

2002-2003 CHEA Survey of Degree-Granting Institutions, Accrediting Organizations, and Higher Education Associations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IN THE SUMMER OF 2002—FIVE YEARS AFTER IT COMMENCED operations—the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) approached the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to conduct a survey of its major constituents. The principal purposes of the survey were to help determine a) how well CHEA has functioned during the past five years, b) the primary issues that constituents think CHEA should address for the future, and c) constituents' views on their recent accreditation experience. A similar survey addressing the latter two topics was administered in 1997-98.

Separate survey instruments were developed for all degree-granting institutions of higher education (both CHEA members and non-members), CHEA-member accrediting organizations, and national higher education associations. These surveys were administered in the fall of 2002. Response rates were satisfactory and representative. Respondents included 2,102 degree-granting institutions (50.2% response), 44 accrediting organizations (73.3%

response), and 32 national higher education organizations (46% response).

Key findings of the survey include the following:

- A solid majority of institutions (87.3%) report that they are at least “somewhat familiar” with CHEA and its activities, and 38.5% report that they are “familiar” or “very familiar” with the organization. National higher

education associations are overwhelmingly familiar with CHEA.

- Accreditation and student learning outcomes is decisively identified by the three constituencies as the most important issue for CHEA to address as a priority in the next five years. This issue was cited as “very important” for CHEA to consider as a priority by 62.8% of institutions, 61.4% of accrediting organizations, and 78.3% of the national higher education associations responding. These ratings represent more than twice the level of response in the “very important” category achieved by any other issue.
- Other important accreditation issues named as priorities by all three respondent groups included distance learning (cited as “very important” by 40.1% of institutions, 34.1% of accreditors, and

ELECTION OF CHEA BOARD MEMBERS

At the April 28-29, 2003 Board of Directors and Annual Meeting of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), five individuals were elected to the CHEA Board for three-year terms (2003-2006):

Francis T. Borkowski, Chancellor, Appalachian State University (NC)

Nancy A. Marlin, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, San Diego State University (CA)

Gregory M. O'Brien, Chancellor, University of New Orleans (LA)

Earl S. Richardson, President, Morgan State University (MD)

Arthur J. Rothkopf, President, Lafayette College (PA) (for a second term).

Terms begin on July 1, 2003.

ELECTION OF 2003-2004 BOARD OFFICERS

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) Board of Directors has elected board officers for 2003-2004:

Chair: **Arthur J. Rothkopf**, President, Lafayette College (PA)

Vice Chair: **Malcolm Gillis**, President, William Marsh Rice University (TX)

Secretary: **Eleanor Baum**, Dean, Engineering School, The Cooper Union (NY)

Treasurer: **Richard P. Traina**, Trustee, George I. Alden Trust (MA)

43.5% of associations) and federal policy issues (cited as “very important” by 36.4% of institutions, 48.8% of accreditors, and 50% of associations).

- Evaluations of CHEA’s performance in its government relations function are broadly favorable with about 60% of institutions, more than three-quarters of accrediting organizations, and over half of national higher education associations indicating that CHEA is performing “extremely well” or “very well” in each of the areas of activity mentioned. About a third of institutional respondents indicated that they were “unable to judge” CHEA’s performance in this area.
- Evaluations of CHEA’s recognition function were also favorable. About 60% of institutions responding felt CHEA performed this function “extremely well” or “very well” (although almost a quarter were unable to judge). Solid majorities of both accreditors and associations also rated CHEA’s performance in various aspects of the recognition function favorably, while fewer than 15% of any respondent group rated any aspect of CHEA’s performance “not very well” or “not at all well.”
- Evaluations of CHEA’s membership services functions were similar. About 60% of institutions reported that CHEA performed each service “extremely well” or “very well,” as did more than three-quarters of accreditors and about two-thirds of associations. About a quarter of institutions reported that they were unable to judge.
- Both accrediting organizations and national higher education associations view CHEA favorably as an organizational colleague and partner, with almost 90% of the former and over three-quarters of the latter reporting CHEA as “excellent” or “good” in this respect.
- Institutional views of the accrediting process are generally favorable, with majorities indicating that such things as “the opportunity to examine institutions and programs through self-study” (72.8%), “gaining external feedback on performance that can be used for improvement” (52.9%), and “an alternative to government regulation or oversight” (54%) were “major benefits” of the process. Prominent challenges of accreditation reported by institutions were “providing evidence of student learning outcomes” (cited by 33% as a “major challenge”) and “responding to the needs of multiple accreditors” (cited by 23.4% as a “major challenge”). Some 47% of institutions reported that the “benefits [of accreditation] far outweigh the burdens” and a further 36.3% reported that benefits “somewhat outweigh burdens.”
- Institutions and accrediting organizations identified several important changes in the accreditation process based on their recent experience. More than 70% of both groups reported increased emphasis on student learning outcomes in recent reviews compared to five years ago, while more than half of institutions and over two-thirds of accreditors reported greater use of electronic media in the review process.

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CHEA Board of Directors Actions on Eligibility and Recognition

At its April 28-29, 2003 meeting the CHEA Board of Directors reviewed the recommendations of the CHEA Committee on Recognition and took the following actions:

Organizations deemed eligible to undertake a recognition review:

- American Podiatric Medical Association Council on Podiatric Medical Education
- Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology

Organizations recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation:

- Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education
- Council on Social Work Education Commission on Accreditation

Organizations recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation with a Report:

- American Society of Landscape Architects Landscape Architectural Review Board
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology

Organization approved for a change of scope

- Distance Education and Training Council Accrediting Commission

The next meeting of the CHEA Committee on Recognition is November 24-25, 2003 in Washington, DC.

CHEA ENHANCING USEFULNESS
W ♦ O ♦ R ♦ K ♦ S ♦ H ♦ O ♦ P
WASHINGTON, DC, JUNE 19-20, 2003

*Enhancing Accreditation Accountability:
What are the Roles and Responsibilities of
Accreditors, Institutions, and Programs?*

THE RITZ – CARLTON

I M P O R T A N T D A T E S

- ◆ June 19-20, 2003
Enhancing Usefulness Workshop
Washington, DC

- ◆ September 22-23, 2003
CHEA Board of Directors Meeting
Washington, DC

- ◆ January 26, 2004
CHEA Board of Directors Meeting
Marina del Rey, CA

- ◆ January 27-29, 2004
CHEA Annual Conference
Marina del Rey, CA

CHEA

Council for Higher Education Accreditation
One Dupont Circle NW • Suite 510
Washington DC 20036-1135