructing the institution's Passport Block and updating it as appropriate. Passport Blocks of Network member institutions are posted on the Interstate Passport's website. Students must earn a minimum grade

of “C” or its equivalent in all Passport Block courses/learning opportunities necessary to earn a Passport at their institution. *(See Appendix C.1.)*

**Passport Earner:** A student who has earned a Passport at a member institution of the Interstate Passport Network.

**Passport Feature:** Topics that help to index or categorize the Passport Learning Outcomes in each knowledge and skill area (for example, fundamentals, basic information).

**Passport Learning Outcomes (PLO):** Learning outcomes are statements—what a student should know or be able to do—developed by faculty members of Network member institutions in the nine knowledge and skill areas in the Passport framework. *(See Appendix C.2.)*

**PassportVerify:** Service provided by the National Student Clearinghouse—similar to the DegreeVerify service currently offered to all NSC participating institutions— that allows Interstate Passport Network institutions to query the Clearinghouse to find out if an incoming transfer student has earned the Passport and if so, where and when.

**Proficiency Criteria (PC):** Part of the Interstate Passport framework, proficiency criteria are examples, not requirements, of student assignments or activities that demonstrate proficiency of the learning outcome appropriate at the transfer level. Faculty members at Passport institutions developed a list of proficiency criteria for each Passport Learning Outcome across the nine knowledge and skill areas, drawing from current practice, to help inform faculty at new member institutions about expectations for transfer level proficiency. Faculty members at Network member institutions develop their own ways to determine a student’s proficiency with their learning outcomes.

**Receiving Institution:** The institution to which a student transfers—the institution receiving the transfer student.

**Sending Institution:** The institution from which a student transferred—the institution sending the transfer student.

## **Section 3: Membership in the Interstate Passport Network**

### **Section 3a: Membership Eligibility**

Membership in the Network is open to all public and private regionally accredited, not-for-profit institutions, both two-year and four-year which complete the institution profile process and agree to comply with the requirements outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) at the time of signature. Initial or statewide membership may be coordinated by higher education systems and state coordinating and governing boards. Additional information regarding membership can also be found in the Bylaws, Article II, Network Membership.

### **Section 3b: Membership Fees**

Membership is for a five-year renewable term. Fees are based on the number of full-time equivalent students at the institution according to IPEDS data for the last reported academic year. Membership fees range from \$2,500 to \$7,500 per year (see below). Institutions paying for the full five-year term up front receive a 10 percent discount on the total cost. System-wide members (all institutions in the system are

members) qualify for a 10 percent discount when paying for all institutions in a single payment. If the system joins and pays for the full five-year term in a single payment, it qualifies for a 20 percent discount on the total full cost for all institutions in the system. **Currently, the Network is offering a promotion allowing the first 100 institutions to join for free for their first five-year term.**



### Section 3c: Becoming a Member

To join the Network, each institution completes the following steps listed below. Appendices D.1, D.2, and D.3 can be used as guides to ensure each step is satisfied.:

- Step 1: Identify an Institution Liaison
- Step 2: Create an Institution Team
- Step 3: Map Learning Outcomes and Construct a Passport Block
- Step 4: Sign the Memorandum of Agreement (unless this is done at the system or state level)
- Step 5: Generate an Institution Profile
- Step 6: Sign the National Student Clearinghouse's Amendment to its Core Services Agreement
- Step 7: Prepare to implement the academic progress tracking processes within one year

#### Step 1: Identify an Institution Liaison

Each participating institution will identify an Institution Liaison to lead the work on campus and to serve as its primary contact for the Passport State Facilitator on matters related to the institution's participation in the Interstate Passport Network (*see Appendix B.2*). The role of the Institution Liaison is to:

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of the institution as a participant in the Interstate Passport Network and ensure- that it meets these obligations;
- Develop a workplan for becoming a member of the Interstate Passport Network and review with PSF and Interstate Passport staff;
- Communicate regularly with faculty and staff responsible for internal operations in support of the Interstate Passport;
- Establish procedures for participation in the Interstate Passport as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement;
- Coordinate internal Interstate Passport activities and procedures involving multiple departments, as appropriate (e.g., ensuring that registrar, campus catalog staff, and others are aware of requests by faculty to add a course to the institution's Passport Block);
- Recommend to the Passport State Facilitator the names of individuals to represent the institution and/or state on various Interstate Passport committees; and
- Ensure that the institution's profile on the Interstate Passport website provides up-to-date information on its Passport Block and accurate contact information for relevant staff members.

