

Glossary of Terms 2017

The following are terms and acronyms associated with the accreditation process. Additional terms can be found in the [Higher Learning Commission's Glossary](#).

Accreditation — The process that ensures the academic quality of an institution. Accreditation is voluntarily sought by institutions and conferred by non-governmental bodies. In the United States, accreditation is provided through a network of geographically located peer professional groups. In Illinois, the group is the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, and UIS has been an accredited member of NCA since 1975.

AQIP — Academic Quality Improvement Program

Assessment Academy — Offered by the Higher Learning Commission; member institutions are provided a four-year sequence of events and interactions that are focused on student learning, targeted at accelerating and advancing efforts to assess and improve student learning, and designed to build institution-wide commitment to assessment of student learning.

Assurance Argument — Text submitted by the institution to the Commission that addresses each criterion and the related core components. A list of the Criteria for UIS' 2017 accreditation can be found [here](#).

Assurance Filing — Comprised of the institution's Evidence File and Assurance Argument.

Assurance System — The Higher Learning Commission's web-based technology that institutions use in the Standard and Open Pathways to provide an Assurance Argument and evidence materials.

Assurance Review —

Commission — Refers to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Criteria — A list of the Criteria for UIS' 2017 accreditation can be found [here](#).

Evidence File — Two sections within the Assurance System, which include (1) recent comprehensive evaluation and interim reports, a trend summary from the institution's most recent Institutional Update submissions, copies of official actions and correspondence, and public comments; and (2) evidence materials that demonstrate that the institution meets the criteria for accreditation.

HLC — The Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association.

Open Pathway — A process of accreditation that is divided into two components, the Assurance Review and the Quality Initiative.

PEAQ — Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality. In September 2012, the Higher Learning Commission began the process of replacing PEAQ with two pathways, the Standard Pathway and the Open Pathway.

Quality Initiative — An institution selects one major improvement project that meets its current needs or aspirations. This project is the Quality Initiative and allows institutions to take risks, aim high, and if so be it, learn from only partial success or even failure.
