



FEMA

Higher Education Program 2021 Program Plan

National Training and Education Division

“Meeting the emerging challenges of 21st century disasters and the changing nature of the risks we face requires innovation and engagement with the whole community, including academia, emergency management professional organizations, and the private sector, to harness the collective creativity to solve our toughest challenges.”

FEMA 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, page 19

Foreword

One of the great ideals in emergency management is that the whole community works together to leverage the collective knowledge and experience to develop solutions to disaster challenges and improve outcomes for survivors. The Higher Education Program (HiEd) provides a forum to advance that ideal, in association with the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) University and Agency Partnership Program (UAPP). HiEd, focused on emergency programs within FEMA’s National Training and Education Division (NTED) portfolio. Together, they foster continuous learning and innovation for their respective and inter-related communities.

In 1994, FEMA established HiEd to work with colleges and universities to foster a higher level of commitment to the field of emergency management. At the time there was one bachelor’s degree program and three certificate programs in emergency management in the United States. As of January 2021, the commitment has grown to include **269 institutions** of higher education offering **684 programs** in emergency management, homeland security, and related fields at the undergraduate, graduate, and certificate levels.

Today, the HiEd mission is to engage educators, researchers, and practitioners to work together to foster continuous learning and innovation in emergency management to meet the challenges that confront the Nation. HiEd meets the mission through a range of activities, including:

Managed by Staff:

- College List,
- Website,
- Newsletter,
- Community Calls,
- Webinars, and
- Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

Supplemented through Micro-Purchases:

- Focus Groups and Workshops,
- Regional Engagements,
- Research Inquiries, and
- Annual Symposium.

Strategic Alignment

HiEd supports the FEMA 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, Strategic Objective 1.4: Better learn from past disasters, improve continually, and innovate.

HiEd supports the [National Preparedness 2020-2023 Strategic Framework](#), Focus Area 2: Deliver integrated preparedness solutions that help communities balance risk with resources.

HiEd also supports the [NTED 2020-2022 Strategic Framework](#) priority to increase knowledge of and access to training and education resources.



Measures of Success

In his 2019 [FEMA PrepTalk](#), David Kaufman, former FEMA Associate Administrator for Policy, Program Analysis, and International Affairs, discusses trends in the strategic environment, including changes in demographics, urbanization, and emerging threats, and how they will dictate the future of emergency management and associated needs for higher education. HiEd continues to evolve to meet the changing needs. Measuring success includes monitoring the capacity of the academic community, the impact on the emergency management workforce, and knowledge transfer through HiEd into widely accepted theory and practice:

- Number of emergency management higher education programs in the U.S.
- Number of U.S. graduates (annual and cumulative since reporting began) with a degree, certificate, or concentration in emergency management.
- Number and percentage of new-hire U.S. emergency managers at FEMA and the Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial levels of government who come to the job with a college education that includes a degree, certificate, or concentration in emergency management.
- Number and percentage of on-board U.S. emergency managers at FEMA and the Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial levels of government who incorporate higher education into their professional development goals.
- Number and percentage of emergency management higher education programs in the U.S. that use resources from HiEd to modernize their curriculum and course materials.

Higher Education Program Plan

HiEd sponsors an annual survey and State of the Community Report that includes the following:

- *What is the focus of emergency management higher education programs?* Based on responses from 114 U.S. based and seven foreign institutions in 2020 (39.4% response rate), the survey indicates half of the programs focus on preparing students for work in the public sector, while the other half are divided between the private sector and non-profits. While responding programs have a variety of degree, certificate, and concentration offerings, the majority offer bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, the programs are increasingly providing the majority of their curriculum in an online format.
- *Who are the students that benefit from these programs?* Based on extrapolation of data, more than 8,228 students graduated with an emergency management degree in 2020 and more than 61,962 students graduated with an emergency management degree since the inception of the survey in 2004. More than 57% of the programs reported increases in enrollment over the past three years and over 65% expect increases over the next three years. In 2020, approximately 36% of responding programs indicated an increase in diversity, including international (5%), African-American (5%), female (4%), Asian-American (3%), and non-traditional students (2%), including older adults and adults who also work full-time.
- *What type of support is accessible to these programs?* Responding programs overwhelmingly rely on part-time faculty. Nearly 30% of faculty have a practitioner background. While access to external funding is generally not an option, library resources, administrative support, and support from the practitioner community (local, state, and national) are widely accessible. Most programs use the number of graduates as a measure of success.
- *Which HiEd services do these programs use?* Of 91 programs (38%) responding, 100% use the [EMI Independent Study courses](#) as supplemental material, 22% use the [Principles of Emergency Management](#) document, and 20% use the journal [articles](#) found on the HiEd website. The least used resources were online [textbooks](#) (10%) and [webinars](#) (9%). With regard to HiEd activities, 54% have participated in the Symposium, 43% have participated in the Special Interest Groups, and 32% have participated in the Focus Groups. Respondents were asked open-ended questions about ideas for products, activities, and services they would like to see in the future. Many would like to see changes around the learning materials, and updates to the web resources and curriculum guides (n=28). Others were interested in student resources and funding opportunities.

