



Higher Learning Commission
A commission of the North Central Association

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July 17, 2014

Mr. James A Lorensen
President
Gogebic Community College
E-4946 Jackson Rd.
Ironwood, MI 49938

Dear President Lorensen:

Attached is the report of the team that conducted Gogebic Community College's Quality Checkup site visit. In addition to communicating the team's evaluation of your institution's compliance with the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and the Commission's Federal Compliance Program, the report captures the team's assessment of your institution's use of the feedback from its last Systems Appraisal and its overall commitment to continuous improvement.

A copy of the report will be read and analyzed by the AQIP Panel that reviews institutions for Reaffirmation of Accreditation at the time your institution's review is scheduled.

Please acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become a part of the institution's permanent record.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Green
AQIP Accreditation Services

QUALITY CHECKUP REPORT

Gogebic Community College

Ironwood Michigan

March 19-21, 2014

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association

QUALITY CHECKUP TEAM MEMBERS:

Tod Treat

Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs
Tacoma Community College

Mark Felsheim

Vice President, Oak Creek Campus
Milwaukee Area Technical College

Background on Quality Checkups conducted by the Academic Quality Improvement

Program

The Higher Learning Commission's Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) conducts Quality Checkup site visits to each institution during the fifth or sixth year in every seven-year cycle of AQIP participation. These visits are conducted by trained AQIP Reviewers to determine whether the institution continues to meet The Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, and whether it is using quality management principles and building a culture of continuous improvement as participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) requires. The goals of an AQIP Quality Checkup are to:

1. Affirm the accuracy of the organization's Systems Portfolio and verify information included in the portfolio that the last Systems Appraisal has identified as needing clarification or verification (System Portfolio Clarification and Verification), including review of distance delivery and distributed education if the institution is so engaged.
2. Review with organizational leaders actions taken to capitalize on the strategic issues and opportunities for improvement identified by the last Systems Appraisal (Systems Appraisal Follow Up);
3. Alert the organization to areas that need its attention prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation, and reassure it concerning areas that have been covered adequately (Accreditation Issues Follow Up);
4. Verify federal compliance issues such as default rates, complaints, USDE interactions and program reviews, etc. (Federal Compliance Review); and
5. Assure continuing organizational quality improvement commitment through presentations, meetings, or sessions that clarify AQIP and Commission accreditation work (Organizational Quality Commitment).

The AQIP peer reviewers trained for this role prepare for the visit by reviewing relevant organizational and AQIP file materials, particularly the organization's last *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* and the Commission's internal *Organizational Profile*, which summarizes information reported by the institution in its *Annual Institutional Data Update*. The Quality Summary Report provided to AQIP by the institution is also shared with the evaluators. Copies of the Quality Checkup Report are provided to the institution's CEO and AQIP liaison. The Commission retains a copy in the institution's permanent file, and will be part of the materials reviewed by the AQIP Review Panel during Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

Clarification and verification of contents of the institution's Systems Portfolio

In the team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with the Commission's standards and AQIP's expectations.

The team congratulates the AQIP Coordinator and the CQIN Team for their diligence and preparations to address each OO and O in the Portfolio. The team suggests Gogebic focus its activities on a few key elements first by combining like activities, prioritizing objectives and implementing changes over time.

Review of the organization's quality assurance oversight of its distance education activities.

In the team's judgment, the institution has presented satisfactory evidence that its distance education activities are acceptable and do comply with the Commission's standards and expectations.

The use of the Moodle LMS system, tracking of online versus face to face retention in business, and innovative use of Moodle to address competency development in welding all speak to a culture of quality in online learning. The team suggests that a review process be developed to assure that online courses across the curriculum have consistency. An institution wide process for review, training and development, design, and evaluation was not readily apparent on the visit and can enhance the overall effectiveness of the use of online and hybrid courses for a very geographically dispersed service area.

Review of the organization's quality assurance and oversight of distributed education (multiple campuses)

In the team's judgment, the institution has presented satisfactory evidence that its distributed education activities (operation of multiple campuses) are acceptable and comply with Commission's standards and expectations.

