



*“A goal without a plan is just a wish” - Antoine de Saint-Exupery*

## **This is Our Year**

We’re well into 2018 and that means we’re less than a year away from our accreditation visit scheduled for November 5-6. The HLC team continues to revise and improve the assurance argument for a successful visit in November.

## **Presentations at the 2018 HLC Conference**

UMSL will be well-represented at the [Annual Conference](#) of the Higher Learning Commission in April 6-10, 2018. Alan D. Heisel and Bonnie Unal will be presenting during the Pre-Conference Assessment Workshop on the structural and logistical elements of writing the assurance argument. Their presentation, entitled: “Bottom Up: A Molecular Approach to Evidence” will introduce useful tools and effective strategies for organizing and engaging large groups of stakeholders from all institutional levels in the preparation of the assurance argument. The acceptance and programming of this proposal is significant because most of the workshop presentations are done by HLC staff members. Heisel emphasized that “...it was a learning process for us all. Presenting at the workshop isn’t just a validation of our work, it’s a gold star for the entire team! Their contributions were invaluable.”

In addition, Paulette Isaac-Savage is serving on a panel presentation with colleagues from the University of Central Oklahoma and Oakland University on a panel presentation entitled: “Mapping Institutional Diversity Efforts to HLC’s Criteria for Accreditation.” [#UMSLproud](#)

## **Strategic Planning and Reaccreditation**

Strategic Planning is an independent exercise that allows institutions to chart a future course that addresses immediate realities as well as short- and long-term goals. However, it is also a critical component for reaccreditation. Strategic planning is the primary mechanism by which institutions demonstrate good stewardship of current and future resources that support the institutional mission. The criterion that is most often associated with this exercise is Criterion 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness. It’s broad definition states that “The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.”

Of course, Criterion 5 isn’t the only [accreditation component](#) impacted by strategic planning. In fact, all of the criteria require the strategic plan to demonstrate compliance. For example, Criterion 1, which addresses the institutional mission, is an essential component to all strategic planning. Criterion 2, which speaks to the ethical and responsible conduct of the institution, is embedded in the processes that help create the plan. Finally, a well-conceived strategic plan insures that high quality education is provided wherever and however it is offered (Criterion 3) and that evaluation and improvement (Criterion 4) are integral components.

UMSL’s evolving [Strategic Plan](#), which was the product of internal and external stakeholders, campus forums, and significant self-reflection, is well-aligned with the HLC reaccreditation efforts and will be integrated into the final draft of the assurance argument.

**UMSL** | Reaccreditation  
November 5-6, 2018