



HLC Accreditation Evidence Document

Title: Self-Study for HLC Assurance Argument: Taos Campus

Office of Origin: UNM Branch Campuses

Description: A self-study undertaken by the Taos Campus to report on information relevant for the HLC accreditation process, including the assurance argument. This includes information on student populations, and the relationship of the local administration to the main campus.

Date: 2018



University of New Mexico, Taos Campus Self-Study for Higher Learning Commission Assurance Argument

In preparation for the Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation site visit on March 4-5, 2019, we would like to solicit a branch campus self-study. Some information on branch campuses is already included in the most current draft of our HLC Assurance argument. However, we feel that specific responses to the detailed questions below will provide greater assurance of quality to the HLC accreditors as they review UNM branches and as they conduct focused visits to UNM-Taos and UNM-Gallup.

Please submit a report that addresses these questions by August 1 to Joe Suilmann (suilmann@unm.edu) and to Pamela Cheek (apcurriculum@unm.edu). There is no need to be exhaustive and comprehensive. Indeed, brevity is most helpful, given that the HLC Assurance Argument has an overall word limit. Your answers below should be supported by evidence. Please include evidence when you submit this questionnaire. Evidence might consist of specific data very briefly summarized, links to online documents or fuller data presentations, accompanying documents that we can then include in the overall evidence library.

Thank you for your help with this.

1. Profile

- How would you describe your current students? Your potential students?

As of the Spring 2018 semester, UNM Taos students are currently 62% female, 57% Hispanic, and 5% Native American. The average age of our students is 29, with 32% of our students being 18 or under, 49% between ages of 19 and 54 years old, and the remaining 11% are 55 years of age or older. 50% of our students are in degree-seeking programs (for a certificate or associate degree); 13% are non-degree seeking ("life-long learners") and 36% are dual enrollment/early college students, earning college credit while still in high school. 67% of our students are enrolled part-time, and the average course load is seven credit hours. The majority of our students are from Taos and Rio Arriba counties (77% and 9%, respectively), but we serve students from as far south as Doña Ana and Otero. The most popular major is Pre Science, followed by Liberal Arts, General Studies, Pre Business Administration, and Nursing. There is potential for growth in the coming years in the traditional student population from area high schools, as well as an increase in enrollment in the workforce/career technical fields.

- How would you describe your branch? What are its specific attributes, its niche, its goals and its challenges? What is its relationship with UNM's overall mission?

As with all of the branch campuses of UNM, UNM-Taos operates as a community college, offering both career technical certificates as well as two-year associate degrees. As stated in our campus Purpose, we are an "open-access, student-centered, affordable college offering dual

credit, transfer, career-technical, workforce training, college-level academic achievement, and lifelong learning courses and programs”. Being in a rural and demographically dispersed community, we serve as an access to point to many students who would otherwise not have the opportunity to obtain a college degree. Our primary challenge is that the majority of our students are minority, first-generation, and low socio-economic status. However, due to the small size of our community and campus, we are able to offer personalized support to our students in everything from admissions, to holistic advising, to tutoring and other student support services. Our goal is to provide students with the education and skills to enter the workforce and/or transfer to four-year universities. As such, our relationship with UNM and alignment with its overall mission is critical.

2. Governance

- What is the structure of your system of shared governance?

Administrative Leadership Team

UNM Taos has an Administrative Leadership team, which is comprised of the CEO, Dean of Instruction, Institutional Researcher, Director of Business Operations, Director of Student Affairs, Student Success Manager, IT Director, Facilities Director, and the Development Officer. Each member represents his/her department and representation covers the campus as a whole. Each member reports back to his/her respective department to keep staff/faculty informed of, and actively engaged in, important campus developments.