While classes have been offered in Copper Country for many years, the recent creation a new facility is creating tremendous growth opportunity for Gogebic. While GCC has done a good job so far of insuring that the Copper Country Center is closely aligned with the main campus, in anticipation of continued growth at the Center, Gogebic may want reinvigorate the mentoring onboarding process for faculty with attention to Houghton to insure a continued connection to the Gogebic way and culture.

Review of specific accreditation issues identified by the institution's last Systems Appraisal

In the team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were

acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP's expectations.

The last Systems Appraisal did not identify any accreditation issues, and found that the institution's evidence that it met all accreditation requirements was completed and in order. Gogebic has made tremendous progress since its last Systems Appraisal, hiring an institutional researcher, and generating data that can support its continuous improvement efforts. The College is well positioned to expand the use of data for documentation, analysis, and improvement. The team emphasized the need to insure that appropriate data is collected and analyzed for key goals to insure improvements are clearly tied to data analysis and to improve its documentation of these processes.

Screening of Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Quality Checkup Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation* (and the core components therein) or that it may face difficulty in meeting the *Criteria* and core components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Quality Checkup affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation. Items judged to be "Adequate but could be improved" or "Unclear or incomplete" during the Checkup Visit screening will not require Commission follow-up in the form of written reports or focused visits. However, Commission follow-up will occur if the issues remain apparent at the point of reaffirmation of accreditation.

Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	1A	1B	1C	1D	
Strong, clear, and well-presented.			x	x	
Adequate but could be improved.	x	x			
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 2: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	x		x		
Adequate but could be improved.		x		x	x
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 3: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	x				x
Adequate but could be improved.		x	x	x	
Unclear or incomplete.					

Criterion 4: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	4A	4B	4C		
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	x		x		
Adequate but could be improved.		x			
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 5: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	5A	5B	5C	5D	
Strong, clear, and well-presented.		x			
Adequate but could be improved.	x		x	x	
Unclear or incomplete.					

In the team’s judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution’s approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP’s expectations.

The team reaffirms the Appraisal finding that Gogebic would benefit by further documenting its practices in all aspects of the College and having the documentation readily available. Specific examples for each section marked adequate but could be improved are:

- 1.A. GCC faculty and staff demonstrate an understanding of the college's mission, " exists to provide educational and enrichment opportunities for its students and the surrounding communities in the college service region." However, documentation of misunderstanding is not readily available and distributed.
- 1.B GCC is encouraged to post its mission statement more visibly within the college itself, not just on the website or in the college catalog.
- 2.B. GCC relies heavily upon personal relationships in order to communicate with its students and the public. Additional materials can help communicate clearly with regard to programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.
- 2.D. GCC is committed to free expression of ideas, beliefs, and opinions and includes this among it's general learning outcomes. Results from academic assessment can create documentation of this commitment.
- 2.E. GCC faculty express a clear understanding of their role in ensuring that material is up-to-date and that their qualifications are supplemented by regular professional development. However, the outcome of this understanding with respect to occupational and transfer program review was not found in documented academic assessment.

3.A. GCC has an opportunity to better document the activity of its advisory committees in ensuring programs remain current. The use of minutes with specific recommendations and documentation of those recommendations implemented can be very helpful in this regard.

3.C. The hiring of an HR director is an important first step for GCC. With this hire, GCC has the opportunity to better document qualifications, faculty ratios and teaching loads, and student services staff capacity.

3.D. As noted elsewhere, reinvigorating the mentoring onboarding process and documenting the activity in the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning would be one way to demonstrate that GCC provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

4.B. The team encourages GCC to build systematic academic assessment of student learning outcomes into its regular institutional research process. The recent addition of a specific institutional research role on the campus can aid in this regard.

5.D. As noted elsewhere, regular documentation of continuous improvement cycles (plan, do, study, act) with associated data can demonstrate that GCC works systematically to improve its performance. Such documentation can be shared with the Board of Trustees and administration as part of regular communication of such efforts.

Review of the institution's approach to capitalizing on recommendations identified by its last Systems Appraisal in the Strategic Issues Analysis.

In the team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP's expectations.

