



Glossary of General & Assessment Terms  
And  
Accrediting & Credentialing Organizations

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# **Grand Canyon University (GCU) Glossary of General & Assessment Terms**

## **AAC – Academic Affairs Committee**

The central academic governing body for academic policy and programs at Grand Canyon University. The AAC ensures the standards for all academic programs and policies of the university, supporting the university mission, assuring academic rigor, meeting the requirements set forth by accrediting and regulatory bodies, and serving the educational and occupational needs of students.

## **Accreditation**

The designation that an institution earns indicating that it functions appropriately with respect to its resources, programs, and services. The accrediting association, often comprised of peers, is recognized as the external monitor. Maintaining fully accredited status ensures that the university remains in compliance with federal expectations and continues to receive federal funding.

## **Alignment**

The logical connection between learning outcomes and curricular scope, organization, and content. Curriculum mapping is an example of the alignment process.

## **ALT – Academic Leadership Team**

The academic body comprised of individuals representing the highest levels of leadership from each college and academic services. This group oversees the policies, procedures, and processes that ensure academic and institutional integrity.

## **Alumni Survey**

A survey deployed to alumni at 1- and 5-years post-graduation. The survey prompts responses related to program and academic satisfaction, career readiness and advancement, and value-add of the degree completion.

## **AM&T Report - Academic Metrics and Trends Report**

A quantitative report generated by the GCU Office of Assessment biweekly. The report contains key student performance data disaggregated at the course level, tracking student pass rates, withdraw rates, failure rates, persistence, retention, and a number of other statistics.

## **Analytic Rubric**

A rubric that articulates and measures levels of performance or competencies for a set of criteria. Each criterion is scored individually. An analytical rubric is in contrast to a holistic rubric.

## **Anchor Sample**

A student artifact that represents a specific level of performance. An anchor sample is used by normed raters to assess student work, usually comparing the student's performance to the anchor sample.

## **Andragogy**

The art and science of teaching and learning with a focus on adult learners.

## **Artifact**

A student work product that is assessed to evaluate the demonstrated level of competency mastery.

## **ASL – Assessment of Student Learning**

GCU's campus-wide assessment of student learning process. It is conducted by the Office of Assessment, applied to all levels, modalities, and programs of study, to assess key mission critical learning outcomes.

## **Assessment**

The collection and analysis of information about student learning and institutional effectiveness.

- 1) Assessment is best accomplished through multiple means. No single measure can adequately capture complex constructs such as teaching, student learning, or institutional effectiveness.
- 2) Assessment of student learning can be quantitative or qualitative but is most often a combination of both.
- 3) Assessment of institutional effectiveness is most often quantitative, although at times qualitative data might be collected.
- 4) Assessment is an essential component of the continuous improvement process and is undertaken at GCU for two reasons: first and most importantly, to improve student learning; and second, to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of institutional systems and processes (most often referred to as "institutional effectiveness").

## **Assessment Findings**

Data that have been collected to serve as evidence of student learning. The analysis and interpretation of assessment data guide improvement actions to meet student needs more effectively.

## **Assessment Measures**

A means used to evaluate assignments, activities, artifacts, or events that support outcomes or objectives. These can be measurement tools such as rubrics, benchmark/threshold scores on standardized and locally designed test, threshold goals for exit interviews, or student, alumni, or staff surveys.

## **Assessment Methods**

Student work products used for assessing learning. Direct methods demonstrate student performance of objectives and can include research papers, oral presentations, projects, performances, portfolios, standardized examinations, case study analyses, and internships. Indirect methods, from which student perception is assessed, include surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

## **Assessment Plan**

A document that outlines assessment activities, including identifying learning outcomes or program competencies, assessment measures, and target mastery goals.

## **Authentic Assessment**

A form of assessment that measures a student's ability to demonstrate meaningful application of skills and knowledge. Authentic assessment usually consists of a task that students perform, as opposed to taking an exam. This form of assessment can take place repeatedly in order to measure the ability to apply knowledge and skills and meet learning outcomes. Authentic assessment often utilizes a rubric to measure a student's performance level associated with a learning outcome. Authentic assessment is also called performance-based assessment.

## **Automated Rubric**

An analytic rubric that makes use of a Digital Classroom feature to create a system-generated rubric that allows faculty to score the work product. The Digital Classroom stores these scores in a database. They provide important pieces of data in most college assessment plans.

