
HLC Update

2 messages

UNI President Mark A. Nook <president@uni-mail.org>
To: andrew.batovsky@uni.edu

Thu, Feb 14, 2019 at 9:37 AM

University of Northern Iowa

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

SEERLEY HALL

Dear Colleagues,

In the 2020-21 academic year, UNI will undergo accreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). This process occurs every 10 years and is required to maintain our regional accreditation status through HLC.

Preparations for this review began about a year ago. We have made significant progress and identified some areas of attention.

HLC values campus-wide understanding of its principles and processes, and toward that end we assembled large, representative committees to do this work. Over 100 people are serving on committees related to this effort and many more have shared information and data with the committees or provided feedback on committees' work. The Steering Committee co-chairs spent the summer and fall updating nearly every faculty, staff and student governance group on our progress and challenges.

The accreditation process includes four key elements: 1) completing a Quality Initiative Project; 2) documenting our compliance with numerous federal regulations; 3) submitting an Assurance Argument that shows how we meet HLC's five Criteria for Accreditation; and 4) a site visit by peer reviewers. Due largely to increased federal regulation and scrutiny of accrediting bodies, this process has changed significantly since we were re-accredited in 2011.

The Quality Initiative Project, which centers on service-learning, is nearing completion and the report will be submitted to HLC in the coming months. Julianne Gassman, Nick Rafanello and their entire committee have done excellent work that will make it easier for faculty to offer service-learning opportunities to students and promote and recognize these engaged learning experiences brought about by collaboration among faculty, students and community members.

The Federal Compliance team has done considerable work examining where the university's policies or practices need to be updated to more clearly reflect the demands and expectations of the federal government. These areas include demonstrating how we use information gathered via student complaints and demonstrating that all courses, regardless of mode of delivery, meet the federal government's definition of a credit hour.

Finally, committees have been gathering data to demonstrate how we meet HLC criteria and are starting to circulate draft assurance arguments. Based on our 2010-11 re-accreditation review and on the areas that HLC cites most frequently, we anticipate that issues related to assessment of student learning, the intentionality of our general education program, and our ability to financially deal with enrollment or funding shortfalls will be areas that will be especially scrutinized during our review.

Late last semester we learned that our site visit will take place on March 29-30, 2021. The work we've done puts us in position to write strong assurance arguments and address challenges we identify in our preparations. Thank you for your commitment to the continued success of UNI.

Panther Proud!

Mark A. Nook
President

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Office of the President

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UNI President Mark A. Nook <president@uni-mail.org>
To: Kristin.Moser@uni.edu

Thu, Feb 14, 2019 at 1:28 PM

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Mark A. Nook
President

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