Update on Procedures for Institutional Accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

Institutional Accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

Student Success Team
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Wayne Jacobson, Assessment Director
Office of the Provost
wayne-jacobson@uiowa.edu

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In the past:

- Ten-year cycle with accreditation site visit at Year 10

- Intensive preparation of a comprehensive institutional Self-Study and a room full of documentary evidence (in hard copy), compiled by multiple working groups, faculty committees, and administrative support staff during Years 8.5-9.5

- Recover and return to the operating the university during Years 1-8.5

Beginning in 2012/13:

- Ten-year cycle, with review of an institutional Assurance Argument at Years 4 & 10

- Comprehensive Site Visit in conjunction with the Year 10 Assurance Argument review

- Annual updates of institutional data and routine organizational changes

- Separate review of institutional compliance with federal regulations

- Completion of a 3-year Quality Initiative at some point during Years 5-9

Assurance Argument

Rather than an open-ended, all encompassing self-study and a room full of reference documents, we are now asked to complete an online Assurance Argument that is specifically structured to articulate how Accreditation Criteria are met.

It is limited to 35000 words, and supported by links to documents in an Evidence File. The Evidence File stores pdf copies of all documents referenced in the Assurance Argument. The Assurance Argument and the Evidence File are compiled online in the HLC Assurance System.

HLC asks us to address 5 accreditation criteria, with 3-5 components each, for a total of 21 distinct components to address in our argument.

Example: Criterion 3 (Teaching and Learning Resources and Support),
*   Core Component E (Enriched Educational Environment)*

3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

There is no argument.

Sources

There are no sources.

Assurance Argument Timeline

	Year 5 2013/14	Year 6 2014/15	Year 7 2015/16	Year 8 2016/17	Year 9 2017/18	Year 10 2018/19	Year 1 2019/20	Year 2 2020/21	Year 3 2021/22	Year 4 2022/23
Institutional Update *Submitted online annually*	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update	Online Update
Federal Compliance Review *In conjunction with Year 10 Assurance Review and Site Visit*						Federal Compliance Review				
Assurance Review *Prepared online and reviewed in Years 4 & 10*	Add documents to the Evidence File, Prepare Assurance Argument					Assurance Review and Site Visit	Add documents to the Evidence File, Prepare Assurance Argument			Online Assurance Review
Quality Initiative *Proposed and carried out over three years between Years 5 & 9*	Five-year window to propose, implement, and assess a three-year Quality Initiative									

http://provost.uiowa.edu/university-accreditation

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Quality Initiative

"The Open Pathway requires the institution to undertake a major Quality Initiative which is designed to suit its present concerns or aspirations. The Quality Initiative is expected to take place between Years 5 and 9 of the 10-year Open Pathway Cycle …

"The Quality Initiative is intended to allow institutions to take risks, aim high, and if so be it, learn from only partial success or even failure."

Quality Initiative

- Designed to benefit the institution, focusing on innovations or areas for improvement that we might want to pursue apart from HLC requirements

- Institution-level scope and significance

- Alignment with the implementation of other institutional priorities

- Meaningfully assessed by the end of the 3-year period: Success in HLC's view is determined by whether we sustain and assess the initiative, not necessarily how effective it is.

For the University of Iowa, 2014/15 is Year 6 of the 10-Year cycle, giving us 3.5 more years in our 5-year window to carry out a 3-Year Quality Initiative.

UI Quality Initiative Committee Conclusions

The greatest predictor of not persisting to graduation at UI is Pell grant eligibility.

- Financial challenges related to paying for college, compounded by …

- More likely to be first-generation college students – less likely to receive informational support from family, more likely to report not fitting in

- Less likely to have participated in college prep courses in high school

- On aggregate at UI, tend to have lower ACT and high school GPA; tend to sign up for later orientation and registration dates; relatively less likely to sign up for opportunities perceived as optional

- MAP-Works: On average, reporting fewer peer connections, feeling less socially integrated, and greater levels of homesickness than other first-year students

Proposed UI Quality Initiative

Moving Beyond First Come, First Served for Student Success and Academic Engagement Initiatives

The University of Iowa has developed an array of programs to support academic success and retention, including institution-wide initiatives open to all students and also college and program-specific initiatives designed to serve their respective student populations. For most of these initiatives, student participation is optional, self-selected, and available on a first-come first-served basis.

Our Quality Initiative is designed to target students who are at greatest risk of not persisting to graduation and more effectively recruit them to participate in established initiatives that have been shown in increase student engagement, persistence, and success.

UI Quality Initiative - Areas of Activity

- Design and implement a program of pre-enrollment academic success messaging to help set academic expectations for incoming students prior to their arrival at the university

- Develop a system for targeted recruiting of at-risk students to existing programs designed to address academic or financial needs, such as supplemental instruction, financial literacy consultations, and free tutoring

- Examine first-year courses designed for high levels of in-class engagement and student/faculty interaction (such as First-Year Seminars, Rhetoric, and Constellation courses), and identify their role(s) in supporting student persistence and success

- Create gateway experiences that recruit students in groups identified as at-risk for later participation in high impact educational opportunities, such as undergraduate research, community-based civic engagement, academically focused student employment (for example, UI GROW and STEP programs)

A Profile of Successful Pell Grant Recipients

Time to Bachelor's Degree and Early Graduate School Enrollment

The Upshot

Helping the Poor in Education: The Power of a Simple Nudge

JAN. 17, 2015

Economic View

By SUSAN DYNARSKI

There are enormous inequalities in education in the United States. A child born into a poor family has only a **9 percent chance of getting a college degree**, but the odds are 54 percent for a child in a high-income family. These gaps open early, with poor children less prepared than their kindergarten classmates.

How can we close these gaps? Contentious, ambitious reforms of the education system crowd the headlines: the Common Core, the elimination of teacher tenure, **charter schools**. The debate is heated and sometimes impolite (a recent book about education is called "**The Teacher Wars**").

Yet as these debates rage, researchers have been quietly finding small, effective ways to improve education. They have identified behavioral "**nudges**" that prod students and their families to take small steps that can make big differences in learning. These measures are cheap, so schools or nonprofits could use them immediately.

Let's start with college. At every step of the way, low-income students are more

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- Seek your input on an accreditation-related campus initiative designed to support student engagement, persistence, and success

  Once HLC gives approves our proposal, we will need to identify campus partners, form a leadership team, and develop working groups to oversee and carry out different segments of this project.

UI Quality Initiative - Questions

Help us identify partners and stakeholders:

- Who is already working with students who might benefit from this type of outreach and engagement …

- Who is already doing similar work that we can learn from, borrow from, coordinate with, connect with …

Help us identify campus experience and expertise:

- Who has found strategic entry points that offer effective pathways for getting students involved …

- Who has been successful in broadening or deepening levels of participation in student success initiatives …