

Program

# Higher Learning 2026

**HLC's Annual Conference**

March 21-24 | Hyatt Regency Chicago



Higher Learning  
Commission



## Download the Higher Learning Mobile App

### Use the mobile app to:

- Create your own personalized schedule by favoriting sessions.
- Take notes on and download presentation slides and handouts.
- Access your schedule on multiple devices.



To log in to the mobile app or conference website for the first time, create an account and input event code **HLC2026**.

## Stay Connected!

### Complimentary Wireless Internet

Higher Learning 2026 has Wi-Fi access throughout the public spaces and meeting rooms where conference sessions are held.

Sponsored in part by  watermark

**Network Name:** HLC 2026

**Password:** Watermark26

### Social Media

Stay in touch with HLC and other attendees throughout the conference. Follow us and use the hashtag **#HLC2026** to join the conversation.

  @hlcommission  
**#HLC2026**



## Letter From the HLC President Barbara Gellman-Danley

**Welcome to Higher Learning 2026!** You will find several great speakers and interesting, relevant presentations available in the next few days. Our intent at HLC is to stimulate conversations, sending you home with a flurry of new ideas. This past year was marked by the fast-moving changes in higher education, and we are committed to keeping attendees informed. The sessions from our member institutions always provide excellent examples of benchmarking success, sharing best practices and generating new ideas to take back to your own campuses or organizations. With the sea changes taking place in higher education, Higher Learning 2026 will create important discussions focusing on the current state as well as planning for the future.

We will start Sunday morning with a review of current trends in higher education, which many attendees use to set their own priorities in the context of their institutions. These trends are the foundation of our upcoming strategic plan, North Star 2030. The plan is the result of extensive member input, including listening sessions at conferences. We welcome your input.

I want to express appreciation to all those who submitted proposals, helping us build a very robust conference. The HLC Conference Committee, Board and staff are committed to ensuring the next few days are informative, exciting and stimulating. Take advantage of the networking, which is always rated as highly significant to those participating in our conference. Make new friends, interact with colleagues, and have a great experience learning together!

*Barbara Gellman-Danley*

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# Welcome to Higher Learning 2026

## Conference Services

See the Higher Learning 2026 mobile app or website for hours.

### Registration Desk

Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

### Information Desks

Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

Regency Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt West Tower

Zurich Ballroom Foyer | First Floor | Swissôtel

### Coat Check

(Behind Registration Desk)

Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

*HLC is not responsible for items left in the coat room. Any coats left after hours will be moved to hotel security or lost and found. Luggage is not permitted.*

### Bookstore

(Expo Hall)

Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

### Lost and Found

(Registration Desk)

Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

### Speaker Ready Room

(Behind Registration Desk, Grand Suite 5)

Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

# Preconference Programs

*Pre-Registration Required*

## Saturday, March 21

### Peer Reviewer Updates and Training

8:00 a.m.–3:45 p.m. See page 12.

This program will be held at the Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park.

### Strategies for Experienced ALOs Workshop

12:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m. | Crystal Ballroom A | Lobby Level | Hyatt West Tower

### Navigating Disruption: Strengthening Cabinet Leadership in Higher Ed Workshop

Sponsored in part by **HUSCH BLACKWELL**

12:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m. | Crystal Ballroom B | Lobby Level | Hyatt West Tower

### Centering Learning Workshop

12:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m. | Crystal Ballroom C | Lobby Level | Hyatt West Tower

### Conversations With Presidents and Trustees

7:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. | Regency Ballroom | Ballroom Level | Hyatt West Tower

### Seeking Accreditation Workshop

8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | Plaza Ballroom | Lobby Level | Hyatt East Tower

## Learn From Your Peers: Share Fairs

Talk with representatives from a variety of institutions in an informal setting about their recent accreditation activity, Quality Initiative or Assessment Academy project. See page 74 of the 2026 Resource Guide as well as the Higher Learning 2026 mobile app or website for information about the participants.

### Comprehensive Evaluations and Assurance Reviews

Sunday, March 22 and Monday, March 23, 8–8:30 a.m.

Riverside Hall | Lower Level | Hyatt East Tower

### Assessment Academy Projects

Sunday, March 22, 2:30–3:00 p.m.

(Expo Hall) Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

### Quality Initiatives

Monday, March 23, 10–10:30 a.m.

(Expo Hall) Grand Ballroom Foyer | Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

# Resources for Attendees New to HLC



**Attending Higher Learning for the first time, or new to membership with HLC?** Look for conference ambassadors wearing orange buttons to help you navigate the hotels and choose sessions to attend. We also recommend sessions marked New to HLC throughout the conference program.

## Navigating the Hotels

Certain preconference programs and General Program sessions will be held at the Swissôtel, Radisson Blu Aqua and Fairmont Chicago, which are connected by a pedway staffed with HLC and security personnel during conference hours.

### Access to Riverside Hall

Complimentary continental breakfast, Sunday boxed lunch and the Comprehensive Evaluations and Assurance Reviews Share Fair are accessible from the Ballroom Level in the East Tower. Escalators down to Riverside Hall are in front of the Expo Hall and behind the Grand Ballroom.

### Keynote Viewing Options

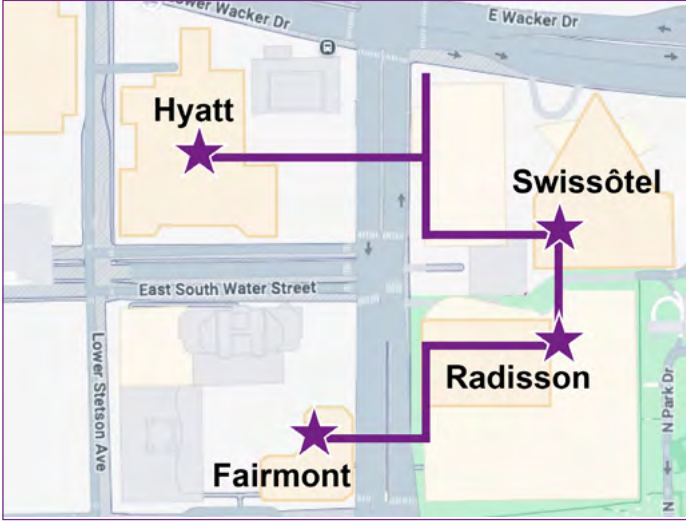
Keynote presentations are simultaneously broadcasted from the Grand Ballroom (East Tower) to Regency and Crystal Ballrooms (West Tower).

