

 HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

**CATYC Annual Meeting**

Year in Review with a Focus on the Future

Columbus, OH | September 9, 2019

**HLC Mission**

Serving the common good by  
assuring and advancing the  
quality of higher learning.

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**Current Strategic Plan –  
Beyond the Horizon**

**V** Value to Members  
**I** Innovation  
**S** Student Success  
**T** Thought Leadership  
**A** Advocacy



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**Lumina Foundation Grant –  
Innovation and Student Success  
2016-2019**

The purpose of the project is to  
continue to evolve into an exemplary  
21<sup>st</sup> century accrediting agency that  
assures quality and fosters  
improvement through innovative  
practices in higher education.

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### Innovation Initiatives

- National think tank, *Partners for Transformation*, developed thought papers regarding the revolution of higher education, student-centric accreditation, and collaboration with the Triad.
- Proposal to provide expedited evaluations for Substantive Change Applications.
- Proposal to develop an Innovation Zone for institutional coaching, incubator for collaboration, and an applied research lab.

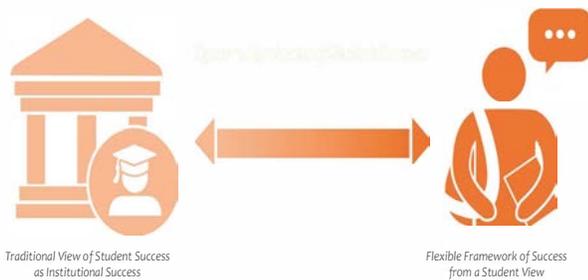
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### Student Success Initiatives

- Thought papers on the shifting conversations focusing on students' expectations of success, disaggregation of data related to various student populations, and a proposed glossary of terms.
- Research conducted in pursuit of a broader understanding regarding variables that may have the greatest influence and predictive qualities relative to student success.

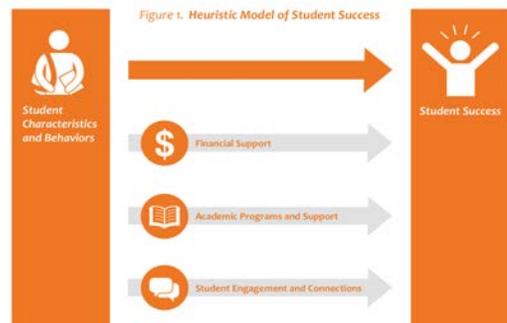
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### Spectrum of Student Success

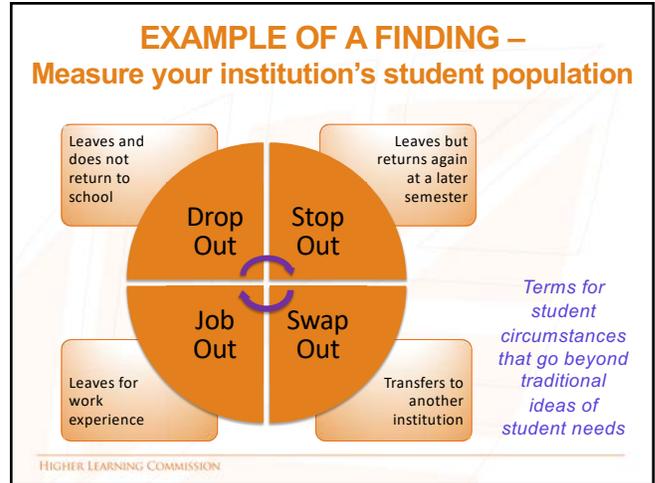
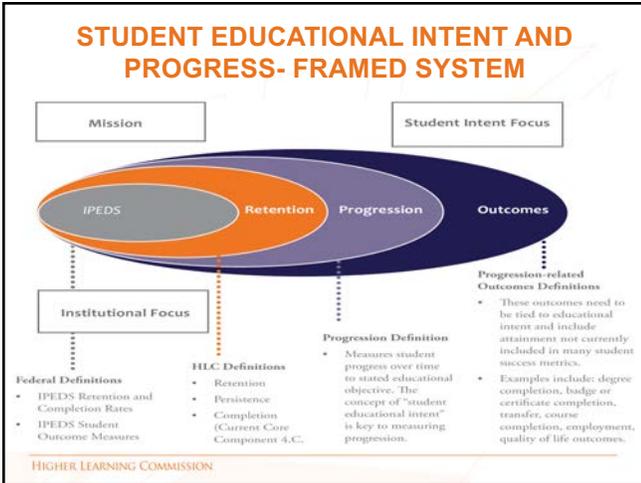