Faculty Assembly and Faculty Senate

On the faculty end, all faculty comprise the Faculty Assembly. The Faculty Assembly meets twice a year at Faculty Orientation to voice ideas and concerns and to vote on faculty-related matters. UNM Taos additionally has a governing body for the faculty assembly, referred to as the Faculty Senate. UNM-Taos Faculty Senate encourages faculty involvement in governance. Election to the Senate is possible for all current instructors appointed by UNM-Taos to teach credit-bearing courses and instructors similarly appointed in the previous year. Faculty Senate members are elected in the fall by the Faculty Assembly and can serve up to two years. Faculty Senate sends a representative to all main campus Faculty Senate meetings and members of the faculty assembly serve on other Faculty Senate committees at main campus (Curriculum, Assessment, etc.). The Faculty Senate is a key stakeholder in faculty and instructional related activities and works closely with the DOI. The campus CEO has regular meetings with the UNM Taos Faculty Senate. The Faculty Handbook (<http://taos.unm.edu/common/documents/faculty-handbook.pdf>) of the branch campus is specific to organizational structure of the campus but the overarching governance for faculty and instruction is the main campus Faculty Handbook (<https://handbook.unm.edu/>).

Presidential Executive Cabinet

The CEOs of each branch campus are members of the President’s Executive Cabinet at main campus.

Staff Council

The UNM-Taos Staff Council is made up of elected staff members to serve as representatives to the administration on staff-related issues. It is the branch equivalent of the 60-member UNM Staff Council, which represents staff employees as a voice in the governance of the university.

Student Government

The UNM-Taos Student Government encourages student participation in university affairs, advocates on behalf of students, oversees funds and student groups and seeks to ensure the rights of all students at UNM-Taos.

Overall, the governing bodies within each branch campus are tied together and with main campus, as are the faculty governance bodies of main and branch campuses.

- Can you give specific examples of how shared governance has been used to develop new policies or programs?

UNM Taos, as a core principle of its mission, makes it a priority to respond to community (local and State) needs for programming. A recent example of shared governance is our new Hospitality Management certificate. Hospitality is a major industry in Taos. Several years ago, the Town of Taos and the Taos Ski Valley brought an idea to our workforce development coordinator to develop a training in hospitality that could then pipeline students into needed areas of employment in the community. Our workforce coordinator, who serves on the UNM Taos curriculum committee, brought the idea to the DOI and then we green lighted to research the curriculum and articulation pathways. There were multiple institutions that a program could articulate to, in addition to aligning with Managed First credentialing standards. A curriculum was developed and then vetted by the community partners and then presented to the UNM Taos curriculum committee for approval. Once approved locally, it was submitted to the curriculum workflow at main campus and vetted through that approval process. Once approved through this process and the Board of Regents, it culminated in full approval for the certificate in Summer 2018.

- What is the structure of your system of fiscal management?

UNM-Taos maintains a fiscal management system that aligns budget and resources with the University's strategic plan, mission, vision and goals. This process promotes fiscal prudence and responsibility by engaging the entire university community, promoting collaboration among functional areas assuring transparency in decision making.

Budget models for higher education institutions in New Mexico are formatted under a specific structure dictated by the New Mexico Higher Education Department, and the fiscal management of UNM-Taos is monitored and controlled not only by fiscal personnel at UNM-Taos, but also by fiscal operations on main campus. UNM-Taos pays a 3.6% administrative fee based on total operating budget to UNM main campus for access to fiscal, HR, legal, student service software and systems etc.

Revenues specific to the UNM-Taos Campus operations, including, tuition & fees, mil levy support, are collected locally and are available to fund operations. State appropriations that fund UNM-Taos are determined by an institution-specific appropriations act that has a performance formula model that is based on meeting performance metrics of graduation, retention etc.

Expenditures are processed following established purchasing guidelines and are reviewed and monitored on a regular basis.

UNM-Taos budgeting principals prioritize student success, recognizing the value of human resources, using strategically based evaluation and analysis of data driven decision making and thoughtful assessment of outcomes.

- How is adherence to the academic mission assured?