S1. Gogebic provided several examples of programs and improvements that the team found distinctive and noteworthy. Each of these demonstrated that GCC is analyzing data for improvement, that methods are deployed systematically and regularly, appropriate measures are collected and analyzed, and linkages exist to mission and goals. The team advises GCC to maintain a focus on the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle for each program, which can be written into future portfolios to demonstrate linkage between Processes, Results, and Improvements.

Gogebic demonstrates that it takes advantage of its size to provide relationships to students and community and responsiveness to issues. The team advises Gogebic to describe this "institutional intimacy," *esprit de corps*, and collaborative relationships systematically.

- S2. Gogebic acknowledges that it has not compared itself to higher education institutions and other organizations but is positioning itself to be able to utilize comparative data through IPEDS, the State of Michigan Activities Classification System, Perkins, and recent addition of the National Community College Benchmarking Project. Potential expanded emphasis on institutional research and participation in the Voluntary Framework for Accountability can enhance this progress. The team advises Gogebic to monitor capacity carefully to avoid overcommitting its resources in this area.
- S3. A lack of formal comprehensive improvement processes has been a strategic issue for Gogebic throughout its quality journey as noted in the 2005 Appraisal, the 2007 Reaffirmation Report, 2009 Appraisal, and the 2013 Appraisal. The team finds that the issue today is a lack of detailed documentation of the improvement processes, not the lack of processes themselves. The AQIP Coordinator and the CQIN Team have a clearer understanding of approaches to address this issue institutionally. The team advises Gogebic build its portfolio for GCC by systematically sampling completed cycles across the institution and categories, prioritizing new cycles each year. The team advises the college to use category eight to address the efficacy of this approach towards continuous improvement.
- S4. Gogebic is enhancing its assessment of student learning, and will benefit by an overall assessment plan for student learning. While Gogebic has clear student learning outcomes, GCC has the opportunity to focus increased use of direct student learning measures, integrated across the institution and systematically analyzed, which would provide support for continuous improvement. Gogebic is advancing on this issue. The team advises Gogebic to continue to build upon its embedded assessment project, to review the purposes and content of its general education objectives, and to systematically implement college-wide assessment strategies to demonstrate they are being met.

Review of organizational commitment to continuing systematic quality improvement

In the team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP's expectations.

The team is convinced as to the commitment of Gogebic Community College to the continuous improvement process expected as part of voluntary participation in AQIP.

Other AQIP Considerations or Concerns

In addition to the aforementioned documentation, the team shared the following observations with the President, Board Chair, and with the college community during report out:

Strengths:

- Collaborative nature
- Clearly committed to student success from President on down
- Good processes in place
- Data collection in place and evolving
- Improvements grew out of reflection on process
- Transition of culture from combative to collaborative
- Special appreciation for collaborative communication and acceptance
- GCC recognizes the need to generate quantitative results and move from anecdotal to systematic in the use of data for improvement. A series of pilot projects is focused on embedded assessments

Practices of Distinction: Vignettes or Case Studies (build these continuously separate out in portfolio).

Several examples of quality stories are evident:

- “Connected advising” in TRIO is being transferred to the general student population through changes to Orientation. “We have a chain and [we] know that when a student comes here they are going to be taken care of.”
- Strategic Risk Tolerance:
 - An advisory board suggestion regarding the value of CMA program (2010) led to a new program that is up and running (an accreditation site visit just occurred in March 2013).
 - Welding as a proactive response to possible mining interests.
 - SAM program and partnership in the Porcies.
- The innovative relationship and risk taking with Michigan Tech University is leading to a growing second campus (Copper Country) with a strong nursing program, tight partnership for general education fulfillment with MTU, and creation of a forestry program. The investments in new faculty, business department trip to Houghton, and planning around growth, including online and flipped hybrid, is laudable.
- The representative Strategic and Fiscal Planning Committee provides a unique mechanism for planning, accountability, and governance in that faculty, staff, administration, and Board are all part.
- The college is realizing great results in the ALP program.

- Individualized consideration and financial literacy in financial aid.
- A committed and innovative Foundation: Taste of the Gogebic Range/ Pine to Palm Pasties Picnic in Florida/Alumni Recognition Breakfast. The College has a true collaborative planning and governance structure that includes broad representation from faculty, staff, administration, and the board. As a result there is strong consensus around the College's goals and operations.