#### Step 2: Create an Institution Team

Creation of an institution team of individuals with various responsibilities across the institution is necessary to overall implementation of Interstate Passport. Training the team ensures a coherent understanding of what Interstate Passport is and how it works. Training also ensures that a consistent message regarding

Interstate Passport is provided to students and other important stakeholders. This team is comprised of at least one representative for each of the following areas of responsibility (*see Appendix B.2*)

- **Academic Advisor Representative:** Academic advisors advise students about how to earn the Passport, how it works when they transfer to a new institution, and what having it means for incoming transfer students.
- **Admissions/Recruitment/Transfer & Articulation Representative:** Admissions representatives and transfer and articulation specialists recognize when incoming students arrive with a Passport and that these students will have their lower-division general education requirements met at the new institution.
- **Campus Marketing Representative:** Campus marketers communicate information about Interstate Passport consistently and accurately in all campus materials and catalogs.
- **General Education/Curriculum Committee Representative:** Faculty members construct their institution's Passport Block by compiling learning opportunities that align with the Passport Learning Outcomes just as they would compile learning opportunities that constitute their institution's General Education program, academic minor, academic major or any other program at their institution. Faculty will make changes to the Passport Block as the institution's curriculum changes.
- **Military and Veteran Affairs Representative:** Veteran and military affairs representatives advise veteran and military students and their families about how to earn the Passport, how it works when they transfer to a new institution, and what having it means for incoming transfer students.
- **Registrar and Institutional Researcher Representative:** Registrars and institutional researchers identify students who earn the Passport, note it on their transcript, and notify them of the award. They also track Passport earners who transfer to their institution, submit data to the NSC at the end of each term, and review, with their campus stakeholders, annual reports from NSC about the academic performance of Passport earners after transfer for continuous improvement efforts.
- **Other:** Each institution may identify other roles that would be helpful in implementation and operations of Interstate Passport such as career counselors, specific faculty members, or IT specialists.

#### Recommended Resources:

- Passport Overview, Appendix A.1
- The Benefits of Interstate Passport, Appendix A.2
- Interstate Passport Institution Team Organizational Chart, Appendix B.2
- Institution Liaison Workplan Template, Appendix D.1
- [Interstate Passport Website](#)
- [Laramie County Community College Video on Interstate Passport](#)

### Step 3: Map the Passport Learning Outcomes and Construct a Passport Block

The Institution Liaison will work with the General Education/Curriculum Committee or other appropriate representative to convene faculty who will review the Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) to determine their relationship to the institution's own student learning outcomes. The Passport Learning Outcomes contain three foundational skill areas: oral communication, written communication, and quantitative literacy; four knowledge of concept areas: creative expression, natural sciences, human society and the individual, and human cultures; and two crosscutting skill areas: critical thinking and teamwork and value

systems. The goal of mapping is to determine if the PLOs are congruent with and cover the same range of learning as those of the institution. The institution does not adopt the PLOs or use the same language. (see Appendix C.3)

Once congruency is determined, faculty members from the appropriate disciplines will identify learning opportunities that align with the Passport Learning Outcomes, just as it would compile the learning opportunities that constitute the institution's General Education program, academic minor, academic major, or any other program at the institution. These experiences are typically courses, but may be other learning opportunities, as well. In some cases, the relevant educational experience may be restricted to only one required course; in others, to more than one course, or many alternative courses or combinations of courses. The essential consideration is that the total of the learning experiences in the Passport Block must cover a similar range and depth of learning across the nine knowledge and skills areas as the PLOs. In many cases the Passport Block will mirror the institution's lower-division general education program requirements; sometimes it will be a more limited selection of courses or may require one or two additional courses.

