

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

December 18, 2020

Report No. XX

December 2020

Notification Regarding HLC Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Larger Strategic Planning

To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees
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From: Mark Mossman,
Associate Provost and Associate Vice President
Accreditation Liaison Officer
Assurance System Coordinator
Date: December 18, 2020

This notification briefly summarizes our progress in preparing WIU's Reaffirmation of Accreditation documents for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), provides a timeline for the remaining work on this project, and outlines for the Board a number of HLC informational initiatives that will be coming to our campuses in January.

In brief, WIU has completed the following tasks:

- Individual Working Groups have now completed the review of all five Assurance Argument chapters;
- The Assurance Argument Writing Team has now completed its final drafting of the Assurance Argument chapters;
- The larger Assurance Argument Review Committee has now reviewed the entire assurance argument. This group will meet one final time in January to review the last drafts of the argument;
- Among other items, a "Final Stretch" team is now completing a large "Evidence File" and "Introduction Page," both of which will be uploaded to the HLC assurance system with the final drafts of the assurance argument; this team is also copyediting and finalizing the last drafts of the assurance argument chapters.

I encourage all board members to visit the Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Strategic Planning website (<http://www.wiu.edu/aasp/accreditation/review.php>) to review drafts of each chapter as well as links to the Evidence File, Introduction Page, and other relevant documents. This website also provides a detailed account of the process of preparing these documents and a list of various committees and their memberships.

I would like the Board to note that the next few months will include the following activities: 1) for December and January, we are developing a series of podcasts outlining the history of WIU and accreditation, the significance of HLC accreditation, and the details of each individual chapter of the assurance argument; 2) in January we will send the assurance argument to students, alumni, all staff and faculty, all administration, and all community stakeholders, and we will ask for comments, suggestions, and responses; 3) in February we will coordinate with HLC to conduct a WIU student survey; 4) in December, January, and February we will meet individually with all major shared governance structures in our WIU community to discuss the contents of the assurance argument and the upcoming visit. Our visit from HLC will begin on March 29, 2021; a review of both campuses will be complete by April 4. It is still to be determined whether or not this visit will be virtual or in person and physically distanced. As mentioned in the last notification (Sep 2020), the writing of these accreditation documents will be the basis for larger strategic planning efforts in the coming years. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Mark Mossman, PhD
Associate Provost and Associate Vice President
Accreditation Liaison Officer
Assurance System Coordinator

cc: Incoming President Huang
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