



### Board Policy 3.43 Accreditation

#### Part 1. Purpose

To establish accreditation requirements for colleges and universities.

#### Part 2. Background

Higher education institutions demonstrate that the college or university and their educational programs meet minimum standards through accreditation. Accreditation can be attained at the institutional or programmatic level. Once achieved, accreditation must be reaffirmed periodically to ensure that the quality of the institution and educational programs is maintained.

#### Part 3. Definitions

##### Accreditation

A process and a status that assures higher education institutions and programs meet a set of standards developed by peers.

##### a. Institutional accreditation

Accreditation of a college or university is determined by institutional accreditors (formerly regional or national accreditors), indicating that the college or university is achieving its mission, objectives, and the accreditor's standards.

##### b. Program/specialized accreditation

Accreditation college or university programs that involves examination of the individual academic units, programs, or disciplinary offerings to ensure they are providing students with a quality education in a particular area of study. Programmatic accreditation may be required in some fields for graduates to seek licensure or certification. Programmatic accreditation in other fields serves to provide a recognition of quality.

##### Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

An institutional accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. HLC accredits degree-granting institutions of higher education in the United States.



#### **Part 4. Accreditation**

##### **Subpart A. Institutional accreditation**

Colleges and universities shall achieve and retain accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission. Any college or university that does not maintain accredited status with the Higher Learning Commission may be subject to loss of degree granting authority.

##### **Subpart B. Program accreditation**

For programs that have an accreditation and for which people working in that field must be licensed or certified for employment, colleges and universities shall achieve and maintain accreditation for those programs (i.g., peace officer, nursing, dental hygiene, etc.).

For fields that do not require licensure or certification, colleges and universities may obtain program accreditation where appropriate and aligned with the mission of the college or university (i.g., automotive technician, business, chemistry, etc.).

#### **Part 5. Report to the Board of Trustees**

The chancellor shall provide an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the status of the accreditation for each college and university. College and university presidents shall submit an annual update to the chancellor, or chancellor's designee, on the status of their accreditation.

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Date of Adoption: 01/29/20  
Date of Implementation: 01/29/20  
Date of Last Review: 01/29/25

##### **Date and Subject of Amendments:**

01/29/25 – Full review, deleted the following: outdated background information, the term “regional” throughout the policy, replaced the definition for Higher Learning Commission, and clarified program accreditation in Part 4, Subp. B.

No Additional HISTORY.