

Tuesday Tidbits
Tuesday, November 17, 2009

In writing the Self Study I know people are looking at documents and programs we've had and all sorts of things to "prove" that we meet the Criteria of the Higher Learning Commission. Wouldn't it be a better strategy to let the HLC Team come and just see what THEY find?

There is a sweet and short answer to this – NO! The HLC Team is a group we want on our side and not one we want to defend against. The exercise of “proving” we meet the Criteria is part of the process of accreditation.

The goal of accreditation is to get accredited! Why all this paperwork before hand?

The process is the most important part. HLC states the Criteria. We take those and see how we measure up. The Self Study is a document that shows where we stand as an institution when we are evaluated against the stated standards of a regional accrediting agency. The Self Study is sent to the HLC Team well in advance of their visit. They review it and our documentation and then come to the campus for a visit to verify our claims and clarify any concerns. Based on the Self Study and the Visit the decision is made to grant continued accreditation.

How do we know we are meeting the Criteria?

The key to the Self Study is the definition of “Self Study.” The whole idea is not to turn out a big and heavy document full of “proof.” The idea is to review the “proof” we have and then decide if that’s what we, as an institution, want. At what level do we wish to aspire? What are the limitations and resources we have and what plans do we have for the future? All this is part of the “Study”.

So, we decide how well we are doing. Why don't we just claim that we are doing GREAT And let the HLC Team find the holes?

Bad strategy. If we point out our flaws and the areas we are concerned about, the Team members can offer professional help and advice. Team members are university faculty and staff and have had special training in working with the Criteria. If we point out our concerns, it shows that we are giving an honest appraisal of our efforts. To a Team member, this means that we are not hiding

anything and we get a much better visit. If the Team thinks we are hiding something, then we have a “difficult” visit.

So how do we indicate what we are concerned about?

There are several ways to do it but we are using a Challenge Box. As we write the Self Study, and find issues of concern, we can insert a box that looks like this:

<p>Challenge Box</p> <p>Challenge: State the area of concern.</p> <p>Plan: What plans does PNC have to meet this challenge.</p>
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We need to show that we are aware of our faults and that we have plans to work on them. Some of our plans are indicated in our Strategic Plan. Others are from Program Reviews or other planning areas.

This is the heart of a good Self Study. We study ... SELF!

When is our visit?

516 days from today – Nov. 17, 2009. The HLC Team arrives on April 18, 2011.

The campus is always NEAT and CLEAN
And the guests arrive in five-sixteen!

Tuesday Tidbits is a way to provide information about the upcoming accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission to the Purdue North Central Campus. Since the visiting team is interested in ALL aspects of the campus and its operation, this is being sent to all employees. If you have any questions about the accreditation process, or ideas for future Tidbits, please let me know.

Thanks!

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