*See food options, parking information and more on the Higher Learning 2026 mobile app or website.*



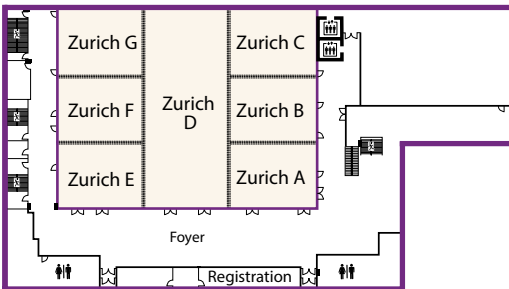
*Build Your Network*  
**#HLC2026**  
in ▶ @hlcommission

## Pedway

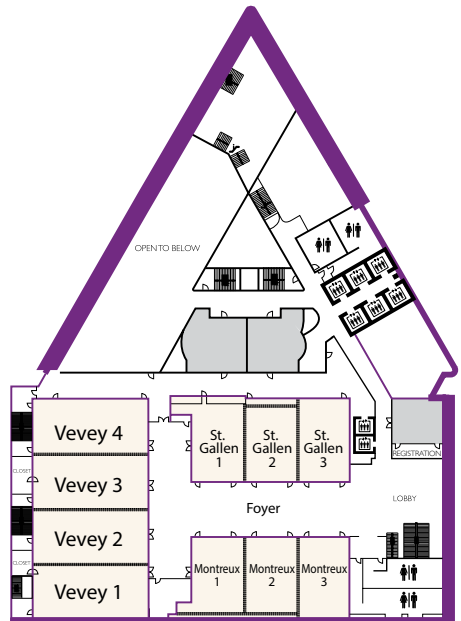


## swissôtel CHICAGO

← Pedway to Hyatt



First Floor



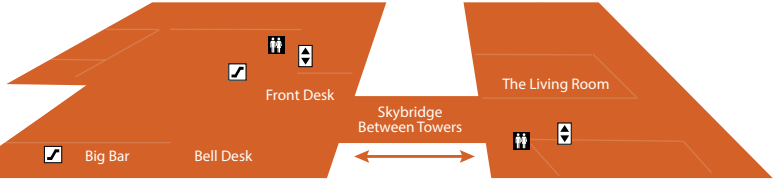
Second Floor

## East Tower

## West Tower

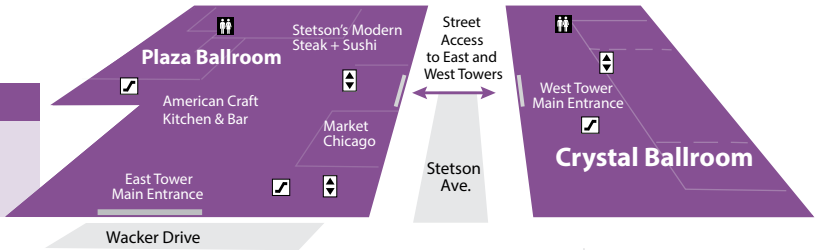
### Skyway Level

- Skybridge between towers
- Big Bar
- The Living Room



### Lobby Level

- Restaurants
- Escalators down to Registration



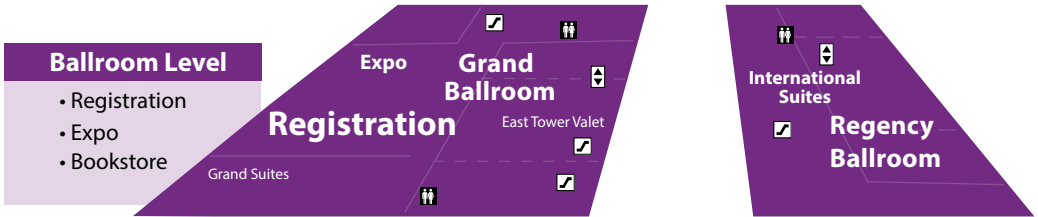
### Concourse Level

- Concourse Between Towers
- Pedway to Swissôtel



### Ballroom Level

- Registration
- Expo
- Bookstore



### Riverside Level

- Business Center
- Package Pickup



### CROSSING BETWEEN TOWERS

Cross between towers via the Skybridge or the Concourse Levels.

You may also cross from the Lobby Level via the crosswalk on Stetson Avenue.

**THE PEDWAY TO SWISSÔTEL** is located in the East Tower/ Concourse Level.



**ESCALATORS, ELEVATORS AND RESTROOMS** are indicated on each floor. Elevators are located throughout the hotel for guests with disabilities or where no escalator is present.