#### Recommended Resources:

- [Seven Steps to Creating your Passport Block](#), Appendix C.1
- [Full list of Passport Learning Outcomes](#), Appendix C.2
- [PLO Mapping Worksheet](#), Appendix C.3
- [Passport Blocks from other Network Member Institutions](#)

#### Step 4: Sign the Memorandum of Agreement

Upon completion of its Passport Block, the Institution Liaison will submit a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to Interstate Passport staff. By signing the MOA an institution or system of institutions agrees to the following terms and core responsibilities:

- Provide a copy of the Passport Block to the registrar to use in establishing processes and procedures for awarding the Passport;
- Put in place methods to identify and award the Passport to students who have earned it, record it in the students' transcript, and notify the students that they have been awarded a Passport;
- Participate in the *PassportVerify* service by 1) supplying data to the NSC at the end of each term on students to which the institution has awarded a Passport; and 2) using the service to verify and recognize in its records that incoming transfer students have been awarded a Passport;
- Participate in the *Academic Progress Tracking* service by supplying to the NSC de-identified student data on the academic performance of three populations of students: 1) students who earned the Passport at the institution (data each term for at least two terms after earning it); 2) students who transferred into the institution with a Passport (data each term for at least two terms after transfer); and 3) students who transferred into the institution without a Passport (data each term for at least two terms after transfer). Graduation data will also be provided for these three populations.
- Comply with Interstate Passport's data management plan in carrying out the above tasks and other data sharing activities of the Network.

#### Recommended Resources:

- [Memorandum of Agreement](#), Appendix A.4

### **Step 5: Generate an Interstate Passport Profile**

Each member of the Interstate Passport Network has a public profile that is completed online. After an institution has signed the MOA, the Institution Liaison will receive instructions from Interstate Passport staff on how to log in to the online system. There, the Institution Liaison will provide institutional information, including contact information and its Passport Block. The Passport Block and some of the contacts will be made publicly available on the institution's public profile.

#### **Recommended Resources:**

- [Public profiles of Network Member Institutions](#)
- [Member Profile Tips Guide](#), Appendix D.3

### **Step 6: Sign the NSC Agreement**

The penultimate step in becoming a member of the Interstate Passport Network is to sign the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) *Amendment to the Core Services Agreement to Provide Passport Services*. This document is an amendment to the existing agreement between the institution and the NSC and enables information on Interstate Passport students to be sent to and received by the NSC via a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) server for use in determining which incoming transfer students have a Passport, tracking the academic progress of students, and submitting completion files for students who have earned a Passport. This amendment is provided to new institutions after the MOA is fully executed. (refer to section 4.b.1.1)

### **Step 7: Prepare to Implement the Academic Progress Tracking Processes**

As partners in student success, each Network member institution agrees to submit data on the academic performance of Passport earners for at least two terms after earning the award, and transfer students (with and without a Passport) for at least two terms after transfer. At the end of each term, Network member institutions submit this data to the NSC, which provides two services to Network members. The first is the *Passport Verify* service by which member institutions are able to query NSC to find out if an incoming transfer student has earned the Passport and if so, where and when, helping to ensure that these students' learning is recognized. Through the second service—*Academic Progress Tracking*—NSC sorts and aggregates de-identified student-level data provided by Network receiving institutions to produce and deliver reports to Network sending institutions about the academic progress of their former students for use in continuous improvement efforts, as well as to provide a composite report to the Passport Review Board, the program's policy-making body, for use in evaluating the program's overall effectiveness. (refer to section 4.b.1.2)

## **Section 4: Implementing and Operating the Interstate Passport Program**

After an institution has officially become a member of the Interstate Passport Network, the school will need to carry out certain tasks to fulfill the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Agreement. The following section lays out these tasks and is organized by institution team members and the responsibilities each member has for the success of Interstate Passport at the institution. The Institution Liaison should regularly check in with institutional team members to ensure progress is being made. (*See Appendix D.2*)

## **Section 4a: Faculty**

One of the guiding principles of the Interstate Passport program is that it is faculty driven. Accordingly, faculty play a large role in implementing and operating Interstate Passport on their campuses.

