



Office of the President Sunil Ahuja, Ph.D.

Dear Faculty and Staff,

We have received the action letter from the Higher Learning Commission communicating HLC Board of Trustees' decision regarding the ongoing review of Lakeland Community College. I am delighted to report that, apart from adding one core component, HLC's Board concurred with the Institutional Actions Council's recommendation on the whole. All told, we are down to five core components as "met with concerns" from the ten as determined by the team, with a focused visit on those five to occur no later than June 2027, and no sanction.

Below are the details to be addressed for the focused visit:

Core Component 3.C: "the institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services," met with concerns for the following reason:

- The institution has only recently instituted regular performance reviews for faculty and staff, and therefore, there is only preliminary evidence that the institution systematically ensures accountability, instructional quality, and support for employee development.

Core Component 3.D: "the institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching," met with concerns for the following reason:

- While the institution has appropriately reinvested a portion of its recent cost savings into expanding areas that directly support student access and institutional sustainability, such as enrollment management, admissions, and recruitment, the institution must also integrate new faculty and staff into a culture of accountability, ensuring new personnel are committed to systematizing student data and achieve key performance indicators, within a supportive environment that promotes a cohesive approach to supporting effective teaching and learning.

Core Component, 4.B: "the institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students," met with concerns for the following reason:

- While the institution now has a framework in place for institution-wide assessment of student learning, it is still in the process of developing and implementing plans for an accountability structure for department chairs and deans.

Core Component, 5.A: "through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission," met with concerns for the following reasons:

- Inadequate administrative processes in past years led to a number of institutional policies becoming outdated and an irregular cycle of performance reviews, and the institution is

still in the process of conducting a systematic review of its policies and instituting a system of regular performance reviews.

- To address a history of insufficient transparency with institutional constituents and the governing board, the institution has made significant progress in improving its communications, promoting data-informed decision making, and including internal constituents in discussions at all levels, but the institution's administrative structures are still in transition and collaborative processes remain under development.

Core Component, 5.C: "the institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement," met with concerns for the following reasons:

- While the institution has developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to various areas such as institutional finances, enrollment, and retention and persistence and completion, the implementation and use of these metrics remains emergent.
- The institution has embedded learning outcomes and program review data into the budget development process; launched cross-campus budget planning teams and reserve-building strategies; and implemented regular budget reporting to the Board, including dashboards and monthly fiscal monitoring, but the systematic integration of planning, budgeting, and student success outcome data also remains at a developing stage.

As I mentioned before, this decision conveys HLC's confidence in continued progress at Lakeland toward meeting all criteria and core components. It's a great win for the College.

Hope everyone is enjoying a restful and pleasant summer.

With best regards,

Sunil Ahuja, Ph.D.
President