Federal Compliance Worksheet for Evaluation Teams

Effective for visits beginning January 1, 2013

Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components

The team reviews each item identified in the Federal Compliance Guide and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. Generally, if the team finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised in appropriate sections of the Assurance Section of the Team Report or highlighted as such in the appropriate AQIP Quality Checkup Report.

This worksheet outlines the information the team should review in relation to the federal requirements and provides spaces for the team's conclusions in relation to each requirement. The team should refer to the Federal Compliance Guide for Institutions and Evaluation Teams in completing this worksheet. The Guide identifies applicable Commission policies and an explanation of each requirement. **The worksheet becomes an appendix to the team's report.**

Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Address this requirement by completing the "Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours" in the Appendix at the end of this document.

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.

1. Review the process that the institution uses to manage complaints as well as the history of complaints received and processed with a particular focus in that history on the past three or four years.
2. Determine whether the institution has a process to review and resolve complaints in a timely manner.
3. Verify that the evidence shows that the institution can, and does, follow this process and that it is able to integrate any relevant findings from this process into its review and planning processes.
4. Advise the institution of any improvements that might be appropriate.
5. Consider whether the record of student complaints indicates any pattern of complaints or otherwise raises concerns about the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices.
6. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
- () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
- () The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

The team advises regular employee training and student communication via orientation and the Student Handbook to ensure familiarity.

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Publication of Transfer Policies

The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.

1. Review the institution's transfer policies.
2. Review any articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and program-specific articulation agreements.
3. Consider where the institution discloses these policies (e.g., in its catalog, on its web site) and how easily current and prospective students can access that information.

Determine whether the disclosed information clearly explains the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions and any articulation arrangements the institution has with other institutions. Note whether the institution appropriately lists its articulation agreements with other institutions on its website or elsewhere. The information the institution provides should include any program-specific articulation agreements in place and should clearly identify program-specific articulation agreements as such. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution under Commission review: 1) accepts credit from the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; 2) sends credits to the other institution(s) in the articulation agreements that it accepts; or 3) both offers and accepts credits with the other institution(s).

4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
- The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Practices for Verification of Student Identity

The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education and appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students and to protect their privacy.

1. Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams, and earns a final grade. The team should ensure that the institution's approach respects student privacy.
2. Check that any fees related to verification and not included in tuition are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance courses (e.g., a proctoring fee paid by students on the day of the proctored exam).
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
 - The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Title IV Program Responsibilities

The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program.

This requirement has several components the institution and team must address:

- **General Program Requirements.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Financial Responsibility Requirements.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion Five if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)*

Default Rates. *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its three year default rate. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. Note for 2012 and thereafter institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012; if the institution does not provide the default rate for three years leading up to the comprehensive evaluation visit, the team should contact Commission staff.*

- **Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*
- **Student Right to Know.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion One if the team determines that disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)*
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students. In most cases, teams should verify that these policies exist and are available to students, typically in the course catalog or student handbook. Note that the Commission does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance but does*

anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.

- ***Contractual Relationships.*** *The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships (If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the change request form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Contractual Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*

 - ***Consortial Relationships.*** *The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a consortial relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Consortial Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*
1. Review all of the information that the institution discloses having to do with its Title IV program responsibilities.
 2. Determine whether the Department has raised any issues related to the institution's compliance or whether the institution's auditor in the A-133 has raised any issues about the institution's compliance as well as look to see how carefully and effectively the institution handles its Title IV responsibilities.
 3. If an institution has been cited or is not handling these responsibilities effectively, indicate that finding within the federal compliance portion of the team report and whether the institution appears to be moving forward with corrective action that the Department has determined to be appropriate.
 4. If issues have been raised with the institution's compliance, decide whether these issues relate to the institution's ability to satisfy the Criteria for Accreditation, particularly with regard to whether its disclosures to students are candid and complete and demonstrate appropriate integrity (*Core Component 2.A and 2.B*).
 5. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
 - () The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

The team advises regular employee training and student communication via orientation and the Student Handbook to ensure familiarity.

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Required Information for Students and the Public

1. Verify that the institution publishes fair, accurate, and complete information on the following topics: the calendar, grading, admissions, academic program requirements, tuition and fees, and refund policies.
2. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
 - () The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information

The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.

