

**University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
HLC Self-Study Design Plan**

January 2, 2015

Introduction

In 2016-2017, a review team from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) will visit the campus as part of the institution's reaffirmation of accreditation process. In preparation for the visit, the university will review its programs and policies to collect evidence to create an Assurance Argument that will demonstrate how the University meets the accreditation criteria. The University community will engage in many discussions and reviews to evaluate the extent to which it is meeting the HLC accreditation criteria. Additionally, the self-study process is an opportunity for the entire University to identify and explore issues of importance to the University that will inform future campus planning.

In fall 2014, Interim Chancellor Petra Roter appointed the Higher Learning Commission Campus Committee (HLCCC) and charged the committee to coordinate and guide the self-study. The HLCCC will consist of a Steering Committee and six subcommittees that will focus upon discrete aspects of the accreditation criteria: 1) mission, 2) integrity, ethical and responsible conduct, 3) teaching and learning quality, resources and support, 4) teaching and learning evaluation and improvement, 5) resources, planning and institutional effectiveness, and 6) federal compliance.

The HLCCC will meet regularly over the next two years and is charged with the coordination and design of a plan for conducting the self-study. The Steering Committee will periodically review the plan and progress made toward meeting the goals of the self-study. The Office of Institutional Research and the division of Integrated Marketing and Communication will assist the HLCCC in documenting this work.

Goals of the Self-Study

The Interim Chancellor's charge to the HLCCC outlines the University's goals for the self-study, which ensure the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, and support campus planning to enhance the educational programs and experiences for all students. The goals of the self-study are:

1. To conduct a comprehensive evaluation in relation to the criteria established by the Higher Learning Commission.
2. To engage in a self-study process that is inclusive of multiple perspectives and that involves participants from constituencies both on and off campus.
3. To integrate the findings of the self-study into campus strategic planning

The self-study process and the HLC criteria will provide a framework for the first two goals of the comprehensive evaluation. The third goal is guided by the following questions:

- a. How well is UW Oshkosh positioned to meet the future challenges in higher education (in this region)?
- b. How do we build upon our current strengths to meet future program needs in the region?

- c. Where do we have opportunities for improvement, and what have we learned in the self-study process that will help us build our capacity to meet these opportunities?

10-27-14 HLC Campus Steering Committee Charge:

The Higher Learning Commission Campus Committee (HLCCC) positions the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh to meet standards, policies, and procedures related to achievement of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association re-accreditation in 2017. This committee will consist of a Steering Committee and six subcommittees are established to focus upon discrete aspects of the accreditation criteria: 1) Mission;

- 2) Integrity, ethical and responsible conduct;
- 3) Teaching and learning quality, resources and support;
- 4) Teaching and learning evaluation and improvement;
- 5) Resources, planning and institutional effectiveness; and
- 6) Federal compliance.

The HLCCC will actively solicit campus wide input for the collection of evidence and data for the preparation of an *Assurance Argument* using a collaborative process to be designed by the Steering Committee.

The University's goals for the evaluation ensure the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, and support institutional planning to enhance the educational programs and experiences for all students. The goals of the self-study are:

1. To conduct a comprehensive evaluation in relation to the criteria established by the Higher Learning Commission.
2. To engage in a self-study process that is inclusive of multiple perspectives and that involves participants from constituencies both on and off campus.
3. To integrate the findings of the self-study into campus strategic planning.

During 2014-15 and 2015-2016, the HLCCC will convene meetings and campus forums to collect evidence for the *Assurance Argument*. In summer 2016, the Higher Learning Commission Campus Committee will issue a draft of the *Assurance Argument* to the Provost and Vice Chancellor's Office. The report will

outline evidence in an *Assurance Argument* with recommendations that enable the institution to maintain accreditation.

The sub-committees will provide periodic and timely updates on the progress of the evaluation and Assurance Argument to the Chancellor and the Provost and Vice Chancellor's Office. The Steering Committee will periodically review the plan and progress made toward meeting the goals of the evaluation. The Office of Institutional Research and the division of Integrated Marketing and Communication will assist the HLCCC in documenting this work.

Self-Study Structure and Process

The Interim Chancellor convenes a Higher Learning Commission Campus Committee who identifies goals for a comprehensive and inclusive self-study that supports campus planning. The self-study process will begin in fall 2014 with a launch event to introduce the campus to the HLC accreditation and institutional goals for the self-study. The University self-study process is designed to be inclusive and participatory in nature. The committee structure allows for the distribution of responsibilities and ensures input across all groups of the institution. The process will use frequent communications including many opportunities for input, reaction and coordination across the campus. The HLCCC, appointed in fall 2014, will meet bi-weekly to design the self-study and communications plan. The HLCCC will continue to meet regularly until the self-study process and site visit have concluded. In fall 2014, the evidence portfolio will be operative and team members will be trained in the collection process to upload evidence. The initial phase of the evidence collection will end in June 2015. Evidence coordinators will provide additional information upon request from July 2015 until the end of the review and site visit.