The integrity of academic mission is assured by adherence to the policies and procedures of the University. The following documents are utilized in adhering to these standards: Faculty Handbook (<https://handbook.unm.edu/>), Pathfinder (<https://pathfinder.unm.edu/>), Course Syllabus guidelines, Course Catalog (<http://catalog.unm.edu/catalogs/2018-2019/>), to name a few. The DOI monitors adherence to these policies and procedures as it relates to ongoing assessment of student learning and advising, student course evaluations and reviews for faculty teaching, adherence to the Faculty Handbook, and compliance with FERPA regulations. The Pathfinder and Faculty Handbook contain academic code of conduct to prevent violations such as Plagiarism. Compliance with FERPA regulations ensure the privacy of student academic records. Further oversight is provided by the presence of the DOI service on major committees and leadership teams across campus and in the strategic planning process of the branch. UNM Taos considers the academic mission to be the overarching principle of its work.

- How does this UNM Branch Campus support and assure ethics in delivering the academic mission and in fiscal management?

UNM Taos fulfills its commitment to integrity and ethical and responsible operations. A shared governance structure, policies, and fiscal controls ensure the integrity of conduct in its operations. Ethics in delivering the academic mission is assured through a decision-making process that has multiple layers. For instance, curricular changes must be approved locally, at main campus, and then by state level entities. Academic hiring decisions also must be approved both locally (by the hiring committee and DOI) and at main campus by OFAS and the Provost's office to ensure the qualifications of academic faculty and staff.

The procurement process at UNM-Taos takes place in conjunction with our parent campus The University of New Mexico. All procurement is consistent with University Business policies and procedures. Ethics in the financial systems is assured through a collaborative budget development model that involves budget changes to be reviewed from the local department level through the UNM Board of Regents. Expenditures are managed at the department level, but processed through a centralized purchasing, payroll and revenue processing system that requires multiple checks and balances to assure policy conformity and ethical handling of

transactions. UNM has strong whistle-blower protection policies for reporting fiscal irregularities that provide for a safe reporting process of concerns. Access to financial data is open to all employees who wish to have direct access to ledgers and transaction details, and no single transaction is possible without review by multiple layers of accounting staff both locally and at the main campus processing departments.

- How does the governance of this branch campus interact and communicate with HED, UNM-Main, and the immediate communities that the branch serves?

There are many opportunities for faculty, staff and administration to represent campus needs to our various constituencies. A number of the members of the Administrative Leadership team interact with HED in various ways, such as approvals for capital projects, curricular matters such as common course numbering or general education core initiatives. Most offices on campus are represented at main campus and the branch has liaisons to those offices (Student Services, Executive Cabinet, Advising, Dean's Council, Assessment, Contracts and Grants, Faculty Senate, etc.). Many members of the governance bodies at UNM Taos have membership in local community groups as well, which enhances our ability to understand and meet the needs of the local community. A few examples of this include the following: Taos Chamber of Commerce, Nonviolence Works, CAV, Taos School Zone, TEN, etc.

2b. Communication of Policies, Procedures, Curriculum, Degree Requirements

- How do faculty, students, and staff access the policies and procedures that affect them?

UNM Taos utilizes digital publication of key documents, including catalog (<http://catalog.unm.edu/catalogs/2018-2019/>)(<http://taos.unm.edu/catalog/index.html>), schedules (<http://webcom.unm.edu/taos/index.html>) (<http://schedule.unm.edu/>), degrees (<http://taos.unm.edu/catalog/degrees-certificates.html>), financial information and data deemed relevant to consumers. Examples include digital versions of the school's catalog, student/faculty/staff handbooks, course offerings, LMS, campus emergency notifications, social media presence, tuition and financial aid, bus schedules, tutoring and library services, assessment, advising, faculty and staff directory, auxiliary programs, Title IX training information, student government, Accreditation, etc. There are also program information available via hard copy, such as our Enrollment guide, degree and certificate sheets, etc.

- How are degree and certificate requirements published?

