

Day 20: Did you the importance of CMU's institutional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)?

Institutional accreditation:

- Provides assurance to stakeholders that Colorado Mesa University offers a high quality educational experience through documented evidence of meeting HLC criteria;
- Establishes CMU's eligibility to offer federal financial aid;
- Is necessary to ensure transferability of credits to other institutions;
- Fulfills a requirement for CMU programs that pursue specialized accreditation; and
- Serves as a process of self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

HLC is one of six regional accrediting bodies with responsibilities that span the 19 states shown in the map below, with CMU being one of 1,330 degree-granting colleges and universities accredited by the Commission. HLC evaluates an entire organization *in terms of its mission* against the agency's criteria and does not does not accredit any programs or specific elements of an institution. HLC approval, however, is required for program accreditation and for CMU to award federal financial aid.

Colorado Mesa was initially accredited in 1957, with its accreditation reaffirmed consistently since then. The University's most recent reaffirmation by HLC was in 2014 for a period of ten years.

HLC Assurance Review Steering Committee

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