

PNC to Host Accreditation Visit

Dr. Linda Duttlinger
Director of Accreditation and Assessment

On April 18, 2011, Purdue North Central will host a team of consultant evaluators from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. The HLC is one of six regional accrediting agencies in the country.

Reasons for Accreditation

There are three reasons PNC needs to be accredited by the HLC and all three should be a concern to the student body. When an institution is accredited ...

1. Students that attend accredited institutions are eligible for federal financial aid.
2. Credits are easier to transfer to another accredited institution. This means that a student has the ability to transfer institutions and take earned credits along. This does not mean that the new school must accept the credits for graduation in the new program. The new school may choose to accept the credits as “undistributed.”
3. Graduating from an accredited institution means it is easier to enroll in graduate programs for advanced degrees at another accredited institution.

PNC's Accreditation History

Purdue North Central was first accredited by the HLC in 1971 and has been fully accredited ever since. The HLC has sent a team to visit and evaluate the campus in 1974, 1981, 1986, 1994, and 2001. In 2001, Purdue North Central requested a change in status with the HLC from an associate degree granting institution to a bachelor's degree granting institution. That request was granted and in 2003, a site visit was held that reaffirmed this decision.

Since the 2001 visit, Purdue North Central has met all the requirements of the Higher Learning Commission and is fully accredited. This means that student's credits are transferable, our degrees are recognized by other accredited institutions and PNC students are eligible for federal financial aid.

Preparation for the visit

For over two years a campus committee made up of faculty and staff has been working on the Self Study document that will be provided to the consultant evaluators prior to the visit in April of 2011. The Self Study is a document that covers the five criteria of the Higher Learning Commission and other required information.

Purdue North Central is seeking two changes in the campus status with the HLC. As was the case in 2001, PNC would like to advance its degree status. This time the campus is requesting consideration for an advance from a bachelor's degree granting institution to a master's degree granting institution. In addition, HLC requires a status change when an institution is considering offering a full online degree program. PNC will also make that request. These requests add two additional chapters to the Self Study.

The Self Study work has required the faculty and staff involved to review campus statistics, assessment, general education, budgets, campus resources, strategic plans, community service projects, degree curricula and articulation agreements with other institutions. In other words, almost every aspect of the North Central campus has been reviewed and evaluated.

Program Accreditations

Purdue North Central has professional ties with four other accrediting agencies related to academic programs offered on this campus. They are:

Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC)
National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Educators (NCATE)
Accreditation Board for Engineering and technology (ABET)

These programs have their own standards, visit schedules and requirements. Purdue North Central is currently in good standing with all accrediting agencies.

2010 and 2011 Plans

In the next semester, there will be an article in *The Voice* every time it is published giving updates on the progress of the Self Study Team. One example will be a list of the names of the consultant evaluators and their expertise relative to the visit. These individuals are professors and staff members that have been trained by the HLC to review a Self Study and an institution that is up for re-accreditation. In 2001, there were six evaluators assigned to the PNC visit and a similar number is expected in 2011.

After Spring Break, the actual schedule for the visit will be made available to the campus community. This schedule usually includes times and locations for Open Meetings with the HLC Visiting Team. The Visiting Team traditionally meets with students in an Open Meeting to address concerns and answer questions of students attending the institution. There are usually Open Meetings for faculty, administrators, clerical and service staff and part time instructors. The Visiting Team may also request meetings with campus leaders or student government.

Additional Information

Any member of the Purdue North Central community is welcome to learn more about the Higher Learning Commission, the upcoming visit in April or the Self Study. The Self Study will be available for review early in the spring semester. For general information, go to <http://www.pnc.edu/accreditation> . For specific questions, contact Dr. Linda Duttlinger, Director of Accreditation and Assessment at dutt@pnc.edu or X5217.