

Higher Learning Commission

CATYC 2023 Annual Conference

Reflecting on Trends and Leading into the Future

Karen J Solomon | October 2, 2023

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https://download.hlcommission.org/HLCTrends_INF.pdf

2023 Trends





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- Student Mental Health
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)
- Changing Landscape of Credentials
- Finance
- Teaching and Learning
- Transfer Roadblocks
- Leadership
- Outcomes
- Value of Higher Education
- Online Program Managers (OPMs)
- Consumer Awareness
- Innovation
- Partnerships, Mergers, Affiliations and Acquisitions
- Workforce Needs
- Shrinking Focus on Liberal Arts
- Broken Traditions
- Career Centers' Shortcomings and Opportunities
- Evolving Workplace Practices and Challenges



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Brief history leading to 2023



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History


Timeline	Events
1895	Launch of North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as high schools begin to form
1944	GI Bill passes with provisions for higher education
1956	GI Bill – 2.2m involved in colleges/universities, 5.6m in training programs
2005, 2013, 2025	Significant Criteria Revisions
2010	Pathways pilot launched



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Policy Updates


Revision of the Criteria for Accreditation



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Criteria Revision

- Streamline/simplify the current model wherever possible
- Revised Criteria will support in the incorporation of differential, risk-based, and student success elements
- Timeline
 - Board of Trustees 1st reading Jan 2024
 - Public Comment and Focus Groups Spring 2024
 - Board Adoption on 2nd reading June 2024
 - Revised Criteria in effect Sept 2025



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Policy Updates

Faculty Qualifications



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Faculty Qualifications

- Draft was circulated for public comment along with the proposed policy changes
- Proposed policy change is under review; will be considered for adoption by HLC Board of Trustees in November 2023

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Faculty Qualifications

- The proposed policy change would revise the faculty qualification provision in HLC's Assumed Practices to emphasize that an institution must establish and maintain reasonable policies and procedures for determining that instructors are qualified
- Proposed policy change specifies that an institution can deem instructors qualified on the basis of a variety of factors, including but not limited to
 - academic credentials,
 - progress towards academic credentials,
 - equivalent experience,
 - or some combination thereof

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Policy Updates

Distance Education

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Distance Education: New Guidance

- Based on new guidance from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), HLC revised its levels of approval for distance education and the thresholds for when institutions should apply for approval.
- Going forward, there will be two levels of approval (rather than three), either for distance education courses, or for distance education courses and programs.
- The levels of approval incorporate the new thresholds for approval required by the guidance: (1) 50% of courses or (2) 50% of students, in addition to (3) 50% of a program.

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Implications for Institutions

- **Institutions previously approved to offer distance education courses and programs:** This change has no impact.
- **Institutions previously approved to offer distance education courses and 1–3 programs:** Because these institutions have been approved for the distance education “program” threshold listed above, HLC has already updated their stipulations to indicate they are approved to offer distance education courses and programs. No action required.
- **Institutions previously approved for distance education courses only or not approved to offer any distance education:** We encourage these institutions to review their distance education offerings and ensure they have the necessary approvals based on our new requirements.



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Distance Education: Reminders

- USDE Waivers have ended – must get approval from accreditor for distance education programs
- Follow policy regarding *Regular and Substantive Interaction*



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Policy Updates

Prison Education



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Prison Education

- New USDE regulations allow Pell Grant eligibility for students who are confined or incarcerated and enrolled in prison education programs
- Definition of “additional location” now includes various types of correctional facilities
- Complex federal regulation
- HLC webinar to be posted website on October 12, 2023 with updated webinar following the November Board meeting to be posted November 16, 2023


<https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-pell-eligible-prison-education-programs.html>



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Prison Education Programs (PEP)

- Engagement with corrections (aka oversight entity)
- Additional location application to HLC for first two locations (regardless of method of delivery)
- Application to USDE to offer an approved PEP
- HLC site visits required within one year after initiating the PEP at the first two locations
- After two years, oversight entity completes evaluation and determines college's final approval as a PEP



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Future Focus

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Future Events

Timeline	Events
2023	Credential Lab introduced
9/1/2025	Revised Criteria in effect
2025	Shifting focus to risk-based and differential and increased emphasis student success outcomes



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Questions?

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