Obligations of Affiliation Report

Prepared for the Higher Learning Commission
AQIP Check Up Visit – Baldrige Option
April 2 – 4, 2014
GRCC Assessment re: HLC's Obligations of Affiliation

February, 2014

While seeking and holding affiliation with the Commission, an institution voluntarily agrees to meet obligations set forth by the Commission as follows:

1. The institution participates in periodic evaluation through the structures and mechanisms set forth in Commission policies, submission of reports as requested by the Commission, filing of the Institutional Update, and any other requirements set forth in its policies.

GRCC meets this obligation through it's adherence to all required activities and timelines.

A. AQIP Action Projects.
GRCC currently has four AQIP Action Projects (with a 5th project "in process"). In addition to the current projects, GRCC has successfully completed a number of AQIP Action Projects. Since our acceptance into the AQIP Process, we have selected and managed AQIP Action Projects in a variety of ways including oversight by the Quality Leadership Team, the Strategy Team, the team attending the Strategy Forum, etc. Currently, AQIP Action Projects are College Action Projects within the GRCC Strategic Plan that have been selected to be AQIP projects due to their potential for positive change for the greatest number of students. The monitoring of the implementation of the AQIP Action Projects is done through Deans Council.

Recently, we were accepted into the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy. We attended our first data session in December, 2013. The GRCC Street to Completion Team will be attending the first workshop in March, 2014. Our expectation is that we will identify and pursue new AQIP Action Projects through our participation as part of the workshop.

Current AQIP Action Projects:

1. Pathways to Employment, Champion: Tina Hoxie
2. College Success Program, Champion: Domingo Hernandez - Gomez
3. SARS - Early Alert & Scheduling System, Champion: Raynard Ross
4. Strengthening the Infrastructure of Distance - Delivered Education to Promote Student Success, Champion: Patti Trepkowski
5. College Generated Graduation (Pending approval from Deans Council), Champion: Diane Patrick

Completed Action Projects:

- From the street to the "right" seat
- Improving student support systems from street-to-seat
- Raider pride: GRCC values in action
- The Raider Learning System
- Improving student learning through curriculum development, assessment, and revision
- Student Success by Deliberate Design (Academic Foundations Project);
- First Year Experience Project.
• Integrating GRCC’s Performance Management Systems with Employee Development Systems
• Expanding Distance Learning
• Improving the Adjunct Experience

B. Timelines re: HLC Accreditation Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April of each year</td>
<td>Submit the Institutional Update to the HLC</td>
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<tr>
<td>September of each year</td>
<td>Submit AQIP Updates as required</td>
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<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Submit the Intent to participate in the Baldrige option form</td>
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<td>September 2011</td>
<td>Michigan Quality Leadership Application kickoff with J. Politi (Baldrige consultant)</td>
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<td>February 2012</td>
<td>HLC Change Request site visit re: Distance Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2012</td>
<td>Submit the Michigan Quality Leadership Award application to the Michigan Quality Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2012</td>
<td>Michigan Quality Leadership Award site visit</td>
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<td>October 2012</td>
<td>Michigan Quality Feedback Report received</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2012</td>
<td>Quality Assurance document due to HLC</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2013</td>
<td>Systems Appraisal (Feedback report re: Quality Assurance document) received from HLC</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>HLC Change Request re: HLC Construction Management Approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2013</td>
<td>Attended HLC Persistence and Completion Academy data session</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2014</td>
<td>Attended HLC Persistence and Completion Academy work session</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2 – 4 2014</td>
<td>AQIP Quality Check-up Visit scheduled</td>
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2. The institution is candid, transparent, and forthcoming in its dealings with the Commission, including in its responses to any special inquiries or requests for information from the Commission. The institution agrees not to enter into any agreement that limits the nature or scope of its communications with the Commission or requires that a third party review and approve those communications prior to their transmission to the Commission.

GRCC meets this obligation to be candid, transparent and forthcoming in its dealings with the Commission. We have no agreement with any other party that limits the nature of scope of our communications with the HLC.

3. The institution notifies the Commission of any condition or situation that has the potential to affect the institution’s status with the Commission, such as a significant unanticipated reduction in program offerings or serious legal investigation.