### ***Section 4a.1 Roles and Expectations of Faculty***

#### **Section 4a.1.1 Review the Passport Learning Outcomes**

Section 3c. step 3 describes the faculty role in mapping the PLOs for consistency with the institution's own student learning outcomes. The Passport Learning Outcomes cover nine knowledge and skill areas. The goal of reviewing the PLOs is to ensure that they are consistent with and cover the same range of learning as those of the institution. The institution does not adopt the PLOs or use the same language.

#### **Section 4a.1.2 Construct the Passport Block**

As also described in Section 3 c. step 3, faculty members are responsible for constructing the institution's Passport Block and ensuring that the learning experiences are congruent with the Passport Learning Outcomes. Faculty also are responsible for monitoring the institution's Passport Block to make certain it continues to be consistent with the PLOs as the institution's curriculum evolves.

#### **Section 4a.1.3 Modify the Passport Block**

Because institutions retain autonomy for their curriculum in constructing their Passport Blocks, modifications to the block may be made whenever necessary by the appropriate faculty body. Modifications do not require approval from either other Network member institutions or Interstate Passport staff. The essential consideration in both constructing and modifying a Passport Block is that the total of the learning experiences reflects the PLOs in the nine knowledge/skill areas. Once a Passport Block has been constructed or modified, the faculty should notify the Institution Liaison to update the block for the Interstate Passport public profile and in the institution's course catalogue.

#### **Section 4a.1.4 Advise Institution Liaison on Needed Updates to PLOs**

Faculty members are also responsible for advising the Institution Liaison when updates to the PLOs may be warranted. Faculty at member institutions may bring concerns or questions about the PLOs/PC to their Institution Liaison, who will in turn bring the concern to the attention of the PSF. See *Appendix D.1* for the modification procedure to PLOs and PC.

#### **Section 4a.1.5 Inform Newly Hired Faculty**

A final responsibility of faculty is to create a process for informing newly hired faculty for lower-division general education courses included in the institution's Passport Block about how the Interstate Passport works and their role in providing learning experiences that consistently enable students to achieve the outcomes identified by the institution for that course.

#### **Recommended Resources:**

- [Procedure for Modifications to the Passport Learning Outcomes and Proficiency Criteria](#), Appendix B.7
- [Seven Steps to Creating your Passport Block](#), Appendix C.1
- [Full list of Passport Learning Outcomes](#), Appendix C.2
- [Webinar: Constructing your Institution's Passport Block: Perspectives from 4-Year and 2-Year Institutions](#)
- [Webinar: Constructing Your Passport Block: Perspectives from the System Level](#)
- [Passport Blocks from other Network Member Institutions](#)
- [Video: The Faculty Role – Mapping Outcomes and Building a Block](#)



## **Section 4b: Registrars and Institutional Researchers**

An essential component of Interstate Passport is the data collection and tracking process designed to provide information on the academic performance of Passport earners for use in continuous improvement efforts by member institutions and for evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the program. Registrars and institutional researchers in the WICHE region have been key players in designing and implementing this process, as well as the process to utilize the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) as the central data repository for the program.

Network member institutions' registrars and institutional researchers identify students who earn the Passport and notify them of the award; track Passport earners who transfer to their institution; submit data to the NSC at the end of each term; and review and share with relevant stakeholders annual reports from NSC about the performance of Passport earners after transfer.

Additionally, registrars must establish a way to inform students when they have been awarded a Passport—such as email, degree audit system, document of completion, or other means of communication most relevant to their student population—within 60 days of the student's completion of the Passport. (*see Appendix E.1*)

NOTE: Receiving institutions may require students transferring in with a Passport to complete additional lower-division courses in the following circumstances. Some institutions may require certain prerequisites for entry into a specific program of study. Faith-based institutions may require the religion-related courses it requires of other students. A few state legislatures require a specific course in state history or civics for graduation.

