



ELIGIBILITY FILING CONTENTS

For Eligibility Filings submitted April 2019–August 2021

Institutions that submitted an Eligibility Filing between April 2019 and August 2021 should follow the format described in this document when providing updated versions of their filing. Institutions are asked to provide an updated Eligibility Filing during the comprehensive evaluation for Candidacy, biennial evaluation and comprehensive evaluation for initial accreditation.

The Eligibility Filing introduces the institution and addresses each [Eligibility Requirement](#). The Eligibility Filing consists of three PDF documents.

PDF 1

- Description of the institution
- Information on any updates to the Preliminary Evidence submitted by the institution
- Certification

PDF 2

- Evaluative narrative addressing the Eligibility Requirements

PDF 3

- Documentation supporting the evaluative narrative addressing the Eligibility Requirements

Note that for documents that are available electronically, the URL should be provided in the applicable PDF.

The content in this document is supplemental to HLC policy. Institutions should familiarize themselves with applicable HLC policies as they complete the Eligibility Filing. Institutions should also familiarize themselves with the [HLC Glossary](#). Many terms in this document are defined in HLC policy or the Glossary.

CONTENTS OF PDF 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTITUTION

Provide a complete description of the entity that is seeking accreditation with HLC. Include information on the following:

1. Corporate structure
2. Governance
3. Credit and non-credit programs
4. Campuses and additional locations
5. Correspondence education
6. Distance education
7. Contractual arrangements
8. Consortial arrangements
9. Any accreditation history with HLC or other accrediting agencies
10. Any parent or related entities, even if those entities are not part of the entity seeking accreditation with HLC

UPDATES TO PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE

Provide a detailed explanation about any information or documentation that has changed significantly from the submission of the Preliminary Evidence to the submission of the Eligibility Filing.

CERTIFICATION

Provide a certification signed by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Board indicating that all the information in the Eligibility Filing is truthful and complete, and that the institution will begin to abide by the Obligations of Affiliation as soon as it receives the Letter on Eligibility from HLC.

CONTENTS OF PDFs 2 AND 3

The full text of the Eligibility Requirements is available on HLC's website at hlcommission.org/eligibility-requirements.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 1. JURISDICTION OF THE COMMISSION

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Identify the institution's state of incorporation and other states in which the institution is registered to do business but is not incorporated. If the institution is seeking system accreditation for multiple corporate institutions, identify the state of incorporation for each of those corporations and identify the states in which these other corporations are registered to do business but are not incorporated.
2. Describe any corporate parent, controlling organizations, subsidiaries or other related entities and identify the state of incorporation for all such entities.
3. Complete the [Substantial Presence Worksheet](#) to provide information about where the institution conducts its activities.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Articles of Incorporation and Certificate of Registration from the state of incorporation.
2. Evidence of registration to do business in other states where the institution is registered but not incorporated.
3. Articles of Incorporation and Certificate of Registration for all parent corporations, controlling organizations, subsidiaries, or other related entities.
4. Documentation supporting that the institution meets HLC's jurisdictional requirements, including the substantial presence requirement. Such

documentation may include bank statements, tax records, leases or mortgages, bills, letterhead or other documents that formally establish where certain activities of the institution are taking place.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 2. LEGAL STATUS

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. List all locations in which the institution conducts educational activities, including distance education and other related activities, and provide a brief description of those activities.
2. Explain the process the institution has used to assure that each location, program, or activity is operating in accordance with applicable requirements regarding corporations and higher education activities in that state.
3. For each state in which the institution has sufficient presence to trigger state review, identify the agency or statutory provision that grants the institution legal authority to award degrees, offer programs, or operate as an institution of higher education in each location or by distance education.
4. Identify and explain any previous, pending or final state actions to limit, suspend or terminate legal status, degree awards, or program or other authority from the past five years.
5. Identify the corporate status of the institution as private not-for-profit, public, tribally controlled, or privately owned or publicly traded for-profit.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Documents from each applicable governmental agency indicating that the institution is authorized to operate and to offer programs and grant its credit-bearing certificates, diplomas and degrees at each location. Include documentation of authorization for distance education in the state where the institution has its main campus or, for institutions that have no on-ground campus or other locations, its principal business office, as well as from other states where the institution is required by state law or regulations to be authorized.
2. If any state has limited, suspended or terminated the institution's legal status, degree-granting authority, programs or other authority within the

past five years, or if such action is or has been pending against the institution within the past five years, a copy of any state analyses outlining state findings or actions relevant to the action or pending action, and a recent (no older than 90 days before the submission of the Eligibility Filing) letter from the appropriate state entity providing information regarding the institution's current status with that entity.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 3. GOVERNING BOARD

