

UAF ACCREDITATION FAQS

Is UAF currently accredited?

Yes. UAF has never lost accreditation and its accreditation through the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) is in good standing.

What is regional accreditation?

The terms regional accreditation and institutional accreditation are often used interchangeably. According to NWCCU: "Regional accreditation is a process of recognizing educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public. In the United States this recognition is extended largely through nongovernmental, voluntary membership associations that establish accreditation criteria, evaluate institutions against that criteria, and approving institutions that meet the criteria."

Doesn't our accreditation expire this fall?

No. Accreditation through NWCCU continues unless the Commission decides not to reaffirm accreditation.

Normally there is a seven-year cycle that culminates in a Mission Fulfillment report and a visit by a team of evaluators who make a recommendation to NWCCU. UAF was due to have an evaluative site visit this fall but we have been given a one-year extension due to the uncertainty following the Board's July 30 decision to pursue a plan for a single accreditation. By waiting a year, UAF believes that reducing the uncertainty will provide for a deeper and more valuable self-study, and provide a context for more relevant recommendations regarding quality and continuous improvement.

Did UAF's School of Education lose its accreditation?

No, it did not. There is a difference between regional accreditation, which accredits the entire institution (in our case, through NWCCU) and specialized accreditation, which is also called programmatic accreditation. A number of UAF programs, including Education, have specialized accreditation in addition to institutional accreditation. In fact, UAF has the only program in the state approved by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

What does teach-out mean for our students?

According to NWCCU policy, "a *teach-out plan* is a written plan that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution of higher education ceases to operate or ceases instruction at one or more locations that provide 100% of at least one degree program or in one or more degree programs before all students have completed their program of study."

The institution should provide an “educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that promised to the students upon enrollment.”

This means that if a degree is eliminated, UAF will make every effort to provide a program that is “reasonably similar” (though not necessarily exactly the same) to the one that the students enrolled in. If that is not possible, a *teach-out agreement* might be reached for the student to complete their program with another institution.

NWCCU must approve teach-out plans and agreements.

Where can I find more information about accreditation?

At <https://uaf.edu/accreditation/>. We will continue to keep this site updated with current information.

The NWCCU website is <https://www.nwccu.org/>