

HLC Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Site Visit: April 26 and 27, 2021

(likely virtual with one in-person reviewer)

Gail Burd

September 24, 2020

Introduction

UArizona accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

- one of seven regional accreditation commissions
- recognized by U.S. Department of Education
- review every college and university in the nation

Last comprehensive evaluation in 2010

- Validated the university's extraordinary quality and integrity in:
 - Academics,
 - Research,
 - Administration,
 - Planning,
 - Faculty and staff,
 - Resources and facilities,
 - Student services, and
 - Procedures.

Review Components

- UArizona comprehensive review to reaffirm accreditation April 2021
Ten-year cycle focus:
 - quality assurance
 - institutional improvement
- Comprehensive evaluation ensures university meets:
 - criteria for accreditation,
 - assumed practices, and is
 - pursuing institutional improvement, and
 - complying with requirements of the U.S. Department of Education.

What is Reviewed and Why

All colleges, campuses, distance locations, academic programs, and processes must be approved and will be reviewed by HLC.

Review assumes and confirms that appropriate UArizona academic programs have **specialized accreditation**.

But the **HLC accreditation** takes place at a **higher level:**
required for the university to operate,
provide federal financial aid, and
award accredited degrees.

HLC Focus of Ten-Year Review

- **Major challenges that need to be addressed:**

- Shared Governance

- Financial Planning

- Ashford purchase

- **Other areas that will likely be closely examined:**

- Assessment of student learning outcomes

- General Education

- Syllabi

- Faculty Qualifications for Instruction

HLC focuses on processes and policies: criteria and assumed practices, constant improvement is valued; reviewers usually come from similar peer institutions.

Is UArizona Prepared for the Review?

Short answer: We will be.

- Last five years, we updated policies and practices
- Assurance Argument (self-study) with embedded evidence in preparation for the last two years.
- Review of the Federal Compliance requirements is done.
- Personnel involved in these preparations includes:
 - Three provosts,
 - Steering Committee: HLC System Administrator, HLC Accreditation Liaison Officer, Executive Director, and two Co-Chairs,
 - Five Criteria Committees with two-three co-chairs each and 10-15 members,
 - Federal Compliance Committee,
 - Communication Committee,
 - Faculty Associates from every college,
 - IT support committee for virtual visit
 - Assurance Argument second draft stage, soon to be distributed for comments.

Known Schedules for the Visit

April 26, 2021 Monday

~8:00 – 8:30 am Welcome Visit: President and Senior Leadership Team with HLC Peer Review Committee

April 26, 2021 Monday

~ 12-1:00 pm Lunch with Regents (whoever can attend) (no members of the ABOR Staff and no other UA personnel)

April 26, 2021 Monday (most likely) – meeting with Deans Council

April 27, 2021 Tuesday

11:30 am – 12:00 pm Exit visit: President, Provost, HLC Executive Director (maybe also CFO)

Schedule and Sessions for the Visit

- Schedule determined by UArizona via HLC Executive Lead and the Chair of the HLC Peer Review team
- No power points presentations
- Additional data and copies of evidence only if requested

HLC expects that all administrators, deans, department heads, and many faculty, staff, and students are aware of the importance of the visit and will be available for meetings with the HLC Peer Review Committee.

Timeline – HLC 2021

Assurance Argument:

- Early October - Rough Draft - Senior Leadership, Deans, and Shared Governance
- October – colleague HLC peer reviewer comments
- December - Editor and then published on UArizona website
- Late Feb/early March Assurance Argument to HLC (electronic document and linked evidence files)

Federal Compliance

- January final edits - submit Late Feb/early March
- mid-late March - Schedule for visit discussed with HLC Peer Review Team Chair
- early April – final schedule established
- **April 26-27, 2021 Site Visit**

HLC Steering Committee

- **Gail Burd**, Sr Vice Provost Academic Affairs, Teaching, and Learning; HLC Peer reviewer for five years; **HLC Executive Director**
- **Barbara Mills**, Regents Professor, Anthropology; **Co-Chair HLC Steering Committee**
- **Roger Miesfeld**, Distinguished Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Global Associate Dean; **Co-Chair HLC Steering Committee**
- **Shelley McGrath**, Manager, Evaluation and Communication; **Accreditation Liaison Officer**
- **Kat Francisco**, Manager, Academic Affairs; **HLC System Administrator**
- **Cindy Williams**, Project Support and Federal Compliance

Criteria 1: Mission; Co-Chairs

- **Meg Lota Brown**, Professor, English
- **Jessica Summers**, Professor, Teaching, Learning and Sociocultural Studies

Criteria 2: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct; Co-Chairs

- **Sangita Pawar**, Vice President of Operations, RII
- **Helena Rodrigues**, Vice President Human Resources

Criteria 3: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support; Co-Chairs

- **Lisa Elfring**, Associate Vice Provost for Instruction and Assessment
- **Susan Miller-Cochran**, Director General Education and Professor of English
- **Melody Buckner**, Associate Vice Provost, Digital Learning

Criteria 4: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement; Co-Chairs

- **Elaine Marchello**, Assistant Director, OIA Assessment
- **Christine Salvesen**, Assistant Vice Provost

Criteria 5: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources, and Planning; Co-Chairs

- **Kathy Whisman**, Budget Director, recently retired
- **Jane Hunter**, VP Strategic Initiatives
- **Tim Schwab**, Executive Director, Administrative Services, UITS

Federal Compliance: U.S. Department of Education Requirements; Co-Chairs

- **Shelley McGrath**, Manager, Evaluation and Communication
- **Sarah Wieland**, Assistant Vice Provost for Distance Education

Thank you