HLC Information – Faculty

Assurance Team Visit: February 26 & 27, 2024

HLC resources on the Innovation Café

Link to Innovation Cafe

- Visit agenda/schedule
- HLC Peer Reviewer Team Information
- HLC Assurance Argument
- HLC Criteria for Accreditation
- What and Why of Accreditation – Perfect for Students!
- WSU Tech HLC Team Members
- Kriterion Kernels

Who is HLC and Why are they here?

A review team representing the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the college's accrediting body, will come to campus and, based upon reading our Assurance Argument report and the team's observations while on site, will determine the extent to which WSU Tech meets expected standards for ongoing accreditation. In addition, HLC team members will provide suggestions for ways in which the college can improve its operations moving forward.

This document offers you, as part of the WSU Tech community, a sense of institutional accreditation: why it is important, what campus members can expect during the upcoming visit, and a summary of the criterion as presented in the assurance argument. The notes below are just some ideas and suggestions that help you better understand the criteria for reaffirmation of accreditation and the evidence put forth in the Assurance Argument to help make the case for the ways in which we meet and exceed HLC expectations and more importantly, what's your role. The bottom-line is you need to be open and honest and provide feedback when asked and this document will provide you a brief roadmap. **Be honest! Don't guess or make stuff up; if you don't know, say that but indicate you can check with someone who would know.**

Differences in Faculty type

Tech Ed versus General Ed- Both complete program review and assessment matrices.

- **Tech Ed faculty** understand the role of program outcomes and SLOs, KBOR Program Alignment, External Accreditations/Certifications/Licensures, Industry Advocate Teams in Curriculum Development/Equipment Purchases and have a general idea of what Gen Ed courses are required for COC, TC, and AAS. Some emphasis is placed in work experience for hiring. What have we done to emphasize the importance of workplace skills, and what have you done?
- **General Education** understand the role of KBOR Core Outcomes project, your course outcomes and the college's student learning outcomes, the focus of gen ed assessment for your subject, and have a general idea of what Gen Ed courses are required for COC, TC, and AAS. You are required to have a Masters in field, if not, you must have a Masters and at least 18 hours of graduate courses in your instructional area.
- **Adjuncts including dual-credit** are held to the same hiring, qualifications, and standards as full-time faculty.

Faculty Specific Improvement Items

- Program Review provides the college with documentation of quality improvement in academics. When did your department participate last? What kind of things does it ask for?
- Assessment-Faculty do assessment to improve student learning. Always identifying weaknesses of student knowledge or skills and correcting them. You do it lots of ways, name them!

- What is WIDS and how is it used? WIDS is primarily a repository of everything related to curriculum and assessment. WIDS is where you go to find your program's most recent Program Review, annual OAP plan, OAP analysis, Semester Snapshots, program outcomes, course outcomes, course standards, etc.
- What are Student Learning Outcomes and what makes them different than your program or course outcomes?
- What are your program or course outcomes (refer to WIDS)?

WSU Tech Things you need to be able to articulate

- Where can a student find their syllabus?
- What policies are in your syllabi?
- Understand the Academic Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct and when each are applicable. What is academic integrity as defined by policy?
- Stackable Curriculum allows students to move into more extensive technical and general education courses while providing exit points for students to utilize workplace skills while earning certificates or a degree. What is it for your program?
- Access and usage of Library Resources
- Your role in the budgeting process-Perkins, NCAT funds, Grant funds if applicable
- Security, ITHelpdesk, and Facilities support systems
- Curriculum development process
- Placement testing for your area.
- Relationship with Student Services
- Courses at the high schools or for high school students follow the same rigorous processes as college courses–vetting instructors, evaluations, assessments, etc.
- The Strategic Plan – what is it and where can you find it?
- WSU President and the WSU Board of Trustees provide governance
- Where do you find the Mission? What is the core message?
- WSU Tech has a diverse student body with a higher percentage of minority students than our surrounding area. Our demographics have changed over the past few years with more high school and traditional college students taking courses.
- Faculty credentials for WSU Tech are governed by policy
- Talk about your own Performance Evaluation goals—how were they developed. Know that there is an overall college goal this year that focuses on retention, completion, success, and placement.
- Talk about any new curriculum, instruction, tools, resources, partnerships, etc…that you have been involved with your program over the past four years including ACCESSIBILITY
- Know your role and communication with other departments-Student Services, Strategic Innovations, Finance, Financial Aid, etc.
- How do we ensure quality of online courses? 7day checks, 3-year reviews, template courses.
- What's ITAS role?
- WSU Tech actively requests feedback from internal and external constituent groups via employee and student surveys, meetings with leadership, and industry advocate team meetings.
- WSU Tech follows all of the federal guidelines for defining a credit hour.

