



# WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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## *Annual Accreditation Report*

*April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021*

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*Casper College • Central Wyoming College • Eastern Wyoming College • Laramie County Community College  
Northwest College • Northern Wyoming Community College District • Western Wyoming Community College*

# **WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACCREDITATION ACTIVITY**

## **APRIL 1, 2020 – MARCH 31, 2021**

This summary is provided in compliance with W.S. 21-18-202(e)(i), which requires the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) to “report the findings of institutional and specialized accreditation studies.” Because continued Higher Learning Commission (HLC) institutional accreditation is reaffirmed for various periods of time and institutions applied for candidacy at various times in the past, each of the Wyoming community colleges is at a different phase of the on-going institutional accreditation process. An HLC accreditation schedule is provided on page seven.

A schedule for specialized program accreditation status begins on page nine. Each Wyoming community college has at least one program with program accreditation agency affiliation.

## **ACCREDITATION BY THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION (HLC)**

The Higher Learning Commission is an independent corporation. The HLC is one of six institutional accreditors in the United States. Institutional accreditation is a voluntary process that serves the critical purposes of quality assurance and institutional and program improvement. Colleges that are accredited by the HLC continually evaluate their overall institutions and programs in light of the criteria for accreditation set forth by the HLC.

## **THE CRITERIA FOR HLC ACCREDITATION**

### **(September 1, 2020)**

The Criteria for Accreditation are the standards of quality by which the WCCC determines whether an institution merits accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation. They are as follows:

#### **Criterion One: Mission**

The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

#### **Criterion Two: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct**

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

#### **Criterion Three: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

#### **Criterion Four: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

#### **Criterion Five: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning**

The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

# PATHWAYS TO HLC REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION

The HLC maintains processes for determining eligibility for accreditation, for achieving candidacy status, for achieving initial accreditation, and for reaffirming accreditation. The HLC now has two Pathways, the Standard Pathway and the Open Pathway.

## **Standard Pathway**

The Standard Pathway seeks to achieve the following goals:

- To reduce the reporting burden on institutions by utilizing as much information and data as possible from existing institutional processes and collecting them in electronic form as they naturally occur over time
- To enhance rigor by checking institutional data annually (Institutional Update) and conducting comprehensive evaluations twice in the ten-year cycle
- To integrate as much as possible all HLC processes and requests for data into the reaffirmation of accreditation cycle

The Standard Pathway is available to all accredited institutions at any time, unless the institution is on probation or under a Show-Cause order, when it follows a separate process. Some institutions are limited to the Standard Pathway. Two comprehensive evaluations take place in a ten-year cycle: one in Year 4 and one in Year 10. Both quality assurance and quality improvement are integrated into these comprehensive evaluations, as well as Federal Compliance. In addition, the institution addresses quality assurance and improvement through interim monitoring, as required. In the Standard Pathway, both assurance and improvement are directly related to the Criteria for Accreditation.

The components of the comprehensive evaluation in the Standard Pathway are:

1. An Assurance Review;
2. An Improvement Review;
3. A review of Federal Compliance;
4. An on-site visit; and
5. If applicable, a multi-campus review.

Currently no Wyoming Community College is on the Standard Pathway.

## **Open Pathway**

The Open Pathway seeks to achieve the following goals:

- To enhance institutional value by opening the improvement aspect of accreditation so that institutions may choose Quality Initiatives to suit their current circumstances
- To reduce the reporting burden on institutions by utilizing as much information and data as possible from existing institutional processes and collecting them in electronic form as they naturally occur over time
- To enhance rigor by checking institutional data annually (Institutional Update) and conducting Assurance Reviews twice in the ten-year cycle
- To integrate as much as possible all HLC processes and HLC requests for data into the reaffirmation of accreditation cycle

Two Assurance Reviews take place in the ten-year cycle: one in Year 4 and one in Year 10. The Year 4 review occurs asynchronously via the HLC's online Assurance System and without a visit. The Year 10 review also is conducted with the Assurance System but includes a visit to the campus, as noted below. Between Years 5 and 9 of the ten-year cycle, the institution proposes and completes a Quality Initiative which focuses on institutional innovation and improvement.

The components of the comprehensive evaluation in the Open Pathway are:

1. An Assurance Review;

2. A review of Federal Compliance;
3. An on-site visit; and
4. If applicable, a multi-campus review.

### **Previous Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Pathway (Phased Out 2018)**

The Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) was one of several pathways leading to accreditation with the HLC. AQIP was premised on principles of continuous quality improvement, and its various processes and requirements were designed to assist institutions in achieving quality improvement, along with reaffirming the institution's accredited status with the HLC once every AQIP cycle. Due to a significant decrease in the number of participating institutions, this Pathway was sunset on October 1, 2018.

