



History of the Caucus and Related Items

The caucus was officially approved and began formation in September of 2022, formally becoming the IAEM-USA Higher Education Academician Caucus. Carolyn J. Harshman, MPA, CEM, serving as the IAEM-USA President during this year, submitted an issue paper for creation. The caucus was formed to create a space for researchers and professors of emergency management to 1) coordinate with FEMA's Higher Education Program to share and contribute to the betterment of the profession of emergency management, 2) provide an outlet for increased networking opportunities for IAEM member researchers and professors, 3) provide an outlet for members to enhance efforts to professionalize emergency management through discussions on a Code of Ethics and other contemporary issues, 4) provide a voice within IAEM for researchers and professors teaching future emergency managers, and 5) provide advice to IAEM leadership on matters related to higher education for emergency management professionals.

One of the first actions of this new caucus was to form a leadership team. Dr. Stacy Willett was appointed as Chair, and Dr. Jennifer Carlson, Ph.D., CEM, LCSW and Dr. Sandy Smith, RN, CEM were appointed as Vice-Chairs. IAEM-USA strongly recommended (and continues to stress) addressing coordination issues surrounding accreditation processes for emergency management higher education. In addition, IAEM-USA specifies that emergency management professionals have a critical role in the processes involving the enhancement of efforts to professionalize the field. and should be considered essential participants at all levels of government. The development of the caucus drives a range of initiatives, from those numbered above, to emerging issues, and longer-term developments.

In 2024, the IAEM-USA board moved to issue an OKR to the caucus involving the assessment of the value of credentialing higher education emergency management programs. The caucus also formally created two subgroups; one examining accreditation, and the other examining

the steps needed for formal professionalization of the field. Similarities existed across three caucuses within IAEM: this caucus, the [Training Caucus](#) (formally the Training and Education Committee), and the [Universities and Colleges Caucus](#). President Justin Kates, CEM, CPM was instrumental in coordinating an information sheet outlining the purposes of these caucuses, as they each have distinct purposes, and needed better alignment to allow coordination and collaboration to continue most effectively. Please visit their webpages linked above for more information.