



HLC'S STRATEGIC PLAN

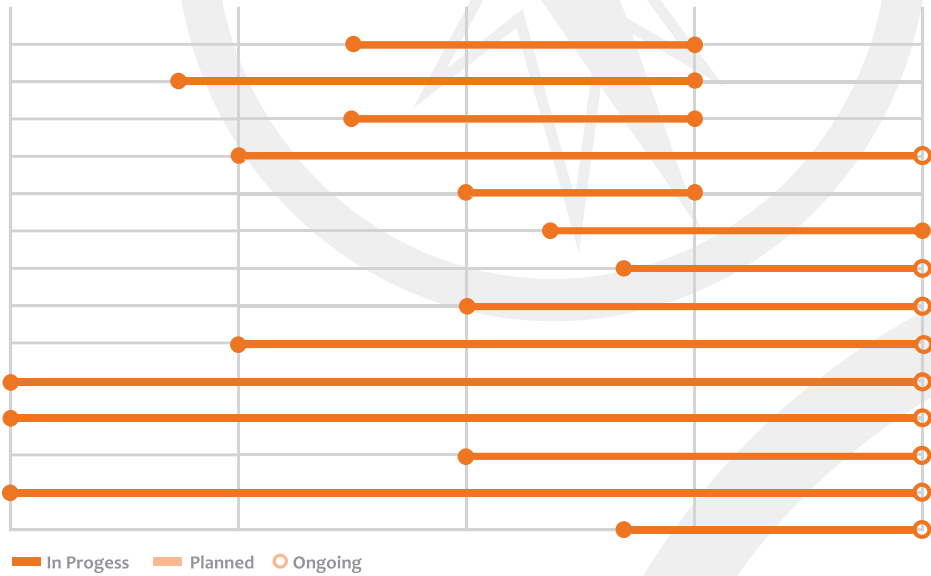
PROGRESS ON VISTA



2016 2017 2018 2019 2020

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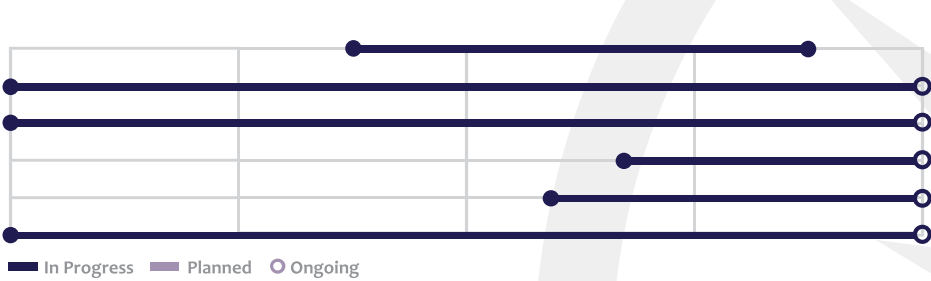
STUDENT SUCCESS (S)



- 1 Launch initiative to define student success
- 2 Ensure student success includes student demographics
- 3 Research trends of student success
- 4 Engage in the discourse on student success
- 5 Modify policies in a timely, consistent and transparent way
- 6 Evaluate the non-financial indicator process
- 7 Clarify the role of regional and programmatic accreditors
- 8 Emphasize the breadth of assessment of student learning
- 9 Connect assessment to institutional improvements
- 10 Analyze the obstacles to “closing the assessment loop”
- 11 Connect members to share assessment lessons learned
- 12 Develop understanding of student success
- 13 Promote student success for the common good
- 14 Explore assessment frameworks for various institutional missions

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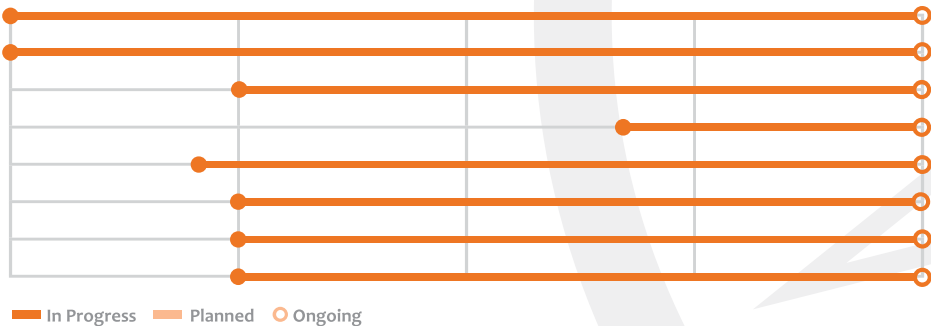
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP (T)



- 1 Form an advisory group that guides HLC on innovation
- 2 Foster understanding of common challenges
- 3 Connect with national efforts to improve higher education
- 4 Explore creation of HLC subsidiaries for thought leadership and advocacy
- 5 Publish white papers on higher education issues
- 6 Publish quality advancement resources

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ADVOCACY (A)



- 1 Build understanding for accreditation
- 2 Communicate the value of accreditation
- 3 Create ways for members to support accreditation
- 4 Research, capitalize on, and improve public recognition of HLC and accreditation
- 5 Develop government relations and advocacy strategy
- 6 Articulate role of and interaction with the Triad
- 7 Simplify processes to cut duplication of institutional efforts
- 8 Mutually understand expectations from the USDE

HLC has successfully completed the action steps of VISTA, Beyond the Horizon. The tenets of the plan have become engrained in HLC's daily work successfully; HLC is "living the plan." Since the February 2020 Board of Trustees meeting and the global crisis of COVID-19, HLC has been focused on providing value to members and to find ways to be innovative for the membership.