In the past 7 years, GRCC has not experienced any of the following:

• institutional declaration of bankruptcy, financial exigency, or intent to close;
• significant unanticipated reduction in program offering, faculty, and/or enrollment;
• serious legal, financial, or ethical investigations, including those involving adjudication in courts;
• financial audit reports that raise serious concerns about financial viability or financial management practices;
• serious misrepresentation to students and the public.

There are two areas, however, where we believe full disclosure is warranted:

• highly publicized and divisive controversies among the governing board, the administration, and/or the faculty or the student body

As an urban community college with a locally elected Board of Trustees, many issues the college faced became newsworthy including:

• Faculty salary/faculty contract
• Millage campaigns
• GRCC Board of Trustee members' stance on support of the college's Diversity Lecture Series, Diversity Learning Center, Spectrum Theater and sustainability.
• Higher One Card
• Guns on Campus
• No Smoking Campus
• ADA concerns
• Elimination of GRCC Football Team
• Tuition increases

Articles regarding these issues published in the local newspaper (GR Press) and/or the student newspaper (The Collegiate) will be available in the Resource Room at the time of the visit.

• public sanctions applied by governmental agencies or by other accrediting or licensing bodies

As a result of the Title IV funds disbursement finding dated January 30, 2014, GRCC has been assessed a fine of $3,004.87, which must be paid to the U.S. Department of Education on or before March 16, 2014. The assessed fine will have negligible impact on the College's short- and long-term financial health.

Due to identified deficiencies in GRCC's drug and alcohol prevention policy and biennial review report, the College must provide additional materials to the Clery Act Compliance Division (CACD) for their review during the months of March and April 2014.

4. The institution informs the Commission of its relationship with any related entity wherein institutional decision-making is controlled by that entity and of any changes in that relationship that may affect the institution’s compliance with Commission accreditation requirements.
(Definitions and process requirements are contained in the Commission’s policy on institutions with related entities.)

GRCC has no such entity that controls institutional decision-making.

5. The institution describes itself in identical terms to the Commission and to any other institutional accrediting body with which it holds or seeks affiliation with regard to purpose, governance, programs, locations, degrees, diplomas, certificates, personnel, finances, and constituents.

   All information provided to accreditors is truthful and transparent.

6. The institution notifies the Commission when it receives an adverse action from or has been placed on sanction by any other accrediting agency or if a state has issued a pending or final action that affects the institution’s legal status or authority to grant degrees.

   No such sanctions exist.

7. The institution assures its employees and students that it will consider fairly all complaints and third-party comments and not engage in retaliatory action against any who have submitted such information.

   The following is an excerpt from the GRCC Harassment Policy:

   B. Retaliation: The College seeks to foster an environment in which all employees and students feel free to report incidents of harassment without fear of retaliation or reprisal. Therefore, the College strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual for filing a complaint of harassment or for participating in a harassment investigation. Retaliatory conduct is illegal and constitutes a violation of this policy.

8. The institution accepts that the Commission will, in the interest of transparency to the public, publish outcomes from its accreditation process.

   Yes, without reservation.

9. The institution portrays its accreditation status with the Commission clearly to the public, including the status of its branch campuses and related entities. The institution posts the electronic version of the Commission’s Mark of Affiliation in at least one place on its Web site, linking users directly to the institution’s status on the Commission’s Web site.

   See grcc.edu/accreditation
10. The institution communicates to its constituencies and applicants any Public Disclosure Notice it receives from the Higher Learning Commission.

No such disclosure notices exist.

11. The institution maintains prominently on its Web site a telephone number that includes an option for both current students and the public to speak with a representative of the institution.

http://cms.grcc.edu/contactus

12. The institution submits timely payment of dues and fees and accepts the fact of surcharges for late payment.

All payments have been submitted on time.

13. The institution agrees to accept binding arbitration in the event of an action by the Commission's Board of Trustees that the institution disputes and is not able to resolve through the Commission's processes. This agreement follows procedures developed and published by the Commission. The institution also agrees to grant immunity to the Commission from claims of civil liability related to judgments made by the Commission or its agents in the course of its work of accrediting institutions provided that it was acting in good faith and within the scope of its responsibilities.

GRCC agrees to accept binding arbitration in the event that institution disputes are not resolvable through Commission processes.