

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Reaccreditation Progress

Site Visit Dates: April 18-20, 2011

President's Council Update Agenda

1. Overview of the Criteria for Accreditation and Emerging Phenomena - Robbie
2. Overview of our Organization/Process, including the role of the Steering Committee - Mike
3. Review of the Work of Criterion Committees - Chris
4. Status of the Report Writing - Chris
5. Inviting PC's thoughts about areas of strength in each of the criteria - Robbie
6. Open Conversations/questions 10 min.

A Changing Environment

- Increased scrutiny of distance education (online)
- Increased scrutiny of Federal Compliance Issues (authentication of student identity, transfer, transparency, complaint processes – see p. 4 in pilot team report)
- More attention to planning, diversity, assessment, governance, and finances
(and these are the most common follow-ups)
- More attention to sites – assuring comparative levels of student and staff support
- Alignment of actions 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:

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

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

Primary Areas of Evaluation:

- Governance and administration
- Financial stability
- Admissions and student services
- Students' achievement of learning outcomes
- General education
- Institutional resources
- Planning
- Institutional effectiveness
- Diversity efforts
- Relationships with internal and external constituencies

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

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

President's Council Report – April 7, 2010

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 The draft Self-Study report is in the process of being finished and disseminated for campus, community, and Board of Trustees' input.
- 2011 HLC Team visits campus April 18 – 20, 2011

Steering Committee Responsibilities:

1. Serve as the **organizing and monitoring entity** for the entire self-study process, serving as a cheerleader and champion as required, to **encourage engagement and thoughtful input** to make the process valuable for participants and the University.
2. Keep a **global focus** on the examination of the University and secondarily on its component parts.
3. **Facilitate a thoughtful, thorough review** of Ferris' documentation of its achievement of the criteria for accreditation, including each of the core components.
4. Engage committee members meaningfully in the total execution of the self-study, and replace and/or add members as required.
5. Appoint additional members, task groups, etc., as required.
6. **Conduct regular meetings** of the committee and/or subcommittees (the frequency will likely vary at different points in the process).
7. Develop a self-study plan by April 30, 2008, and **document progress** throughout, likely resulting from regular steering-committee meetings.
8. Plan and execute interventions as required if the process becomes bogged down or thwarted.
9. Participate in learning opportunities relevant to the self-study, including on-campus meetings and the annual meeting of the HLC, as possible
10. Provide minutes of all meetings to the self-study chair for inclusion on the shared HLC web site.
11. Assist the criteria and data committees to **identify and/or gather evidence** in support of each of the criterion and core components.
12. **Assure that all Ferris primary stakeholders (alumni, students, faculty, staff, etc.) have the opportunity to provide input and to react to draft documents throughout the process** and for each critical component
13. Coordinate and authorize surveys, special meetings, hearings, seminars, or other events to gather input and/or react to findings throughout the process (working with the data committee and the self-study coordinator to avoid redundancy across committees).
14. Provide electronic copies of the evidence utilized and/or referenced for inclusion in the electronic resource room.
15. **Document the Ferris self-study process** for elaboration in the document.
16. **Develop a response to prior concerns of the Commission** (preliminary information already exists from recent change requests, so updating is what is most needed).
17. **Deliver a comprehensive report** to the writer/editor, assuring that the report includes concrete evidence and analytical writing (see suggested lengths below) in a near-final form for the editor/writer.
18. **Coordinate campus communications concerning the self-study**, including the oversight of the third-party comment process (likely working with a Communications Committee that will be convened later in the process).
19. **Develop an Executive Summary summarizing the University identified strengths, opportunities for improvement, and proposed actions** to continue to build on the strengths and make improvements.
20. **Be innovative in approach**, as appropriate.

