College Accreditation

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What is Accreditation?

“The periodic process of peer/professional review that requires colleges and universities to examine and provide evidence of student achievement and institutional performance, among many other features of institutional operation. Accreditation provides a foundation for the various accountability efforts through review of institutions and programs to assure that fundamentals for academic quality are in place and that institutions are living up to their commitments to students and society and are improving what they do.”

Judith Eaton, President of Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2009
“Accreditation is the recognition that an institution MAINTAINS STANDARDS requisite for its graduates to GAIN ADMISSION TO OTHER REPUTABLE INSTITUTIONS of higher learning or to ACHIEVE CREDENTIALS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE. The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets ACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF QUALITY”

“Accreditation means the status of public recognition that an accrediting agency grants to an educational institution or program that meets the agency's standards and requirements”.

U.S. Department of Education
What is Accreditation?

“The periodic process of PEER/PROFESSIONAL REVIEW that requires colleges and universities to examine and provide EVIDENCE OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT and institutional performance, among many other features of institutional operation.

Accreditation provides a foundation for the various accountability efforts through review of institutions and programs to ASSURE THAT FUNDAMENTALS FOR ACADEMIC QUALITY are in place and that institutions are living up to their COMMITMENTS TO STUDENTS and society and are IMPROVING what they do.”

Judith Eaton, President of Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2009
Accreditation is a rigorous evaluation of post secondary institutions that ensure that post-secondary education in the USA (U.S. Secretary of Education):

• Is rigorously reviewed by qualified professional peers

• Can provide evidence of appropriate student achievement

• Assure academic quality

• Commitment to students and society

• Continually Improve current process/facilities/resources/etc.
How are Schools Accredited?

Based on Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

• Pay an annual fee $1,000 to $21,000 (depends on budget)

• Submit a report and to a visit every 10 years
  - a review of peers
    - must follow-up on recommendations
    - must provide evidence of improvement
    - must provide evidence of remediation of recommendations

• May have to submit samples of student work
How are Schools Accredited?

Based on Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

• Submit a report every 5 years
  - Review by peers
  - Overview of institution (enrollment, programs, fiscal resources)
  - Assessment & continuous improvement initiatives
  - Evidence of improvement
  - Evidence of remediation of recommendations
How are Schools Accredited?

Based on Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

Peers & MSCHE judges

- Has a mission appropriate to higher education
- Guided by well-defined and appropriate goals, including goals for student learning
- Has established conditions and procedures under which its mission and goals can be realized
- Assesses both institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes, and uses the results for improvement
How are Schools Accredited?

Based on *Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)*

**Peers & MSCHE judges**

- Accomplishing its mission and goals substantially
- Organized, staffed, and supported so that it can be expected to continue to accomplish its mission and goals
- Meets the eligibility requirements and MSCHE standards
Why Accreditation?

*Based on Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)*

- Makes higher education “legit”
- Major source of protection against fraud (diploma mills)
- Maintain quality of higher education
- Encourage efficient use of resources
- Speaks to increased demand for public accountability
- Essential to global mobility
- Essential to the recognition that USA has best higher education system in the world
  - Academic freedom
  - Diverse set of institutions
  - Institutional independence
Accreditation Agencies

• Seven regional accreditation agencies
  - Degree granting institutions MUST be accredited by one of these

• Several special focus accreditation agencies
  - Non-degree (certificates or diplomas) granting agencies can be accredited for Title IV purposes
    - Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology
    - Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools
    - Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training
    - Council on Occupational Education
    - Distance Education and Training Council, Accrediting Commission

• Lots of specialized program accreditation agencies-
Accreditation Agencies Resources


Accreditation Agencies Resources

Regional Accreditation Agencies (7)

MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION


List of colleges & schools- [http://www.msche.org/institutions_directory.asp](http://www.msche.org/institutions_directory.asp)


Accreditation Agencies Resources

Regional Accreditation Agencies (7)


Accreditation Agencies Resources

Regional Accreditation Agencies (7)


Accreditation Agencies Resources

Regional Accreditation Agencies (7)


Specialized Programs - Examples


### Accreditation Agencies Resources

#### Specialized Programs - Examples


- **National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST):** [http://nast.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp](http://nast.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp).

Accreditation Agencies Resources

Specialized Programs- Examples

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE):
http://www.aacn.nche.edu/accreditation/

American Chemistry Society (ACS):
http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content

National Academic of Forensic Science (FEPAC):
Advisor Advice

For your advisees/students:

0.) Call school’s financial aid office and ask if it is eligible under Title IV

1.) Check to see if school he/she interested is accredited by one of the seven accreditation agencies

2.) Check to see if major at that school has specialized accreditation status (ex. Nursing, Engineering, Education, …Not so much English or Philosophy)

3.) Check to see if school is accredited by a “special focus accreditation agency”
The school must have accreditation from an accrediting body recognized by the **U.S. Department of Education** to be eligible to participate in the administration of federal student aid programs. Accreditation means that the school meets certain minimum academic standards, as defined by the accrediting body.
Questions?