## **Blind Review**

A method whereby normed readers review and assess artifacts from which all identifiers have been removed. This technique is used in GCU's annual ASL process.

## **BMA - Benchmark Assignments**

Assessments or measurements that evaluate student performance, knowledge, or skills relative to a defined, explicit set of learning outcomes or goals. Among the various types/levels of benchmarks are the following: course, programmatic, university, etc.

## **CD - Curriculum Developer**

A member of Curriculum Design and Development (CDD) who works on course revisions and new course development.

## **CDD - Curriculum Design and Development**

A professional services group at Grand Canyon Education (GCE) that assists the colleges in program design and course development.

## **CDT – Course Design Tool**

The tool CDD uses after course development to prepare the course for transfer to the learning management system.

## **CLA+ – Collegiate Learning Assessment Plus**

A national web-based assessment designed to assess critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication. The CLA+ is offered in the fall to freshmen and in the spring to seniors. Both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are available. Over 500 institutions have participated in the CLA and CLA+.

<http://www.collegiatelearningassessment.org/>

## **Co-Curricula**

Activities and learning experiences, both formal and informal, that complement and align to the academic curriculum and support the university mission and vision.

## **Cohort**

A group of students that begin and usually move through a program together.

## **Competencies**

The specific skills developed within a program of study, or what students should know and be able to do after completing the program. In GCU Program Maps, domains are associated with specific competencies developed in individual courses.

## **Cross-Sectional Study**

A study in which the performance of a specified individual or group is observed at one point in time. The CLA+ (Collegiate Learning Assessment Plus) test conducts a cross-sectional study of freshmen in the fall and seniors in the spring of every year.

## **CRT - Criterion-Referenced Test**

A testing method by which scores are based on specific, articulated criteria. The CRT, also called standards-based assessment, is in contrast to norm-referenced tests (NRT) that compare an individual score against a group.

## **Culture of Assessment**

An institutional characteristic that shows evidence for valuing and engaging in assessment for ongoing improvement.

## **Curriculum Map**

A matrix that documents the connection between outcomes (what students will be able to do or demonstrate as a result of their studies) and where the curriculum addresses those outcomes. A curriculum map is an analytic tool for tracking and aligning curriculum content to

learning outcomes. GCU uses the curriculum map to track the location of benchmark assignments in programs and align them to learning competencies.

### **DCO - Detailed Course Outline**

A document created by CDD and the colleges that provides an outline or a framework for the development of a new course. DCOs are frequently started during the program design process, where they bridge programmatic competencies and course objectives, and completed in preparation for the development of the syllabus.

### **Digital Classroom**

A web-based interface, or learning management system, that facilitates online learning. Content is presented, forums are used for asynchronous communication, and assignments and quizzes are submitted and assessed.

### **Direct Methods**

Authentic student work used to demonstrate competency in specific learning outcomes. Direct methods include

- Student writing (e.g., essays or research papers)
- Capstone course projects
- Supervisor observations
- Portfolios
- Standardized or local examinations

### **Domains**

The educational tracks, themes, and expectations in a particular course or set of courses. Specifically, a domain is a key thematic element that runs throughout a program, including domains derived from the mission statement. Domains are used at GCU primarily in the Program Designs and Maps that are produced for each program/program of study through CDD.

### **Effectiveness**

The degree to which programs, events, activities, or institutions achieve intended results and purposes.

### **Embedded Assessment**

A form of assessment that gathers information on proficiency through regular activities. When assessment is embedded, it is authentic, unobtrusive, and an ongoing part of the teaching-learning or operational process.

### **EOCS – End of Course Survey**

A survey presented to all GCU students at the end of each course to assess satisfaction with curriculum, instruction, and student services.

### **EOPS – End of Program Survey**

A survey presented to all GCU students near completion of a program of study to assess overall satisfaction, career preparation, and employment outlook.

### **FEOCS – Faculty End of Course Survey**

A survey presented to all GCU faculty at the end of each course to assess satisfaction with curriculum, faculty services, and technical support.

### **Formative Assessment**

An assessment approach that uses assessment information as immediate feedback to improve instruction and student performance and is therefore used by individual faculty members in ongoing activities.

### **Goals**

The educational expectations of a planned program or set of programs, such as the goals of a particular college or the overall GCU goals. The term is associated primarily with program- and institutional-level assessment.

### **Halo Learn**

GCU's digital classroom.