The HLC Coordinator will meet with the HLCCC and provide information to all committee members early in the process to ensure they are informed and prepared to complete their assigned roles. Sub-committees will meet to regularly review materials collected in the evidence portfolio, conduct interviews and focus group sessions, and collect additional evidence as needed for their reports. The structure and processes are designed to produce an *Assurance Argument* that is comprehensive and well organized. The composition of the committees will ensure that a broad perspective is included in the creation of the final report.

HLCCC Steering Committee

The Steering Committee component of the HLCCC consists of representatives from the major campus divisions and governance groups and is co-chaired by the self-study coordinator. The Steering Committee convenes and charges sub-committees and provides oversight for all the coordination of review activities to ensure a timely and thorough completion of the self-study. The University has allocated resources for an administrative assistant, and a resource specialist to support the self-study process.

Sub-committees charged by the HLC Campus Steering Committee (see Appendix for structure)

Six sub committees will be convened in Fall 2014 and assigned to each of the five criteria and federal compliance groups. Chairs for each Criterion Committee will be selected based on leadership experience and knowledge of the areas related to the assigned criterion. The selection of committee members will be as representative of a broad range of institutional experiences and perspectives as possible. Each committee group will receive an orientation about the criteria, committee roles and responsibilities, and writing assignments. When necessary, co-chairs will be selected from among individuals who possess content knowledge; experiences in leadership and evaluation; ability to facilitate meetings and collaborate with a broad range of people, and a commitment to the University. Sub-committee members will be selected to include individuals who have working knowledge of the content of the criteria focus areas and who represent multiple constituencies of the institution. Committee members should be able to work well with others; have the ability to follow through and to summarize information into findings.

Roles and Responsibilities: to organize and carry out the work of the self-study

HLC Self-Study Coordinator

- Coordinate self-study process with Administration and the HLCCC
- Facilitate communication across campus and with subcommittees
- Train and advise committees
- Ensure communication with HLC liaison
- Provide Updates to campus, Chancellor, Provost
- Oversee electronic evidence
- Review development of Assurance Argument

HLC Campus Steering Committee

- Coordinates the self-study process to fulfill the Chancellor's charge for the self-study
- Convenes committees and monitors progress of committee work
- Provides regular updates to the campus concerning the self-study process
- Solicits feedback from the campus community
- Reviews documentation in the electronic resource room and final report
- Meet with the site visit team

Criteria Subcommittees

Criteria Subcommittees members for the following groups: 1) mission, 2) integrity, ethical and responsible conduct, 3) teaching and learning quality, resources and support, 4) teaching and learning evaluation and improvement, 5) resources, planning and institutional effectiveness, 6) federal compliance.

- Participate in committee meetings
- Identify, collect, review and summarize supporting evidence
- Conduct interviews, focus groups, open forums to obtain information and feedback from campus constituents
- Create criterion draft reports for the Steering Committee

- Meet with the site visit team

HLC Resource Specialist-An individual who will assist the HLC Coordinator with the organization and posting of the supporting evidence.

- Collaborates with the HLC Coordinator to organize the collection of evidence
- Collaborates and communicates with the subcommittees to identify and post evidence related to the five criteria and federal compliance

HLC Evidence Coordinators-Representatives from major campus units are appointed to collect and post evidence and documents as requested by the subcommittees. The HLC resource specialist will organize and index evidence for the committees.

- Ensure accuracy and functionality of all web links
- Collaborate with criterion committees to ensure that all evidence referenced in reports is included in the portfolio
- Make recommendations for the collection of relevant institutional documents to meet the assumed practices and criteria

Integrated Marketing and Communication Committee-IMC and other staff assigned to develop and disseminate web-based communications and materials to communicate with the University community (internal and external) about the HLC process.

- Assist in planning of campus forums
- Develop and implement communication strategies for community updates about self-study process and findings
- Design web-based, print or other communications for distribution to audiences
- Make recommendations to Steering Committee about communication strategies and resources

Institutional Research

- Collaborate with HLCCC and criteria subcommittees to meet data needs
- Review criteria to align data collection practices, reporting
- Post evidence as necessary to support Assurance Argument
- Create data summaries as requested
- Inform HLCCC of available evidence
- Check factual statements in reports

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- Collaborate with HLCCC and criteria subcommittees to meet data needs
- Review criteria to align data collection practices, reporting
- Post evidence as necessary to support Assurance Argument
- Assist in the creation/presentation of evidence as required

Writing Team-Charged with writing and editing the final Assurance Argument.

- Collaborate with Steering Committee and criterion committees
- Meet with HLC Coordinator and Provost
- Write and edit self-study report

Chancellor

- Establish expectations for institutional goals for self-study
- Appoint and charge Steering Committee
- Align self-study to institutional planning as appropriate
- Monitor progress
- Provide input and responses to drafts
- Approve final report
- Meet with visiting team

Campus Leadership

- Ensure that institution is meeting Assumed Practices
- Support and promote self-study as an institutional priority
- Provide time/resources for self-study
- Meet with visiting team
- Serve on Steering Committee

Committee Membership**HLCCC Steering Committee**

HLC Coordinator-Carleen Vande Zande

Academic Affairs-Lane Earns

Student Affairs-Petra Roter

Admin. Services-Tom Sonnleitner

Advancement/IMC-Art Rathjen

Faculty-Senate leadership