

## Biographical Note

Leah K. Matthews, PhD  
Executive Director  
Distance Education Accrediting Commission

Dr. Leah Matthews brings a wealth of experience and expertise in quality assurance to her role as Executive Director of the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC), a position she has held since April 2013. The DEAC, established in 1926, holds recognition from both the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), underscoring its commitment to upholding rigorous educational standards in distance learning. DEAC has been a member of INQAAHE since 2018.

Prior to her leadership at the DEAC, Dr. Matthews served for three years as the Vice President for Recognition Services at CHEA. In this capacity, she oversaw the recognition process for sixty accreditors across the spectrum of regional, national, and programmatic accreditation within the U.S. higher education landscape. Her collaborative efforts with higher education associations addressed key areas such as accountability, student achievement, outcomes assessment, transparency, and quality assurance-related issues.

Known for her meticulous approach and dedication to excellence, Dr. Matthews adeptly manages the complexities inherent in directing an accrediting organization like the DEAC, particularly within the realm of large-scale distance learning institutions. Her leadership is characterized by strategic insight, political acumen, and a steadfast commitment to fostering educational quality and integrity.

Eager to broaden her impact within the higher education community, Dr. Matthews is poised to extend her contributions by offering her expertise to INQAAHE as a board member. Her proven track record and passion for advancing educational standards make her a valuable asset to any initiative aimed at enhancing the quality and credibility of higher education on a global scale.