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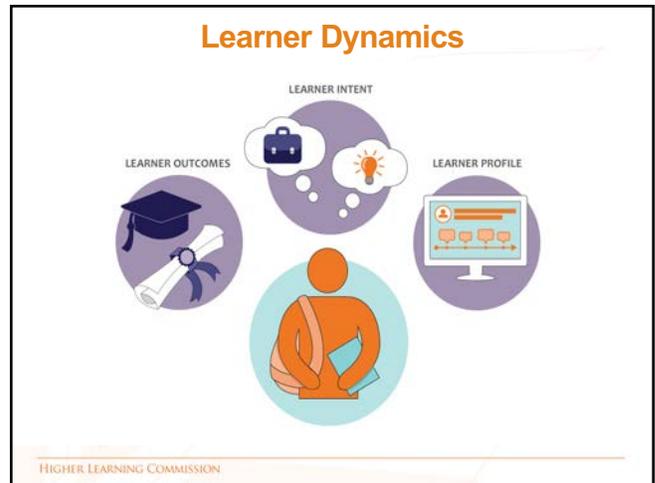
### Student Success: Heuristic Framework

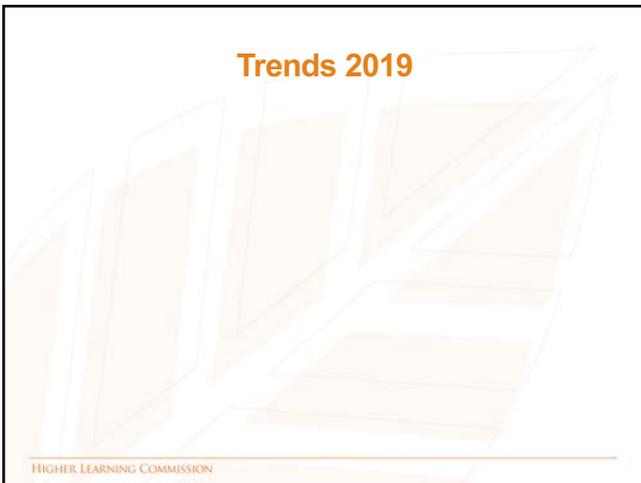
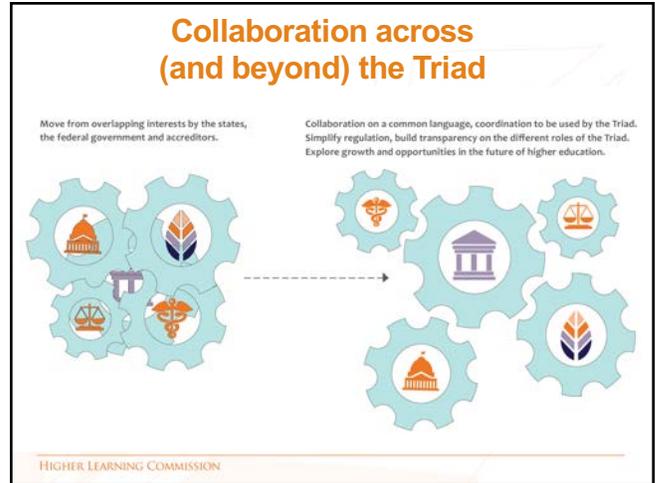
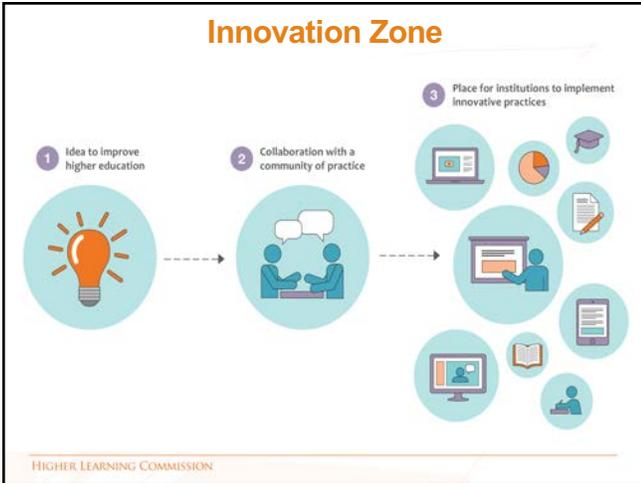


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- ### Priorities identified by Partners for Transformation
- Synthesis of recommendations from the nine thought papers and comments received via surveys and focus group discussions.
  - Suggested priorities presented to HLC Board of Trustees in June 2019.
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- ### Trends
- Recognition that *new business models* are needed to serve our learners and sustain our colleges and universities.
  - Higher education is a way to earn credentials; to date that translates to earning a degree. That has all changed, and *certificates or other stackable paths* are coming of age. Colleges and universities unwilling to respond to this disruption will become increasingly at risk.
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### Trends

- *Financial challenges* will force institutions to do a “prosperity gap” to honestly and transparently recognize their strengths, weaknesses and strategically plan for the future
- For the first time in higher education’s history, institutions are *failing* financially and will either volunteer to close or be forced to so by the states, accreditors and the federal government. Small private institutions in rural area are the section most at-risk.