1. Review the institution's disclosure about its accreditation status with the Commission to determine whether the information it provides is accurate and complete, appropriately formatted and contains the Commission's web address.

2. Review institutional disclosures about its relationship with other accrediting agencies for accuracy and for appropriate consumer information, particularly regarding the link between specialized/professional accreditation and the licensure necessary for employment in many professional or specialized areas.
3. Review the institution's catalog, brochures, recruiting materials, and information provided by the institution's advisors or counselors to determine whether the institution provides accurate information to current and prospective students about its accreditation, placement or licensure, program requirements, etc.
4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
 - () The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

The team applauds Gogebic's rebranding efforts and advises the college to consider using student videos (especially alumni and appreciative scholarship earners) that can reach a broader geographic audience.

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Review of Student Outcome Data

1. Review the student outcome data the institution collects to determine whether it is appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs it offers and the students it serves.
2. Determine whether the institution uses this information effectively to make decisions about academic programs and requirements and to determine its effectiveness in achieving its educational objectives.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

- () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
- () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
- () The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

The team provided advice for refining and improving institutional improvement, focused outcomes data, and encourages GCC to prioritize outcomes data generation.

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies

The institution has documented that it discloses accurately to the public and the Commission its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.

Important note: If the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action (i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial, or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this action. In addition, the team must contact the staff liaison immediately if it learns that the institution is at risk of losing its degree authorization or lacks such authorization in any state in which the institution meets state presence requirements.

1. Review the information, particularly any information that indicates the institution is under sanction or show-cause or has had its status with any agency suspended, revoked, or terminated, as well as the reasons for such actions.
2. Determine whether this information provides any indication about the institution's capacity to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. Should the team learn that the institution is at risk of losing, or has lost, its degree or program authorization in any state in which it meets state presence requirements, it should contact the Commission staff liaison immediately.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
- () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
- () The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments. Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.

1. Review information about the public disclosure of the upcoming visit, including sample announcements, to determine whether the institution made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public and seek comments.
2. Evaluate the comments to determine whether the team needs to follow-up on any issues through its interviews and review of documentation during the visit process.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - (x) The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.
 - () The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.
 - () The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team

Provide a list of materials reviewed here:

- Spring 2013/2014 class schedules: on and off campus
- Annual Audits
- Annual Budget
- Systems Portfolio
- MAHE Negotiated Agreement (sections on Strategic & Fiscal Planning Committee)
- Privacy of Student Records – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Facilities and Services for Students with Disabilities
- Student Diversity
- Refund Policy and Requirements for Withdrawal and Return of Federal Financial Aid
- Textbook Information
- Educational Programs
- Transfer of Credit Policies and Articulation Agreements
- Accreditation, Approval, and Licensure of Institution and Programs
- Computer Use and File Sharing
- Student Activities
- Career and Job Placement Services
- IPEDS Data Feedback Report 2012
- IPEDS Data Feedback Report 2011
- IPEDS Data Feedback Report 2010
- IPEDS Data Feedback Report 2010 – Comparison MI Group
- ACS Data Book
- National Community College Benchmarking 2012
 - Funding Sources
 - Total Revenues compared to Operating Fund Expenditures
 - Gogebic County's lost revenue due to non- or low-taxed lands
 - Property Tax Revenue
 - Taxable Value
 - Millage Rate
- Annual Audited Financial Statements
- 2009-2010 Budget amounts compared to Actual
- 2010-2011 Budget amounts compared to Actual
- Public Act No.62 Disclosures and Public Act No. 201 Transparency Reporting
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program
- Campus Safety and Security Information

Appendix

Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Program Length and Tuition, Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours

Part 1: Program Length and Tuition

Instructions

The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).

Review the "*Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours*" as well as the course catalog and other attachments required for the institutional worksheet.

Worksheet on Program Length and Tuition

A. Answer the Following Questions

Are the institution's degree program requirements within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

Yes No

Comments:

Are the institution's tuition costs across programs within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

Yes No

Comments:

B. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's program length and tuition practices?