### ***Section 4.b.1 Roles and Expectations of Registrars and Institutional Researchers***

The responsibilities of registrars and institutional researchers at Interstate Passport Network institutions are detailed below. Appendix E.2, the Registrar Checklist, can assist with the implementation of tracking and reporting requirements.

#### **Section 4b.1.1 Receive Passport Block and Sign the Amendment to the Core Services Agreement**

The registrar at each Interstate Passport institution will receive from faculty the institution's Passport Block, which lists the courses, course sequences, and/or other learning experiences by which students achieve the Passport Learning Outcomes. The Passport Block contains courses for nine different knowledge and skill areas, and in most cases more than one course or a combination of courses is required to achieve the learning outcomes in a specific area. In most cases, the Passport Block will be very similar to the institution's lower-division general education requirements.

First steps for registrars and institutional researchers are as follows:

1. Watch/listen to the webinar prepared by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), *Overview of the Interstate Passport Program*, available at <https://studentclearinghouse.info/interstate-passport/>. The presentation includes general information about the Interstate Passport program and specific information about the Passport Services offered by NSC and the file submission process.
2. From the same NSC web page, download and review the file formatting and submission instruction guides. Three guides are available, one each for the type of data file to be used by Passport institutions: (a) Passport Completion Data File, (b) PassportVerify Request File, and (c) Academic Progress Tracking Data File.

3. Upon receipt of the *Amendment to the Core Services Agreement to Provide Passport Services from NSC*, review the Amendment and secure the appropriate signature for your institution. (Institutions must contact [PassportSupport@studentclearinghouse.org](mailto:PassportSupport@studentclearinghouse.org) to receive the Amendment. Institutions that do not already have a Core Services Agreement for Services from NSC should first contact the Clearinghouse about such an agreement.)
4. Return the signed amendment to NSC as directed by NSC.

## **Section 4b.1.2 Record the Passport, Extract Data, and Submit Files**

### **Institution Students (Native Students)**

1. Identify students who meet the requirements for the Passport. The scripts/processes developed by fellow registrars for the Banner, PeopleSoft and Colleague student information systems could be helpful (see relevant webinars in recommended resources below).
2. For each student who has earned the Passport, record the Passport in the institution's Student Information System (SIS) for processing and reporting.
3. Make an entry on the official student transcript that a student has earned the Passport. The entry should be recorded as **Interstate Passport-LDGE** and include the date of the award. A comment is one way to do this. (see Appendix E.4)
4. At the end of each term, submit a [Passport Completion Data File](#) to NSC containing information on the students awarded Passports. Fall 2016 is the first term that the Interstate Passport-LDGE was awarded. Registrars may go back in history to test for completion in previous terms. **Passport Completion Data Files are due from all Network member institutions no later than June 15 each year.**
5. Notify students when they have earned the Passport and what that means, i.e., achievement of the [Passport Learning Outcomes in nine knowledge and skill areas](#) and completion of lower-division general education at all other Network member institutions. Each institution may determine how students are notified, i.e., an email message or letter/document. (see Appendix E.3)

### **Incoming Transfer Students**

1. Submit a [PassportVerify Request File](#) (Student Tracker-type request) to NSC to identify students who have transferred to your institution with the Passport. **This request can be made at the most appropriate or convenient time for each institution but should be made before the start of the term to ensure that students do not repeat learning already achieved.**
2. If NSC reports that a transfer student earned a Passport at a previous institution, record the Passport in the SIS (including the awarding institution and date awarded).
3. Ensure that incoming transfer students who have earned the Passport do not repeat or take additional courses to meet lower-division general education requirements. When possible, the degree audit system should be coded to recognize the Passport and mark the general education requirements as complete.

### **Tracking Academic Progress**

1. At the end of each term, submit the [Academic Progress Tracking Data File](#) to NSC that contains de-identified student information on courses and grades on three different populations of students: (1) transfer students with Passports, (2) transfer students without Passports, and (3) native students with Passports. Students will be included in the report for at least the first and second terms after the student transfers or after the student earns the Passport. Data for more than two terms may be reported but the report should not include courses taken after a bachelor's degree is awarded.