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### Trends

- The *access agenda* remains very important, but it is at-risk due to increased competition and less financial support.
- The national pressures to use *bright lines* and a *focus on outcomes* (graduation rates, student debt, etc.) requires the context of sectors and environments. This may lead to risk-managed accreditation and differential accreditation.

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### Trends

- States continue to *disinvest* in higher education, forcing the costs to become covered in increased tuition and fees.
- Higher education is *over-regulated* by outdated rules and regulations at the federal level.
- There is a growing demand for decreased federal regulation.

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### Trends

- Increased *public scrutiny of higher education* is tied to a widespread belief that a college degree is not worth the *Return on Investment (ROI)*.
- *Time to degree (or other credentials)* is very important both to learners and employers.
- *Governance problems* create a huge productivity gap for administrators due to the huge opportunity cost of attending to split boards, disagreements with the CEO or the propagation of individual agendas.

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### Trends

- *Social issues* are on the rise at colleges and universities – ranging from freedom of speech freedom to *campus safety*.
- *Sexual harassment and assault* are issues which are no longer being summarily dismissed and/or diminished on the campuses.
- Stakeholders will insist that transparency is increasingly expected.

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### Trends

- The number of international students is declining.
- *Political influences* can pressure higher education to change during a certain timeframe versus allowing for visionary long-term opportunities and solutions.
- The historical *liberal leanings of higher education is in conflict with an increasingly conservative movement in America*. This leave colleges and universities under greater scrutiny, but also “suspicion.”

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### Trends

- A lot of *ill-informed stakeholders and influencers* are positioning American higher education in ways that detract from its international standing. The other perspective is that higher education needs to be *open to change and less defensive*.
- The question of who *regulates higher education and who assures quality* is blending, confusing the stakeholders and causing defensive reactions that might not lead to productive changes for our learners.

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### Trends: What Have We Missed?



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**Future Strategic Plan –  
EVOLVE**

- E** Engagement
- V** Vision
- O** Outcomes
- L** Leadership
- V** Value
- E** Equity



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**Timeline**

- **February 2020** – Share preliminary findings and recommendations at Board of Trustees meeting.
- **April 2020** – Gain feedback from members during Annual Conference.
- **June 2020** - Request final approval at Board meeting.
- **September 2020** – Finalize writing of plan following approval.
- **November 2020** - Present final document at Board meeting.

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**Lumina Foundation Grant –  
Quality Awareness 2019-2020**

HLC seeks to evolve into an exemplary 21<sup>st</sup> century accrediting agency that assures quality and fosters student success through innovative practices inclusive of the essential need for **transparency for learners** throughout their educational journeys, **equity and demonstrable commitment to changing student populations**, including the **expansion of recognized credentials** to align better with the needs of today's learners.

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**Details**

- Funding: \$500,000
- Timeline: 9/1/2019 – 12/31/2020
- Engagement across membership and various stakeholders including several national organizations and state agencies.

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### Transparency for Learners

- Create a Teach-out Incubator to develop resources and tools for closing and receiving institutions.
- Develop a detailed "What Students Need to Know" guide to assist them in evaluating potential institutions, alternative educational providers (e.g., coding camps), and credentialing organizations.
- Explore policies that would require all learning providers to be transparent prior to a student's enrollment about the expected "Learner Outcomes."

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### Equity & Changing Populations

- Act on priorities related to Learner Dynamics and explore the concept of "learner educational intent."
- Improve decision-making processes and begin building policies regarding the expectation for disaggregated data regarding student populations in response to becoming a more student-centric accrediting agency.
- Survey institutions to understand what variables they utilize as measures of student success.

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### Expansion of Recognized Credentials

- Develop a Business Roundtable to build recommendations on how HLC can strengthen its standards and expectations regarding institutional transparency relative to credentials and learner competencies.
- Share advanced practices regarding competency-based education.
- Engage in conversations about a "Learner Educational Profile" that documents all learning experiences

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### Advancing HLC

- Develop training programs and materials to ensure peer reviewers are prepared to evaluate institutions within the evolving context of higher education.
- Map out an HLC Innovation Zone that provides a safe space for exploration.
- Increase collaboration with the Triad in order to create efficiencies among agencies and decrease the redundancies impacting institutional resources.

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### Changing Policies and Processes

- Federal Compliance (9/1/2019)
  - No longer required for a Year 4 review
  - Reduced burden to complete worksheets
- Consumer Protection (9/1/2019)
  - New policy sets an expectation for appropriate and honest interactions between institutions and prospective or current students
  - Policy will function similarly to its review of the Assumed Practice

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### Revised Criteria effective 9/1/2020

- Core Component 1.B. was merged into Core Component 1.A.
- Core Component 1.D. was renumbered as Core Component 1.B.
- Concepts from Core Component 3.E. were added to Core Component 2.B.
- Core Component 5.A. was renumbered as Core Component 5.B, and Core Component 5.B. was renumbered as Core Component 5.A.
- Core Component 5.D. was merged into Core Component 5.C.

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### Questions?

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