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Explain the governance structure of the board.
2. Identify the sections of the bylaws and any other legal documents that provide the board authority and provide sufficient autonomy to:
 - Exercise the duty of loyalty and the duty of care.
 - Establish and review basic policies, including those that address conflict of interest among the board and administration.
 - Ensure the financial integrity of the institution by approving the operating budget and the external financial audit.
 - Hire, evaluate and dismiss the chief executive officer.
 - Meet regularly.
 - Assure access to information necessary for the board to make sound judgments.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Articles of incorporation, charter, bylaws and any other legal documents that explain the governance structure of the board or enumerate the board's powers and responsibilities.
2. List of the institution's board members and their terms of office. The list should include brief biographical information for each board member. The list should identify any board member whose involvement with the institution includes employment, ownership, familial or contractual relationships, or who is also involved in the board of a parent corporation or other related entities.
3. Organizational chart showing the board's relationship to the administrative structures of the institution and, if applicable, the board's

relationship to the board(s) of any parent corporation or other related entities.

4. If applicable, (a) and (b) for any parent or other related entities.
5. Documentation demonstrating that the board fulfills its enumerated responsibilities (e.g., minutes of board meetings and policy statements), including at least minutes for the last three meetings of the institution's board.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 4. STABILITY

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Provide information on the institution's corporate form and ownership during the past two years. Identify whether the institution has undertaken any transactions that would qualify as a [change of control, structure or organization](#). Identify any anticipated changes of this nature.
2. Provide information on the institution's operations during the past two years. Identify any growth or expansion in enrollment, academic programs, locations and modalities of delivery. Identify any anticipated changes in these areas.
3. Provide any changes in mission during the past two years. Identify any anticipated changes in mission.
4. Provide an overview of the institution's financial situation, including its income and expenses, short-term and long-term debt, and cash flow during the past two years. Describe the institution's anticipated financial health in the near future.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. If applicable, legal documents regarding any transactions identified.
2. If applicable, list of all owners, investors and officers in the previous two years and their ownership interest.
3. List of degree programs, campuses and additional locations. Identify the date of initiation for each, and for campuses and additional locations, identify the address of each.
4. Audited financial statements for the previous two academic years.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 5. MISSION STATEMENT

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Identify the statements of mission. Statements of mission include any mission statements, vision statements, values statements, goals statements and statements of institutional priorities.
2. Identify the dates on which the statements of mission were approved by the board and the means by which they were approved
3. Explain how the statements of mission address:
 - The nature of the higher learning provided by the institution.
 - The purposes of that learning.
 - The students for whom that learning is intended.
 - The constituencies (including geographic area) to be served by the institution.
 - The institution's place within the broader higher learning community.
 - The institution's commitment to preparing students for their professional and civic lives.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Statements of mission.
2. Minutes of the governing board's meeting(s) in which the statements of mission were formally adopted.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 6. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Explain the institution's academic programs, including information on length, credit hours, content, degree requirements, contact hours and assignments.
2. Provide the stated, required learning outcomes for each program. Explain how the learning outcomes are appropriate and sufficiently rigorous for that program. Explain how the learning outcomes ensure that graduates are prepared for their professional and civic lives. Explain how the institution assesses whether students are meeting those learning outcomes.