# Thank You to the Higher Learning 2026 Sponsors

## GOLD SPONSORS



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## SILVER SPONSORS

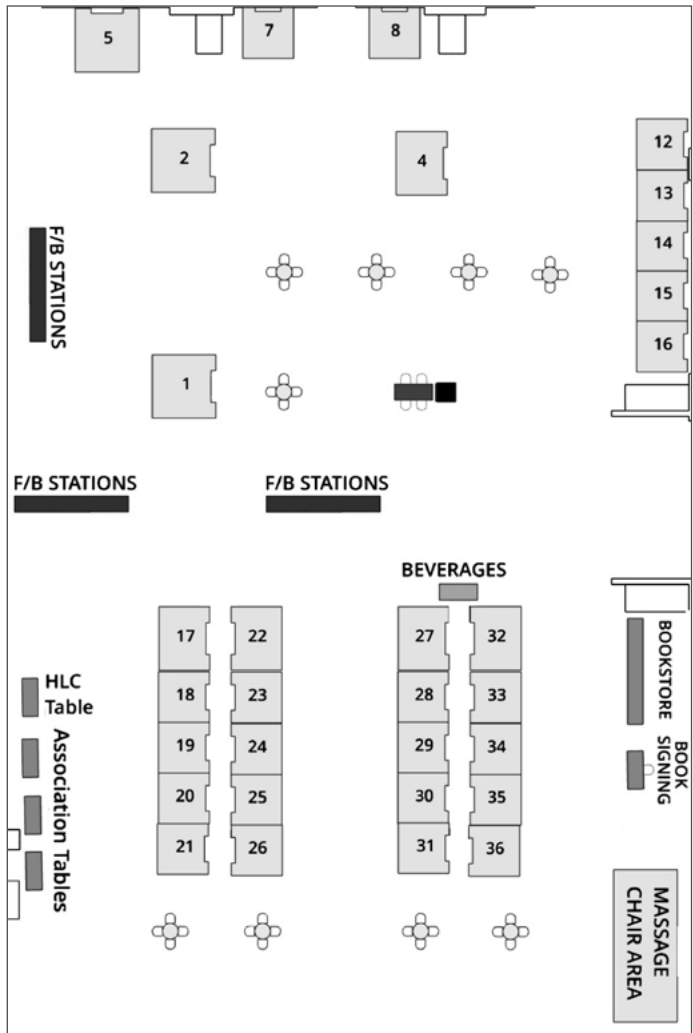
- Anatomage, Inc.
- BibliU
- Blackboard
- Interfolio from Elsevier
- Simple Higher Ed

## BRONZE SPONSORS

- AlensiaXR
- Association of College and University Educators (ACUE)
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- CourseLeaf
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- eLumen
- Evisions
- Forvis Mazars
- Gardner Institute
- HelioCampus
- Honorlock
- Instructure, Inc.
- Jamworks
- Nuventive
- ProjectConcert
- Revolution Lightboards
- Rize Education
- SimSpace
- SPOL
- Steppingblocks
- The Registry
- Tutor.com

## ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

- National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)
- National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)
- NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising



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# Peer Reviewer Updates and Training

Saturday, March 21

## Day at a Glance

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8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.

**Coffee and Networking**

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9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

**HLC Peer Corps Updates**

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10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

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12:00 p.m.–1:15 p.m.

**Peer Corps Recognition Luncheon**

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1:30 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

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### Which Sessions Can I Attend?

While most sessions are open to all peer reviewers, some are indicated as **invite-only** or for **team chairs**. For sessions with **sign-in required**, you can get required training to conduct a certain type of review.

## 8:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.

**Coffee and Networking**

**International Ballroom Foyer** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

All peer reviewers are welcome to join us for coffee and networking.

8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

### **New Team Chair Training**

**Cuvee** Lobby Level Fairmont

#### **BY INVITATION ONLY**

This training for new Team Chairs focuses on the responsibilities of leading a team and analysis of team reports. Participants discuss challenges in the creation of team reports, including quality and tone in evidentiary statements, managing team dynamics and deadlines, and crafting a consistent, well-supported report. Attendance by invitation only.

**Kevin Cole**, *University of Sioux Falls*

**Steph Brzuzy**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Kristin Stehouwer**, *Northwood University*

## **9:00 a.m.**

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### **HLC Peer Corps Updates**

**International Ballroom** Second Level Fairmont

#### **OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

In this session, HLC staff members will share progress over the last year and insight on what is to come.

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

## **10:00 a.m.**

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### **PC-1 - Building and Maintaining Quality Distance Education Programs**

**Millennium** Lobby Level Fairmont

#### **OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

HLC staff liaisons will discuss recent initiatives in distance education and how HLC determines quality and compliance when evaluating distance education programs. This session will also examine national trends and quality metrics.

**Tom Bordenkircher**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### **PC-2 - Core Component 1.C.: Mission and Diversity of Society**

**Gold** Second Level Fairmont

#### **OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Today's students continue to graduate into a more globally connected and diverse world than ever before. This session will present and consider the kinds of evidence that member institutions can provide to document their efforts to continue to prepare culturally competent graduates for the workforce and day-to-day civic engagement.

**John Marr**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Lisa Perez-Miller**, *Pratt Community College*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### PC-3 - **The “Multiverse” of HLC Reviews**

**Crystal** Third Level Fairmont

#### **OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

HLC staff share how reviewers can become involved in a variety of review types beyond comprehensive visits.

**Vince Coraci**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### PC-4 - **Leading Change: Team Chair Strategies for the Revised Criteria**

**State** Second Level Fairmont

#### **OPEN TO TEAM CHAIRS**

Change brings both challenges and opportunities. In this session, participants will hear lessons learned from team chairs who have already navigated the transition to the revised Criteria, discuss effective strategies for guiding teams through the transition, and consider approaches to foster consistency across peer review teams.

**Cory Clasemann**, *Southeast Technical College*

**Linda Wellborn**, *Evangel University*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### PC-5 - **Canopy for Panels and Decision-Making Committees**

**Regent** Third Level Fairmont

#### **OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Join HLC staff members to learn how panels and decision-making processes are handled in Canopy. We will provide a short presentation followed by live interactions with Canopy.

**Jon Davenport**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Stephanie Kramer**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**William Mahoney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

### PC-6 - **Specialized Corps Training**

**Ambassador** Second Level Fairmont

#### **BY INVITATION ONLY**

This intensive training session is designed for peer reviewers who have been invited to serve as members of HLC's Specialized Corps. The session will explain the processes, nuances and challenges associated with complex evaluations, with a focus on advisory visits and Change of Control reviews.