2. **APT Data Files are due from all Network member institutions no later than August 15 each year.**
3. NSC will compile and report the information to sending institutions and to the Passport Review Board.

### **Section 4b.3 Reviewing Reports/Providing Recommendations**

The NSC will provide annual reports to the sending institutions about how their students performed after transfer. These reports will be sent in February of each year. Additionally, the NSC will also provide raw data files of the students' academic progress post transfer. Institutions must submit a request for the raw data files. The raw data files will allow institutions to create custom reports across multiple dimensions. Institutional research staff and registrars should review and share the annual reports as well as any custom-made reports using the available raw data with relevant stakeholders for use in the institution's continuous improvement efforts, as appropriate.

Each year the NSC will also produce composite reports of aggregate data compiled from all Network institutions for use by the Passport Review Board in evaluating the overall program and for inclusion in its Annual Report. The total number of Passports awarded, by term, and data on the academic performance of the Passport cohorts of students after transfer compared to non-Passport transfer students and to native students will be reported. The Annual Report will be posted on the Passport website.

### **Section 4b.4 Providing Information About Interstate Passport to Stakeholders**

Registrars and institutional researchers should be prepared to share information about the Interstate Passport program with stakeholders at the institution such as the provost, General Education committee, and others. Additionally, they should be prepared to generate additional reports from raw data provided by the NSC.

### **Section 4b.5 Recommending Changes to Interstate Passport Operations**

Institutional researchers and registrars are encouraged to provide feedback to Interstate Passport staff on policies and procedures related to their role in the program. This includes suggestions for additional topics on the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Interstate Passport website (<https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/faq>) and recommendations on the reports generated by NSC, as well as the creation of custom or other reports that could provide useful information to the institution, to a group of institutions participating in the Network, or to the members of the Network as a whole.

## Section 4b.6

Registrars and institutional researchers should use the timeline below as a guide to implement the systems and processes to identify, award, and track Passport students.

Targeted Timeline for Implementation	Tasks
Immediately after institution has signed the Interstate Passport Memorandum of Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign amendment to NSC agreement to submit data for Interstate Passport. Contact the NSC at PassportSupport@Clearinghouse.org to receive this amendment;</li> <li>• Establish account to submit data</li> </ul>
The term immediately following receipt of the Passport Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify native students who meet Passport requirements;</li> <li>• Record the Passport in the student information system (SIS) so it will show on students' transcripts;</li> <li>• Notify students who have earned a Passport;</li> <li>• Build and submit a Passport Completion file listing Passport earners to the NSC;</li> <li>• Build and submit a PassportVerify file to the NSC to verify incoming transfer students with a Passport;</li> <li>• Record when/where Passport earned on transfer students' records in SIS for tracking purposes;</li> <li>• Recognize Passport earners as having completed lower-division general education in SIS/Degree Audit.</li> </ul>
For two terms after Passports are awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track academic progress data for least two terms after transfer for incoming students and for at least two terms for native Passport-earners by building and submitting the Academic Progress Tracking (APT) data file to the NSC.</li> </ul>
February following submission of Academic Progress Tracking file	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review/share with appropriate campus stakeholders your institution's annual report and raw data files provided by NSC on academic progress of former students for use in continuous improvement.</li> </ul>

### Recommended Resources:

- Registrar/IR Guiding Principles, Appendix E.1
- Registrar Checklist, Appendix E.2
- Sample Notification Letter, Appendix E.3
- Sample Transcript Notation of Interstate Passport, Appendix E.4
- [Submitting PassportVerify file](#)
- [Submitting Passport Completion file](#)
- [Submitting Academic Progress Tracking file](#)
- [Registrar-IR Webpage](#)
- [Registrar-IR Handbook](#)
- [National Student Clearinghouse Interstate Passport Webpage](#)
- [Video: The Role of the Registrar and Institutional Researcher](#)
- [Using Banner to Collect and Submit Passport Student Data Webinar](#)
- [Using Colleague to Transcript and Report Interstate Passport: Two Institutional Perspectives](#)
- [Using PeopleSoft to Collect and Submit Passport Student Data](#)

## **Section 4c: Academic Advisors**

The role of academic advisors is key to communicating information about Interstate Passport consistently and accurately. (*see Appendix F.1*) As a student's early contact in his/her academic career, it is critical for academic advisors to know how Interstate Passport works and how earning a Passport can benefit students, both native students who may or may not transfer, and incoming transfer students.