### **Holistic Rubric**

A rubric that assigns a level of performance by measuring performance across multiple criteria as a whole. It does not give single scores for each criterion. A holistic rubric is in contrast to an analytic rubric.

### **Holistic Scoring**

A method of obtaining a score that results from an overall judgment of performance using specified criteria.

### **IAP - Improvement Action Plan**

A course of action based on the collaborative analysis and interpretation of Assessment Findings. They include specific initiatives designed to improve performance, the success indicator to demonstrate improvement, the personnel responsible for implementing the improvement, and the time period involved.

### **ICS – Initial Course Survey**

A survey presented to students in the middle of their first two courses to assess perception of and satisfaction with student services and instruction.

### **ID – Instructional Designer**

A member of Curriculum Design and Development (CDD) who works on program revisions and new program development.

## **Indirect Methods**

Methods that assess student opinion, reflection, or perception of their learning rather than the demonstration of their knowledge, skills, or abilities. Indirect measures include

- Exit interviews
- Focus groups
- Participation rates
- Surveys

## **Institutional Effectiveness**

The measure of an organization's achievement of articulated goals.

## **Inter-Reader Agreement**

The extent to which two or more scorers or readers reach consensus in assessment.

## **LC – LoudCloud**

GCU's previous learning management system. All courses are transitioning to Halo Learn.

## **Learning Outcomes *or* Student Learning Outcomes**

The expected learning outcomes of an educational experience or a series of educational experiences (assignment outcomes, course outcomes, and program outcomes). Learning outcomes are most often associated with course- and program-level assessment.

## **Likert Scale**

A method used in questionnaires and surveys to prompt a respondent to express a view on a statement being presented, thereby signaling a level of agreement or disagreement with the statement presented.

## **LMS - Learning Management System**

A web-based interface that facilitates the Digital Classroom.

## **Longitudinal Study**

A study in which a specified individual or group is followed over a period of time to discover changes that may be attributable to the influence of the educational experience.

## **Measurement Tool**

Any standardized measure used to collect data for assessing outcomes.

## **Mid-Semester Survey**

A survey presented to traditional GCU students to provide an opportunity for mid-semester feedback about their academic, student services, and engagement experiences.

## **Mission Statement**

A statement that articulates an organization's essential nature, its values, and its work.

## **Norming**

The calibration process by which assessment readers learn to apply rubric criteria consistently to student work products and to align their scoring. Norming contributes to inter-reader agreement.

## **NRT - Norm-Referenced Test**

A testing method by which an individual's score is compared to peer scores. It contrasts with criterion-referenced tests (CRT), where scores are based on specific criteria.

## **NSSE – National Survey of Student Engagement**

A national survey instrument that collects information at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college.

<https://nsse.indiana.edu>

## **Objective Measure**

Data that avoid bias from observers' feelings, interpretations, or other extraneous factors.

## **Objectives**

The expected learning outcomes of planned educational experiences; in other words, the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students should develop and demonstrate. The term is primarily associated with course-level assessment.

## **Outcome-Based Education**

An educational approach or philosophy focusing on student learning that is achieved and assessed utilizing a system of established goals or learning outcomes.

## **PAT – Programmatic Assessment Tool**

A framework in xRM for managing and tracking programmatic assessment data collected by colleges and monitored by the Office of Academic Assessment. PAT is designed for curriculum mapping, recording assessment plans and findings, and tracking improvement actions plans and status reports.

## **PDD – Program Design Document**

The document that defines programmatic outcomes using Domains and Competencies developed by the colleges and facilitated by CDD.

## **PDT – Program Design Tool**

The tool CDD uses during program development to track and communicate programmatic details and changes.

## **Pedagogy**

The art and science of how something is taught and how students learn it. Pedagogy refers to the approach to teaching and learning, the way the content is delivered, and what students learn as a result of the process.

## **Performance-Based Assessment**

Authentic tasks to measure performance.

## **Portfolios**

A systematic and organized collection of a student's work that exhibits to others the direct evidence of the student's efforts, achievements, and progress over a period of time.

## **POS – Program of Study**

A general description of an academic program, the preferred sequence of program major courses, their descriptions and credit values.

## **Program Competencies**

The specific, measurable knowledge, skills, or abilities that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of their program of study.