**Robert Rucker**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Marie Baehr**, *Coe College*

**Sarah Hallett**, *Higher Learning Commission*

## 11:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

### PC-7 - **Training for Substantive Change Processes**

**Millennium** Lobby Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS** **SIGN-IN REQUIRED**

A foundational session for peer reviewers interested in reviewing substantive change applications. This session will include an overview of the substantive change processes, reviewing program applications, and review elements for substantive change. Anyone completing this session will be eligible to participate in reviews of change requests for new traditional credit format educational programs.

**Stephanie Kramer**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tamas Horvath**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Landon Lee**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Patricia Newton-Curran**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

### PC-8 - **Listening Session: Adjusting to the Revised Criteria**

**Gold** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

This listening session provides an opportunity for attendees to express feedback about the Criteria for Accreditation and changes in team procedures that went into effect in September 2025. Feedback will help HLC develop additional resources and shape future trainings.

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Lindsey Myers**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Amanda Wornhoff**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

### PC-9 - **Comprehensive Evaluations and Assurance Reviews in Canopy**

**Crystal** Third Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Join HLC staff members to learn how peer reviewers conduct comprehensive evaluations, Assurance Reviews, and reviews related to seeking accreditation in Canopy. We will provide a short presentation followed by live interactions with Canopy.

**Jon Davenport**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Vince Coraci**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**William Mahoney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

PC-10 - **Self-Leadership: Optimizing Your Time and Contributions During Peer Review Assignments**

**Regent** Third Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Team member engagement is essential for contributing expertise and insights to the team and completing reviewer responsibilities. Reviews are also time-intensive. This session will introduce suggestions for how reviewers can fully engage in review assignments, while simultaneously managing work and other life responsibilities.

**Kristi Archuleta**, *University of Central Oklahoma*

**Janet Smith**, *Pittsburg State University*

11:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

PC-11 - **Listening So We Can Grow: Confronting Bias in Peer Review**

**State** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Embracing the peer review process is an opportunity for a deeper understanding of the mission and vision of a community. This session emphasizes the power of listening—listening to others, to data, and to one’s own assumptions - to reduce bias and strengthen evidence-driven peer review.

**Remylin Bruder**, *Rochester Christian University*

**Theodore Hamilton**, *Oglala Lakota College*

**Clyne Namuo**, *Joliet Junior College*

12:00 p.m.



12:00 p.m.–1:15 p.m.

**Peer Corps Recognition Luncheon**

**International Ballroom** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Join us for a plated lunch and a celebration of peer reviewer milestones and achievements. HLC staff members will recognize members of the Peer Corps for another great year of service.

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Julia Goeke**, *Higher Learning Commission*

1:30 p.m.

1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

PC-12 - **Building Competency and Confidence Around Institutional Finances**

**Millennium** Lobby Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

No matter the background, peer reviewers need to have a general understanding of institutional finances. Using a case study, this interactive session is designed to build competency and confidence for reviewers who do not have a financial background.

**Kathy Parkison**, *Indiana University Kokomo*

**Randy Smith**, *Oklahoma Baptist University*

1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

PC-13 - **HLC Peer Reviewer Procedures vs. Team Member Preferences**

**Gold** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Consistency across reviews is important for peer reviewers to effectively implement HLC's procedures and for institutions to appropriately prepare for a review. This session explores required approaches, areas where teams have more flexibility to choose based on specific aspects of the review, and logistical decisions based on preference.

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Sarah Westfall**, *Kalamazoo College*

1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

PC-14 - **Releasing the Past, Reclaiming the Now: Writing to Criterion 3**

**Crystal** Third Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

This interactive workshop focuses on writing to Criterion 3 through a hands-on writing session that includes guided practice and collaborative critique. Experienced HLC peer reviewers will lead participants in focused writing exercises for Criterion 3, followed by small-group feedback to elevate clarity, coherence, and impact.

**Gail Jensen**, *Creighton University*

**Kenneth Ruit**, *University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences*

1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

PC-15 - **Met With Concerns? A Case Discussion for Peer Reviewers**

**State** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

If a Core Component is deemed "met with concerns" what does this mean, what are monitoring options, and when do issues rise to a Notice recommendation? Two HLC staff liaisons and an experienced team chair will facilitate this lively interactive discussion. Case study materials provided in the conference mobile app.

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Jamie Stanesa**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Sandra Cassidy**, *Rockhurst University*

1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

PC-16 - **Student Success Indicators Training**

**Regent** Third Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS** **SIGN-IN REQUIRED**

This workshop will train peer reviewers on HLC's student success indicator process and share good practices and lessons learned from reviewers who have participated this past year. This training will provide an overview of how HLC benchmarks three outcome measures, as well as how to review improvement plans and updates.

**Vince Coraci**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Patricia Newton-Curran**, *Higher Learning Commission*

## 1:45 p.m.

1:45 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

### PC-17 - **Federal Compliance Reviewer Training**

**Ambassador** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS** **SIGN-IN REQUIRED**

HLC's Federal Compliance Requirements address institutional compliance with specific federal regulations. This session will train peer reviewers as Federal Compliance reviewers to independently conduct an off-site, documentary review as part of certain comprehensive evaluations and make preliminary recommendations that are then verified and finalized through the on-site visit.

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

## 3:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### PC-18 - **Location, Branch Campus, Multi-Location and Multi-Campus Visits Training**

**Millennium**. Lobby Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS** **SIGN-IN REQUIRED**

This session prepares peer reviewers to successfully conduct location visits. HLC ensures the quality of additional locations and campuses, beginning with the initial approval process and continuing through ongoing multi-location and multi-campus reviews. Prerequisite: Peer reviewers must first complete Training for Substantive Change Processes.

**Stephanie Kramer**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tamas Horvath**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Nicole Perez**, *Higher Learning Commission*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### PC-19 - **Peer Reviewer Evaluations**

**Gold** Second Level Fairmont

**OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS**

Providing feedback is essential for ensuring quality and consistency across and within teams. HLC is launching a new evaluation system for team chairs and team members. This session will introduce the evaluation content and process, including how reviewer feedback will be used.

