

Education Committee report: September 2024

National Association of University Forest Resource Programs (NAUFRP) Executive Committee meeting, Loveland CO.

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1. SAF Accreditation - Education Policy Review Committee

The education committee chair continues to serve on the Education Policy Review Committee (EPRC) of SAF and was reappointed in December 2023.

Key personnel at SAF:

Erin Turner, Director of Credentialling.
Su Ann Shupp, Accreditation Manager.

The major focus for SAF at this time is conforming to CHEA standards as SAF prepares to be recognized by CHEA. To achieve this recognition, SAF must comply with the CHEA Standards and Processes for Recognition. The preparation of the application for CHEA recognition is ongoing, and over the last few months the different portions of the application have been drafted and then reviewed by members of the EPRC. The education committee chair has focused on review of STANDARD 3. ACCREDITATION STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION. Please communicate any challenges resulting from changes that have been requested from NAUFRP institutions relating to the location on websites where evidence of student outcomes and/or achievement data can be found which, to comply with CHEA standards, need to be within one click of program homepage. Evidence may include retention rate, graduation rate, and student achievement data (qualitative or quantitative). The due date requested for this at our previous meeting is October 15.

2. Updates on enrollments in Natural Resource disciplines.

Terry Sharik and Tara Bal are preparing a manuscript that includes a 10-year update of national Natural Resources enrollment trends. The results of the most recent data that are available present some interesting trends, and these will be discussed at the General Assembly. This provides NAUFRP with a preview of some of the results that will be included in a peer reviewed manuscript and provides the opportunity for discussion regarding the reasons behind some of the trends that have been observed.

3. Artificial Intelligence

Following the discussion at the March Executive Committee meeting, the Education Committee is hosting a short workshop "AI in forestry education - opportunities and challenges" at the General Assembly. This workshop will focus on the use of Generative AI (GAI). The goals are to:

- Compare notes and discuss how our programs, units and institutions are prepared for the new world
- Identify gaps in our integration of AI into our programs

- Identify areas where the Education Committee can assist programs. This might include information gathering, pulling together resources to share, and other opportunities that will be identified at the workshop.

As a community it is important to embrace the opportunities as we prepare students for a workforce in which AI will be omnipresent, and it is also exciting to contemplate and prepare for what the next generation of AI tools will enable us to do to help ensure the success of faculty and our students.