## **Program Review**

Program efficacy and performance are assessed and evaluated in a recursive three-, five-, or six-year cycle which culminates in a formal Program Review. Program Review assesses data gathered from multiple indicators appropriate to a program's mission and educational purposes, and concomitant with student success and external requirements. Ongoing assessment, analysis, and improvement actions occur during the cycle, all of which provide evidence for the final review.

The process includes the Program Review Scorecard, which identifies and provides a means for capturing data on key indicators for evaluating program performance over a designated period of time. The indicators reflect areas of student learning, faculty and curricular effectiveness, and university outcomes. The Scorecard provides a summary of indicator data, the evaluation of which forms the basis for the Program Review Document, which includes informed analysis, evidentiary statements, and detailed improvement actions.

## **Programmatic Assessment**

Program analysis of student performance is an on-going annual process through a review of the benchmark assessments of expected learning outcomes. The analysis and interpretation of

programmatic assessment data guide improvement action plans, inform curricular and instructional changes, and further development to meet student needs more effectively .

The annual Programmatic Assessment cycle for all college programs includes the following components:

- Assessment Plans, which articulate the programmatic domains and competencies that will be analyzed in that cycle as well as the benchmark target achievement levels for each measure.
- Assessment Findings, which are pulled directly from the learning management system and show the level of student achievement, based on the stated targets, for each of the designated measures that evaluate the competency or competencies.
- Improvement Action Plans, which are based on the collaborative analysis and interpretation of the Assessment Findings.
- Status Reports, which are required at four and eleven months post submission of the Improvement Action Plans and indicate the progress of that plan.

Each phase of the annual cycle is documented in the PAT in xRM, and feedback is provided by the Office of Assessment as needed. The ultimate goal of this effort is to improve student learning, students' overall university experience, and their future success.

### **PSEC - Program Standards and Evaluation Committee**

College committee comprised of faculty and administrators who gather to discuss, prepare, and vet proposals for new academic programs. The PSEC reviews and evaluates program designs and coursework for each program and makes recommendations and/or modifications based on that review. The Committee considers proposals for all new courses and programs of study and makes recommendations to college leadership.

### **Qualitative Data**

Non-numeric information, such as conversation, text, audio, or video.

### **Quantitative Data**

Numeric information including quantities, percentages, and statistics.

### **Reliability**

The extent to which a set of results can be generalized and repeated over time, across tasks, and among interpreters. Reliability indicates how consistently assessment procedures measure their specified target with high levels of agreement.

### **Rubric**

A scoring and instructional tool used to assess student performance using a task-specific range or set of criteria. A rubric is used to measure student performance against this pre-determined

set of criteria and contains the essential criteria for the task and levels of performance (i.e., from low to high) for each criterion.

### **Sample**

A defined subset of the population based on defined criteria.

### **Scaffolding**

An instructional technique in which a complex task is divided into smaller tasks within a single course or throughout an entire Program of Study to accomplish the reinforcement and mastery of desired learning outcomes.

### **SME - Subject Matter Expert**

An individual with authoritative knowledge, expertise, and/or skill in an academic area. SMEs collaborate in the development of course- and program-level curricula.

### **SSC - Student Services Counselor**

An individual who works with current and prospective students to advise them on degree program requirements, course selection, and financial processing

### **Standard of Performance**

A specific expectation of student performance that shows progress toward a learning outcome.

### **Status Report**

Audit conducted at pre-determined intervals post submission of an Improvement Action Plan that indicates the progress of that plan.

### **Student Artifact**

A sample of a student work product, such as an essay or subject paper.

### **Student Learning Outcomes *or* Learning Outcomes**

The expected learning outcomes of an educational experience or a series of educational experiences (assignment outcomes, course outcomes, program outcomes). Learning outcomes are most often associated with course and program-level assessment.

### **Subjective Measure**

Data that rely on opinion or judgment.

### **Summative Assessment**

An assessment approach that is culminating and does not inform the immediate learning experience. The goal of summative assessment is to make a judgment of student competency after an instructional phase is complete. A department or program would conduct summative assessment at the completion of a program to ensure students have met the program goals and objectives.

## **Target**

The level of student performance expected for an outcome. GCU uses acceptable and ideal target performance in programmatic assessment. Targets identify the percentage of students expected to meet or exceed a specified score.