Students who plan to transfer will have an incentive to earn a Passport knowing that it will be accepted as evidence of completing the lower-division general education requirements. Particularly for two-year students, earning a Passport can also serve as a completion milestone, an achievement on their path to a degree. Because incoming transfer students who arrive with a Passport will benefit by having all their lower-division general education requirements met, Interstate Passport can serve as an effective recruiting tool for four-year institutions desiring to welcome transfer students.

### **Section 4c.1 Roles and Expectations of Academic Advisors**

#### **Section 4c.1.1 Understand Interstate Passport**

Academic advisors should have a thorough understanding of what Interstate Passport is and its benefits to students through staff orientations and/or professional development trainings. The Institutional Liaison, the academic advising representative to the Institution Implementation Team, and the members of the Interstate Passport's Academic Advising Advisory Committee are valuable resources regarding the implementation of Interstate Passport on the campus. (*see Appendix F.2*)

#### **Section 4c.1.2 Promote the Interstate Passport program**

Academic advisors should share information about Interstate Passport with students. Not all students will transfer to another institution, and those who do will not necessarily transfer to another Network member institution. However, learning about Interstate Passport and understanding its advantages early on will benefit many students in a variety of ways.

#### **Section 4c.1.3 Advise Students**

Academic Advisors are key to advising students how to efficiently complete a Passport as they navigate the requirements of general education and prepare for a major program of study. Not all students who complete general education requirements at the institution will earn a Passport, as students must earn a minimum grade of "C" or its equivalent in all courses/learning opportunities applicable to earning the Passport. (*see Appendix F.3*)

#### **Section 4c.1.4 Participate on the Institutional Team**

Academic Advisor representatives are crucial members of the Interstate Passport institutional team, which is led and convened by the Institutional Liaison. Maintaining regular communication with team members will ensure successful implementation of Interstate Passport on campus. (*see Appendix B.2*)

### **Section 4c.1.5 Provide Feedback and Recommendations**

Academic advisors are encouraged to provide feedback to their Institutional Liaison, Interstate Passport staff, or to the Interstate Passport Academic Advisors Advisory Committee on policies and procedures related to their role with Interstate Passport. This includes suggestions for additional topics on the Frequently Asked Questions (*see Appendix F.3*) and recommendations for changes or additions to the *Academic Advisors Toolkit* ([http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/AA\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/AA_Toolkit.pdf))

### **Section 4c.1.6 Professional Development Opportunities**

Academic advisors are encouraged to share best practices and materials with their campus colleagues and their counterparts at Network member institutions. Those interested in making a presentation about Interstate Passport at a state or national conference, should contact Interstate Passport staff who may be available to assist with the development of slides or handouts.

#### **Recommended Resources:**

- The Roles and Expectations of Academic Advisors, Appendix F.1
- Key Facts for Academic Advisors, Appendix F.2
- Academic Advisors FAQs, Appendix F.3
- Interstate Passport Checklist for Academic Advisors, Appendix F.4
- [Academic Advisors Webpage](#)
- [Laramie County Community College Interstate Passport Video](#)
- [University of Utah Interstate Passport Video](#)
- [Video: Communicating with Students: The Role of Advising and Marketing](#)

### **Section 4d: Campus Marketers**

Like Academic Advisors, the role of marketing/communications staff is key to communicating information about Interstate Passport consistently and accurately. It is critical to know how Interstate Passport works and how it benefits students—both native students who may or may not transfer, and outgoing and incoming transfer students. Marketing/communications representatives at all Network member institutions should be familiar with the program to better promote and communicate information about the Interstate Passport to the campus community, prospective students, and parents. (*see Appendix A.1 and Appendix G.3*)

