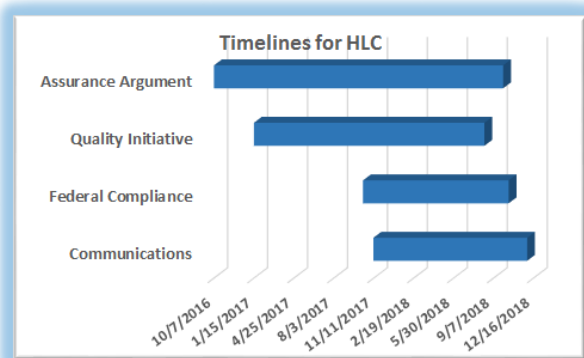




“No Procrastination at the Accreditation Station” - Dr. Seussesque

Timelines for HLC are Success-Driven

The Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC) team of reviewers will visit our campus November 5-6, 2018, and while the date may seem distant, it is not nearly as far-off as it seems. Preparation for the visit requires multiple activities on parallel timelines—all of which must be effectively managed to insure a successful visit. These activities include the Assurance Argument, Quality Initiative, Federal Compliance, and the Communications Plan



Assurance Argument

The Assurance Argument is the institutional self-study that demonstrates compliance with the [Criteria for Accreditation](#). It is a multi-stage project that involves crafting a narrative which articulates why the evidence shows compliance. A preliminary rough draft was completed last month and the narrative has been exported to the Assurance Website, but the process of linking the evidence files to the narrative is a meticulous and time-consuming process. Individual pieces of evidence must be independently linked in each criterion and subcriterion. Narratives must be reviewed and vetted by multiple individuals, edited for conciseness, and assessed in terms of the relative strength of the argument-evidence link. The final rough draft is expected to be broadly distributed in early 2018. This release plan insures sufficient time to solicit and receive input from stakeholders; to make adjustments and corrections as necessary; and to address any perceived shortcomings. The final draft is due mid-September 2018

Quality Initiative

The [Quality Initiative](#) is a requirement of the [Open Pathway](#) to Accreditation. Institutions must propose, implement, and report on a quality initiative designed and suited to address the concerns, potential concerns, and future aspirations of the university. UMSL’s Quality Initiative is derivative of the Access to Success (A2S) program which focused on student success and retention. This element is driven by the HLC team, the new Associate Provost for Student Success, Institutional Research, and a number of other key stakeholders. Similar to the Criteria for Accreditation, the Quality Initiative report must address key questions focusing on the scope and impact of the initiative, commitment and engagement, resource allocations, and future planning. The Quality Initiative report is due at the end of August, 2018.

Federal Compliance

The third timeline involves [Federal Compliance](#), a critical component of the Accreditation Review in which we demonstrate conformity with Title IV program policies, responsibilities, and regulations. Title IV compliance directly impacts the eligibility of students to receive federal financial aid and for faculty to receive federal research funding from NEA, NIH, NSF, etc. This report, which involves a range of offices and individuals, is due in Early September, 2018.

Communications

Finally, the communications rollout is a timeline of events, activities, media, and distributions designed to raise campus awareness about the HLC visit and to engage our stakeholders. Intended to inform and persuade, these communication efforts will promote participation in the HLC Online Student Survey (Sep. 7-21, 2018) and encourage thoughtful consideration of the question, “How do I contribute to student learning/success?” The communications timeline extends beyond November 5-6, 2018.

Accreditation is a multifaceted process—and UMSL is success-driven in all of its aspects. Each individual element and corresponding timeline is monitored and adjusted to insure our collective success.

