

Preparing for the HLC Campus Visit

October 26-27, 2020



CLOUD COUNTY
Community College

Frequently Asked Questions About Accreditation

What is accreditation?

- Assuring and advancing the quality of higher education.
- Required to be eligible for federal student financial aid.
- Validates Cloud County Community College in requests for public or private support.

When is Cloud CCC's visit with the HLC?

- The peer review team arrives October 25 and conducts interviews with Cloud CCC's faculty, staff, students, administration, and Board of Trustees on October 26-27.

What will occur during the HLC visit?

- A team of 4-5 members will conduct interviews with the Cloud CCC's faculty, staff, students, administration, and Board of Trustees.
- Team members will seek to validate the evidence that was presented in Cloud CCC's Assurance Report. The Assurance Report addresses the HLC's criteria for accreditation (see back).
- During the interviews, the team members will be determining whether Cloud CCC meets the standards for accreditation.

What am I expected to know in order to prepare for the HLC visit?

- Review Cloud CCC's:
 - Mission (<https://www.cloud.edu/about/accreditation/mission-guiding-values/index>)
 - Guiding Values (<https://www.cloud.edu/about/accreditation/mission-guiding-values/index>)
 - Philosophy of General Education (<https://www.cloud.edu/academics/assessment/general-ed-courses/index>)
 - Student Learning Outcomes (<https://www.cloud.edu/academics/assessment/assessment-committee/index>)
 - Consider how your office, department, or division contributes to one or more of these statements.
- Familiarize yourself with the College's Strategic Plan (<https://www.cloud.edu/about/strategic-plan/index>)

How to contribute to a positive accreditation outcome?

- Participate in the mock interviews and accreditation workshops.
- Answer questions from the review team candidly and thoughtfully.
- If you don't know the answer, there is no need to make up an answer or to guess. It is okay to say, "I don't know".

Questions You May Be Asked

1. What do you know about accreditation and have you seen or read Cloud CCC's Assurance Report?
2. How would you describe Cloud CCC's mission? Do you know where you would find the official statement?
3. What are the College's current strategic planning priorities?
4. What are Cloud CCC's greatest strengths?
5. What are the biggest challenges facing Cloud CCC?
6. What makes Cloud CCC unique among colleges in your area?
7. Provide an example of how Cloud CCC is committed to freedom of expression.
8. Describe your codes of conduct and how they are used.
9. Do you know where to find information about academic integrity and policies regarding academic misconduct?
10. How would you describe the campus climate for diversity?
11. Describe any campus processes that could be improved or made more efficient.
12. What kind of changes are taking place at Cloud CCC? Do you see these as positive or not?

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HLC Criterion for Accreditation

1	Mission The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations. <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. <i>The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.</i>B. <i>The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.</i>C. <i>The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally-connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.</i>
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible. <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. <i>The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.</i>B. <i>The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.</i>C. <i>The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.</i>D. <i>The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.</i>E. <i>The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.</i>
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered. <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. <i>The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.</i>B. <i>The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.</i>C. <i>The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.</i>D. <i>The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.</i>
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement (Assessment) 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. <i>The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.</i>B. <i>The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.</i>C. <i>The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.</i>
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. <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. <i>Through administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.</i>B. <i>The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.</i>C. <i>The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.</i>



Questions for Faculty

1. What are the characteristics of a Cloud CCC education?
2. How do you contribute to the College's mission?
3. What is your department's vision for the future? How does this relate to the College's vision?
4. Can you describe the rank and promotion process? What is your impression of the process?
5. Talk about shared governance and how faculty participate in decision-making at different levels of the College.
6. How would you describe the relationship between faculty and administration? What works and what needs improvement?
7. Describe the relationship between Cloud CCC's departments. What collaborations currently exist?
8. What resources are available to support faculty (e.g., library, external grant support, faculty professional development, travel, et.)? Are these sufficient in meeting faculty needs?
9. Is your department actively involved in assessing student learning? How has your department used its assessment findings? What evidence do you have that students achieve your program's intended learning outcomes?
10. Tell me about the Student Learning Outcomes process. How does it work? How are you assessing learning outcomes?
11. What is the purpose of Cloud CCC's general education?
12. Over the past few years, significant initiatives were implemented in several key student support areas. Can you describe some of these efforts and how they've contributed to student success?
13. How are your students doing once they graduate?
14. What opportunities do students in your program have to gain experience with community or civic engagement? Diversity or multiculturalism?
15. For some common faculty issues (workload, salary, etc.), what works well and what needs to be improved?
16. What is the role of faculty in ensuring academic quality?
17. Provide an example of how Cloud CCC is committed to the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.
18. How do you ensure that all classes – face-to-face, online, blended, dual-credit, off-campus – have the same student learning outcomes and equivalent assessments?
19. Is Cloud CCC or your department more effective than it was 5-10 years ago? Explain.
20. What are the biggest resource challenges at Cloud CCC?

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Questions for Staff

1. How does your department support the academic mission of the College?
2. What is like to be a staff member at Cloud CCC? How is morale on campus?
3. How do you contribute to the College's mission?
4. What opportunities do you have for professional development? Are staff members treated equitably in their access to these opportunities?
5. How are staff evaluated at Cloud CCC? What is your impression of the evaluation process?
6. How are staff involved in campus decision-making process? Do you think staff have sufficient input into decisions that affect them?
7. How would you describe the relationship between staff and administration? What works and what could be improved?
8. What are some important benefits about working at Cloud CCC? What do you like best about your job? What would you change if you could?
9. How do departments across campus work collaboratively? What works well and what could be improved?
10. Do you feel that the work you do is valued by administration? Faculty? Other staff members? Students?
11. How does your department contribute to student learning and development? How does your department assess or evaluate effectiveness?
12. What are the biggest resource challenges at Cloud CCC?

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Questions for Students

1. Why did you choose to enroll at Cloud CCC? Have your expectations been met?
2. What do you think is special about a Cloud CCC education?
3. Would you recommend Cloud CCC to other students?
4. What do you like best about Cloud CCC? What would you change if you could?
5. Have you experienced any problems getting the courses you need in a timely manner?
6. Describe your experiences with academic advising.
7. Do you know where to go for help with the following? (a) academic support; (b) career planning; (c) personal counseling; (d) making a complaint; (f) technology support.
8. Do you use any of the following: library, tutoring services, dining services? If yes, what has been your experience?
9. Are you able to estimate your bill each semester or are you surprised when you receive it?
10. Do you know if you are enrolled in an accredited program?
11. How is the relationship between students and faculty?
12. What opportunities do you have to participate in community or service learning experiences?
13. What opportunities do you have to interact with people and cultures different from your own?
14. What opportunities do you have to gain real world experience related to your educational and career goals?
15. Tell us about programming that happens outside of academic departments where you have learned something.
16. If you have transferred in credits, what was the experience like for you?
17. Do you think the College is clear in its communication with students about topics such as financial aid, student conduct, costs, and graduation requirements? What improvements would you recommend?

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Questions for Trustees

1. What is the agenda and the materials used in the orientation of new board members?
2. What type of annual training do all board members receive?
3. How has the board enhanced Cloud's ability to fulfill its mission?
4. How has the board assisted in generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution?
5. Are there clearly defined expectations and protocols for trustee obligations and communications with each other, the President, employees and community members?
6. How are records of resource allocation decisions made by the board shared with the College community?
7. What are the biggest resource challenges at Cloud CCC?
8. Does the board periodically and objectively assess its effectiveness and the effectiveness of Cloud's governance structure?