



Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry
1155 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
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NMLS Course Provider Newsletter Issue 9, January 22, 2010

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Urgent Need for Providers and Courses in Many States – Alaska, California, Oregon, Hawaii, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Maine, and Puerto Rico have few, if any, in-state classroom sessions currently scheduled. Accordingly, NMLS is fast-tracking applications from education providers who are seeking to become an ***NMLS Approved Course Provider*** from any of the states listed above. Applications submitted by March 1, 2010 will have their applications processed within one week.

NMLS does not fast-track course approvals. However, the launch of the new NMLS Course Approval Portal, along with other changes NMLS is making, are intended to significantly reduce the amount of time it takes for a course to get approved.

MLO's Want State Education – As most providers know, about 15 states have a “state content” requirement as part of the 20 hour pre-licensure requirement. These states typically require two or more hours of electives be devoted to state content (see the NMLS Resource Center for State Specific Education Requirements). However, if a state does not have a state education requirement that doesn't mean the MLO's don't have a need for education on state law. Indeed, many MLO's are looking for (more like demanding!) courses that will prepare them to take the state component of the MLO SAFE test. Accordingly, providers may want to give consideration to offering State Comprehensive Courses even if the state doesn't require it. Additionally, just because a state may require three or four hours of state-education doesn't mean a provider can't offer more. The 12 hours of electives can include any number of topics related to mortgage loan origination including state law so the more you offer the more an MLO may be willing to take as they work to prepare to take the test.

New NMLS Course Approval Portal Launched: The new NMLS Course Approval Portal is now fully deployed. Providers who have submitted a course for approval have been invited to set-up a login and have been instructed to begin using the portal. The new course approval portal is to be used to submit course content, to review the status of course submissions, submit additional course materials, and to view and respond to course evaluator comments. Here are some additional points:

- An updated User Guide for Submitting Courses was posted in the NMLS Resource Center on January 19th. The new NMLS Course Approval Request form was also posted and is the only document that is now required to be uploaded into the PULSE Portal.
- Providers are still required to continue to use the existing PULSE portal to pay fees and maintain their course offerings (see the user guide for instructions on when and how to use both portals).
- Starting on February 1, 2010, NMLS will only accept course material in electronic format.

Course Approval Pitfalls – Course Evaluators have now reviewed over 400 courses. Here is a list of the most common mistakes providers make when submitting a course for approval and here is what you can do to ensure your course is evaluated as fast as possible:

- **Ensure Content is Current:** Several new laws went into effect January 1. Please ensure all content is up-to-date prior to submitting a course for approval.
- **Update “core content:”** Many providers use existing content to write new courses. There have been cases where NMLS has previously approved a course, a new course is submitted using the previously-approved content, NMLS evaluates the new course and then finds deficiencies with the previously approved content. Generally this happens when:
 - o Requested changes associated with a conditional approval were not made;
 - o The laws have changed and the core content needs to be updated;
 - o The changes were not correct;
 - o Another evaluator has evaluated the course and found something that was not caught during the initial evaluation.

We recognize this is a frustrating scenario and that it happens from time-to-time; however, it is NMLS policy to not knowingly approve incorrect information even if it was not caught during the previous course review. It is in no one’s interests to perpetuate misinformation or errors.
- **Submit ALL Content:** We respect and appreciate that many providers are extremely knowledgeable; however, we can’t evaluate what’s in an instructor’s head. Courses are required to be submitted with all material documented in such a way that the information can be evaluated and approved. Just submitting a course outline, a stack of PowerPoint slides or other “raw” material will result in a deficiency notice.
- **Include “Business Day:”** Please be sure that when referring to “X days” in course material you state “business days” or “calendar days” where applicable. Several of the evaluators have regulator and/or compliance backgrounds and the omission of the word “business” or “calendar” when referring to days ranks as one of the number one deficiencies.

- **Highlight Changes:** Highlighting or “red lining” changes made in response to a deficiency notice will assist the course evaluator to quickly identify those areas that have been updated and will reduce the amount of time it takes to re-evaluate the course. Providers should also ensure that all comments made by the evaluators are addressed. Additionally, if the revised material is moved from the original page note, please provide the evaluator with the page number whereby the new/revised content may be found.
- **State Law Courses:** course material should provide the MLO with the state specific citation from which the course material is instructing upon.
- **Understand Classroom Format Requirements:** Online and classroom equivalent courses have specific technical requirements that must be met in order for the course to be approved. Details are posted in the NMLS Resource Center.
- **Submit Text for Online CE Courses:** Providing the course in written format as well as providing online access to the course (student ready) will help to expedite the review process for online CE courses. If you do not submit written material it will take the evaluator three days to work through your twenty-hour timed course.

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