


 Accreditation

# CHEA at a Glance

## Council for Higher Education Accreditation

### ***Accreditation Serving the Public Interest***

*A national advocate and voice for promoting academic quality through accreditation, CHEA is an association of degree-granting colleges and universities and recognizes institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations.*

### CHEA AT A GLANCE

- The only national organization in the United States focused exclusively on higher education accreditation and quality assurance.
- Recognizes U.S. accrediting organizations, including regional, national career-related, national faith-related and programmatic accrediting organizations.
- Governed by a 20-person board of college and university presidents, institutional representatives and public members.

### CHEA PURPOSES

#### **Advocacy**

- A primary national voice for accreditation and quality assurance to the U.S. Congress and U.S. Department of Education.
- A leading national voice for accreditation to the general public, opinion leaders, students and families.

#### **Serving Members and the Public**

- National leader in identifying and articulating emerging issues in accreditation and quality assurance.
- National forum to address issues of mutual interest and concern in accreditation through conferences, meetings and Webinars.
- Authoritative source of data and information about accreditation and quality assurance.
- Projects and initiatives to strengthen accreditation and its role in serving the public interest.
- Conferences and meetings.
- Databases and directories of accredited institutions and programs and accreditation and quality assurance bodies.
- Convener of international discussions of accreditation and quality assurance through the CHEA International Quality Group.

## RECOGNITION

Recognition is the scrutiny and affirmation of the quality of regional, national career-related, national faith-related and programmatic accrediting organizations. CHEA is the only nongovernmental higher education organization in the United States that undertakes this scrutiny. The federal government, through the U.S. Department of Education, conducts governmental recognition reviews.

### CHEA Recognition Standards\*

- **Promotes academic quality and advances student achievement.** Advancement of academic quality is at the core of accreditation. Accrediting organizations provide evidence that they implement and enforce standards, policies or procedures regarding the accrediting organization's expectations for academic quality and results associated with institutional or program performance.
- **Demonstrates public accountability for performance and transparency.** Public accountability for performance and transparency includes expectations related to the following three elements: (A) performance of accrediting organizations, (B) performance of accredited institutions or programs and, if applicable, (C) performance of accrediting organizations engaged in international activity.
- **Sustains an effective accreditation structure and organization.** A recognized accrediting organization provides evidence that it implements standards, policies and practices and sustains organizational characteristics consistent with CHEA requirements.

*\* This language illustrates the recognition standards and is not the full or official policy statement. For the formal policy language that is used in CHEA recognition reviews, please consult the [2019 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures](#) on the CHEA Website ([www.chea.org](http://www.chea.org)) in the Accreditation and Recognition category under "Recognition Policy and Procedures."*

### Accreditation in the United States

Accreditation in higher education is a collegial process of self-review and peer review for improvement of academic quality and public accountability of institutions and programs. This quality review process occurs on a period basis, usually every three to ten years. Typically, it involves three major activities:

- A self-study by an institution or program using the standard or criteria of an accrediting organization.
- A peer review of an institution or program to gather evidence of quality.
- A decision or judgment by an accrediting organization to accredit, accredit with conditions or not accredit an institution or program.

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Council for Higher Education Accreditation — serving higher education, students and the public through advocacy and leadership in assuring academic quality through accreditation.

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