

Overview of the Higher Learning Commission's Expectations for Assessment

Bill Knight

Academic Assessment
and Institutional Research



Documents

- Draft *New Criteria for Accreditation*
- *2007 Statement on Student Learning, Assessment, and Accreditation*



Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

- **Criterion Statement** 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 publicly the organization's commitments.
- **Examples of Evidence**
 - The mission documents state goals for the learning to be achieved by its students.

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

- **Criterion Statement** 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 2b** The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.
- **Examples of Evidence**
 - Plans for resource development and allocation document an organizational commitment to supporting and strengthening the quality of the education it provides.



Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

- **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 processes.

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

- **Criterion Statement** The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.
- **Core Component 3a** The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.
- **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.



Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

- 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.



Criterion Four:

Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

- **Criterion Statement** 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 regularly reviews the relationship between its mission and values and the effectiveness of its general education.



Criterion Four:

Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

- The organization assesses how effectively its graduate programs establish a knowledge base on which students develop depth of expertise.
- The organization demonstrates the linkages between curricular and co-curricular activities that support inquiry, practice, creativity, and social responsibility.
- 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.



Criterion Four:

Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

- **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.



Criterion Four:

Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

- 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.



*HLC STATEMENT ON STUDENT LEARNING,
ASSESSMENT, AND ACCREDITATION (2007)*



Fundamental Questions for Conversations on Student Learning

- How are your stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, degrees, and students?
- What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?
- In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?
- How do you ensure shared responsibility for student learning and for assessment of student learning?
- How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning?
- In what ways do you inform the public and other stakeholders about what students are learning---and how well?



Discussion

