

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION EVIDENCE TABLES FOR CRITERION 4 Section 4A, 4B, 4C

WHAT IS EVIDENCE

Evidence documents support the Assurance Argument. Examples of sources of evidence common to most Assurance Arguments include: mission statements, budget documents, assessment and curriculum reports, minutes from meetings of governing boards and other important committees, and materials related to special accreditation organizations or state agencies.

Much of the evidence in the file will be uploaded from the Catalog, Class Schedules, Faculty Rosters, Faculty, Staff, and Student handbooks.

HLC will include evidence from their file, such as team reports from Comprehensive Evaluations, analysis of Interim Reports, Institutional Updates, copies of actions and correspondence, and public comments.

THE ASSURANCE ARGUMENT

An important feature of the Assurance Argument is the criterion in its entirety. The entire argument is mission-focused.

Criterion 4. Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A. Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance, data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

4.B. Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

4.C. Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

4.A. Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance, data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Examples

List of campus committees and teams participating in collaborative planning processes, such as faculty or university senate, assessment committee, general education committee, strategic planning committee, budget committee, policy advisory group, and/or library committee, with descriptions of their roles in such processes.

Bylaws, policies, procedures and schedules for the institution's faculty or university senate, student government association, staff senate or council, and governing board.

Documentation outlining the institution's organizational structure.

Resolutions and meeting minutes of different constituent groups.

Evidence of institutional action based on review of data.

Evidence of the institution's engagement with community, non-institutional entities and local organizations. Examples might include public transportation, partnerships with local law enforcement, and support for local nonprofit organizations.

4.B. Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Examples

Independent audited financial statements and Composite Financial Index patterns for multiple years.

Documentation of investments in facilities and technology, including deferred maintenance.

Campus master plan, including additions and deferred maintenance.

Documentation of strategic plan investments.

Budget requests and procedures delineating flow of decision-making.

Projected budgets/pro forma budgets.

Compliance with bank covenants and lines of credit.

Endowment drawdown policy (and explanations of any anomalies during a review period).

Process for monitoring expenses.

Mission statement and activities of the institution's foundation or advancement office, as relevant to the support of facilities and educational programs.

Fundraising documentation and results.

Enrollment plan, current enrollment, and enrollment projections.

Evidence of allocation of budget for instruction, strategic plan, mission, professional development, and similar priorities.

Duration and amount of grants received by the institution.
Evidence of the alignment of planning initiatives with current educational programs, such as facilities planning, budget processes, and advancement initiatives.
Collective bargaining agreement(s).
Investment policy and documentation demonstrating compliance.
Internal budget control policies.
Bond rating since last comprehensive evaluation or Assurance Review, if available.
Information about training and professional development for faculty and staff.

4.C. Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Examples

History and process of strategic plan creation and constituencies involved in such activities.
Annual updates to strategic plan; status of action plans.
Budget requests and procedure for budget planning.
Budget allocation by major area.
Budget projections for multiple years.
Enrollment management plan.
Environmental scan results.
Evidence of resources used to aid in planning activities, such as state reports on demographics, industry/vocational employment demands, and market analyses.
Facilities and technology plans.
Evidence of attainment of strategic planning goals.
Documentation delineating linkage between planning, budgeting and evaluation/assessment.
Student success data and reports.
Documentation of institutional effectiveness plans and strategies, including goals and measurable outcomes for identified functional areas.
Student learning and academic program assessment documentation.
Documentation regarding assessments of student satisfaction with facilities, libraries, technology, human resources, security, and other services (e.g., counseling, dining, residence life, student recreation, student activities, parking, for example).
Key performance indicators/dashboard.
Meeting minutes, agendas and/or task lists indicating review and analysis of data to inform improvements of operational activities (e.g., counseling, residence life, information technology, parking, student activities).
Current rates of and goals for institutional persistence, retention and completion data and reports (include the institution's definitions of these terms), documentation of a consortium for student retention data exchange, analysis of graduation and retention rates by distinctive student populations (e.g., age, gender, race, ethnicity, first-generation status).

Strategies or initiatives implemented based on review and analysis of data to make improvements in persistence, retention and completion, such as agendas, meeting minutes and action items of units working in these areas.

Information about the effectiveness of the institution's student success center.

Documentation of utilization of datasets to make improvements.

Documentation of campus services to support student needs (e.g., writing skills, math tutoring, study skills, time management)

Analysis of and actions based on suspension and probation trends, DFW rates and tracking in sequenced courses, effects of add/drop and withdrawal policies on student success.

Analysis of student success based on academic preparation and financial well-being and various demographics.

Student advising procedures and policies.

Student exit survey results and action taken to address concerns as applicable.