STATE AND INTERNATIONAL AUTHORIZATIONS

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)

Cornell University has been approved by the state of New York to participate in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (https://nc-sara.org/) (NC-SARA).

Cornell's membership in SARA enables Cornell University to offer online programs to students in 49 of 50 member states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands.

In addition, Cornell, as a postsecondary educational institution, is permitted to offer online programs to students in California. This is because California, the only non-member state, does not require registration for out-of-state educational institutions.

NC-SARA is a private nonprofit organization [501(c)(3)] that helps expand students' access to educational opportunities and ensure more efficient, consistent, and effective regulation of distance education programs.

In 2013, higher education stakeholders—including state regulators and education leaders, accreditors, the US Department of Education, and institutions—joined together to establish the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), which streamline regulations around distance education programs.

SARA establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs and is overseen by a national council and administered by four regional education compacts.

Student consumer protection and complaint information for out-of-state distance learning students

SARA Student Consumer Protection requires member institutions to

- Be accredited and in good standing with their accreditors
- Hold authorization in their home state
- Demonstrate healthy finances
- Be accountable for third-party providers
- Uphold stringent reporting and accountability requirements
- Demonstrate transparency around professional licensure
- Meet the educational obligations to students
- Agree to elevate unresolved student complaints

Complaint process

Students must first use the complaint process in place at Cornell before submitting a complaint to the State Portal Entity (SPE) for New York.

For complaints related to Cornell University online courses and programs, contact the office of the Vice Provost for External Education (onlineprogramcomplaints@cornell.edu). Someone will respond to your complaint within 3 business days.

Cornell University Office of External Education
onlineprogramcomplaints@cornell.edu
950 Danby Rd., Suite 170
Ithaca, NY 14850

If your complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved by Cornell, you can refer to the NC SARA Complaint web page (https://www.nc-sara.org/sara-student-complaints-0), which explains the process for filing complaints with the SARA State Portal Entity (SPE) for New York. You may appeal the Cornell decision to the SARA State Portal Entity for New York within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made.

Please note that SARA policies do not cover complaints related to grades or student conduct violations.

After you have exhausted all internal Cornell University complaint procedures, if you remain unsatisfied you may contact:

New York State SARA Portal Entity
Andrea Richards
Supervisor of Higher Education Programs
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Ave
Albany, NY 12234
Phone: 518.474.1551
Email: IHEauthorize@nysed.gov

See the New York State Education Department page, Filing a Complaint About a College or University (https://www.nysed.gov/college-university-evaluation/sara-student-complaint-process).

Once the SARA State Portal Entity (SPE) for New York makes a determination on the complaint, they will notify the SARA SPE associated with your location.

Filing a complaint with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accreditor recognized by the United States Department of Education. MSCHE provides opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and members of the public to submit certain types of complaints regarding its member institutions, including Cornell University.

Learn more about filing a complaint with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education regarding an accredited MSCHE institution (https://www.msche.org/complaints/).

International Authorization

Cornell is committed to compliance with all export control regulations, including U.S. sanctions. Any individual located in the following regions must receive written approval from Cornell's Export Control and Compliance Officer prior to enrolling in an online course: Iran, North Korea, Syria, Cuba, Russia, Ukrainian regions of Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk.