

## Is AACSB Accreditation Worth the Cost?

In a recent [Chronicle of Higher Education](#) news report, “Struggling Colleges Question the Cost—and Worth—of Specialized Accreditation” the lead-in stated, “In thinking about selecting a new dean for its business school this year, Southern New Hampshire University considered whether the new leader should guide the school to gain accreditation through the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, as more than 500 colleges have done. But after seeing estimates that the costs of meeting those standards could top \$2-million annually, Paul J. LeBlanc, president of the university, decided that approval from the business-college association wasn’t worth the institution’s time or money.”

The following [comment on the article](#) expressed a view that is all too true from the experience of many: “The best thing that could happen to B-School education is an overthrow of AACSB. Many people feel that it has become little more than a sham. Indeed, the standards that are used to determine whether an institution is granted accreditation varies widely. Whereas the top B-Schools are reviewed by individuals from similar institutions, deans at mediocre schools get cronies from other mediocre universities to serve on their accreditation committees, and then take turns ‘scratching each others’ backs.” Although AACSB accreditation at one time actually signified quality, it unfortunately has created a culture in which “checking boxes” takes precedence over innovation, excellence, and true leadership. As a result, the “bar” continually gets lower. It seems that AACSB has placed priority on generating more revenues each year, rather than maintaining and raising standards.”

Marc DePree, Editor  
usmnews.net