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Jon Davenport**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Julia Goeke**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**William Mahoney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### PC-20 - **Beyond the Criteria for Accreditation: Understanding HLC Requirements**

**Crystal** Third Level Fairmont

#### OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS

This session will provide an overview of HLC requirements other than the Criteria for Accreditation, including the Eligibility Requirements, Assumed Practices, Federal Compliance Requirements and Obligations of Membership. Peer reviewers will gain a practical understanding of when and how to evaluate these requirements in different types of HLC reviews.

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Judith Penrod Siminoe**, *St. Cloud State University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### PC-21 - **Different Trails to Climb the Mountain of Student Success**

**Regent** Third Level Fairmont

#### OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS

Core Component 3.G is a broader version of the former standard. Because institutions will now define student success and determine benchmarks, peer reviewer understanding of this Core Component should expand. This session will explore implications for peer reviewers, including a discussion of the types of evidence to expect to review.

**Brent Yoder**, *Friends University*

**Yesenia Avalos**, *Purdue University Northwest*

**Rita Gulstad**, *Central Methodist University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### PC-22 - **Balancing Rigor and Reduced Burden in Open Pathway Assurance Reviews**

**State** Second Level Fairmont

#### OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS

This session reviews the purpose and structure of the Open Pathway Year 4 Assurance Review and explores how to ensure rigor while reducing burden to institutions.

**Andrew Lootens-White**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Chandra Arthur**, *Cuyahoga Community College*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### PC-23 - **SAP Concur Office Hours: Ask Us Anything**

**Ambassador** Second Level Fairmont

#### OPEN TO ALL PEER REVIEWERS

Drop in during this time to ask questions about SAP Concur, an online platform and app that allows peer reviewers to submit travel expenses for reimbursement. HLC staff will have a live connection to Concur for demonstration purposes.

**Susan Pyne-Torres**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Ofelia Martinez**, *Higher Learning Commission*

# General Program

The General Program for Higher Learning 2026 kicks off at 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 21 with a keynote presentation. HLC's president begins the first full day of the General Program with a Welcome Address on Sunday at 9 a.m. The conference concludes midday Tuesday.

## Navigating the General Program

### Presentation Types

#### **HLC Presentation**

Delivered by HLC staff member(s).

#### **Institutional Presentation**

Delivered by representatives from colleges and universities.

#### **Keynote / Featured Presentation**

Delivered by invited researchers and thought leaders in higher ed.

#### **Viewpoint Presentation**

Delivered by representatives of non-institutional higher ed organizations.

#### **Showcase Presentation**

Delivered by a Higher Learning 2026 sponsor.

#### **Networking Opportunity**

Some social/networking events require pre-registration or are invitation only.

### Tracks

#### **Institutional Experiences With Accreditation**

#### **Building a Sustainable Future**

#### **Teaching, Learning and Student Success**

#### **New to HLC**

If you're new to HLC accreditation, these sessions may help you get acquainted with our policies, procedures and expectations for institutional representatives.

#### **HLC's Academies**

These sessions are related to our Student Success and Assessment Academies, including presentations by Academy graduates and Scholars. Learn about promising practices that can be applied at your institution and discover the benefits of participation in these multi-year programs.

# Saturday, March 21

5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.



## **Keynote: The Value of Higher Education**

**Grand Ballroom** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

With a background in education policy and a decade as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Yale, Tamar Gendler has a front-row seat in observing and shaping the American education system. Looking at the key economic, sociological, and organizational factors of higher education, Dean Gendler differentiates the American higher education system from that of other nations and addresses the benefits and disadvantages of this unique system.

**Tamar Gendler, Yale University**

*The presentation will also be broadcast to:*

**Crystal Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**Regency Ballroom** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

## **Welcome Reception** *(Pre-Registration Required)*

**Grand Hall and Expo** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### **NETWORKING**

Kick off the conference with a warm welcome! Join us for light refreshments, networking, and a chance to meet fellow attendees in a relaxed atmosphere before the sessions begin.

*Sponsored in part by*



# Sunday, March 22

## Day at a Glance

7:30 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

**Complimentary Continental Breakfast**

*Sponsored in part by*



9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

**KEYNOTE: Welcome Address**

10:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

**Networking Break and Expo**

*Sponsored in part by*



10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

**FEATURED: The Future is the New Now**

12:30 p.m.–1:45 p.m.

**Networking Lunches and Boxed Lunch** *(Pre-Registration Required)*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

2:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

**Networking Break and Expo**

*Sponsored in part by*



3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

**FEATURED: Capitol Hill to the State House: Navigating Federal and State Higher Education Advocacy**

3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

## 7:30 a.m.

7:30 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

### Complimentary Continental Breakfast

**Riverside Hall** Lower Level Hyatt East Tower

Sponsored in part by



## 8:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m.–8:30 a.m.

### SHARE FAIR: Comprehensive Evaluations and Assurance Reviews

**Riverside Hall** Lower Level Hyatt East Tower

Visit this Share Fair to learn from institutions that recently completed a comprehensive evaluation or Open Pathway mid-cycle Assurance Review. Stop by to meet representatives from a variety of institutions, discuss their experiences, and ask questions.

## 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.



### Keynote: Welcome Address

**Grand Ballroom** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

HLC President Barbara Gellman-Danley welcomes General Program attendees with an overview of the dynamic change HLC's community is facing, as well as opportunities the future offers.

**Barbara Gellman-Danley**, Higher Learning Commission

*The presentation will also be broadcast to:*

**Crystal Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**Regency Ballroom** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

## 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

### Networking Break and Expo

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**Regency Ballroom Foyer** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**Zurich Ballroom Foyer** First Floor Swissôtel

Sponsored in part by **Blackboard** 

## 10:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-1 - **Accreditation Liaison Officers: An Overview of the Role**

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### HLC PRESENTATION

This session is designed for new Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs) who have not participated in the ALO orientation course, but all ALOs are welcome. Presenters will provide an overview of the role, share resources available to ALOs, review relevant HLC processes and share important components of the HLC accreditation relationship.

