

Assessment Related Portions of HLC Criteria for Accreditation
(These statements are verbatim from the most recent HLC Handbook of Accreditation)

Criterion One-Mission and Integrity: The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Core Component 1a: The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate the organization's commitments.

Examples of Evidence

- The mission documents include a strong commitment of high academic standards that sustain and advance excellence in higher learning.
- The mission documents state goals for the learning to be achieved by its students.
- The organization regularly evaluates and, when appropriate, revises the mission documents.

Core Component 1d: The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

Examples of Evidence

- The organization evaluates its structures and processes regularly and strengthens them as needed.

Criterion Two-Preparing for the Future: The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Core Component 2c: The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Examples of Evidence

- The organization demonstrates that its evaluation processes provide evidence that its performance meets its stated expectations for institutional effectiveness.
- The organization maintains effective systems for collecting, analyzing, and using organizational information.
- Appropriate data and feedback loops are available and used throughout the organization to support continuous improvement.
- Periodic reviews of academic and administrative subunits contribute to improvement of the organization.
- The organization provides adequate support for its evaluation and assessment process.

Criterion Three-Student Learning and Effective Teaching: The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Core Component 3a: The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Examples of Evidence

- The organization clearly differentiates its learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate programs by identifying the expected learning outcomes for each.
- Assessment of student learning provides evidence at multiple levels: course, program, and institutional.
- Assessment of student learning includes multiple direct and indirect measures of student learning.
- Results obtained through assessment of student learning are available to appropriate constituencies, including students themselves.
- The organization integrates into its assessment of student learning the data reported for purposes of external accountability (e.g., graduation rates, passage rates on licensing exams, placement rates, transfer rates).
- The organization's assessment of student learning extends to all educational offerings, including credit and noncredit certificate programs.
- Faculty are involved in defining expected student learning outcomes and creating the strategies to determine whether those outcomes are achieved.
- Faculty and administrators routinely review the effectiveness and uses of the organization's program to assess student learning.

Core Component 3c: The organization creates effective learning environments.

Examples of Evidence

- Assessment results inform improvements in curriculum, pedagogy, instructional resources, and student services.
- Advising systems focus on student learning, including the mastery of skills required for academic success.
- Student development programs support learning throughout the student's experience regardless of the location of the student.
- The organization's systems of quality assurance include regular review of whether its educational strategies, activities, processes, and technologies enhance student learning.

Core Component 3d: The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Examples of Evidence

- The organization evaluates the use of its learning resources to enhance student learning and effective teaching.
- The organization regularly assesses the effectiveness of its learning resources to support learning and teaching.

Criterion Four-Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge: The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Core Component 4b: The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

Examples of Evidence

- The organization integrates general education into all of its undergraduate degree programs through curricular and experiential offerings intentionally created to develop the attitudes and skills requisite for a life of learning in a diverse society.
- The organization regularly reviews the relationship between its mission and values and the effectiveness of its general education.
- The organization assesses how effectively its graduate programs establish a knowledge base on which students develop a depth of expertise.
- Learning outcomes demonstrate that graduates have achieved breadth of knowledge and skills and the capacity to exercise intellectual inquiry.
- Learning outcomes demonstrate effective preparation for continued learning.

Core Component 4c: The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

Examples of Evidence

- Regular academic program reviews include attention to currency and relevance of courses and programs.
- In keeping with its mission, learning goals and outcomes include skills and professional competence essential to a diverse workforce.
- Learning outcomes document that graduates have gained the skills and knowledge they need to function in diverse local, national, and global societies.
- Curricular evaluation involves alumni, employers, and other external constituents who understand the relationships among the courses of study, the currency of the curriculum, and the utility of the knowledge and skills gained.