3. Explain how the institution's academic programs are in fields that are appropriate for higher education, including how they relate to fields of study currently offered in U.S. higher education, whether such fields are generally studied at other institutions of higher education accredited by agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, and whether such fields are accepted or recognized by employers, state governments, licensing entities, etc. Include information about how the institution focuses its attention on its degree programs even though it also may offer credit-bearing certificate or diploma programs. Special purpose institutions or those with programs in very new fields must make clear how their programs relate to existing programs currently offered at institutions of higher education and general acceptance by higher education and by society of the new field or discipline.
4. Show how the institution's undergraduate programs integrate effective general education appropriate in length and content as well as appropriate to the institution's mission. Explain the purpose, philosophy, and established framework for the general education, as well as its content and required learning outcomes. If the institution offers only graduate programs, explain how the institution ensures that its students have completed appropriate general education as undergraduates.
5. Explain the institution's policies and processes, if any, for acceptance of transfer credit and recognition of prior learning; include the percentage of credits students may apply through these processes to any degree or credit-bearing certificate awarded by the institution.
6. If the institution outsources some or all of any of its academic programs to another entity, provide information about that entity, including whether the entity is accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for Title IV purposes; the entity's responsibilities relative to the academic programming (e.g., delivering courses, selecting faculty, recruiting, etc.); and how the institution assures the quality of the services or content provided by the other entity.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Catalog or other official documents that outline the institution's academic program requirements, course descriptions, and learning outcomes for each academic program.
2. Documents outlining the institution's program to assess student learning (e.g., advisory committee minutes, program documents, summary of assessment results, etc.).
3. Documents that demonstrate that the institution's educational programs are in fields that are found among the degree offerings of other accredited institutions of higher education and are widely accepted by employers, state governments, etc.
4. Documents that demonstrate how the institution integrates general education into undergraduate degree programs and/or ensures that its students have completed appropriate general education as undergraduates.
5. Policies on transfer and recognition of prior learning.
6. Contracts and other documents regarding the outsourcing of some or all of any academic program offered by the institution to another entity.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 7. INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Provide an overview of the ways in which the institution makes the required information available to current and prospective students.
2. Describe the institution's procedures to ensure that required information is made available to current and prospective students in a current and complete manner.
3. Describe the institution's current affiliations with national, regional and specialized accrediting bodies and state agencies and any other similar affiliations. Include information on the status of those recognitions or relationships during the past five years.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Catalog, student handbook and other relevant materials distributed to prospective and

current students to communicate the required information.

2. Policies and procedures regarding the institution's process for making the required information available in a current and complete manner.
3. Documents identifying the institution's current affiliations with national, regional, and specialized accrediting bodies and state agencies in the past five years. Include documents that define any special relationships or restrictions with state or federal financial aid programs.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 8. FINANCIAL CAPACITY

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Describe the institution's audit practices and audit history.
2. Describe how the institution ensures the use of sound accounting and management practices.
3. Explain the budgeting process at the institution and evaluate the institution's recent history (three years) of budgeting. Compare budgeted income and expenses against actual income and expenses.
4. Identify the institution's expenditures directly related to the support of the educational programs.
5. If applicable, document and explain the resolution of any operating losses in the last three years.
6. Identify the board's policies on fiscal oversight, including the use of reserves and endowment, and practices for reviewing and approving the budget and audit.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Two most recent financial audits for the institution. If the institution is part of a larger corporate entity with a consolidated audit, provide the "Supplemental Information" for the institution from the audit of the larger corporate entity. The "Supplemental Information" must be sufficiently particularized to evaluate the institution's income, expenses and allocation of financial support for its major expenditures.
2. Policies regarding fiscal management, including the use of sound accounting and management practices.

3. Three years of comparative budgets: the last fiscal year, the current fiscal year, and projections for the next fiscal year. Include relevant notes about basic assumptions underlying the budgets.
4. Cash-flow analyses for the past two years.
5. The institution's primary reserve ratio. The primary reserve ratio is calculated as (expendable net assets/total expenses).
6. Board policies on fiscal oversight, including the use of reserves and endowment and practices for reviewing and approving the budget and audit.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 9. ADMINISTRATION

Evaluative narrative (PDF 2)

