



UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN
COLORADO

**Steering Committee for the Oversight of
HLC and Legislative Academic Compliance**

Minutes

February 28, 2019 | 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Carter Hall 4th Floor Board Room

✚ **Members Present:** Ann Bentz, Kim Black, Linda Black, Charlie Couch, Larry Loften, Anne Toewe, Marty Somero, Gardiner Tucker, Olga Baron, Lisa Grimes

Members Absent: Rachel Walton, Sean Broghammer

✚ **Approval of Minutes from October 25, 2018 - approved**

✚ **Approval of Minutes from December 6, 2018 - approved**

✚ **Chair's Report**

Negotiated Rulemaking for Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (5 Key Issues) – Ann

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Stay-Awake-for-These-5-Issues/245465>

- Current Department of Education is taking steps to reverse many Obama era regulations

Accreditor Recognition: proposing that accrediting agencies gain federal recognition if they are “substantially” compliance with federal rules rather than completing meeting the standards

- Changes what it means to be an accreditor
- Thoughts from the committee regarding potential problems
 - Undermines the purpose of accreditation
 - Allows accreditors to hold institutions accountable when they don't have to be
 - Impacts accrediting agency's ability to hold institutions accountable
 - Opens up federal funding that would otherwise be prohibited
 - Institutions don't have to be more than “substantially compliant”
 - Most of the problems with oversight are with national accrediting bodies

Credit Hours: considering eliminating the federal definition because the rules do not support competency-based programs

- Disregards fundamental differences between competency based and credit hour programs
- Essentially allows institutions to accept everything; removes movement toward consistency in the awarding of credit

Outsourcing Education: currently only half of an education program may be provided by an unaccredited entity; proposing raising or eliminating the cap; entire programs could be offered under a college name even if the college provided none of the instruction

- Allows unaccredited entities to provide all of the education under the name of the accredited institution
- Paying another entity to give out credit
- Would allow institutions to award degrees over which they have no oversight
- Bypasses accreditation requirements

Regular and Substantive Interaction: currently helps to distinguish between correspondence courses (do not have regular and substantive interaction), which are not eligible for full federal aid and distance courses (requires regular and substantive interaction), which are eligible for full federal aid; proposing that accreditors and colleges have flexibility in setting the amount of interaction and have flexibility in defining who qualifies as an instructor

- Whether a course is a “correspondence course”
 - Half aid
 - Student works at own pace
- Would allow institutions to set their own requirements
- Would allow institutions to determine who is an “instructor”
 - Significant concerns about quality

State Authorization: originally designed to strengthen state consumer-protection laws and renew state’s role in overseeing higher education; proposing elimination of the requirement that programs offered in another state meet rules for licensure in that state

- This would take away the power of the state to have say over what states do
- Anticipate significant push back from the states
 - Issue of balance of power between federal government and the states
- The proposed changes are not all or nothing
 - Can pick and choose what ends up in the reauthorization
- Still has to get through Congress, comment period, and response to comments
- Previous proposals are off the table
- There may be reversals of existing regulations
- Conflicts with other federal legislation

Title IX Update – Lisa

- Proposed regulations (still needs to go through several steps before implementation)
 - Would have the force of law
 - Department of Education has previously only provided guidance (not necessarily mandated)
- Several significant changes
 - Requires actual knowledge (currently constructive knowledge is sufficient)
 - Changes definition of sexual harassment
 - Requires a live hearing
 - Schools must allow advocates (including attorneys)
 - Must permit live cross examination
 - Decision maker cannot be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator(s)
- Would have a huge impact on UNC’s practices

SARA Update - Lisa

- Renewed membership for 2019
- Moving forward with website update
- IM&T is working on Action Item Processing project to collect location information at time of registration
- Lisa is continuing program research (particular problems with nursing and education)
- Placement reporting is a new requirement this year
 - Critical to track placements for SARA reporting and state authorization
 - Currently information is housed in units

- No consistency
- Concerns about duplicate reports and accuracy
- Difficult to collect and report data
- Importance of central, standard process for tracking placements
 - SGACCOOP in Banner
 - Lisa will work with Charlie and Ken Clavir to develop process
 - Ease of reporting (also helpful for HLC)
 - Potential problem with campus buy-in
- Lisa will continue to update

HLC Update – Kim

- Accrediting bodies are currently required to review and revise criteria every 5 years
 - HLC is concluding that process
 - Once changes are approved will be implemented September 2020
- Revisions are mostly semantic – clarifying terms, eliminating redundancies
- A couple of big changes
 - Institutions should strive to ensure that the overall constituency of faculty and staff reflects diversity
 - First time HLC has said anything about composition of faculty and staff
 - Will have to give data and provide information on search and hiring process
 - Have to report, but there are no set targets
 - Demonstrate that administration uses data to make informed decisions in the best interest of students and constituents
 - Currently have to show at the unit level, but institution level requirement is new
 - Not an immediate impact (2024-2025)
- HLC has changed accreditation process since UNC's last self-study in 2015
 - Used to be a 10 year cycle unless an institution is in trouble
 - Now a 4 year assurance review
 - Update progress report to HLC that we continue to meet criteria for accreditation
- Next year we will have to submit a proposal for quality improvement initiative
 - Year 9 of the cycle we report back on what we have done
 - Can be things we are already planning on doing
 - No accountability for that project (no consequences if a project doesn't work)
- Assurance review is due June 1st
 - Kim has been working on that report
 - Completely electronic process (online reporting template)
 - Not a comprehensive review (10 year is comprehensive)
 - All colleges uploaded documents last fall
 - Sections of the report will be sent out soon to certain people for accuracy/currency/adequacy of evidence
 - Concurrent to internal review, have to upload every document that is cited in the report and embed hyperlinks (peer reviewers will only be able to see what is linked)
 - Review happens electronically during 4 week period in June
 - Reviewers can, and likely will, contact UNC for additional information
 - Very fast turn-around – imperative that information holders respond quickly
- UNC is a fundamentally sound institution
 - A lot of good things happening on campus despite challenges – evidence supports

✚ **GTP Challenge Exam Policies - Ann**

- Liberal Arts core
- Ann went to Deans – have to have a challenge exam for every course
- Have a list that has been approved by faculty
- Table is posted
 - Everything faculty has agreed to do if a student wants to challenge
- Requirement is in statute ([C.R.S. § 23-1-125\(4\)](#))
 - State is going to be enforcing
- It is up to faculty what the test is
 - Faculty must create exam if there is no CLEP
 - Some faculty will wait to create an exam until such time that a student asks
- If student tests out, they get credit
- Students are supposed to be told about challenge exam via academic advising
- We have a draft policy
 - Critical to get policy out as soon as possible
 - Should the policy go through Faculty Senate Academic Policies Committee (APC)?
 - Ann will check with Theo
- Will continue to work operationally regardless of status of policy approval

✚ **Student Consumer Information - Lisa**

- Not addressed due to time constraints

✚ **Student Complaints – Tuck**

- Not addressed due to time constraints

✚ **Other**

✚ **Next Meeting: March 28, 2019 (10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.) Carter Hall 4th Floor Board Room.**