



HLC ACCREDITATION VISIT
March 18-19, 2019
OCC's Time to Shine!

Criterion 1 Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

SUMMARY

Oakland Community College has clearly articulated its mission, values, and vision statements to all stakeholders. These have been reviewed and refined through a strategic planning process that aligns with academic and student services, drives all supporting operations, is tied to the budgeting process, and is Board approved.

The mission, values, and vision statements are widely communicated across the College in several areas – including OCC's website. OCC's educational opportunities align with our values and reflect the diversity of Oakland County through our Global Studies degree program and our new Global Learning Endorsement. OCC addresses diversity through our strong English as a Second Language program, initiatives to address ADA compliance, LGBTQ+ and veterans, and continues to offer affordable tuition.

As a multi-campus institution, OCC faces challenges involving campus wide involvement in major process and decision-making endeavors. The College is exploring use of electronic feedback and modalities to include campus and community members in these processes.

During the HLC visit, members of the HLC review team will be holding forums for each of the criteria that will be open to OCC employees. Following are potential questions to consider for Criterion 1.

- ◆ Tell me about the College's mission and how you understand it.
- ◆ Does your department contribute to OCC's mission?
- ◆ How do you contribute to the mission?
- ◆ How does OCC serve the public good?
- ◆ Do you know where you would find the mission, values and vision statements?
- ◆ How does OCC's mission guide the institution's work?



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Criterion 2 Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

SUMMARY

In an effort to reaffirm OCC's commitment to integrity and ethical and responsible conduct, the College has spent the last year reviewing and adopting a new policy governance system for the Board of Trustees. This new governance system follows the Carver Model and it complements OCC's Administrative Policies and Procedures. This new model supports the new mission and Strategic Plan and has shaped how each area of the College conducts itself, interacts with other College constituents, and with our students.

OCC's challenges are related to training and orientation of all employees, evaluation of employees, and staff development. The College is working on developing and implementing new strategies and programs to address this shortfall.

During the HLC visit, members of the HLC review team will be holding forums for each of the criteria that will be open to OCC employees. Following are potential questions to consider for Criterion 2.

- ◆ The College's policies have recently been updated. How do the College policies guide operations at OCC? (The new policies can be found here: oaklandcc.edu/Policies/)
- ◆ One of OCC's values is being ethical – what does this mean to you?
- ◆ What do you view as the Board of Trustees' role in governing the College?
- ◆ Describe ways the College presents itself clearly to the students and the public.
- ◆ Tell me how the College is committed to the freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth and teaching and learning.



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

*The institution provides high quality education,
wherever and however its offerings are delivered.*

SUMMARY

Oakland Community College is extremely proud of its degree and certificate programs. We offer over 85 programs and our transfer rate for students is the highest in Michigan. Our relationships with the community to provide qualified nurses, dental hygienists, sonography and radiology technicians, and public safety officers speaks to our quality programs that are highly respected. Our courses transfer at a high rate and we have several strong articulation agreements with many Michigan four-year institutions.

OCC is also proud of its redesigned distance education program, which has received high marks from HLC reviewers. We have made great strides in our extensive general education review process that has included multiple stakeholders and focus groups to help the College focus on course and program outcomes as they relate to general education.

OCC is one of a few community colleges that offers sabbaticals to full-time faculty and offers tuition reimbursement for professional development for faculty and staff. OCC is also proud of its mandatory orientation for new students and mandatory counseling for all FTIAC students. Examination of data on these processes are yielding positive impacts on student experiences, persistence, and completion.

Challenges include requiring students to declare a program of study early in their college experience and working to engage adjunct faculty in the assessment process of student learning.

During the HLC visit, members of the HLC review team will be holding forums for each of the criteria that will be open to OCC employees. Following are potential questions to consider for Criterion 3.

- ◆ How do you ensure that all courses – traditional, online, hybrid, etc. – have the same learning outcomes?
- ◆ If you could change one thing about the current classroom that you are teaching in, what would it be?
- ◆ What is the purpose of OCC's general education program? In what ways does the program achieve its goals for students? How could it be improved?
- ◆ What resources are available to support faculty? Are these sufficient in meeting faculty needs?
- ◆ What plans are in place to address co-curricular programs and assessment?
- ◆ Tell us about support for student learning and effective teaching. What works well and what could be improved?



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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.

SUMMARY

Oakland Community College is proud of its extensive program review process that is well developed and deployed. The success of the College's graduates are well monitored and tied to area wage data. Our student learning assessment tool, ARTIS, is a key strength of the institution, as it tracks progress in course/program outcomes, lists strategies for improvement, and improves our curricula.

The College's participation in the HLC Persistence & Completion Academy has assisted the College in implementing several initiatives focused on improving student outcomes related to guided pathways, improving student services, accelerated learning paths and engaging in best practice strategies for student learning. We have revised our placement process by utilizing mandatory practice tests and remediation exercises which more accurately place students in courses, and have adopted program plans to assist students in completion of certificates and degrees.