1. Identify the sections of the bylaws and other legal documents that outline:
 - The duties and responsibilities of the chief executive officer.
 - The source of the chief executive officer's authority to implement board policies and administer the daily activities of the institution.
 - The accountability of the chief executive officer for effective administration of the institution.
2. Explain the institution's administrative structure. Outline the processes by which the administration works with the board and faculty governance structures to make decisions for the institution.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Job description for the chief executive officer and for senior administrators, including at least the chief academic officer (provost) and chief financial officer.
2. Name and title of the chief executive officer and other senior administrators, including at least the chief academic officer (provost) and chief financial officer, and brief biographical information for each one.
3. Minutes of the board meeting at which the chief executive officer was appointed and the effective date of the appointment.
4. Organizational chart that depicts the institution's administrative structure.
5. Administrative policies of the institution.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 10. FACULTY AND OTHER ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Identify the faculty and academic personnel at the institution by position, including their roles and responsibilities.
2. Explain how the faculty is of sufficient size and capability to create and support learning environments, whether on campus or off, for appropriately rigorous higher learning. If the institution does not have a core of full-time faculty, provide an explanation as to how an alternate arrangement achieves this requirement.
3. Explain the institution's faculty governance structure, including any faculty governance bodies.
4. Describe the structures and processes through which faculty and academic personnel exercise appropriate oversight over all of the institution's educational offerings, regardless of the modality or location of delivery. Explain how faculty discharge their academic responsibilities, including setting and reviewing curriculum, teaching, developing assessment strategies and programs, conducting academic program review, and reviewing assessment results.
5. Describe the process for hiring and reviewing faculty and academic personnel, including the process for establishing faculty and other academic job descriptions and required qualifications, and for reviewing performance (including tenure and promotion). Identify by position the individuals involved in those processes.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Job descriptions for faculty and academic positions.
2. List of all full-time, part-time and adjunct academic personnel and the credentials or experience that qualify each for their responsibilities (include departmental assignment, courses taught, and level of instruction). Identify all earned degrees, fields of study, and the institutions that issued them. Documentation of experiential credentials must include evidence of publicly recognized professional competence.

3. Documentation regarding the faculty-student ratio by program or department.
4. Documents that outline faculty governance structures, including documents that explain the role of academic personnel in academic oversight.
5. Sample of minutes of meetings of the faculty structures through which oversight is exercised.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 11. LEARNING RESOURCES

Note: The term “libraries” in this requirement is broadly defined to include information networks and computer databases as well as print media.

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Describe the learning resources the institution makes available to its students and how those learning resources support the curriculum and mission of the institution.
2. Describe the learning resources specific to individual degree programs.
3. Describe how the institution assures access to learning resources for students participating in distance education.
4. If a contractual partner provides learning resources, explain how the institution assures the quality of those learning resources.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Inventory of learning resources for students, including program-specific learning resources.
2. Documents that explain for students, regardless of their location, the learning resources available to them (e.g., student handbooks, catalog, orientation materials).
3. Contracts or agreements for outsourced or shared learning resources.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 12. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Describe the student support services the institution makes available to its students and how these resources support the curriculum and mission of the institution.
2. Describe the student support services specific to individual degree programs.

3. Describe how the institution assures access to student support services for students participating in distance education.
4. If a contractual partner provides student support services, explain how the institution assures the quality of those student support services.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Inventory of student support services, including program-specific student support services.
2. Documents that explain for students, regardless of their location, the student support services available to them (e.g., student handbooks, catalog, orientation materials).
3. Contracts or agreements for outsourced or shared student support services.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 13. PLANNING

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Explain the institution’s structures, processes, and schedules for short-term and long-term planning. Include information about strategic planning as well as planning related to business and academic operations.
2. Explain how the institution’s planning and goal-setting link to the institution’s mission.
3. Evaluate the institution’s record of planning and accomplishment of goals identified in planning.
4. Explain how the institution utilizes data derived from assessment of student learning and related processes to inform planning.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Planning documents.
2. Documentation outlining the planning process, including the link between planning and mission, and between planning and assessment.
3. Documentation regarding the monitoring of planning, such as the tracking of goal accomplishment.
4. Documentation indicating that planning is an ongoing activity (e.g., minutes of planning meetings, formally adopted plans).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 14. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Evaluative narrative (PDF 2)