**Patricia Newton-Curran**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-2 - **Creating a Reduced-Credit Bachelor's Degree Program**

**Zurich A-D** First Floor Swissôtel

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Join this session to learn about HLC's requirements and processes for institutions seeking to offer reduced-credit bachelor's degree programs. Representatives from Yavapai College will also share their experience developing a 92-credit bachelor's degree program, which aims to sustain access, affordability and workforce relevance, while maintaining academic rigor.

**Tom Bordenkircher**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Douglas Berry**, *Yavapai College*

**Lisa Rhine**, *Yavapai College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-3 - **HLC's Short-term Credential Provider Endorsement**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

HLC recently launched a voluntary quality assurance framework to review and endorse short-term credential providers. Learn about the categories of review, application process and how institutions may elect to partner with endorsed providers.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Eva Sitek**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-4 - **Integrating Student Success Into Institutional Priorities**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Student success is central to the mission of higher education. In this session, representatives from several institutions will share how they have embedded student success initiatives into their strategic plans and institutional priorities, creating integrated approaches that strengthen their core functions and drive meaningful, sustainable improvements in student outcomes.

**Janice Denton**, *University of Cincinnati*

**Mark Kinney**, *West Shore Community College*

**Frank Ludwig**, *Three Rivers College*

**David Torres**, *Northern New Mexico College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-5 - The Standard and Open Pathways

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

The Standard and Open Pathways are processes through which HLC institutions maintain accreditation. This presentation will identify factors that allow an institution to choose its Pathway, highlight the evaluation touch-points across each Pathway's 10-year cycle, and describe how quality improvement is conducted within each Pathway.

**Andrew Lootens-White**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-6 - The Strategic Advantage of GenAI + Agile

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

Explore how generative AI and Agile methodologies can transform strategic planning in higher education. Learn about practical applications for environmental scanning, stakeholder engagement, goal-setting, and execution. Designed for leaders and planners, this session provides actionable strategies, tools, and prompts to implement adaptive, AI-enhanced planning processes.

Please note: This session is derived from content created for HLC's Strategic Planning workshop and is part of its thought leadership efforts. It does not address HLC's Policies and Procedures.

**Jon Davenport**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Destiny Quintero**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-7 - Accreditation During Crisis: Using Assessment as a Foundation for Stability

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

In May 2023, Diné College was put on "interim monitoring" status and tasked with showing evidence of consistent, meaningful assessment. It then suffered unprecedented challenges, including the provost's resignation, the president's death, and a devastating campus fire. In this presentation, we demonstrate how assessment can stabilize an institution in crisis.

**Alysa Landry**, *Diné College*

**Mikayla Largo**, *Diné College*

**Ashima Singh**, *Diné College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-8 - Building a Comprehensive General Education Assessment Process

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This presentation will explain how the University of Northern Colorado leveraged external stakeholder requirements and internal shared governance structures to design and implement a course-embedded direct assessment plan for general education between 2021-2025. We will also share data on student learning and faculty engagement collected to date.

**Nancy Matchett**, *University of Northern Colorado*

**Heidi Muller**, *University of Northern Colorado*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-9 - **Collaborations in College Readiness: A Dual Credit Success Story**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

In our presentation, we'll share resources and explain how we collaborated with area high schools to provide a successful college readiness program for dual credit students, a majority of whom are first-generation, under-resourced students. Students who complete our college prep classes persevere in general education classes and beyond.

**Mary Cantrell**, *Tulsa Community College*

**Lori Mayberry**, *Tulsa Community College*

**Melissa Steadley**, *Tulsa Community College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-10 - **Expedition Accreditation: A Campus United for Excellence**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Discover how Paradise Valley Community College turned its Year 10 comprehensive evaluation into "Expedition Accreditation," a campus-wide celebration. Learn practical strategies for managing evidence, engaging stakeholders, and fostering campus pride to create a highly successful, standing-room-only site visit experience.

**Michelle Carter**, *Maricopa Community Colleges - Paradise Valley Community College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-11 - **How a Strategic Enrollment Plan Provides Trajectory Into the Future**

**St. Gallen** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Des Moines University's Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) engages multiple individuals to develop initiatives to mitigate enrollment risk and consider student needs. Each SEP initiative is linked to our strategic plan. This presentation will cover our university's evolution in SEP development, including stakeholders' engagement, benchmarking and progress tracking.

**Molly Moeller**, *Des Moines University*

**Amy Morris**, *Des Moines University - Osteopathic Medical Center*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-12 - **Increasing Belonging in Transfer Students**

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Increasing the feeling of belonging among transfer students is a unique challenge for institutions. This session will focus on one institution's attempt to use a multi-pronged approach to increase a sense of belonging for these students. Belonging ratings for transfer students increased significantly after instituting the interventions.

**Joel Frederickson**, *Bethel University*

**Alicia Ochs**, *Bethel University*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-13 - **Promise and Pressure in Community Colleges Today**

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

While elite colleges dominate the headlines, it's our community colleges — open to all, rich in diversity — that are doing the hard work of educating nearly 40% of undergraduates. This session explores how these institutions quietly drive economic mobility and cultivate the talent that will shape a stronger, more inclusive America.

**Vincent Bowhay**, *Highland Community College*

**Seth Carter**, *Colby Community College*

**Amber Knoettgen**, *Cloud County Community College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-14 - **Scaling Curriculum Processes: From Program-Level Foundations to Institutional Accreditation**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Baker College developed a structured curriculum revision process at the program level, beginning in nursing and expanding across multiple disciplines. This session will explore how those processes now inform institutional accreditation through the Open Pathway, providing a replicable framework for curriculum alignment, faculty engagement, and continuous improvement.