## **WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE HLC ACCREDITATION SUMMARIES**

### **CASPER COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Casper College is preparing for its 4-year Assurance Review in April of 2023. Energy and activity are routinely focused on building and presenting a quality argument that substantiates the progress of the last few years. Moreover, the action item producing the interim report on Faculty Qualification was both reported and resolved within the requisite time requested by HLC.

### **CENTRAL WYOMING COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Central Wyoming College completed its 4-year Assurance Review in July, 2020. This mid-cycle review entailed submitting an Assurance Filing as well as an assessment by peer reviewers. CWC met all criteria, and no additional monitoring was recommended.

CWC also hosted a peer review visit in December, 2019 as part of its application to offer a Baccalaureate degree. The college's first four-year degree was approved by HLC in March, 2020, and the college began offering a BAS in Organizational Management and Leadership in Fall 2020.

### **EASTERN WYOMING COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Eastern Wyoming College (EWC) in Torrington was recommended for a ten-year reaccreditation following the HLC team visit in 2010. The last comprehensive visit was completed in November 2020. Eastern Wyoming College is participating in the Higher Learning Commission Persistence and Student Completion Academy. The next report date will be in February 2023 and the next comprehensive visit will be scheduled for 2030-2031.

### **LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Laramie County Community College (LCCC) hosted an HLC Comprehensive Quality Review on October 7-8, 2019. HLC re-affirmed LCCC's accreditation on March 20, 2020 with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2029-30. LCCC transferred from the AQIP Pathway, which HLC closed in October 2018, to the Open Pathway on March 30, 2020. The first Open Pathway Assurance Argument is due in August 2023.

An Interim Report is due to the HLC by 12/31/2021 on timeline and process used to ensure the quality of distance (online) courses. The College is developing its plan to ensure quality in distance courses, completed staff training for Magna Online course, Evaluating Online Teaching, and will deliver a successful interim report before the HLC deadline.

On May 8, 2020, HLC approved two bachelor of applied science degrees for Applied Management and Healthcare Administration.

**NORTHERN WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Northern Wyoming Community College District (NWCCD), serving Sheridan, Campbell, and Johnson counties, has participated in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) form of accreditation with the HLC since 2005. With a comprehensive HLC accreditation visit in Fall 2018, the District received reaffirmation of its 10-year institutional accreditation in Spring 2019. The HLC is retiring the AQIP pathway and transitioning institutions to either "Standard" or "Open" pathways. NWCCD has chosen the Open pathway. The next milestone on the new pathway will be the submission of an Assurance Report in 2023. The next comprehensive visit will be scheduled during 2028-2029. Considerations are being made to offer applied baccalaureate degrees which will occur as part of HLC's substantive change process for new programs.

**NORTHWEST COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Northwest College (NWC), in Powell, had a comprehensive HLC accreditation visit on September 11-12, 2017, which resulted in the college's reaffirmation of accreditation for the next ten years. NWC moved from the Standard Pathway to the Open Pathway as a result of the 2017 visit. After that visit, an interim report on assessment of student learning was requested and subsequently submitted in December 2019. That report was reviewed, and no additional monitoring was requested. Additionally, Northwest College was approved to offer a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in January 2021. Northwest College's next scheduled review is an Assurance Review scheduled for July 2022. NWC's next comprehensive visit will occur in 2027-28.

**WESTERN WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Western Wyoming Community College (WWCC) in Rock Springs is in the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) Open Pathway. Western is scheduled to have its next Comprehensive Evaluation in November 2022. Between now and then Western will be preparing for this visit, this visit will include a mock peer review in the spring of 2022 and a thorough review of Policies and Procedures. In January 2021 HLC approved Western's Substantive Change Application to begin offering a Bachelor of Applied Science degree. In April 2021 HLC approved Western's Substantive Change Application to begin offering an Associate of Science in Paramedicine.

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# HLC Accreditation Schedule

(Last updated May 2021)

<b>References:</b> 1. W.S. 21-18-202(e) (i) and (iii)	<b>Last Comprehensive Visit</b>	<b>Concerns to be Addressed at next Assurance Filing</b>	<b>Reports</b>	<b>Focused Visit</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>	<b>Next Standard or Open Pathway Site Visit</b>
<b>Casper College</b>	October 2018	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2028-2029
<b>Central Wyoming College</b>	October 2015	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2025-2026
<b>Eastern Wyoming College</b>	November 2020	n/a	February 2023	n/a	n/a	2030-2031
<b>Laramie County Community College</b>	October 2019	n/a	Interim report: on ensuring the quality of distance (online) courses	n/a	n/a	2029-2030
<b>Northwest College</b>	September 2017	n/a	Interim Report on student learning assessment December 2019; Assurance Review 2022			2027-2028
<b>Northern Wyoming Community College District</b>	October 2018					2028-2029
<b>Western Wyoming Community College</b>	October 2013	n/a	Quality Initiative Proposal approved May 2019	n/a	n/a	2022-2023

## **SPECIALIZED PROGRAM ACCREDITATION**

All seven community colleges offer credit programs which culminate in an Associate Degree or Certificate that are accredited by thirty-one accreditation agencies, associations, boards, commissions, councils, or societies, each specific to an individual program. The seven Wyoming community colleges have a total of 36 programs that have full accreditation status. The accreditation status of each of those 36 programs are documented below.