Summary of FSU Criterion Committee Responsibilities and Activities 2008-10

General Responsibilities

- Attend initial organizational meetings to organize/set individual Criterion Committee approaches
- HLC committees must prepare for site visit Spring 2011—see timeline
- Serve on a subcommittee for Criterion (a, b, c, d, e) or as organization is determined
- Collect and analyze relevant data
- Draft report section
- Attend meetings/work sessions
- Record minutes of any meetings/activities
- Report to co-chairs as needed
- Meet deadlines set by FSU HLC Steering Committee
- Follow up with report writer as needed/requested for Criterion Content/Analysis

-
1. Criterion Committee Early Activities (Sp Su 2008)
-

President's Council Report – April 7, 2010

- Identification, Collection, and Review of Data
 - Noted Emerging FSU topics/"stories"
 - Organized Committee Approaches
Persons Involved: 100+ persons affiliated with 5 Criterion Committees
2. Initial Criterion Committee Study (Fall 08 - Spring 09)
 - Self-Study Data Study--Analysis
 - Criterion Committees Regular Reports to Steering Committee
 3. Criterion Committee First Formal Presentations: Initial Findings to Steering to Committee
 4. 15+ Listening Sessions: Campus Community (Fall 08 - Spring 09) and World Café: BR Community
Persons/Groups Involved: Campus Divisions, Colleges, Faculty Senate, Residence Halls, Financial Aid, Birkham Health, U-Rec, Student Organizations, Torch, RSOs, Big Rapids Community...
 5. Criterion Committees' Initial Report: Outline and Drafting (Sp Su 09)
 - Initial Draft to S. Balkema Aug-Sept 2009
 6. Open Sessions, Faculty Week 2009
Persons Involved: Members of steering committee, criterion co-chairs and members, faculty, staff, administration
 7. Criterion Committees' Individual Meetings with S. Balkema (Fa 09 Sp 10)
 - Close review of 5 criterion chapters with writer
 - Continued data and information collection and review for report draft
 8. Large Group Review Sessions (Sp 10 - current)
Review of 5 Criterion Chapters
Persons Involved: Steering Committee plus 18 invited extra reviewers
 9. Attendance HLC Annual Conference: Chicago, IL (Sp 08, 09, 10)

Current Research and Editing Activities:

- Step 1 In the fall of 2009, first editing sweep of each of the Criterion chapter drafts.
Purpose / Activities: Develop readable format, establish consistency, identify missing information (including areas to integrate related Kendall information), and update with additional research information. **Responsible:** Sandy with Criterion Co-Chairs
- Step 2 From December - February, meetings with the Criterion committees
Purpose / Activities: Discuss missing data and information, develop a strategy for locating/collecting it, and discuss revision plans. **Responsible:** Sandy with Criterion Committees
- Step 3 From March-April, review sessions with broader group of readers
Purpose / Activities: Expand current set of readers from Steering Committee and Criterion Committee members to include extra readers (identified from each of the colleges and divisions). Begin identifying Strengths-Challenges-Progress for each Criterion, based on draft evidence. **Responsible:** Sandy with Steering Committee
- Step 4 From May-August, complete Criterion chapter drafts and draft 3 introductory chapters
Purpose / Activities: Integrate all new information, editing changes/corrections, updated data into Criterion chapters (includes drafting report index, incorporating/testing all URL links). Draft introductory chapters (Changes at Ferris since last report; Responses to concerns from last visit; Description of the self-study process). **Responsible:** Sandy (with review by Steering Committee)
- Step 5 From September-October, hold final campus review sessions and discussions, including President's Council, Board of Trustees, satellite campus reviews
Purpose / Activities: obtain a broader readership of the "near-final" draft to ensure its completeness and accuracy. **Responsible:** R. Teahen w/ Steering Committee
- Step 6 From September-December, complete revisions and prepare for publication
Purpose / Activities: Integrate all revised content and updated data from review sessions, complete final URL checks, prepare for publication (PDF and limited print publication). **Responsible:** Sandy (with review by Steering Committee)
- Step 7 From December-April, prepare for HLC site visit
Purpose / Activities: Prepare B.R. campus (and satellite sites) with appropriate communication, signs, etc. Prepare Resource Room and Work Room for Team. Develop visit schedule and arrangements. **Responsible:** R. Teahen w/ Steering Committee

Your Ideas About Areas of Strength and Challenge (survey handout)

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

Send comments to: hlcselfstudy@ferris.edu