Enterprise Risk Management

HiEd currently experiences the risks outlined below. NTED will review priorities, adjust the level of effort where possible, and reallocate staff time and program funding as necessary.

- **Paperwork Reduction Act.** As of January 2021, in consultation with the NTED attorney advisor, HiEd processes are in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, which requires that agencies obtain Office of Management and Budget approval before requesting most types of information from the public. In 2021, HiEd is outsourcing the collection of papers and peer review for the Symposium to members of the academic community.
- **Website Update.** HiEd has not been able to update the pages on the EMI website since May 2020 due to system issues. In 2021, HiEd will work with EMI and CHDS to redesign the website and transfer portions of the archive to the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Library and the CHDS Homeland Security Digital Library.
- **Desk Reference and Procedures.** Program knowledge is concentrated in just two staff. Over

the past several years, staff created a series of check lists, yet there is more that needs to be done or the program risks major disruption with potential staff turnover. The program manager and assistant need to create a desk reference and procedures for their positions to ensure continuity and smooth transition.

- **Records Management.** The shared drive on the EMI server ([\\emli2f3\EMI_Shared\Higher Ed Current](#)) is not in compliance with FEMA's electronic records management policy. HiEd will allocate staff time to review, organize, archive, and dispose of records as appropriate. HiEd will work with the FEMA Records Management Branch to leverage support.

2021 Program Activities

Managed by Staff

College List

The [College List](#) identifies higher education programs at all levels of study in emergency management, homeland security, and related fields. Entries are updated every two years to provide an accurate database for program analysis. As of January 2021, there are **269 institutions** of higher education offering **684 programs** in emergency management, homeland security, and related disciplines.

Website

HiEd maintains pages on the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) website. The [website](#) is the main interface with the academic community and provides a public-facing repository for program information, learning materials, event proceedings, reports, and the College List.

Newsletter

The bi-weekly newsletter features upcoming events, articles, employment opportunities, and other information of interest to the community. There are currently **73,072 subscribers**.

Community Calls

The monthly calls are hosted on Zoom. HiEd records the number of participants by FEMA Region but does not take notes. HiEd schedules one or two presenters for five to ten minutes each followed by an open forum. The calls provide an informal means to share information, collect feedback on HiEd activities, and recruit members for the Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

Webinars

HiEd conducts webinars periodically to share information on a variety of topics using Adobe Connect and the HiEd conference line. Webinars are scheduled for 90 minutes to provide ample time for presentation and discussion. Several topics accepted for the 2020 Symposium could not be accommodated on the agenda after the pivot to a virtual symposium. This group will be offered webinars which will be scheduled at monthly intervals.

2021 Schedule - TBD

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are self-organized and self-directed by members of the community for knowledge exchange on specific topics related to emergency management higher education. SIG members can potentially become involved in co-authoring research, mentoring students, and advising practitioners. To join a SIG, contact the SIG Lead(s). More information on the SIGs is available at <https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/specialinterest/sig.aspx>.