## **Taskstream AMS (Accountability Management System)**

A web-based system for managing and tracking programmatic assessment, used from 2009 to 2020 by colleges for curriculum mapping, recording assessment plans and findings, and tracking improvement actions plans and status reports for all programs. GCU has transitioned to an internal system in xRM— the Programmatic Assessment Tool, or “PAT”.

## **Triangulation**

A method of data collection using multiple methods in order to determine if the results show a consistent outcome.

## **UAC - University Assessment Committee**

University committee that identifies assessment goals for the university, provides discussion and assistance in the development of assessment tools, and assists with creating a culture of assessment at GCU. The membership of this committee is representative of the diversity of GCU's colleges and departments. GCE representatives participate as non-voting members. The individual committee members work collaboratively to identify and develop assessment processes, and serve as liaisons in communicating assessment strategies and building a culture of assessment in their respective colleges or departments.

## **UC - University Counselor**

An individual who is typically the first and primary point of contact for new and prospective students. The UC helps students to navigate the application and matriculation processes and assists students with initial course enrollments.

## **University Mission-Critical Competencies**

The articulation of the core skills Grand Canyon University expects of all students, regardless of college, program, or level, upon completion of a degree. These expectations reflect the Christian liberal arts nature of GCU's educational experience and demonstrate the connection of all university programs of study and the courses that make up those programs, to a Christian liberal arts heritage. These competencies include

- Effective Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Christian Worldview
- Leadership
- Global Awareness, Perspectives and Ethics

**Validity**

The degree to which evidence or results support a specific interpretation of test scores or results. Validity is a concept that defines quality in assessment. It addresses the extent to which assessment methods actually measure what is intended and provide accurate information that supports its intended purpose.

**Value-added**

The increase in learning that occurs during a course, program, or by the completion of a degree. Measurement of value-added can focus on the individual student (how much better a student can write, for example, at the end than at the beginning) or on a cohort of students (i.e., senior papers that contain more sophisticated writing skills than freshmen papers). A baseline measurement is required for comparison.

**xRM**

A customizable IT relationship management system. It is a strategic approach to a unified system that connects all aspects of a system.

## ***Accrediting & Credentialing Organizations***

### **AAQEP – Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation**

AAQEP promotes excellent, effective, and innovative educator preparation that is committed to evidence-based improvement and enjoys a high degree of community engagement and public confidence. AAQEP leverages credible evidence, technological advances, and innovations in quality assurance/accreditation to provide transparent, understandable reports on program quality and to foster innovation and improvement. <https://aaqep.org/>

### **ABET**

ABET accredits disciplines of applied and natural science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology programs at colleges and universities. ABET accreditation provides assurance that a college or university program meets the quality standards of the profession for which that program prepares graduates. ABET accredits programs, not institutions, and provides specialized accreditation for post-secondary programs within degree-granting institutions already recognized by national or regional institutional accreditation agencies or national education authorities worldwide. <https://www.abet.org/>

### **ACBSP – Accreditation Council for Collegiate Business Schools & Programs**

ACBSP, founded in 1988, was created by its members to fulfill a need for specialized accreditation by institutions of higher education with business schools and programs. <https://acbsp.org/>

### **ACOTE - Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education**

The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) is the accrediting body for occupational therapy educational programs and occupational therapy assistant educational programs. ACOTE establishes, approves, and administers educational standards to evaluate occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant educational programs. ACOTE establishes standards for educational programs; develops and implements policies, rules, and procedures for conducting accreditation reviews; and makes all accreditation decisions. <https://acoteonline.org>

### **ATS – The Association of Theological Schools**

More than 270 graduate schools of theology in the United States and Canada form The Association of Theological Schools. Member schools conduct post-baccalaureate professional and academic degree programs to educate persons for the practice of ministry and for teaching and research in the theological disciplines. These schools differ from one another in deep and significant ways, but through their membership in ATS, they demonstrate a commitment to shared values about what constitutes good theological education. <http://www.ats.edu/about>

### **CAA - The Council on Academic Accreditation - For Speech and Language**

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) accredits eligible master's degree programs in speech-language pathology. The CAA relies on a dedicated corps of volunteers serving as Council members and site visitors to accomplish the work of the accreditation program. <https://caa.asha.org/>

### **CAATE – The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education**

CAATE produces the Academic Accreditation of Professional Athletic Training Programs Standards. CAATE strives to assure accreditation excellence across the continuum of AT Education enhancing clinical practice. <http://www.caate.net/>

