

2024 Higher Learning Commission Assurance Argument

Executive Summary

4/09/24

Things to remember:

- Site visit is April 22 and 23
- Evidence requests will continue throughout the process, including possibly the visit.
- Invitations to attend meetings or notifications for public forums will come from the Office of Academic Affairs when the itinerary has been finalized.
- Questions can be directed to Brian Thomas at bjthoma1@svsu.edu.

Criterion 1: Mission

- The institution clearly articulates its mission through various platforms and documents, ensuring it is accessible to both internal and external stakeholders—this was last done in 2016.
- The mission and vision align with the purpose of a regional, public university oriented towards student success, community engagement, and the public good.
- The strategic planning process initiated in 2016 was extended in 2020 until the new president was positioned to begin the next plan. A consultant has been hired and planning for the new strategic plan has begun with a target of fall 2024 to have a new plan in place.

Criterion 2: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

- The institution has established comprehensive policies and procedures to ensure ethical and responsible conduct in its operations. Examples include the board of control bylaws, university operations manual, student code of conduct, title IX training and procedures, institutional review board, faculty contract, support staff contract, mental health and wellness, accessibility resources and accommodations, human resources, and more.
- SVSU supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning as evidenced by research, artistic productions, and public events.
- Some highlights include the implementation of Slate for better student communications, ongoing autonomy of the Board of Control, multiple successful faculty contract negotiations, clear shared governance via CAPC, GEC, and GE.

Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

- The institution provides high-quality educational offerings, supported by qualified faculty and adequate resources.
- Important aspects of this include a well-developed curriculum review process via shared governance (CAPC, GEC, and GC), investments in learning technologies (Canvas, Echo360, smart podiums), and comprehensive support services for students (Mental Health and Wellness, Writing Center, Math and Physics Resource Center, Cardinal Student Success Center, Multicultural Student Services.)
- Faculty development initiatives (e.g. CETL) and student learning assessment mechanisms (annual departmental reports, General Education assessment, 7-year program assessment, and external accreditation) are in place to ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning outcomes.
- Some highlights include creation of the Student Success Plan and the Student Success Center, securing grants like TRIO-SSS, KCP, GEAR-UP, and Rural Pathways to support historically underrepresented students, ongoing support by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, expansion of CT 100 to over 400 students.

Criterion 4: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

- The institution actively engages in the evaluation and improvement of its teaching and learning practices.
- Examples of this include systematic program reviews, the use of student feedback to inform teaching practices, and the promotion of innovative pedagogical strategies.
- Outcomes assessment data is used to drive decisions about curriculum development, teaching methods, and resource allocation.
- Assessment is now standardized via annual reports that are sent to Deans and synthesized into reports that go to the Provost and VPAA to guide resource allocations.
- All programs undergo either external accreditation (11 programs) or engage in 7-year program assessments involving external reviewers.
- General education has standardized student learning objectives and undergoes annual data collection and 5-year assessment for each course on a rotating schedule.

Criterion 5: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

- The institution demonstrates effective resource allocation, strategic planning, and a commitment to institutional effectiveness.
- Examples include a transparent budgeting process, strategic use of technology and facilities, and comprehensive planning documents that align with the institution's mission.
- Regular assessment of institutional effectiveness involves analyzing performance metrics, stakeholder feedback, and external benchmarks to inform strategic decisions.
- Some highlights include the Brown Hall renovation and Carmona College of Business construction, creation of new divisions for enrollment management and development, and a commitment to campus safety.