

Before You Enroll, Ask About Accreditation

With all the educational choices available - community colleges, business schools, online universities, private colleges, public universities – how do you know which option is the best investment for your future?

One measure of the value of a college's programs is called accreditation. Accreditation means that a college or university meets established standards. Academic credits and degrees earned at accredited institutions will be more readily recognized by other accredited schools if you decide to transfer to another school or earn an advanced degree.

It is important to find out about a school's accreditation before you enroll. For example, if you begin your college career at a two-year school that is not accredited and later decide to transfer to an accredited four-year school to earn a bachelor's degree, the courses you completed at the non-accredited school will not count toward your bachelor's degree. To find out about a school's accreditation and policies about transferring courses from one school to another, ask an admissions counselor.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) is the primary accrediting agency for colleges and universities in North Carolina. SACS accredits all of North Carolina's community colleges, the UNC institutions and the 36 private colleges that are part of the N.C. Independent Colleges and Universities. For a list of these accredited schools, see the "College Fair" section of CFNC.org.

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