V VALUE TO MEMBERS

HLC has been working to develop and update policies and the related procedures for HLC to meet the new federal regulations effective July 1, 2020.

As a result of COVID-19 and with clearance from the U.S. Department of Education, HLC staff developed and implemented an immediate transition for all face-to-face evaluations for spring/summer 2020 to virtual evaluations with required verification visits anticipated to occur in fall 2020. As a result of COVID-19, HLC developed a process to collect updates from institutions about business and instructional disruptions and put into place a mechanism to offer distance education waivers to member institutions requesting them. The process for the waivers, was designed similarly to the regular approval process for initiating distance education courses, and HLC completed the approval process for institutions in need of a waiver. This resulted in all member institutions having some level of distance education approval from HLC's Institutional Actions Council.

HLC staff members worked with member institutions to build bridges between colleges and universities coping with the COVID-19 and the various approaches to this new reality.

To ensure public safety, HLC canceled a number of face-to-face events, including the 2020 Annual Conference. Essential information has been repurposed and offered as virtual events to member institutions, including

Effective Administrators Workshop, Assurance Clinics, Assessment Academy and Student Success Academy events, and New Criteria for Accreditation Webinars. The Criteria Webinars had attendance of approximately 500 each.

HLC has provided just-in-time training for peer reviewers regarding the virtual evaluation process. Through HLC's standard peer reviewer training, all peer reviewers are trained to review distance education.

HLC is developing guidance for evaluations that take place during this crisis. Distance education that was put into place quickly during this "crisis" environment may need to mature for students and faculty who are not familiar with doing their work in a distance education environment. This will include faculty training, technology trial and error for students, and more.

HLC offices closed in Mid-March, consistent with state recommendations, yet HLC has continued to support the membership by maintaining a high level of productivity and full staffing through remote work.

HLC staff members have launched a number of services to support widespread remote work at member institutions, including paperless invoices and honoraria payments, adopting new tools for online webinars and events, and upgrading HLC's conference line service, which is used extensively by staff and peer reviewers.

I INNOVATION

HLC took advantage of existing technology infrastructure and put into place new infrastructure to pivot from face-to-face meetings to virtual for a number of events.

HLC developed a process for conducting virtual comprehensive evaluations with verification visits to be held when travel is again an option. This process was developed, the peer reviewers were trained, and feedback is being collected regarding its effectiveness. Early anecdotal feedback from institutions and teams highlights the responsiveness of HLC and the relative effectiveness of the format. (Note: HLC is currently considering the possibility of virtual comprehensive evaluations throughout the Fall 2020 semester as well.)

IAC meetings have been virtual for many years, and during the pandemic, HLC has also been able to conduct IAC Hearings virtually.

HLC's Assessment Taskforce continues to work on a definition of institutional assessment needs specifically with regarding to Core Component 4.B.

Several HLC staff members have become certified in online delivery of face-to-face conferences.

HLC has formed an Office Health and Safety Committee to develop the approach for staff returning to the office in a safe and manageable way.

S STUDENT SUCCESS

In partnership with numerous higher education organizations, HLC has endorsed two statements: 1) [Statement of Principles on Acceptance of Credit](#) and 2) [Joint Statement on the Transfer and Award of Credit](#).

As distance education offerings may become more permanent in the coming semesters, HLC is exploring the need to update the C-RAC Distance Education Guidelines originally posted in 2009.

With the bridge into EVOLVE, HLC will begin exploring a shift from “student success” to “outcomes”.

T THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

HLC is in talks with the Gates Foundation and the National Student Clearinghouse regarding the Postsecondary Data Project (PDP). This project seeks to unify data collection and reporting through the National Student Clearinghouse.

HLC has identified an internal committee to explore differential accreditation.

The Effective Administrators Workshop offered this summer will feature new content from the Association of Institutional Research, the National Association of College and University Business Officers, and the Society for College and University Planning.

HLC is establishing an infrastructure enable self-serve culture of data collection and analysis with the goal of data-based decision-making among the staff.

HLC is working on a research project to look at relationships across core components of the Criteria for Accreditation.

A ADVOCACY

HLC continues to advocate with the federal government on issues such as access to broadband communication, extension of flexibilities for institutions related to distance education, stimulus dollars for students, colleges and universities, the Higher Education Act, and the HEROES Act.

HLC continues to survey the membership to stay informed about what is going on at campuses and using the feedback to guide our focus and improvements.

HLC provides updated information to the membership on advocacy issues related to higher education through *Leaflet*.