Criterion 1: Mission

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

WSU Tech has a solid strategic plan created with guidance from a variety of internal and external sources. The mission statements and strategic plan have guided the college to a clear focus on the core principles of providing highest quality education for our community and serving as an engine of economic development to the region. The affiliation with WSU continues to bring new opportunities to demonstrate these core principles. WSU Tech is committed to delivering quality technical education to its students, providing a highly qualified workforce for regional business and industry, and facilitating workforce and economic development in the area. While the college does not have investors or parent

organizations, WSU Tech recognizes that it is accountable to the Wichita community, students, business and industry, and taxpayers and strives to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to it to carry out the educational mission.

Mission: Provide quality higher education and leadership in workforce training that supports economic development for a global economy.
- Mission guides strategic planning with clear milestones and indicators.
- The initial three-year plan was extended to AY24 due to continued effectiveness.

Vision: To be one of the nation's most innovative and impactful two-year colleges.

Values Based Culture
- Values integrated into the institution's fabric and is emphasized during hiring, onboard, and interviews.
- Recognition program rewards employees exemplifying values.

Strategic Priorities
- People and Culture – Recruit and retain a competitive talent advantage.
- Student Success – Foster student success, focused enrollment growth, ensure positive student experiences.
- Community Partnerships – Develop transformational partnerships to meet community workforce needs.
- Continuous Improvement – Improve internal efficiencies to assist student learning and customer experiences.
- Financial Sustainability – Ensure financial sustainability.

The current strategic plan contains priorities to enhance the academic experience and advance applied learning opportunities for students to gain valuable workplace skills. These priorities directly support the mission to provide a highly educated and trained workforce for our community to remain globally competitive.

Criterion 2: Integrity – Ethical and Responsible conduct
The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

WSU Tech is committed to ethical and responsible conduct as evidenced by having in place policies that guide the integrity and ethics of its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students, as well as appropriate steps for due process. Additional internal and external processes are in place to maintain compliance with institutional, state and federal policies. Publicly available documents advertise WSU Tech's admission/degree requirements and processes, educational costs, qualifications, and accreditation status. Mechanisms are also in place to ensure that faculty, staff and students use and apply knowledge responsibly and ethically. While the governance structure of WSU Tech is unique, the affiliation with WSU has enhanced the integrity of both institutions through shared resources and innovative approaches to meet the needs of community stakeholders.

Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning – Quality, Resources and Support
The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

WSU Tech provides high quality education in its delivery of academic offerings, technical programs, support services, and student experiences. The collaborative work of administration, faculty and staff enable consistent learning goals and expectations for courses as well as certificate and degree programs. The mission of the college drives the focus on the appropriateness of curriculum in technical education and the opportunities in general education. The college community works together to facilitate policies and procedures to ensure high standards for teaching and learning. Providing support to students in and out of the classroom ensures that the college enriches the learning environments. Faculty and staff provide the infrastructure and resources for effective teaching, and targeted support services are available for all student populations.

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.

WSU Tech faculty actively participate in assessment policy, methods, and best practices; evaluate assessment data; make recommendations based on assessment data for improvement and accountability purposes; and communicate assessment practices with their colleagues. The [program review](#) process, including financial health measures, provides a renewed quality measure for faculty and academic administration. WSU Tech is committed via the most recent Strategic Plan to define goals that will lead to improvements focused on student success by:

- Employing a systematic process, method, and regular pattern of review [(3-yr cycle)](#) for each program that provides data on student outcomes and student success regarding those outcomes.
- Integrating the assessment of college-level student learning outcomes across all technical programs ([annual OAP plan and analysis](#)-housed in WIDS).
- Instituting a [program review](#) process that focuses on the relevant issues related to each program and the necessary changes and improvement needed. [Program Review](#) documentation is housed in WIDS.
- Engaging the entire college community's attention on success measures such as retention, completion, credential attainment, placement, and course success.

Criterion 5: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

WSU Tech is a dynamic institution that embraces the necessity of continuous adaptation. Guided by mission documents and a strategic plan, coupled with the dedication of faculty, staff, and administrators, the college has successfully navigated consistent increases in student enrollment and addressed evolving industry needs. The collaboration of internal and external constituents, starting with industry and community involvement, board oversight, and the planning and vision of college administration, has been pivotal. The institution's nimbleness and responsiveness are underpinned by financial solvency and effective engagement of additional revenue streams. While growth brings challenges, the college's ability to react swiftly to local business needs and adjust for timely solutions reflects its proactive approach. External factors such as unemployment and population growth add unpredictability to planning, and the integration of high school students and dual/concurrent credit faculty necessitates careful consideration and responsive planning.