

The Accreditation Review



Mission: Accreditation
Destination: 2023
Path to Possible

March 2022

Volume 2, Issue 2

WELCOME!

Welcome to SCC's Accreditation Review! This is the ninth issue of the SCC Accreditation Steering Team's newsletter that provides the College with accreditation updates and shares important information about accreditation processes.

We have some exciting topics to cover in this issue! We'll start with our President's Perspective segment in which Dr. Illich will address several "Burning Questions" about accreditation from the January In-Service presentations. Then, we will announce the members of the new HLC Accreditation Champions Team that launched in February and end by highlighting this month's Passport Challenge.

We are also thrilled to announce that the HLC Conference will be held in Chicago on April 2 - 5 with several SCC employees attending virtually or in-person!

President's Perspective

We all receive weekly
President's Updates emails



from Dr. Illich, but for this month's Accreditation Review Newsletter, we have asked him to provide insight into some of the more challenging accreditation-related "Burning Questions" that were posed by several SCC employees following the January In-Service presentations.

**Why does
SCC maintain
accreditation
with HLC?
What would
happen if we
weren't
accredited?**

"Southeast Community College maintains accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission to ensure it provides the highest quality learning experience through effective accountability practices, including annual assessments of our financial strength, regular review of our compliance with accreditation criteria, and intensive site visits every 10 years. Over the past several years, SCC has been working very closely with HLC on an initiative to directly address improvement opportunities related to the following: revision of our policies and procedures, facilities master planning, program length, co-curricular assessment, and student learning assessment. We have made tremendous progress as a result of this action plan. Our HLC liaison, Dr. Tom Bordenkircher, reviews our progress and shares his findings each year as a critical part of this process. I believe it is vital to view HLC as an essential partner in our ongoing journey through our various transformative phases. In terms of consequences of not being accredited, SCC would not be eligible for Title IV funding, which is critical given that the majority of our students receive some form of federal financial aid. Accreditation also ensures that earned course credits are transferable to other

accredited institutions. Accreditation is vital to the operational status of the institution.”

How were we allowed to stay on monitoring for so long?

“HLC places an institution on monitoring when it is determined that the college or university is not in full compliance with one or more elements of the HLC Criteria. SCC had been on monitoring in relation to several different areas of the Criteria from 1992 through 2016. In 2017, SCC was removed from monitoring for the first time since 1992 as a part of our assurance review process. I believe one of the reasons we were on monitoring for an extended period of time was related to the fact that the monitoring was associated with different concerns. An institution would likely receive a sanction if it failed to address the specific area of monitoring. In our case, it appears that we would address the specific area of monitoring and then be placed on monitoring for a different area of concern. I think this journey is a good example of why it is so important to embrace the accountability aspect of accreditation. While it took many years, SCC met all of the Criteria in 2017 and is no longer on monitoring. One of the reasons for this successful review in 2017 was related to our overall approach of identifying all possible areas of noncompliance and the development of specific improvement plans. We are using this same approach as we prepare for the full HLC review in 2023.”

Why don't more schools take the approach of defining up front where they struggle?

“I am not certain as to how many colleges and universities approach accreditation as an opportunity to identify potential areas of noncompliance and create corresponding improvement plans. One possible reason could be related to concerns that such an approach may increase the chance of receiving a sanction. I believe the opposite. I think a transparent approach makes it less likely that an institution would receive a sanction. One of the requirements of HLC membership is that ‘the institution is candid, transparent, and forthcoming in its dealings with HLC.’ The proactive identification of potential areas of noncompliance provides an institution with more time to develop and implement appropriate improvement plans. Another potential reason an institution may be hesitant in regard to this proactive approach could be related to institutional culture. Goal 9.6 is designed to create a climate that encourages

reflective and transparent communication and compassion and respect for the views and ideas of others. In the spirit of Goal 9.6, a potential area of noncompliance represents an opportunity for improvement rather than failure to be avoided. I would encourage any institution to approach accreditation as an opportunity to identify potential areas in need of improvement and to partner with HLC to implement corrective strategies.”

Accreditation Champions!

In January, we asked for volunteers to serve as Accreditation Champions. **These 16 employees answered the call:**



