

# The Criteria for Accreditation

HLC Standards

# AQIP Categories vs. Criteria

- The AQIP **Categories** provide a framework that colleges can use to examine and understand their key processes.
- The Higher Learning Commission's **Criteria** for Accreditation are the standards of quality by which the Commission determines whether an institution merits accreditation.

# HLC Criteria

- Mission
- Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct
- Teaching and Learning: Quality Resources and Support
- Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement
- Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

# The Criteria

- Each Criterion is divided into Core Components, which are in turn divided into Subcomponents

# Criterion 1: Mission

- The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.
- Core Components:
  - A. The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.
  - B. The mission is articulated publicly.
  - C. The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.
  - D. The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

# Criterion 2: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

- The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.
- Core Components:
  - A. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.
  - B. The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.
  - C. The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.
  - D. The institution is committed to to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.
  - E. The institution's policies and procedures call for the responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by its faculty, students, and staff.

# Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

- The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.
  - A. The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.
  - B. The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.
  - C. The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high quality programs and student services.
  - D. The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.
  - E. The institution fulfills the claims It makes for an enriched educational environment.

# Criterion 4: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

- The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.
- Core Components:
  - A. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.
  - B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.
  - C. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.



# Criterion 5: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.

- The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.
- Core Components:
  - A. The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.
  - B. The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.
  - C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.
  - D. The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

# Criteria and Accreditation

- The Criteria are addressed in the Systems Appraisal through the crosswalks with the Categories
- The Systems Appraisal rates the criteria on how well the case is made:
  - Strong, clear, and well-presented
  - Adequate, but could be improved
  - Unclear or incomplete
- For the the Continuous Quality Review (CQR), the criteria are rated:
  - Met
  - Met with Concerns- Monitoring Assigned
  - Not Met- Probation or Withdrawal of Accreditation Recommended
- All subcomponents must be Met for the Criterion to be Met

EVIDENCE

Thank You!