OCC's challenges include improving processes related to credit by exam, military experience and experiential learning. We also need to review our co-curricular assessment processes. Through our participation in the Persistence & Completion Academy, the College systematically reviews data and implemented initiatives to enhance P&C. The College ultimately seeks to achieve a 75% fall to fall student persistence rate and a 40% six-year completion rate in both degree and certificate programs. These ambitious goals will better meet the needs of Oakland County and the surrounding counties.

During the HLC visit, members of the HLC review team will be holding forums for each of the criteria that will be open to OCC employees. Following are potential questions to consider for Criterion 4.

- ◆ Faculty/Deans/Program Coordinators – OCC has a comprehensive program review process. What have you learned from the program review process and how do you use and share information based on what you've learned?
- ◆ Describe the process of assessment of student learning at OCC from your perspective.
- ◆ How does the College focus on persistence and completion?
- ◆ What practices are currently in place to improve retention? What else could be done?
- ◆ How do departments/faculty access data specific to the programs?
- ◆ How does the institution support assessment?



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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.

SUMMARY

Oakland Community College is fiscally sound, despite the downturn in enrollment for several years. This enrollment trend has forced the College to examine its budgeting and forecasting processes, which has contributed to financial stability and sound strategic planning. This includes a 5-Year Capital Outlay plan, that systematically helps improve facilities.

OCC's technology infrastructure is regularly reviewed, remains current, and is effective. The institution's governance through the BOT has been greatly enhanced through the newly revised Board policies and the Board Monitoring Reports track and evaluate College operations. OCC has many faculty driven committees that engage stakeholders in college-wide initiatives and actions. The renewed mission, vision, and value statements are aligned with integrated planning and budgeting.

Our challenges include developing improved and consistent procedures related to staff development, review, and evaluation, and engaging students in our shared governance process.

During the HLC visit, members of the HLC review team will be holding forums for each of the criteria that will be open to OCC employees. Following are potential questions to consider for Criterion 5.

- ◆ Tell me about your budget process. How are you involved?
- ◆ What can you tell me about strategic planning at OCC?
- ◆ Can you provide examples of collaboration that enables the institution to fulfill its mission?
- ◆ How do you think the College's planning processes could be improved?
- ◆ What are your biggest resource challenges at OCC?
- ◆ What are some examples of improvements that have been made at the College based on data?



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**What is the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)?
 Why is accreditation important?**

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is an independent corporation and is responsible for assuring that colleges and universities meet certain standards in terms of their missions, operations, and activities in teaching and student learning, discovery and promotion of knowledge, and service. Accreditation is an assurance to the public that an institution is properly prepared to do its job. Unaccredited schools are not eligible for many kinds of federal support, including student financial aid.

What does HLC look for when it accredits colleges and universities?

The Criteria for Accreditation provides the framework for peer reviewers to evaluate the organization. The five criteria areas are:

1. Mission
2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct
3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support
4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement
5. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

How can students prepare for the visit?

During their visit, the HLC team of reviewers may ask OCC students questions related to the work of the College. To help answer questions, consider how you benefit from the College's vision:

- ◆ Excellence in all we do...
 - ◇ Become the college of choice.
 - ◇ Become the partner of choice.
 - ◇ Become the employer of choice.

Who will be on the HLC team of reviewers?

We will be visited by a Peer Review Team of trained Consultant Evaluators. These are administrators, staff, and faculty who have been accepted to the Peer Review Corps by the HLC.

What will the team do during the visit?

The team will already have received the complete OCC Assurance Argument and will have had access to all supporting documents. During the visit, they will be seeking to validate the content of the report, including meetings with key individuals and groups as well as open meetings that are less structured.

How will the findings be reported?

The HLC team will write a report that addresses the Criteria and Core Components for accreditation and send a draft to the College a few weeks after the visit.

You may have the opportunity to meet with the HLC review team at an OCC campus during the review team visit. Following are some questions to consider that may be asked by the reviewers:

- ◆ Tell us about your experience at OCC as a student.
- ◆ How do you access information about the College?
- ◆ What does OCC do well?
- ◆ What are some ideas for improvement that you have?
- ◆ What one word would you use to describe OCC?
- ◆ What do you want us to know about OCC?

OCC Strategic Plan

Excellence in all we do

Mission

OCC is committed to empowering our students to succeed and advancing our community.

Values

- ◆ ACCESSIBLE – We welcome people of diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- ◆ EXCELLENT – We offer high-quality and relevant educational experiences, and celebrate the accomplishments of our people.
- ◆ ETHICAL – We act with respect, integrity, and kindness, and carefully steward the resources entrusted to us.

Vision

Excellence in all we do...

- ◆ Become the college of choice.
- ◆ Become the partner of choice.
- ◆ Become the employer of choice.



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