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<b>Community College</b>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Addictionology</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>Business and Accounting</b>	<b>Dance</b>	<b>Early Childhood Education</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	National Addiction Studies Accreditation Commission	National Association of Schools of Art and Design	Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs	National Association of Schools of Dance	National Association for the Education of Young Children
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	2020	2018	2010	2018	2017
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Good Standing	Good Standing	No Longer Seeking Accreditation	Good Standing	Good Standing
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	NA	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	NA	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	None	None	NA	None	None
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	NA	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2027	2028-2029	NA	2028-2029	2023-24



<b>Community College</b>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Health Science Simulation Center</b>	<b>Medical Lab Technology</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Nursing</b>	<b>Occupational Therapy Assistant</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	Society for Simulation in Healthcare	National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science	National Association of Schools of Music	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing	Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	2016	2019	2019	2019	2013
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Accredited	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	No	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	None	None	Comprehensive review/campus visit 10/2019	None	Annual Report
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	Summer 2021	2026	2029	2027	May 2022

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Paralegal Studies</b>	<b>Paramedic Technology</b>	<b>Pharmacy Technology</b>	<b>Radiography</b>	<b>Respiratory Therapy</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	American Bar Association	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs	American Society of Health System Pharmacists	Joint Review Committee on Higher Education in Radiologic Technology	Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	2016	2018	2013	2016	2015
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	None	None	None	Annual	Annual report
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2022	Spring 2022	June 2021	2/1/2024	2024-2025

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Central Wyoming College</u>	<u>Eastern Wyoming College</u>	<u>Eastern Wyoming College</u>	<u>Eastern Wyoming College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Theatre</b>	<b>Associate Degree Nursing Program</b>	<b>Veterinary Technology</b>	<b>Welding and Joining Technology</b>	<b>Nursing</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	National Association of Schools of Theatre	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)	American Veterinary Medical Association	American Welding Society	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	2010	March 2016	October 2017	2020	March 2020
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Good Standing	Good Standing	Full	Full	Full
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	None	Self-study report due 6 weeks before October 2021 re-accreditation visit	None	None	None
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None	None

<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	October 2021	October 19-21, 2021	Fall 2023	2021	2023
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<b>Community College</b>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Concurrent Enrollment</b>	<b>Dental Hygiene</b>	<b>Diagnostic Medical Sonography</b>	<b>EMS - Paramedic</b>	<b>Nursing</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)	Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP/CoAEMSP)	Accrediting Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	April 2016	August 2017	November 2019	July 2015	March 2020
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Initial Accreditation	Approval without reporting requirements	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual Report	None	Annual Report	Annual Report	Annual Report October 2021
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2022	2024	July 2024	Fall 2021	Fall 2027

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Northern Wyoming Community College District</u>	<u>Northern Wyoming Community College District</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Physical Therapist Assistant</b>	<b>Radiography</b>	<b>Surgical Technology</b>	<b>Dental Hygiene</b>	<b>Nursing</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)	Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)	American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA, CODA)	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	May 2016	April 2017	November 2013	Spring 2017	Spring 2019
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation	Approval Without Reporting Requirements	Continuing Accreditation as the program is in compliance with all Accreditation Standards
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual Report	Annual Report	Annual Report	Annual CODA Survey	Annual Report
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	Fall 2024	Fall 2024	2023	Spring 2024	Spring 2027

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Northwest College</u>	<u>Northwest College</u>	<u>Northwest College</u>	<u>Western Wyoming Community College</u>	<u>Western Wyoming Community College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Art; Graphic Design</b>	<b>Music; Music Technology</b>	<b>Nursing</b>	<b>Associate Degree in Nursing</b>	<b>Automotive</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	National Association of Schools of Art & Design (NASAD)	National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)	ASE Educational Foundation
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	November 13, 2014	2012	April 2020	March 2020	October 2017
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Good Standing	Good Standing	Continued Accreditation	Continued Accreditation	Good standing
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual HEADS data survey	Annual HEADS data survey; on-going follow-up on acoustic remedies to the Nelson Performing Arts building as specified in the 2012 self-study memo	Annual Report	Annual Report due each fall	Compliance Report submitted Spring 2020. Accreditation renewal Fall 2022
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2027	Spring 2028	Fall 2022