In addition, marketing/communications staff are responsible for ensuring the posting of accurate information about the Interstate Passport on the institution's website and in the institution's course catalog utilizing the resources identified below. (*see Appendix G.2 and G.3*)

Marketing and communication representatives at all Interstate Passport institutions are encouraged to meet with their Institutional Liaison, campus colleagues, and counterparts throughout the state to ensure broad dissemination of information about the Interstate Passport program. The Campus Marketing Toolkit presented on the website (<http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/toolkit>) and other resources listed in the appendices have been developed for use by all Interstate Passport Network members. Each document can be tailored by the institution to use with students and colleagues, and to disseminate throughout campus.

### Recommended Resources:

- Key Facts for Marketing/Communication Representatives, Appendix G.1
- Two-Year Course Catalog and Website Recommendations, Appendix G.2
- Four-Year Course Catalog and Website Recommendations, Appendix G.3
- Interstate Passport Brand Platform, Appendix G.4
- Interstate Passport Talking Points, Appendix G.5
- [Campus Marketers Webpage](#)
- [Campus Marketing Toolkit](#)
- [Laramie County Community College Interstate Passport Video](#)
- [University of Utah Interstate Passport Video](#)
- [Video: Communicating with Students: The Role of Advising and Marketing](#)

## **Section 5: More Information**

The [Interstate Passport website](#) is a comprehensive source of updated information about Interstate Passport. Users can find background on the program, the Interstate Passport framework, participating institutions and PSFs, Passport Blocks, staff contact details and other information.





## **Appendices**

Available online at <https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/resources/information-for/liaison/interstate-passport-handbook/>.

### **APPENDIX A**

[Appendix A.1: Interstate Passport Overview](#)

[Appendix A.2: The Benefits of Interstate Passport](#)

[Appendix A.3: Interstate Passport Guiding Principles](#)

[Appendix A.4: Memorandum of Agreement](#)

[Appendix A.5: Interstate Passport Bylaws](#)

### **APPENDIX B**

[Appendix B.1 The Interstate Passport Network Organizational Chart](#)

[Appendix B.2: Interstate Passport Institutional Team Roles](#)

[Appendix B.3: Passport Review Board Member Role and Expectations](#)

[Appendix B.4: Passport Review Board Members](#)

[Appendix B.5: Passport State Facilitator Role and Expectations](#)

[Appendix B.6: Interstate Faculty Knowledge and Skills Area Teams Appointment](#)

[Appendix B.7: Procedure for Modifications to the Passport Learning Outcomes and Proficiency Criteria](#)

### **APPENDIX C**

[Appendix C.1: Seven Steps to Creating your Passport Block](#)

[Appendix C.2: Passport Learning Outcomes](#)

[Appendix C.3: PLO Mapping Worksheet](#)

### **Appendix D**

[Appendix D.1: Institution Liaison Workplan Template](#)

[Appendix D.2: The Interstate Passport Network Institution Implementation Checklist](#)

[Appendix D.3: Member Profile Tips Guide](#)

### **APPENDIX E**

[Appendix E.1: Registrar/IR Guiding Principles and Assumptions](#)

[Appendix E.2: Registrar Checklist](#)

[Appendix E.3: Sample Notification Letter](#)

[Appendix E.4: Sample Transcript Notation of Interstate Passport](#)

### **APPENDIX F**

[Appendix F.1: The Roles and Expectations of Academic Advisors](#)

[Appendix F.2: Key Facts for Academic Advisors](#)

[Appendix F.3: Academic Advisors FAQs](#)

[Appendix F.4: Interstate Passport Checklist for Academic Advisors](#)

## [APPENDIX G](#)

[Appendix G.1: Key Facts for Marketing/Communication Representatives](#)

[Appendix G.2: Two-Year Course Catalog and Website Recommendations](#)

[Appendix G.3: Four-Year Course Catalog and Website Recommendations](#)

[Appendix G.4: Interstate Passport Brand Platform](#)

[Appendix G.5: Interstate Passport Talking Points](#)



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