## HLC Criteria and Core Components

**Guiding Values**
The guiding values provide the foundation for the criteria.

### Criterion 1: Mission
- **1A.** Mission is broadly understood & guides institution’s operations.
- **1B.** Mission is articulated publicly.
- **1C.** Institution understands the relationship between its mission & the diversity of society.
- **1D.** Institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to public good.

### Criterion 2: Integrity: Ethical & Responsible Conduct
- **2A.** Institution operations with integrity in financial, academic, personnel & auxiliary functions; it establishes & follows fair & ethical policies & procedures for governing board, administration, faculty & staff.
- **2B.** Institution presents self clearly & completely to students & to public regarding programs, requirements, faculty & staff, costs to students, control & accreditation relationships.
- **2C.** Governing board of institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in institution’s best interest & to insure its integrity.
- **2D.** Institution is committed to freedom of expression & pursuit of truth in teaching & learning.
- **2E.** Institution ensures that faculty, students & staff acquire, discover & apply knowledge responsibly.

### Criterion 3: Teaching & Learning: Quality, Resources, & Support
- **3A.** Institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.
- **3B.** Institution demonstrates that exercise of intellectual inquiry & acquisition, application & integration of broad learning & skills are integral to educational programs.
- **3C.** Institution has faculty & staff needed for effective, high-quality programs & student services.
- **3D.** Institution provides support for student learning & effective teaching.
- **3E.** Institution fulfills claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

### Criterion 4: Teaching & Learning: Evaluation & Improvement
- **4A.** Institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.
- **4B.** Institution demonstrates commitment to educational achievement & improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.
- **4C.** Institution demonstrates commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence & completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

### Criterion 5: Resources, Planning & Institutional Effectiveness
- **5A.** Institution’s resource base supports current educational programs & plans for maintaining & strengthening their quality in the future.
- **5B.** Institution’s governance & administrative structures promote effective leadership & support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.
- **5C.** Institution engages in systematic & integrated planning.
- **5D.** Institution works systematically to improve its performance.