

HLC Fact of the Day:
“HLC Assurance Argument: Subcomponent 4B4”
(with specific focus on “Culture of Continuous Improvement”)
(September 15, 2017)

In the HLC Criteria for Accreditation, Subcomponent 4B4 says: *The institution’s processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.*

In our Assurance Argument being prepared for HLC, and in support of the 4B4 standard, this is what we say regarding “culture of continuous improvement”:

A Culture of Continuous Improvement. Lindenwood is striving to build a “culture of inquiry” throughout the institution, the absence of which was observed by the HLC team during its 2013 visit. In January 2013, the Faculty Council and Deans Council [affirmed the university’s commitment](#) to “mission-based, comprehensive, and data-driven assessment for the purpose of continuous institutional improvement and effectiveness.” A companion document, “[A Culture of Continuous Improvement: Defining Characteristics](#),” approved in 2015, serves as a compass in guiding assessment and continuous improvement efforts. In 2016, when the Assessment Committee, Cabinet, Deans Council, Staff Council, and Faculty Council evaluated the university’s progress according to the principles noted in the Culture of Continuous Improvement document, 88.6% of the respondents indicated that Lindenwood had made either “moderate” or “significant” progress over the past two years in establishing a culture of continuous improvement. This [survey](#) found that Lindenwood's most critical continuous improvement need was the integration of assessment with planning and budgeting, partially inspiring development of the Assessment Summit in 2017 (5.C.2). In 2017, 100% of the Assessment Committee members perceived either "moderate" or "significant" progress over the past three years.

Discussion of assessment and improvement is increasingly routine at Lindenwood, as at [Faculty Council and Full-Faculty Meetings](#). Faculty and staff receive assessment news at least once a week in the LU Digest’s [Assessment Tip of the Week](#). Since 2014, [annual faculty performance evaluations](#) have evaluated support for university assessment efforts. Faculty can also receive special recognition for exceptional assessment efforts thanks to the Assessment Committee’s establishment of [annual “Assessment Champion” awards](#) in 2016-17. Two Lindenwood Student Government Association (LSGA) representatives serve on the Assessment Committee. More generally, [programs are encouraged](#) to communicate with their students about program assessment practices, findings, and resulting improvements to student learning.

To learn more about accreditation and Lindenwood’s comprehensive evaluation and site visit scheduled for November 6-7, 2017, and to see the countdown clock to the visit, go to the HLC page on the Lindenwood website here: <http://www.lindenwood.edu/about/higher-learning-commission/>.

Past HLC Facts are archived [here](#).

Questions? Contact David Wilson, Associate VP for Institutional Effectiveness, at DWilson@lindenwood.edu or x4737.