Current SIGs include:

1. Case Teaching and Learning
2. Collaboration, Connection, and Commitment to 2-Year Programs
3. Ethics
4. Information Exchange and Symposium Planning
5. International
6. Jobs and Internships
7. New Program Resources
8. Race, Ethnicity, and Economic Impacts
9. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
10. Science and Technology Integration
11. Service-Learning and Leadership
12. Student Perspectives and Academic Learning
13. Theory and Research
14. Unity of Effort: Education Standards, Accreditation, and Collaboration
15. Wildland Urban Interface Governance

Assessment: SIG Leads meet quarterly via Zoom or the HiEd conference line to share current work, challenges, opportunities to collaborate, and successful practices. If a SIG Lead fails to attend two meetings and provide evidence of SIG activity, HiEd staff will notify the members via email that the SIG presence will be removed from the website in 30 days if no activity is reported.

Supplemented by Micro-Purchases

Focus Groups and Workshops - \$32,000

HiEd conducts focus groups¹ and workshops to explore ideas, options, and perspectives on topics relevant to emergency management higher education. Topics are identified by FEMA based on emerging issues and feedback from the higher education community. Workshops are co-facilitated by members of the community and the HiEd staff or alternatively, by EMI or CHDS staff. HiEd establishes an agreement with qualified faculty to cover the cost of time and materials to attend, participate, and complete a report capturing the event proceedings. These meetings will be facilitated by the selected faculty and HiEd staff, in partnership with EMI and/or CHDS when available. Workshops will be delivered virtually and in person as possible.

¹ HiEd complies with FEMA policy on stakeholder outreach. For more information, refer to: "[Framework for Private Sector Engagement](https://usfema.sharepoint.com/sites/OCC/OCC Documents/Framework for Private Sector Engagement.pdf)," available at <https://usfema.sharepoint.com/sites/OCC/OCC Documents/Framework for Private Sector Engagement.pdf>

Higher Education Program Plan

2021 Schedule

- Q4 Date TBD - Building and Sustaining MSI EM Academic Programs Workshop

In 2021, HiEd will conduct one workshop: Building and Sustaining Emergency Management Programs with Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). HiEd in partnership with the Race, Ethnicity, and Economic Impacts SIG, other FEMA offices, and MSIs will design and deliver the workshop, focusing on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). A total of \$32,000 is budgeted for one workshop.

The desired outcomes of this workshop are to:

- Develop an action plan to graduate more students from MSIs with degrees in emergency management and improve the curriculum to better reflect diversity and inclusion.
- Connect MSIs with practitioners in their state and FEMA Region to share expertise and offer internship and/or service-learning opportunities.
- Complete a report to highlight successes, challenges and recommendations, and support the delivery of future workshops for other MSIs.

Assessment: Following the workshop, a report will be developed and provided to HiEd. The report will be reviewed for content, formatted, made 508 compliant, approved, and disseminated to all event participants and relevant stakeholders via the HiEd newsletter and website. Workshops will be considered as a topic for the annual Symposium.

Regional Engagements - \$10,500

HiEd conducts regional academic engagements in partnership with the FEMA Regions. Each engagement delivers a report to provide documentation and lay out a plan for future collaboration. As of FY19, regional engagements have been conducted in all ten FEMA Regions. Moving forward, engagements are encouraged to use the Emergency Management Excellence (EMx) model described below. The desired outcome is to identify gaps and create regional and national research agendas for ongoing practitioner and academic collaboration.

HiEd establishes an agreement with qualified regionally based faculty, in partnership with the host FEMA Region, to cover the cost of time and materials to attend, participate, and complete a report capturing the event proceedings. These meetings will be facilitated by the selected faculty and the FEMA Region, supported by HiEd, CHDS, and other representatives of institutions of higher education when available. Engagements will be delivered virtually and in person as possible. Time and cost for planning, attendance and data collection, and report generation are estimated at up to \$3,500 per regional engagement. A total of \$10,500 is budgeted for three regional engagements.

Background: Regional engagements are based on the Hacking for Defense (H4D) Model. H4D is an undergraduate and graduate level entrepreneurship course, congressionally authorized and sponsored by the Department of Defense. Utilizing “lean start-up” methodology, students validate real-world problems and develop Minimally Viable Products (MVPs), innovative solutions to problems which can take the form of products, policy, or practices.