**Maria McCormick**, *Baker College*

**Kelly Martin**, *Baker College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-15 - **Strategic Planning Through Collective Impact: The Essential Institutional Effectiveness Backbone**

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Northern Michigan University transformed strategic planning from fragmented efforts to coordinated institutional improvement using collective impact principles. This presentation demonstrates how an expanded Institutional Effectiveness office served as essential backbone infrastructure, enabling sustainable planning systems with measurable outcomes across 1,500+ stakeholders over three years while completing our Quality Initiative.

**Jason Nicholas**, *Northern Michigan University*

**Daniel Cullen**, *Northern Michigan University*

**Ellen Koski**, *Northern Michigan University*

#### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences  
With Accreditation**

**Teaching, Learning and  
Student Success**

**HLC's  
Academies**

**Building a Sustainable  
Future**

**New to HLC**

## 11:15 a.m.

11:15 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

### Networking Break

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**Regency Ballroom Foyer** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**Zurich Ballroom Foyer** First Floor Swissôtel

## 11:45 a.m.

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-16 - **Featured: The Future is the New Now**

**Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### FEATURED PRESENTATION

Join Phil Komarny, Chief Future Officer at Maryville University, to learn how one institution is cutting through “technical debt” to build a cohesive, data-first ecosystem that boosts student support and operational efficiency. From high-impact AI assistants to faster workflows and trusted automation, this session offers a clear, practical roadmap for modernizing campus systems and strengthening lifelong learner engagement.

**Phil Komarny**, *Maryville University*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-17 - **Change of Control, Structure or Organization: Part 1**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Institutions often explore changes that fall within HLC’s policy on Change of Control, Structure or Organization. HLC staff members will provide an overview of this policy across a two-part session. Part 1 will focus on the various types of Change of Control, Structure or Organization and HLC’s review procedures.

**Robert Rucker**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Sarah Hallett**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**John Marr**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-19 - **HLC Updates for ALOs**

**Zurich A-D** First Floor Swissôtel

#### HLC PRESENTATION

In this session for new and experienced Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs), presenters address a variety of topics, including the Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Report, Canopy, new information related to policy updates and more.

**Patricia Newton-Curran**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-20 - **HLC's Relationship Within the Triad**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

This session will provide an overview of HLC's work related to advocacy and government relations within the program integrity Triad, which includes accreditors, states, and federal government. The session will also include a high-level summary of various updates on state and federal legislation and regulations.

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Brenna Goss**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-21 - **North Star: The Values and Priorities Informing HLC's Next Strategic Plan**

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

This session will overview proposed revisions to HLC's Guiding Values and the current higher education trends and priorities informing HLC's next strategic plan, North Star. Membership insight and input are sought ahead of the finalization of the Guiding Values and the release of North Star in the summer of 2026.

**Eric Martin**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Heather Berg**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Sarah Byrne**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-22 - **AI Playbook: Policy, Innovation and Global Digital Transformation**

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

American Public University System developed a playbook for responsibly integrating artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching, learning, and operations. This session will explore policy, faculty training, course quality, affordability, student success, and "Signature Skills," highlighting lessons from Generative AI Policy, Course Development project, and the Global Digital Journey initiative's first year.

**Michelle Newman**, *American Public University System*

**Elizabeth Johnson**, *American Public University System*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-23 - **All Students Can Get HIRE'd: Bridging Education and Employment**

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Discover how the HIRE Program creates inclusive pathways for students with intellectual disabilities, bridging postsecondary education and workforce readiness. Learn how gradual-release supports, career exploration, and community partnerships foster student success, empower instructors, and strengthen institutional inclusion. Gain strategies to replicate this model and drive meaningful student outcomes.

**Renato Freitas**, *Fort Myers Technical College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-24 - **Focusing Institutional Values and Aligning Faculty Performance Review**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This panel will share a unique institutional success story, with resources and information for how to achieve it. At Emporia State University, faculty and administrators collaborated in a year-long effort to achieve a common faculty recognition document template aligned with core values of quality teaching and student engagement.

**Amy Sage Webb-Baza**, *Emporia State University*

**Tim Burnett**, *Emporia State University*

**Sara Schwerdtfeger**, *Emporia State University*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-25 - **From Obligation to Opportunity: Transforming a Community College's Program Review**

**St. Gallen** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

How can academic program review transform from a standalone compliance exercise into a reflection-driven continuous improvement cycle? This session shares one community college's mission-alignment strategies, culture shifts, and lessons learned from implementing an upgraded program review process that is less complicated, more meaningful, and sustainable through institutional change.

**Claire Gibbons**, *Anoka-Ramsey Community College*

**Jennifer Hodges**, *Anoka-Ramsey Community College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-26 - **Marathon Mindset: Surviving and Thriving in the HLC Assessment Academy**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

North Central Michigan College's HLC Assessment Academy initiative transformed assessment process, practices, and culture. Presenters share how they shifted from a culture of compliance to one of curiosity—navigating ambiguity, building momentum, and sustaining campus-wide engagement. Attendees will leave inspired and equipped to “run their own race” in assessment work.

**Sara Glasgow**, *North Central Michigan College*

**Erin Sonneveldt**, *North Central Michigan College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-27 - **One Front Door: Driving Systemic Change for Student Success**

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Clark State College transformed fragmented learning events into a unified Center for Teaching and Learning, shifting culture and driving student success. Insights from accreditation, assessment, and Achieving the Dream initiatives have inspired strategic, comprehensive professional development that supports all learners and our “One Front Door,” a next generation holistic approach.

**Jo Alice Blondin**, *Clark State College, HLC Board of Trustees Member*

**Carol Miller**, *Clark State College*

**Amy Sues**, *Clark State College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-28 - **Program Assessment Data Visualizations: Overcoming Constraints, Enhancing Insights**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session illustrates how data visualization tools can be used to generate actionable insights from multiple semesters of program-level assessment reporting using datasets generated from existing workflows. In addition to streamlining long-term assessment outcome tracking, this approach uses dashboards that provide program, course, and assignment-level snapshots of assessment trends.

