

Congratulations HWC students, faculty and staff - We did it!

Our Open Pathway Reaffirmation Review Document concludes with the following:

“For these highlighted reasons and because of the evidence presented in the review, the visit team recommends reaffirmation of accreditation for Harold Washington College and eligibility to choose its pathway.”

The “Visit”

The HLC team of community college peers met with 120 stakeholders in their brief time with us on October 1st and 2nd 2018.

The Report Highlights

Five Criterion, including 21 specific components, all **“Met”**. No sanctions and no interim monitoring recommended. Many, many useful comments and suggestions from our very welcome HLC visitors. Selected positive comments about the quality work we do at HWC were as follows:

Institutional Context

“But, opportunities also abound in the Loop and HWC has worked hard to maximize those opportunities.” Page 2.

“As one of the City Colleges, HWC benefits from shared expertise, central budget management, and a wide outreach. However, being part of the system can also create tensions and opaque borders of authority between the college and the system and the college and the sister colleges. HWC demonstrates an ability to navigate these situations, to maintain its identity, to facilitate shared governance, and to center itself on its mission as ‘a student-centered institution that empowers all members of its community through accessible and affordable academic advancement, career development and personal enrichment.’” Page 3.

Criterion One – Mission

“Evidence indicates that the mission, which includes embracing human diversity, care for the whole student, and responsive and relevant education, drives the college's operations.” Page 8.

“HWC's mission builds on City Colleges of Chicago's mission statement which clearly states that the institution is intended to serve the ‘diverse student populations in Chicago.’” Page 9.

“The core value to ‘embrace human diversity’ is included in HWC’s mission statement, and evidence is provided to support this assertion.” *Page 10.*

“During faculty-only sessions, faculty members expressed that one of the reasons they enjoy working at HWC is the diversity of its student population and the opportunity to work with such a student body.” *Page 10.*

“The college does public good in its downtown Chicago location by serving as a Warming Center, a Cooling Center, and a local polling place. It also provides free tax preparation. These are examples by which the college fulfills its mission to "build community" and "foster global citizenship for social justice.”” *Page 11.*

“In sessions with college personnel, college members knew the mission and supported it vocally.” *Page 12.*

Criterion Two – Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

“The President has established a new shared governance process with well-attended meetings that also allow online participation. These are organized through the auspices of the Faculty Council, which both at HWC and CCC, had expressed long-term concerns about shared governance and CCC policy decisions.” *Pages 16/17.*

“HWC has a distinct history of faculty-led practices that are encouraged and sustained in philosophy and practice by Academic Affairs and the Office of Instruction. Through assessment practices, curriculum development processes, and the City and State curriculum change process, HWC consistently utilizes faculty for academic matters.” *Page 17.*

“In its mission, HWC upholds standards in its expression and practice of the democratic ideal, which is embedded in the college’s policy which forbids discrimination “on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex or marital status, or membership or participation in... the lawful activities of any organization,” which in turn guarantees freedom of expression in pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.” *Page 18.*

Criterion Three – Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

“HWC faculty affirm that they regularly engage with, and drive this process [course design], and evidence presented demonstrates that HWC is successful at obtaining approval for courses.” *Page 22.*

“Specifically, with online learning, first it is important to note that HWC has done significant work to ensure and enhance the quality of online learning since the CCC district designated HWC as the home for the CCC Center for Distance Learning....” *Page 23.*

“HWC measures the successful rate of transfer of its students and takes pride in the activities of its transfer center.” *Page 24.*

“During the visit the team gained additional insight into the work of the Assessment Committee and the collaborative nature of their work, both within the committee as well as all other faculty.” *Page 24.*

“Students self-reported in the student survey that they value the diversity at HWC; this was echoed by the students the team spoke with during the visit. Additionally, it is clear from both word and action that HWC places its students at the center of its decision-making, recognizing the richness of the diverse environment it serves.” *Page 25.*

“During the visit, faculty spoke very positively about the ability to attend conferences as well as internal professional development opportunities such as those sponsored by CAST, Faculty Development Week, Teaching and Learning Community events, and various programs put on by internal and external groups.” *Page 27.*

“While HWC could certainly benefit from additional space, the college has provided high quality laboratories, practice spaces, art spaces, and classroom equipment and technology to support the learning process in the space it has.” *Page 30.*

“Students speak very highly of the learning experiences they have as part of their student organizations and how those directly correlate to their areas of study.” *Page 31.*

“HWC has deeply engaged faculty members who make every effort to own all aspects of the curriculum.” *Page 32.*

Criterion Four – Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

“... on the visit, faculty and staff talked knowledgeably about program review processes. It is clear that faculty and staff regularly engage in this work.” *Page 33.*

“HWC has put in a yeoman’s effort to improve its assessment processes since its comprehensive review in 1998, which labeled its processes ‘dysfunctional’... It was clear from the faculty engagement during the visit that the work of this committee is an incredible point of pride for the faculty involved in the committee as well as the institution as a whole.” *Page 36.*

“Throughout both the argument and evidence provided during the visit, the assessment committee gave numerous examples of ways in which they have used the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.” *Page 37.*

“Faculty truly own the assessment process at HWC... Again, HWC’s efforts in the area of assessment of student learning are commendable.” *Page 37.*

“During the visit, various departments and individuals discussed specific efforts they take to both monitor and act on retention, persistence, and completion data.” *Page 38.*

“HWC has demonstrated through both the work of its Assessment Committee and related efforts through the Committee for the Art and Science of Teaching as well as through the Program Review process that it is committed to improving its educational programs.” *Page 40.*

Criterion Five – Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

“Despite facing national and state-level financial hurdles, HWC has maintained a moderate resource base.” *Page 41.*

“Despite expressing concern about the short tenure of these administrators, sessions with staff and faculty unions and Executive Council leadership revealed trust in the competence of the current administration... Additionally, during these turnovers, much of the college’s work has continued to be completed by staff and faculty.” *Page 41.*

“Faculty leadership said they feel heard and see the administration taking action when faculty raise concerns.” *Page 44.*

“The President played a strong role in helping the college to develop this [strategic] framework. This is commendable.” *Page 45.*

“HWC responded, with great success, to recent budget reductions with four key decisions.” *Page 46.*

“Several examples were provided at sessions that indicate the institution’s learning from and improvement to effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability.” *Page 47.*

“Although a new iteration of strategic planning has only recently begun, it is clear that the new leadership is setting up a framework that fulfills the mission and builds on the work HWC does best.” *Page 48.*

Oh, yes we did!