Degree and certificate requirements are available both in print and online. Degrees and certificates online are located at <http://taos.unm.edu/catalog/degrees-certificates.html> And also available in print in several different locations on campus.

2c. Risk Assurance

- Do you have any systems or strategies for managing risk that are independent from those at UNM-Main? If so, please explain how they operate and who bears responsibility for them.

We currently utilize risk management protocols made available by main campus Safety and Risk Management Department. As pertaining to security, we are collaborating with the local police and sheriff's offices on an EOP and have contracted Bad Company for security analysis and training. High Desert Security patrols the campus for security.

3. Faculty Credentials and Promotion:

- How do you assure that faculty have the requisite credentials to teach courses?
UNM Taos utilizes a faculty credential screening form/spreadsheet that records all credentials of faculty, including CV evaluation and transcript evaluation. This is done for both dual credit and collegiate level faculty. Initial screening is done within the context of the hiring process. Minimum qualifications have been set to meet HLC guidelines for faculty, therefore there is multi-layered review process. Department Chairs, in conjunction with the Dean of Instruction, review course requests from returning faculty in alignment with HLC standards.

- Where do you store/archive faculty credentials? Please note, we are close to launching a credential tracking system centrally that will also cover branches.

Faculty credentials are stored digitally and in hard copy. Hard copies are filed in a secure location in the Department of Instruction (Senior Operations Manager office, who handles all faculty contracts). An electronic file is kept (both CVs and transcripts plus spreadsheet) in a secure DOI folder on the network.

- How do you assure that faculty teaching dual-credit courses have the requisite credentials?

Dual credit instructors are held to the same standards as regular collegiate level faculty. Our dual credit coordinator retains a spreadsheet of dc credentialing in a secure network site. Currently, UNM has a 5-year waiver from HLC for credentialing of dual credit faculty.

- Where do you store/archive faculty credentials for faculty teaching dual-credit courses?

They are kept in faculty files with all other faculty credential files and an electronic file is kept in a secure file on the network.

- What are your criteria for determining whether faculty may receive tenure and promotion and how do these criteria compare with those at the other branches and at UNM-Main?

UNM Taos follows main campus criteria for promotion. As for tenure, the branches have a unified set of guidelines (Section F Task Force) that differs from main campus in the area of research. Branch campus focus is excellence in teaching and instead of research, has broadened that category to scholarship. There is an all branch level review committee that reviews all branch dossiers for tenure and promotion and then submits recommendations to the Provost's office at main campus. The initial process for t & p is in the hiring process itself-tenure track position vs. continuing non-tenure. The candidate's Department Chair and UNM Taos tenured faculty review each applicant's dossier and make recommendations

to the Dean of Instruction, which then goes to the campus CEO, who makes the final recommendation.

4.a. Curriculum and Assessment

- What is your process for determining the need for changes or additions to the curriculum?

The UNM Taos Curriculum Committee is the main entity at UNM Taos that safeguards the curriculum. Changes or additions to curriculum may be instigated by multiple avenues- advisors who learn of changes to main campus curriculum that impact branch curriculum, CC representatives from the branch to main campus are apprised of changes in branch impacted programs or general education or core requirements, change in community need for workforce development may inspire changes to curriculum to better align with a changing workforce, etc. Once a modification is brought to the attention of a Department Chair or other academic officer, the proposed changes are brought to curriculum committee and reviewed. Once approved, it is entered into the curriculum workflow at main campus and reviewed through their process. The UNM Taos curriculum committee is comprised of representatives from the Department of Instruction, workforce development, student services, library, tutoring and testing services, and faculty representation.

- What is your process for actually making a change to the curriculum?

After a request has been approved by the Curriculum Committee, the appropriate main campus curriculum workflow form (A, B or C) is completed electronically. The Senior Operations Manager for the DOI is the main point of contact for curriculum workflow and enters and tracks all information required. These forms are then routed electronically for approval by the Dean of Instruction before being fully routed through the main campus curriculum workflow process.