Higher Education Program Plan

DHS is pursuing a similar program, Hacking for Homeland Security (H4HS), with funding from the DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) and support from Begin Morning Nautical Twilight (BMNT) and the Common Mission Project (CMP). Under H4HS, FEMA Region VIII started EMx in partnership with the Colorado School of Mines' Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, FEMA NTED and CHDS. The partnership developed the first "EMx Flash Challenge" and "EMx Hackathons," which engaged university students around the world to propose creative solutions to evolving problems in the COVID-19 response. Built on the success of these events and this strong partnership, the Colorado School of Mines hosted pilot courses in Fall 2020. The curriculum is listed as "[Innovate EMx](#)."

Assessment: Following the delivery of the regional engagement event, the selected faculty and a counterpart from the FEMA Region will develop and submit a full report to HiEd. The report will be reviewed for content, formatted, made 508 compliant, approved, and disseminated to all event participants and relevant stakeholders via the HiEd newsletter and website. Regional engagements will be considered as a topic for the annual Symposium.

2021 Schedule

- Region I – TBD
- Region VII – TBD
- Region VIII - TBD

Research Inquiries - \$52,500

In 2018, HiEd convened a focus group of interdisciplinary researchers and published a [research agenda](#), focused on uniting research and practice, outlining guiding principles, and research thrust areas. In 2021, HiEd will begin to review and update this agenda, in coordination with the regional engagements work listed above. In the future, the intent is that research inquiries must align with the new research agenda in order to be considered for HiEd funding. In 2021, HiEd will support up to 15 research inquiries at \$3,500 for each inquiry. A total of \$52,500 is budgeted for this activity. Proposals must address a community need, be of value and interest to FEMA, and align with the [Next Generation Core Competencies for Emergency Management Professionals](#). Proposals related to regional engagements and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are encouraged.

Annual Symposium - \$36,000

The Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium is scheduled for June 8–10, 2021 and will be fully virtual with support from CHDS. In 2020, there were 298 attendees, including 10 international participants, with similar participation expected in 2021.

HiEd hosts an annual Symposium for the emergency management higher education community, including educators, practitioners, and researchers. The Symposium includes workshops scheduled in advance of the main event for participants to enhance their professional development. Funds are used to cover time and travel expenses for the presenters, not to exceed \$3,500 each. This year, HiEd will support two virtual pre-Symposium workshops and eight speakers for the virtual Symposium. There will be no travel cost this year. The Symposium Planning SIG will conduct a peer review of papers in order to recommend presenters, using software estimated at \$1,000.

Higher Education Program Plan

Assessment: Following the Symposium and workshops, participants will complete evaluations to rate the delivery, accuracy, and utility of the information provided. These results will be provided to the presenters and inform the selection of future presenters and topics. HiEd coordinates workshops, plenaries, and breakout sessions to build, engage, and amplify the work of the emergency management academic community.

Resources

HiEd will review and update the Program Plan and statement of work (SOW) on an annual basis in order to achieve measurable outcomes that address FEMA priorities and provide evidence of return on investment. This is the best means to deliver and communicate results that demonstrate the value and impact of the program, achieve the mission, and justify additional investment.

Staffing

The staffing level has been the same since the inception of the program in 1994, while the program has grown from less than 10 to over 700 affiliated educational programs. As a result, the program has created avenues for the academic community to self-organize to facilitate coordination and advancement of the academic discipline.

- The program manager is responsible for leading the development and implementation of the program plan and SOW for approval by NTED leadership, supported by the program assistant and contractor.
- The program assistant is responsible for data collection, maintaining the program website, tracking course requests and updates, planning and coordinating webinars, compilation and editing of newsletters, logistical support of focus groups, and managing aspects of Symposium planning and execution. The program assistant also supports the contract process including tracking invoices and deliverables.
- The contractor is responsible for maintaining and updating the College List database, providing updates to the program assistant for the program website, and administrative support for the annual Symposium including designing invitations, tracking registrations, designing and building the program agenda booklet, preparing other print material, and drafting the After-Action Report. Additional responsibilities include notetaking for meetings, , focus groups, and some regional engagements; developing brochures, postcards, and other print materials for dissemination; collecting and compiling data, and drafting the annual data report.