1. Provide an overview of the institution's policies and procedures. This should include, at a minimum: admissions policies; academic policies; student financial policies; student conduct policies; employment policies; faculty policies (research, promotion and tenure); policies on discrimination and harassment; grievance/ complaint policies, etc. Include information about how these policies differ for specific programs or groups of students or employees.
2. Explain the processes by which the institution creates, implements and reviews policies. Identify by position those individuals who are involved in each aspect of the process.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Catalog, student handbook, employee handbook and other relevant materials highlighting the required policies.
2. Documents regarding policy creation, implementation and review.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 15. CURRENT ACTIVITY

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. For the last three years, provide the number of students in each degree program and credit-bearing certificate program, including matriculation date and anticipated graduation date for each student as applicable.
2. If the institution has graduated students, provide the number of students that have graduated in each academic program for the last three years.
3. If some programs currently do not enroll students, provide timelines for expected enrollment.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. A copy of the degree (diploma) the institution will award (or currently awards) its graduates.
2. If the institution has awarded degrees, samples of actual student transcripts documenting the award of actual degrees to students.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 16. INTEGRITY OF BUSINESS AND ACADEMIC OPERATIONS

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Outline the institution's processes for ensuring that it remains in compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.
2. Information about any criminal investigations in the last 10 years conducted by a state agency, the US Department of Education or other bodies regarding the institution or its current and former employees with respect to their relationship to the institution. Include information about the circumstances and outcome of the investigation.
3. Information about any lawsuits in the last 10 years related to the institution's academic programs, financial aid, recruiting or admissions, business operations, or other actions. Include the docket information for the lawsuit. Include information about the circumstances and outcome of the lawsuit (including any settlements or judgments, with amount).

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Policies and procedures that ensure the institution complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
2. Documentation indicating the original allegations and outcome or current status of all investigations and lawsuits.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 17. CONSISTENCY OF DESCRIPTION AMONG AGENCIES

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Explain the descriptions of institutional structure and operations the institution has provided to other accrediting agencies, to state agencies that have authorized the institution, and to the U.S. Department of Education, if the institution is receiving Title IV or has filed an application for eligibility.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Scope of accreditation status provided by any other accreditor that has granted the institution accreditation or any pre-accreditation status and scope of authorization provided by state agencies.

2. Descriptive information provided by the institution in its electronic application to the U.S. Department of Education.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 18. ACCREDITATION RECORD

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Describe the institution's current and previous accreditation relationships within the past five years, including applications for status with another institutional accreditor and relationships involving specialized accrediting agencies for educational programs. Indicate whether any agency has revoked or withdrawn accreditation or placed the institution on sanction or show-cause within the past five years. Also indicate whether the institution has withdrawn or resigned from status with another accrediting agency or withdrawn an application for status within the past five years and the circumstances of that withdrawal. Describe the accrediting actions or proposed accrediting action of each agency and the reasons for the action as identified by the agency.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Action letters and letters of resignation related to the institution's current and previous accreditation relationships within the past five years, as described above.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 19. GOOD FAITH AND PLANNING TO ACHIEVE ACCREDITATION

Evaluative Narrative (PDF 2)

1. Explain the institution's planning process to ensure that it meets HLC's Criteria for Accreditation in the candidacy period.
2. If applicable, identify the institution's status with an appropriate recognized specialized or professional accreditor or explain institutional

efforts to achieve such status while the institution is a candidate with HLC. A single-purpose institution must demonstrate that it is accredited by, or actively seeking accreditation with, the specialized accrediting agency most closely related to the institution's single-purpose programs and that the agency is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or CHEA.

3. If the institution offers programs that require specialized accreditation or recognition in order for its students to be certified or sit for licensing examinations, describe how this is explained to current and prospective students, including how the institution explains to students the distinction between regional and specialized or program accreditation and the relationships between licensure and the various types of accreditation. If the institution lacks specialized or professional accreditation necessary for licensure in specific states, explain how students are informed about the requirements in those states.

Required Documentation (PDF 3)

1. Copy of the board minutes authorizing the institution to seek accreditation with HLC.
2. Plan for achieving accreditation with HLC.
3. If applicable, documentation of the institution's status with, or application for status with, the specialized accreditor or accreditors most closely associated with the discipline of the programs offered by institution.
4. Disclosures to students explaining consequences of specific programs lacking specialized or professional accreditation.