- What is your process for evaluating and assessing AA programs, general education courses, certificates and courses (on the program and certificate level and on the course level)?

UNM Taos engages in annual assessment for both core course level and program level. The Assessment coordinator and the Department Chairs supervise the process for both forms of assessment. Reports are submitted to the Assessment coordinator and Dean of Instruction for review. Feedback is provided for continuous quality improvement within the process. All general education core courses are assessed every semester. All programs are assessed on a rotating matrix. Reports are submitted to main campus in the repository.

- Are all of your programs up to date on Academic Program Reviews? Have you uploaded all current assessment reports and Academic Program Reviews to UNM's digital repository using guidelines provided by the Office of Assessment? Where do you house older assessment reports and APRs?

All programs are on a schedule to be reviewed on a 5-7 year cycle. Not all programs have been reviewed at this time. All completed APRs have been uploaded to the digital repository.

Older reports are archived by the Assessment Coordinator and stored securely on the network in the Department of Instruction.

- What are some of the challenges you encounter in managing curriculum needs and changes?

The major challenge faced by UNM Taos is the amount of time it takes for the curriculum workflow at main campus. There is a streamlined process locally (inception to chair to curriculum committee to main campus workflow) but the adoption of programs from other branches, the approval for new programs, and the curricular changes in general take a significant amount of time. New programs and adoptions have been taking over a year, sometimes two, for final approvals and CIP codes. Our CC Chair also serves on the main campus Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee.

- How do you determine workforce needs and how does this contribute to your development or cancellation of vocational certificates and courses?

Workforce needs are determined by multiple factors, such as Department of Labor statistics, industry demand in the area, business partner requests/needs, local school boards and local municipalities. Sometimes they are created for alignment for transfer purposes to 4 four Universities (stackable credentials) or statewide job opportunities. The position UNM Taos has in the community creates this mutually beneficial employment training and workforce driven programs. UNM Taos makes every attempt to stay current with workforce trends and modifies curriculum based on this data.

- Can you provide one or two examples of successful implementation of curricular changes based on assessment findings?

Based on program review and assessment data, UNM Taos has made several major curricular changes. Firstly, our ECME program had very low enrollments and was not yielding enough graduates to supply the workforce demand in the community. Based on assessment data, we formed a collaborative team to revamp the ECME program to improve quality outcomes and be more efficient in terms of completion rates. The new program is rolling out fall 2018 that includes an embedded learning model wherein the students take the majority of coursework within one of our 5 Star programs in Taos wherein they receive academic and hands on learning within the context of an early childhood learning center. We have more than doubled our enrollment numbers in this program this fall alone.

- What is your advisor-to-student ratio? (If there are questions about the definition to use to determine this ratio, we can discuss those at the meeting.)

UNM Taos utilizes a Professional Staff Advisor model. Currently we have three general academic advisors (Academic Advisement Specialist and 2 Sr. Academic Advisors) and three advisors for the TRiO Student Support Services program. The TRiO SSS program provides academic advisement for their 170 students. Our other three advisors manage caseloads of approximately 150-200 degree seeking students and provide pathways advisement for dual enrollment students when necessary.

4.b. Student Grievances:

- Do you have a transparent student grievance procedure that students can easily find and follow? (Note here as well that we are working on an application for tracking, collecting, and storing student grievances. We will discuss in more detail at the meeting.)

UNM Taos uses the Student Grievance Procedure as accessed in The Pathfinder-UNM Student Handbook. Issues that would be referred to the main campus Dean of Students' office/Student Conduct Officer are initially addressed locally at UNM Taos by the Director of Student Services and student judicials addressed by both the Director of Student Services and the Dean of Instruction jointly. Issues that would be referred to the Provost's office are addressed by the Dean of Instruction and then the campus CEO, dependent on academic nature or general administrative/staff level complaint. Student grievances about staff are directed to the Director of Human Resources. The Dean of Instruction's office retains a student grievance log for academic complaints and the Director of Student Services maintains a grievance log for non-academic complaints.

