

HLC Information – Staff

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.**

Your role and the mission

- **Academic Coordinators** provide administrative support in the respective academic departments, serving as liaisons between academics and other departments.
- **Academic leadership** is responsible for the academic quality and accessibility including hiring qualified faculty and providing leadership and support. It also includes supporting students by scheduling classes at convenient times and promoting multifaceted instruction for a variety of learning styles.
- **Admissions, Advising, Success Coaches, and Navigators** provide quality customer service to students to help them achieve their educational goals and provide future workers for the global economy. We are the connection for students to plug into school and community resources and removing barriers for their future academic career success.
- **Career Services** works to ensure that student have the knowledge and soft skills to be successful in matching the expectations to be successful in the workplace. Communicates with departments such as student services and academics on this type of employer feedback. Assists students with employability and career services coaching.
- **Facilities and Operations** provide a safe, comfortable, and cutting-edge educational facility.
- **Finance** provides the financial and operational foundation on which the college's mission can be fulfilled. They deliver quality leadership by ensuring sound financial management and support of all college functions.
- **Financial Aid** assist students to obtain funding to complete technical education and training to be able to secure a position in the workforce.

- **Foundation** helps to change the lives of students through scholarships, emergency loans and other student-focused initiatives allowing students to gain the education and experience to fill the talent pipeline in Wichita.
- **Grants and special projects** leverage resources to support the college in assisting students, meeting employer demands, and stimulating economic growth globally.
- **High School & FutureMaker** share post-secondary opportunities with middle and high school students including career exploration and concurrent credit options allowing them to get a jump on a college degree or a career with tuition-free or reduced-cost classes.
- **Institutional Effectiveness** creates, analyzes, and disseminates data and reports to internal and external customers that is used in decision making and planning processes.
- **Instructional Academic Support (ITAS, Accessibility, Assessment, Registrar)** offers a variety of services which support students and faculty in their work to provide quality education and leadership in workforce training. These services include curriculum management, instructional design, instructional technology, FERPA compliance, etc.
- **IT** provide fast, reliable and quality information technology and service that support the current and future college needs and requirements while building on state-of-the-art IT infrastructure.
- **Marketing** creates awareness of WSU Tech opportunities by recruiting a broad spectrum of students to help maintain diversity throughout the college and champion innovation by using cutting-edge techniques to communicate with internal and external audiences.
- **People and Culture** align employees with positions to provide high quality education and services to students and the public by hiring quality employees and ensuring that the trainers and faculty are qualified to give students a chance for a better life.
- **Security** provides safe learning, teaching, and working environments by which we make an atmosphere free of undue concern and stress allowing everyone to achieve their goals and be a success. In addition, they provide useful, informative, and dialogue inducing information regarding workplace safety and security.
- **Student Engagement & IDE** provide resources and opportunities to foster the development of the whole student inside and outside the classroom.
- **Student Support (Library, TRIO, Tutoring, Testing)** provides academic support to help students be successful and meet their educational, personal, and professional goals.

WSU Tech Things you need to be able to articulate

- Understand applicable policies to your job.
- Know how your department is setup. What's your role in providing students support?
- What services are offered at what campuses that impact students?
- Your role in the budgeting process—as your job, as a department member?
- Students access and usage of Library Resources—where and how
- Security, ITHelpdesk, and Facilities support systems
- Courses at the high schools or for high school students follow the same rigorous processes as college courses
- We have a [strategic plan](#) that guides decision-making
- 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.
- Staff credentials for WSU Tech are appropriate for the job. Professional Development is provided via in-service, onsite workshops, and other opportunities.
- 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 initiatives, tools, resources, partnerships, etc...that you have been involved with in your dept over the past couple of years.
- WSU Tech actively requests feedback from internal and external constituent groups via employee and student surveys, meetings with leadership, and industry advocate team meetings.
- What's your role in Banner? Or other technology

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.