



# HLC ACCREDITATION AT OCC

## **SPECIAL EDITION**

It's Time to Shine! OCC's Higher Learning Commission (HLC) reaffirmation for accreditation visit is **March 18-19, 2019**.

As we prepare for this visit, please make yourself familiar with the HLC Criteria for Accreditation, against which we are evaluated. Each of the five criterion focus on a different aspect of our institution as outlined below, along with questions to consider. Also included are the contact names for each of the criterion co-chairs. If you would like more information, we invite you to reach out to them.

**Criterion One. The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.**

Questions to consider: Do I know OCC's mission? How does my work contribute to furthering our mission?

Co-Chairs: Shawn Dry, Dan Jenuwine

**Criterion Two. The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.**

Questions to consider: How do I promote ethical and responsible actions? Do I understand the role of the governing board?

Co-chairs: John Mitchell, Eileen Husband

**Criterion Three. The institution provides high quality education, whenever and however its offerings are delivered.**

Question to consider: How does my position help to improve the quality of education at OCC?

Co-chairs: Laura Wicklund, Marty Orlovski

**Criterion Four. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.**

Question to consider: How does my role at the institution help students to be successful? How do we use student learning results to make the institution better?

Co-chairs: Peter Schade, Tim Sherwood

**Criterion Five. The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.**

Question to consider: How do I help to manage resources effectively? Do I understand how the college plans for the future?

Co-chairs: Judy Matteson, Bob Montgomery

## HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)? Why is accreditation important?**

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is responsible for the accreditation of colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning. The HLC is an independent corporation and is one of six regional institutional accreditors, responsible for assuring that colleges and universities meet certain standards in terms of their missions, operations, and activities in teaching and student learning, discovery and promotion of knowledge, and service. Accreditation is an assurance to the public that an institution is properly prepared to do its job. Unaccredited schools are not eligible for many kinds of federal support, including student financial aid.

### **When will the HLC re-accreditation visit take place at OCC?**

The College is preparing the Assurance Argument, based on the criteria, and will submit it to the HLC by early January 2019. An evaluation team from the HLC is scheduled to come to OCC on **March 18-19, 2019**.

### **How are we preparing for the reaffirmation of accreditation visit in 2019?**

An HLC Steering Committee has been formed to draft the Assurance Argument and to help prepare the College for the 2019 visit.

### **Who will be on the HLC team of reviewers?**

A Peer Review Team of trained Consultant Evaluators will visit OCC. These are administrators, staff, and faculty who have been accepted to the Peer Review Corps by the HLC.

### **What will the team do during the visit?**

The team will already have received the complete OCC Assurance Argument and will have had access to all supporting documents. During the visit, they will be seeking to validate the content of the report. Team members will have meetings with key individuals and groups from across the College and will have open meetings that are less structured.

### **What kinds of recommendations might the team make?**

The team may simply recommend continued accreditation with no recommended follow-up activities before the next scheduled visit in 2028-29. The team could require reports on how the institution is dealing with particular issues. HLC staff estimate that 85% of institutions will have some kind of activity required.

### **What will happen to the report when the visit is over?**

OCC as an institution will need to look carefully at the report, both for the validation of the things that we are doing well and for advice about ways in which we can improve what we are doing. Particular issues may be referred to appropriate committees and offices for examination and action.

*For more information, contact the HLC Steering Committee Co-Chairs: Tim Sherwood (tasherwo@oaklandcc.edu) or Nancy Showers (ncshowers@oaklandcc.edu), or visit the HLC InfoMart page at <http://infomart/HLC>*