Yes

No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

Part 2: Assignment of Credit Hours

Instructions

In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps:

1. Review the Worksheet completed by the institution, which provides information about an institution's academic calendar and an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats, and the institution's policy and procedures for awarding credit hours. Note that such policies may be at the institution or department level and may be differentiated by such distinctions as undergraduate or graduate, by delivery format, etc.
2. Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level. The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:
 - Associate's degrees = 60 hours
 - Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours
 - Master's or other degrees beyond the Bachelor's = at least 30 hours beyond the Bachelor's degree
 - Note that one quarter hour = .67 semester hour
 - Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.
3. Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution.

- At semester-based institutions courses will be typically be from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14-16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The description in the catalog should indicate a course that is appropriately rigorous and has collegiate expectations for objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.
 - Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a full-time load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)
 - Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode, and types of academic activities.
 - Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the above federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution. Commission procedure also permits this approach.
4. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course. Pay particular attention to alternatively-structured or other courses with particularly high credit hours for a course completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor.
5. **Sampling.** Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.
- At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.
 - For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.
 - Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.
 - For the programs the team sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several of the courses in the program, identify the contact hours for each course, and expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.
 - The team should pay particular attention to alternatively-structured and other courses that have high credit hours and less frequently scheduled interaction between the students and the instructor.
 - Provide information on the samples in the appropriate space on the worksheet.

6. Consider the following questions:

- Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?
- Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?
- For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe allotted for the course?
- Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)
- If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?

7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:

- If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently-detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and evidence of implementation.
- If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or single department or division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.
- If the team identifies systematic non-compliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify Commission staff immediately and work with staff to design appropriate follow-up activities. The Commission shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team (see #5 of instructions in completing this section)

The team reviewed the catalog across programs and questioned the leadership team and department chairs about the use of compressed courses to ensure that compression is addressed appropriate to student learning outcomes and success and that instructional time (seat time) is not sacrificed. The team also reviewed with the Chief Academic Officer how lecture and lab hours are determined. The team finds that Gogebic comports to accepted academic practices and standards regarding credit hours for all delivery modes and durations.

B. Answer the Following Questions

1) Institutional Policies on Credit Hours

Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

Yes

No

Comments:

Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

Yes

No

Comments:

For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

Yes

No

Comments:

Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes

No

Comments:

2) Application of Policies

Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes

No

Comments:

As determined from the catalog and conversation with the Chief Academic Officer.

Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

Yes

No

Comments:

If the institution offers any alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, were the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

Yes

No

Comments:

If the institution offers alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the

learning outcomes reasonably capable of being fulfilled by students in the time allocated to justify the allocation of credit?

Yes

No

Comments:

Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes

No

Comments:

C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Review the responses provided in this section. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign Commission follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

Yes

No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

D. Identify and Explain Any Findings of Systematic Non-Compliance in One or More Educational Programs with Commission Policies Regarding the Credit Hour

Part 3: Clock Hours

Instructions

Complete this worksheet **only if** the institution offers any degree or certificate programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs. Non-degree programs subject to clock hour requirements (an institution is required to measure student progress in clock hours for federal or state purposes or for graduates to apply for licensure) are not subject to the credit hour definitions per se but will need to provide conversions to semester or quarter hours for Title IV purposes. Clock-hour programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.

For these programs Federal regulations require that they follow the federal formula listed below. If there are no deficiencies identified by the accrediting agency in the institution's overall policy for awarding semester or quarter credit, accrediting agency may provide permission for the institution to provide less instruction provided that the student's work outside class in addition to direct instruction meets the applicable quantitative clock hour requirements noted below.

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8)

- 1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
- 1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution's requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour include at least 20 semester hours.

Worksheet on Clock Hours

A. Answer the Following Questions

Does the institution's credit to clock hour formula match the federal formula?

Yes

No

Comments:

If the credit to clock hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class?

Did the team determine that the institution's credit hour policies are reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that if the team answers "No" to this question, it should recommend follow-up monitoring in section C below.)

Yes

No

Comments:

Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes

No

Comments:

B. Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit to clock hour conversion?

Yes

No

(Note that the team may approve a lower conversion rate than the federal rate as noted above provided the team found no issues with the institution's policies or practices related to the credit hour and there is sufficient student work outside of class as noted in the instructions.)

C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

Yes

No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date: