Institutional Accreditation: What is it?

• Higher Learning Commission accredits degree-granting institutions in the North Central region.

• Assurance to the public that an institution has met agency’s 5 criteria.

• An affirmation of adherence to best practices and aspires to continually improve.
Upcoming Process

• Self-study report addressing 5 accreditation criteria submitted.

• 5 person team of consultant-evaluators receives report and conducts visit: 10/22-10/24.

• HLC board renders decision based on self-study and team report.
Self-Study Conclusions: Strengths and Opportunities
Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

• Re-affirmation of mission statement.
  – Core purpose: quality academic programs.

• Alignment between mission and Strategic Plan.

• Continue review and publication of unit mission statements.

• Continue to evaluate alignment of administrative structures with University’s growing complexity.
Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

• Continue to rely on successful financial strategy.
• Principle of Intergenerational Equity:
  – Quality educational environment belongs to all generations. Resources should be managed to provide quality education to both current and future generations.
  – Morally sound.
  – Financially wise policy (minimize debt).
• Success in advancing strategic core priorities.
  – Continue to rely on them, while being open to new actions (e.g., new programs).
Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

• Significant progress in assessment of student learning!
  – Assessment-based improvements in majors, professionally accredited programs, and graduate programs.
  – Viability of LAE assessment plan and 4 Goals.
  – LAE Goals align with mission.
Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching (cont.)

• Learning objectives driving course-based assessment.
  – Recommend “learning objectives prompt” on Faculty Annual Evaluation Reports.

• Improve publication of assessment results.
  – Provide data in ways that ensure student’s privacy right.
Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

• Strong faculty/student collaborative research.
• Innovations in service-learning activities indicate opportunities for further developments on campus.
  – Sociology Department.
  – Center for Regional Planning.
  – 175th museum project.
  – Others. . . .
Criterion Five: Engagement and Service

- Continue support for new programs that meet regional needs.
- Continue support for collaborations with other institutions.
- Service Learning (again).