Higher Education Program Plan

Program Funding

Purpose	Amount
Annual Program SOW (micro purchases)	\$130,885.40
EMI agreement for on-site contract support	\$69,114.60
Total	\$200,000.00

Travel – *all events are virtual at this time*

2021 Schedule (in addition to the HiEd events listed in the program plan)

- Coastal Resilience Center Annual Meeting – April 21-22, 2021 (virtual)

The DHS S&T Office of University Programs facilitates access to the expertise of the nation’s colleges and universities to address pressing homeland security needs. They fund Centers of Excellence (CoE) that develop technologies and training that can inform emergency management higher education curricula. DHS S&T also supports MSIs. Each year, DHS S&T OUP invites Federal reviewers to observe presentations, provide feedback, and help identify potential pathways to get research outcomes into practice. Additional information is available at [CRC announces new and updated projects](#) and [Coastal Resilience Center](#). HiEd can help to integrate and leverage these projects with the academic community. For questions, please contact Eleanore Hajian at eleanore.hajian@hq.dhs.gov.

- Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop, July 11-14, 2021 (virtual)

Since 1975, the Natural Hazards Center has hosted the Annual [Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop](#), which brings together federal, state, and local mitigation and emergency management officials and planning professionals; representatives of nonprofit, private sector, and humanitarian organizations; hazards and disaster researchers; and others dedicated to alleviating the impacts of disasters. HiEd maintains ties with the Natural Hazards Center as they are a clearinghouse of hazard and disaster research and information.

- Annual [Homeland Defense/Security Education Summit](#), November 2-4, 2021, Monterey, CA

Sponsored by CHDS UAPP. Similar to previous years, Day 1 will focus on homeland security/emergency management program development and is designed for faculty and administrators. Days 2 and 3 will feature morning plenary sessions with homeland security thought leaders from government, private sector, and academia. Afternoons will include research presentations and program discussions in breakout sessions. For questions, please contact Steve Recca at sprecca@nps.edu.

Date	Description	Cost
TBD	Currently none planned due to COVID-19	0
	Total	0

HiEd Project Dashboard

Major milestones involve visibility, review and/or approval at the Branch Chief level and above.

Projects and Major Milestones	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Notes
Risk: Paperwork Reduction Act				
Manage call for papers and peer review with academic partners; confirm with FEMA Records Management that resolves PRA issue	02/01/21	04/30/21		Michelle
Meet with NTED attorney on PRA issue with College List	01/29/21	01/29/21		Barbara
Develop and implement plan to resolve PRA issue with College List		03/01/21		Barbara with Lisa support
Risk: Records Management				
Coordinate with EMI and FEMA Records Management Branch	01/01/21	03/31/21		Barbara with Rebecca support
Develop schedule to review, organize, archive and dispose of records for review and approval by Lisa/Amanda	03/31/21	04/30/21		Barbara with Rebecca support
Implement schedule to completion		12/31/21		Barbara and Rebecca
Risk: Website Update				
Finalize updated College List and Go Live				TBD (EMI)
Meet with EMI staff to frame shared objectives and timeline	02/01/21	03/01/21		POC: Lisa and Barbara
Update priority pages (home, Symposium, and SIGs)	03/01/21	04/15/21		In progress with EMI webmasters
Review other pages and update or download for archive	07/01/21	09/30/21		
transfer archive material to NETC Library or CHDS Digital Library	10/01/21	12/31/21		As time permits
Risk: Desk Reference and Procedures				
Barbara and Michelle complete first full draft for review		03/31/21		Barbara and Michelle, Rebecca support
Lisa review and return		07/31/21		Lisa
Barbara and Michelle complete second full draft for review		09/31/21		Barbara and Michelle, Rebecca support
Finalize desk reference and procedures		12/31/21		All
Workshop: Building and Sustaining MSI Programs				
Identify and coordinate plan with partners		04/30/21		Michelle with team support
Submit plan and schedule for approval by Lisa/Amanda		05/31/21		Michelle with team support
Conduct workshop		09/30/21		Michelle with team support
Finalize and issue report		12/31/21		Michelle with team support
Regional Engagements				
Conduct monthly calls and develop plan			ongoing	Lisa with support from All
Region 1 completes regional engagement and submits report		12/31/21		Dan McElhinney
Region 7 completes regional engagement and submits report		12/31/21		Jay VanDerWerff
Region 8 completes regional engagement and submits report		12/31/21		Lanney Holmes, Dan Green