

# Institutional Accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission

REAFFIRMATION 2019

CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

University of Iowa Assurance Argument

## Executive Summary

This summary provides an overview of the university's Assurance Argument, prepared in support of the university's upcoming institutional accreditation review and site visit by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) on March 25-26. The full document addresses ways in which the university meets HLC's five criteria for accreditation. The full text of the document and more information about the upcoming review can be found at [accreditation.uiowa.edu](https://accreditation.uiowa.edu)

### Criterion1- Mission

*The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.*

The university serves the state of Iowa, the nation, and the world through its threefold mission of teaching, research, and public service. Foundational to success across all parts of that mission is the commitment to achieving "excellence through diversity." The strategic plan, which articulates areas of focus and emphasis within the broader mission, provides a framework to guide decision-making across the university.

The core mission, strategic priorities, and commitments to diversity, inclusion, and the public good are communicated in myriad ways to students, faculty, staff, and the public, and are enacted through direct public services, active community engagement, and integration across academic and co-curricular experiences. Campus-wide initiatives during the last decade have made it an institutional priority to broaden and deepen commitments in these areas and to increase both the quality and the coordination of efforts to support student success, to create a more equitable and inclusive university community, and to advance university outreach and public engagement.

### Criterion2- Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

*The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.*

The university establishes and enforces policies that enact its commitments to freedom of expression, pursuit of truth, and integrity in all its practices. The university provides oversight and institutional resources to support both the quality and the integrity of research and scholarly work, and provides students with education and guidance in ethical and responsible uses of information.

Established university policies and practices uphold ethical and responsible conduct in academic, financial, personnel, and auxiliary operations. The university demonstrates the integrity of its operations by regularly reporting to the state-appointed Board of Regents, other state and federal regulating bodies, and accrediting agencies, and by transparently representing its programs, requirements, faculty, staff, costs, and accreditation relationships to students, faculty, staff, and the public.

### Criterion3- Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

*The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offering are delivered.*

The university maintains systematic support and oversight for programs that offer high-quality education, first and foremost through a commitment to supporting its faculty and staff. Through their leadership of programs and new initiatives, oversight of curricular and co-curricular offerings, participation in shared governance, and ongoing scholarly and professional development, faculty and staff develop and maintain a wide variety of educational opportunities that support student success and challenge students to excel.

*The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational program, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.*

- Regular comprehensive reviews of departments, colleges, and co-curricular programs.
- Unit-based annual updates on teaching, learning, and continuous improvement in academic and co-curricular programming.
- Cross-unit assessment of General Education and high-stakes gateway courses, first-year experiences, and transition to college.
- Regular monitoring of student engagement, success, and post-graduation outcomes.

*The institution's resources, structure, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of the educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.*

Through these processes, the university prioritizes areas of emphasis within its broader mission and implements strategies that respond to current and emerging challenges and opportunities. With its newly implemented budget model, the university expects to facilitate more effective planning, increase transparency, encourage collaboration, and ensure that academics are at the center of the resource allocation decision-making process.