### **CACREP - Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs**

CACREP accredits master's and doctoral degree programs in counseling and its specialties that are offered by colleges and universities in the United States and throughout the world. CACREP's mission is to promote the professional competence of counseling and related practitioners through the development of preparation standards; the encouragement of excellence in program development; and the accreditation of professional preparation programs. <https://www.cacrep.org/>

### **CAE - Center of Academic Excellence**

CAE is a recognition by the National Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security. This designation is given to institutions who meet the rigor and hands-on experience cybersecurity requirements as laid out by the NSA and DHS. Schools are designated after meeting stringent criteria and may elect to specialize in several possible focus areas. CAE-CD institutions receive formal recognition from the U.S. Government for participating in the program. Recognition is program specific. <https://www.nsa.gov/resources/students-educators/centers-academic-excellence/>

### **CAHIIM - Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management**

The Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM) strives to provide the public with effective and consistent quality monitoring of academic programs in health information management (HIM) and health informatics (HI) through maintenance of accreditation policies and processes. CAHIIM provides tools for assessing continuous quality improvement through university partnership, voluntary peer review process, and annual program monitoring as various means to continuously improve the quality of health information management and health informatics education to meet healthcare workforce needs. <https://www.cahiim.org/accreditation>

### **CAHME – Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education**

The Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) serves the public by advancing the quality of healthcare management education globally. CAHME is an

interdisciplinary group of educational, professional, clinical, and other health sector organizations devoted to quality improvement of education for healthcare management and administration professionals. <https://cahme.org/healthcare-management-education-accreditation/>

### **CCNE – Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education**

CCNE is an autonomous accrediting agency contributing to the improvement of the public's health. The commission ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate, graduate, and residency programs in nursing. It also serves the public interest by assessing and identifying programs that engage in effective educational practices. <https://www.aacnursing.org/CCNE>

### **CEPH - Council on Education for Public Health**

An independent agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit schools of public health, and public health programs outside schools of public health. CEPH assures quality in public health education and training to achieve excellence in practice, research, and service, through collaboration with organizational and community partners. <https://ceph.org/>

### **CHEA – The Council for Higher Education Accreditation**

CHEA is an association of 3,000 degree-granting colleges and universities and recognizes 60 institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations. CHEA serves as a national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation. <https://www.chea.org/>

### **CSWE - Council of Social Work Education**

CSWE is the national association representing social work education in the United States that ensures and enhances the quality of social work education for a professional practice that promotes individual, family, and community well-being, and social and economic justice. CSWE pursues this mission in higher education by setting and maintaining national accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work, by promoting faculty development, by engaging in interprofessional and international collaborations, and by advocating for social work education and research. <https://www.cswe.org/>

### **HLC – Higher Learning Commission**

HLC is an independent corporation that was founded in 1895 as one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region, which includes the following 19 states: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming. <https://www.hlcommission.org/About-HLC/about-hlc.html>

### **NASAC - National Addiction Studies Accreditation Commission**

NASAC is an academic accreditation organization for higher education addiction studies programs. The organization represents addiction-focused major and minor programs,

educators, and practitioners at the Associate, Bachelor's, Master's, Post-Grad, and Doctoral levels. <https://nasacaccreditation.org/>

### **National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) Designation**

The National Security Agency (NSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) created the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) program as a way to recognize and grant designations to schools that offer rigorous degree programs in information security. Through this jointly sponsored program, the NSA and DHS work together to promote higher education and research in cyber defense. The NSA and DHS recognize that the ultimate goal of higher education and research in cyber defense is to produce professionals capable of defending against the increasingly complex nature of cybercrime and intrusion in both government and industry. <https://www.nsa.gov/Academics/Centers-of-Academic-Excellence>

### **NOAA – National Office for Arts Accreditation**

NOAA is the name given to the staff and facilities shared by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), and the National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD). In addition to the work of these four accrediting bodies, NOAA manages these cooperative efforts that involve all four accrediting bodies, the Higher Education Arts Data Services (HEADS) project, the Council of Arts Accrediting Associations (CAAA), and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS). <https://www.arts-accredit.org/national-office-for-arts-accreditation/>

### **SSH - Society for Simulation in Healthcare Accreditation**

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare serves members by fostering education, professional development, and the advancement of research and innovation. It also promotes the profession of healthcare simulation through standards and ethics; and champions healthcare simulation through advocating, sharing, facilitating, and collaborating <https://www.ssih.org>

