

# COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION

## RECOGNITION DECISION SUMMARY

### AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FORENSIC SCIENCES (AAFS) FORENSIC SCIENCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS ACCREDITATION COMMISSION (FEPAC)

In accordance with the [2021 CHEA Standards and Procedures for Recognition](#), Procedures-B.11, this summary provides the reason(s) for the recognition decision by the CHEA Board of Directors.

#### Profile of Accrediting Organization

Type of Accreditor: Programmatic

Number of Programs: 51

#### Current CHEA-Recognized Scope of Accreditation

*FEPAC accredits forensic science education programs that lead to a bachelor's or master's degree in forensic science or in a natural science with a forensic science concentration in the United States and Internationally. FEPAC will also accredit bachelor's or master's programs with a digital evidence concentration. (2015)*

#### CHEA Recognition Information

History: Initial recognition, September 2012  
Extension of term of recognition, January 2021  
Action deferred on recognition for one year, October 2022

#### Most Recent Recognition Action

Date: CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, January 29, 2024

Decision: The CHEA Board of Directors awarded continuing recognition for a term of seven years with a Follow-up Report due December 1, 2024, and an Interim Report due at the midpoint of the recognition term (July 1, 2027). The Follow-up Report is to address Standards 1.A. and 2.A. which seek evidence that the accrediting organization implements and enforces standards, policies or procedures which advance academic quality using quantitative and/or qualitative measures and the accrediting organization implements and upholds standards, policies or procedures that require the accrediting organization to inform the public of the institution's or program's accreditation status and the reason(s) for the accreditation action(s) within 30 days of the organization's decision-making meeting in a readily accessible manner.

#### Summary of Prior Recognition Decisions

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, October 3, 2022: The Committee on Recognition informed the CHEA Board of Directors that it deferred action on Recognition for one year. The American Academy of Forensic Sciences, Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (AAFS-FEPAC) is to submit a response addressing CHEA Standards 1.A. (advance academic quality using quantitative and/or qualitative measures), 2.A. (inform the public of the program's accreditation status and the reason(s) for the accreditation action(s) in a readily accessible manner), 2.B. (provide current, readily accessible, accurate data to the public regarding student learning outcomes and/or achievement data), 2.D. (timely action to prevent substantially underperforming programs from maintaining accreditation), 3.C. (bases its accreditation decisions on how well a program meets its accreditation standards), 3.D. (require a program to meet all standards within a specified period of time not to exceed four years),

3.E. (clear distinctions between required actions and suggested actions for program improvement), 3.F. (process to ensure consistency in accreditation reviews and accreditation actions), 3.G. (engages in regular self-evaluation), 3.I. (demonstrate sufficient financial, staff, and operational resources to perform and sustain its accreditation functions efficiently and effectively), 4.A. (capacity and competence to engage in international accreditation activities), 4.B. (notifies the appropriate international authorities), and 4.C. (applies standards that are substantially comparable to U.S. programs).

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, January 25, 2021: Extension of term of recognition from December 31, 2022, to June 30, 2023 assuring continuity of CHEA recognition to allow for completion of the recognition process.

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, September 24–25, 2012: The CHEA Board of Directors accepted the CHEA Committee on Recognition’s recommendation to grant the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) Forensic Science Educational Program Accreditation Commission (FEPAC) recognition for up to 10 years.

The CHEA Committee on Recognition and the Board of Directors reviewed the AAFS-FEPAC for recognition. The review was based on the six CHEA recognition standards that require an accrediting organization to show that its accreditation process advances academic quality, demonstrates accountability, encourages self-scrutiny and planning, employs fair and appropriate procedures and demonstrates ongoing review of practice, and that it possesses sufficient resources to carry out its accreditation processes (*2006 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*, Paragraphs 12A-12F, pp. 5-8).

FEPAC demonstrated that it meets these standards and that its accreditation process is consistent with the quality improvement and accountability expectations that CHEA has established.

The CHEA recognition policy requires that an accrediting organization undergo a recognition review at least every 10 years and submit two interim reports.