Lindsay Dickinson
LRC Specialist
Milford Campus



Misty Griggs
Operations Coordinator
Milford Campus



Marguerite Himmelberg



Rachel Hruza

*Sr. Director, Workforce Development
Area Office*

*English Instructor
Milford Campus*



Gail Illich
Adjunct Mathematics Instructor
Lincoln / Beatrice Campus



Jason Jolicoeur
Criminal Justice Instructor
Education Square Campus



Sarah Jones
Bookstore Manager
Milford Campus



Lacey Jurgens
Office Professional Instructor
Lincoln Campus



Tracie Klosterman
Office Professional Instructor



Cheney Luttich
Developmental Instructor



Sarah Murtagh
Administrative Director, HR
Area Office



Brandon Rudloff
Instructional Designer/Trainer
Lincoln Campus

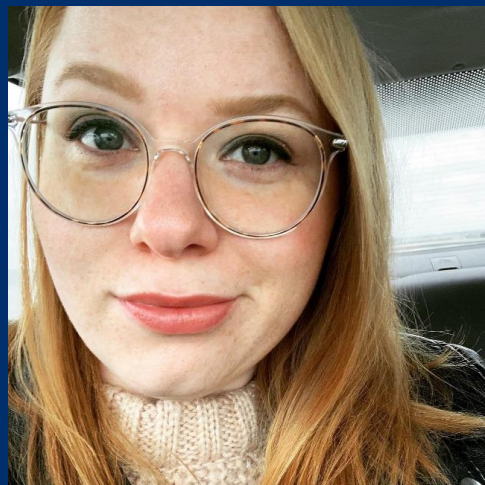


Mary Schieke
Office Professional Instructor
Lincoln Campus

Kim Waswick
Computer Info Tech Instructor
Lincoln Campus



Theresa Webster
Assistant Campus Director
Lincoln Campus



Tammy Zimmer
English Instructor
Beatrice Campus

The Champions have agreed to help strengthen and promote accreditation at SCC in a variety of ways, including actively encouraging their team members to complete the Passport Challenges, attending quarterly accreditation update meetings, distributing accreditation-related information, and of course, completing “other duties as assigned.”

You will likely be hearing from the Champions in the coming months as they spread the word about accreditation and help prepare for the accreditation site visit from HLC in April of 2023.

Accreditation Passport Challenges

The Accreditation Passport Challenge program is designed to help the College community learn about the accreditation process, **assist in gathering evidence**, and prepare for the HLC site visit. *Each Challenge takes five minutes or less to complete!*



Destination:
2023

Recap of February 2022 Passport Challenge

Thank you to the numerous employees who have participated in the Passport Challenges to date! As you may recall, **we set an ambitious goal of 150 participants regarding civic engagement for the February 2022 Passport Challenge and have had 101 participants for this challenge so far.** *You can STILL submit information about your civic engagement.* There is no time like the present!

Lucky Winners of the February 2022 Passport Challenge!

Erin Hussey

Elizabeth Schulenberg

Marci Rost

Brittany Walters

Julie Wollberg

March 2022 Passport Challenge



March's Passport Challenge focuses on gathering evidence regarding **STUDENT civic engagement**.

Our students are involved in numerous college-related activities. We are asking for your help in identifying how you incorporate service learning, civic engagement, or other forms of community involvement in your classes, programs, services, or student organizations.

Tracking Completed Passport Challenges

SCC's talented Institutional Research Office has created an interactive dashboard to track completed Passport Challenges. **Check out your own passport** by clicking the button on the right!

Passport Challenge
Completion Tracking
Dashboard

How You Can Participate

There are two easy ways to access the monthly Accreditation Passport Challenges!

They can be accessed directly on the SCC Accreditation website by clicking the button below:

They can be accessed directly in the Mission Accreditation: Passport Canvas shell by clicking the button below:

Thank you for supporting accreditation at SCC!

Thank you once again to everyone who has completed Passport Challenges thus far! We will address more January Passport Challenge "Burning Questions" like the ones Dr. Illich answered in this issue in upcoming newsletter editions.

Shawna's Shout Outs!

Every month, Shawna's Shout Outs will include recognition of an individual or team of employees who has gone above and beyond!



This month's shout out goes to **Nicole Trevena-Flores**. Nicole has stepped up as the leader of SCC's Global Education initiative and is exploring a variety of exciting expansions to the program including "study away" opportunities for cultural travel within the US, a Global Studies Certificate program, potential faculty and student exchange programs, and exciting new international travel opportunities as well as cultural and service trips. She has a vision for Global Education to be visible, available, and integrated into our college culture on all our campuses and for all our students and staff. Nicole has spearheaded a diversity and inclusion book club that connects faculty and staff across the College through books and discussions of important issues.

Nicole is also a member of the Co-curricular Assessment/Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) Team that was created this year. She brings great insight and enthusiasm to the team: as a faculty sponsor of a student organization, as someone who is passionate about global education and service learning, and as someone who champions the

importance of assessment. She gamely volunteered to assess International Education Week as a pilot project for developing the College's co-curricular assessment model. Outside of assessment, SCC is fortunate to have Nicole's energy and engagement to bolster several essential components of our Strategic Plan!

Questions about SCC's accreditation processes, initiatives, or anything else accreditation-related at SCC?

Please email accreditation@southeast.edu or Shawna Herwick, Accreditation Liaison Officer, at sherwick@southeast.edu.

Want to learn even more about accreditation at SCC? Check out these online resources below!

[General Information about Accreditation](#)

[What is Accreditation?](#)

[Reaffirmation of Accreditation Process at SCC](#)

[SCC Accreditation Steering Team Members](#)

[History of Accreditation at SCC](#)

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