- Where is the statement of the grievance procedure housed?

The Student Grievance Procedure is housed on the UNM Taos website (directing them to the Pathfinder) and on the unm.edu website for all UNM students.

- Do you collect regular data on student grievances (kind of grievance, date initiated, who addressed grievance, brief notes on resolution, date closed)?

We have very few grievances that escalate to the point of documentation. We keep a written record of those that are filed officially, which would include the above-mentioned information. Student complaints that are non-academic or rise to a student judicial proceeding are kept by the Director of Student Affairs and academic grievances are kept by the Dean of Instruction.

- Where do you store/archive this information?

An electronic file is maintained on the secure network, either within the Student Services drive or within the Department of Instruction drive.

- Do you analyze this student grievance information?

This process requires that the Director of Student Services has an active role throughout the process. The Director serves as both the Dean of Student role and the Conduct officer role at UNM Taos. Code of Conduct issues are addressed in a student judicial process that also includes the Dean of Instruction. This information is recorded and archived. There are no specific trends that have been identified and the conduct issues vary widely.

- Please identify any trends or patterns in student grievances from AY 2015 to AY 2018 and explain whether you are implementing changes to address these and, if applicable, what changes you are making.

During the period of AY 2015 to AY 2018 most student grievances filed were able to be resolved via the Informal Resolution 2.2 portion of the student grievance procedure. The primary judicials during this time focused on conduct issues on the part of a student- both pertaining to disruptive behavior either in the classroom or on campus. These situations assist the campus in reviewing its policies and procedures related to student conduct and how they are addressed in class by instructors and on campus in general.

5. Financial Responsibility

- Who is responsible for budget management and oversight (both at department/unit level and for overall branch)?

The UNM-Taos Operating Budget is developed and monitored by the UNM-Taos Business Office with the input of Department Heads. The Senior Administrative Team, Local Advisory Board and Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico all review and approve the operating budget. Department Heads are provided budget allocations for their areas of responsibility. Department Heads, in conjunction with the Dean of Instruction, are responsible for determining the most appropriate use for funds allocated to their area. Through the use of Procurement documents (internal purchase requisitions, travel requests and purchase orders) the UNM-Taos Business Office ensure that funds are expended in a manner consistent with University policies and procedures.

- What entities receive fiscal reports and according to what calendar?

The UNM Taos Operating Budget is reviewed and approved by the UNM Taos Advisory Board. Additionally, the UNM Taos Operating Budget is reviewed and approved by the Regents of the University of New Mexico. The Annual Operating Budget is then submitted to the New Mexico Higher Education Department by May 15th. The UNM Taos Report of Actuals is reviewed and approved by the Regents of the University of New Mexico and submitted to the New Mexico Higher Education Department by September 15th. Monthly and Year to date financial statements are available via the My Reports system on an as needed basis. All UNM Taos Department Heads and others with a need to know may request access to my reports via the UNM Banner Authorization Request system. Additionally, UNM-Taos Business Office staff perform quarterly budget reviews with Department Heads and project expenditure levels.

- What systems of audit or oversight are in place to ensure financial ethics in addressing the academic mission?

The procurement process at UNM-Taos takes place in conjunction with our parent campus The University of New Mexico. All procurement is consistent with University Business policies and procedures. All requests for purchases are submitted to the Business Office and must be signed by the Department Head and Dean of Instruction. Purchases for goods and

services exceeding a certain dollar threshold are further reviewed by Accounting Offices and the Purchasing Department at the Main Campus. Post Purchase audits of purchasing card purchases are also performed regularly. UNM Taos financials are audited yearly alongside our Main Campus as required by the Single Audit principle. Branch Campus Business Operations are reviewed and audited on a 4 year cycle by the University of New Mexico Internal Audit Department.

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