

## The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Reaccreditation Progress

Site Visit Dates: April 18-20, 2011



HLC Self-Study and Beyond

### College of Pharmacy Update Agenda

1. The Criteria for Accreditation and Emerging Phenomena – Robbie Teahen
2. Overview of our Organization/Process, including the role of the Steering Committee – Mike Cairns
3. Highlights of the Report Findings – Robbie and Mike

### The Criteria and Topics:

The HLC re-accreditation team will evaluate Ferris holistically using five main criteria for accreditation (along with each of the core components, for a total of 21 dimensions):

- Criterion 1: Mission and Integrity
- Criterion 2: Preparing for the Future
- Criterion 3: Student Learning and Effective Teaching
- Criterion 4: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge
- Criterion 5: Engagement and Service

Get more information here: <http://www.ferris.edu/hlc/core.htm>

Also considered in HLC's evaluation criteria are these cross-cutting themes:

- Future Oriented
- Learning-Focused
- Connectedness (internally and externally)
- Distinctiveness

### A Changing Environment – *areas we expect will receive additional scrutiny*

- Increased scrutiny of distance education (online)
- Increased scrutiny of Federal Compliance Issues (authentication of student identity, transfer, transparency, complaint processes, financial aid practices)
- Heightened attention to **planning, diversity, assessment\*, governance, general education, and finances** (*these are the most common follow-ups*)
- More attention to sites – assuring comparative levels of student and staff support
- Alignment of **use of data** (especially about student learning) in planning actions in alignment with strategic plans and mission

### Purposes of the FSU Process

As a result of the HLC Reaccreditation Self-Study Process, the following outcomes are planned. We will “roll out” in reverse order through the fall:

1. **Celebration:** Successful reaccreditation effort, with multiple areas of commendation and recognition of exemplary practices and programs with no follow-up requirements

# College of Pharmacy Progress Report – August 25, 2010

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2. **Awareness:** Enhanced knowledge among all stakeholders concerning our services, programming, strengths, challenges, and opportunities
3. **Data Use:** Increased emphasis upon the use and transparency of data/information to inform planning and service and program improvements
4. **Action:** Movement to address identified challenges through existing or ad hoc university processes
5. **Mission Focus:** Expanded focus on Ferris' mission and goals, including student success and our values of collaboration, excellence, diversity, ethical community, and learning, and opportunity.

## **Simplified Timeline:**

- 2007 We initiated our reaccreditation efforts in the fall of 2007 by forming Steering, Criterion, and Data Committees.
- 2008 The Criterion Committees began the process of inventorying, collecting, reviewing, and making meaning of data. Preliminary findings provided a basis for campus-wide surveys, the results of which informed draft reports.
- 2009 In late August 2009, the Criterion Committees submitted draft reports to the report editor (Sandy Balkema) and the HLC Steering Committee.
- 2010 In August 2010 the draft Self-Study report is in the process of being finished and disseminated for campus, community, and Board of Trustees' input.
- 2011 In February 2011, the printed/bound report must be sent to the team (after review in January by HLC Liaison)
- 2011 HLC Team visits campus April 18 – 20, 2011

## **Key findings**

Find the full self study and the discussion summary here under progress reports: <http://www.ferris.edu/hlc/>

### **Criterion 1**

- Ferris' mission, vision, and core values are well defined and accepted, communicated broadly and consistently, and supported by activities that are consistent with the mission.
- Ferris desires to be a truly diverse institution by providing an institution that is supportive, safe, and welcoming, and by embracing a diversity of ideas, beliefs, and cultures.
- Many governance entities are both a strength and a limitation, with several often overlapping groups involved in University decision making, and with an occasional lack of clarity about which of these groups has responsibility.

### **Criterion 2**

- Over its history, Ferris has always responded to the needs of the state and region by offering courses, degree programs, training, and certification in a wide range of professional fields. In the past few years, these curricular enhancements reflect the challenges facing the state, and they also reflect changes in course delivery and student demographics.
- While the University community feels strongly that its assessment and evaluation processes are appropriate, adequate, and reliable, the application of the data collected could be more visible, transparent, and more widely shared.
- The use of assessment and evaluation data in informing strategic directions presents an improvement opportunity.

### **Criterion 3**

- Assessment continues to be a high priority at Ferris State University. Clearly stated outcomes, assessment measures, and data collection will continue to drive continuous improvement.
- Another strength highlighted by the self-study process is the professional expertise and ongoing connections to business and industry that Ferris faculty are recognized for, and which they successfully bring into their classrooms.

## College of Pharmacy Progress Report – August 25, 2010

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- At the same time, a limitation is that the faculty evaluation process is not thought to be as effective as it could be in providing useful feedback for faculty and our processes do not always contribute to resolving teaching deficiencies easily.

### Criterion 4

- Ferris' commitment to lifelong learning is evident in the development opportunities that range from training for more effective completion of day-to-day job tasks, wellness opportunities, and awareness of emerging community needs, to career development activities and financial support of research.
- Knowledge, skills, and intellectual inquiry are central to the University's educational programs and activities. Ferris' comprehensive assessment and curricular development processes and a rigorous general education program support this centrality, which is also grounded in the University's mission. However, although historically a "teaching institution," Ferris is slowly increasing emphasis on faculty and student research.
- Ferris is committed to providing students with an education that prepares them for the global, diverse, and technology demands of their futures.

### Criterion 5

- Ferris continues to improve and enhance its community relationships. The community perception is that community relationships with Ferris have significantly improved in recent years through better communication and increasing engagement of Ferris faculty, staff, and students in service to the community.
- The community perceives Ferris as enhancing the quality of life in the area and making the community more vibrant and unique by providing activities, cultural events, and training. The community values the services that the University provides through the outreach clinics (optometry, dental hygiene, and pharmacy) and the students who serve as role models to area youth.
- At the same time, staff and student engagement varies immensely.

Keep apprised of Ferris' progress at: <http://www.ferris.edu/hlc>

Send comments to: [hlcselfstudy@ferris.edu](mailto:hlcselfstudy@ferris.edu)

\*When using the term "assessment," the HLC is referring to the assessment of student learning, especially direct measures.