**Allison Chatterjee**, *Indiana University Bloomington*

**Kristoffer Rees**, *Indiana University Bloomington*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-29 - **Successful Comprehensive Evaluation at a Complex Institution**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

As a “complex” mission-driven institution with new leadership and little institutional memory, we approached our comprehensive evaluation with intentionality. Critical to our success was planning in advance, developing and utilizing tools that allowed frequent communication and collaboration, and active listening to other institutions’ experiences to craft our own approach.

**Rachel Shefner**, *Loyola University Chicago*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-30 - **Sustainable Growth Through Mergers and Partnerships**

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

As higher education faces growing headwinds, institutions are collaborating to serve students and meet workforce needs. Mission-aligned collaborations may provide seamless pathways and expanded opportunities for students. This session focuses on one university’s approach to sustain growth and meet workforce demands through a strategic merger and partnerships with multiple institutions.

**Sandra Cassidy**, *Rockhurst University*

**Sue Willcox**, *Rockhurst University*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-18 - **CredLens: A National Data Trust for the Non-Degree Credential Ecosystem**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

CredLens securely links verified credential records to employment, wage, and education data, providing decision-makers with the outcomes and insights that have been missing.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Christy Abercrombie**, *North Central State College*

**Thomas Benjamin**, *Lorain County Community College*

**Adrienne Kupper**, *CredLens*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-31 - **The Graduate Student Experience**

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

With more than four million graduate students in the United States, it is time to situate their experience within the broader student success movement. This session examines why attention is critical, draws lessons from first-year initiatives, and explores research, assessment, accreditation and collaboration to help attendees identify priorities.

**John Gardner**, *John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Higher Education*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## SS-1 - **Syllabus Management: Campus Perspectives With UMKC and Peers**

**Grand Ballroom B** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### SHOWCASE PRESENTATION



This session shares campus perspectives on syllabus management, centered on insights from the University of Missouri Kansas City and Brianna Portmann, Ed.D. Presenters explore what campus feedback

reveals about time savings, student clarity, and alignment, emphasizing practical lessons campuses can apply to improve syllabus consistency and quality.

**Matthew Compton-Clark**, *Simple Higher Ed*

**Brianna Portmann**, *University of Missouri Kansas City*

### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences  
With Accreditation**

**Teaching, Learning and  
Student Success**

**HLC's  
Academies**

**Building a Sustainable  
Future**

**New to HLC**

## 12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m.–1:45 p.m.

### **Boxed Lunch**

*Pre-registration required*

**Riverside Hall** Lower Level Hyatt East Tower

12:30 p.m.–1:30 p.m.

### **Networking Lunch #1: Centering Students, Demonstrating Value**

*Pre-registration required*

**Atlantic Ballroom A** Radisson Blu Aqua

*Sponsored in part by*



### **Networking Lunch #2: Mission in Action**

*Pre-registration required*

**Atlantic Ballroom B** Radisson Blu Aqua

## 1:45 p.m.

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### **C-33 - Building and Maintaining Quality Distance Education Programs**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **HLC PRESENTATION**

HLC staff liaisons will discuss recent initiatives in distance education and how HLC determines quality and compliance when evaluating distance education programs. This session will also examine national trends and quality metrics.

**Tom Bordenkircher**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### **C-34 - Criteria for Accreditation: Criterion 3**

**Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### **HLC PRESENTATION**

In this session, an HLC staff liaison and experienced peer reviewers will explore Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning for Student Success.

**John Marr**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Remylin Bruder**, *Rochester Christian University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### **C-35 - Institutional Designations and Other Special Monitoring**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **HLC PRESENTATION**

This session will explore HLC's policy on Special Monitoring, with a focus on institutional designations. This will include an overview of the institutional designation process and the types of circumstances that may lead to an institutional designation. The session will also cover other aspects of HLC's Special Monitoring policy.

**Robert Rucker**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Sarah Hallett**, *Higher Learning Commission*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-36 - Integrating Civic Learning as a Core Feature in Educational Programs

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Attend this panel to learn how two institutions have deployed civic learning and democratic engagement as a key feature of their academic curriculum and student learning outcomes.

**Jamie Stanesa**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tonia Bock**, *University of St. Thomas*

**Mia Hardy**, *Dominican University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-37 - Addressing DWF Rates with Intention: General Education Course Redesign

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Eastern Illinois University demonstrates how systematic collaboration between faculty and instructional designers can reduce percentages of students earning D, F grades, or withdrawing in a course (DWF rates). Through data-driven, systematic methodology, and ongoing support structures, the DWF Initiative achieved 75% improvement rates, providing a replicable model for student success.

**Michael Gillespie**, *Eastern Illinois University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-32 - Washington's Transparency Agenda: Changes to IPEDS and New Disclosure Requirements

**Grand Ballroom B** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

The new IPEDS Admissions and Consumer Transparency Supplement (ACTS) requires applicable institutions to report substantial new disaggregated, and in some cases student-level, data. This session covers IPEDS changes and ED actions to increase transparency around student outcomes, and offers guidance on how colleges can advocate for better data quality while reducing reporting burden.

**Kathryn Gimborys**, *American Association of Community Colleges*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-38 - Addressing Ohio's Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Needs: A Collaborative Approach

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

#### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

Ohio's higher education and industry leaders collaborated to design advanced manufacturing curricula into stackable courses aligned with industry competencies and statewide transfer systems. This session highlights how the model addresses workforce needs, supports short-term credentials, and preserves degree pathway, offering a framework for institutions seeking to balance employability with academic rigor.

**Richard Woodfield**, *Ohio Association of Community Colleges*

**Jessi Hart**, *Ohio Department of Higher Education*

**Nikki Wearly**, *Ohio Department of Higher Education*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-39 - **Credit Mobility in Motion: Region-wide Stackable Pathways for Industry-Recognized Credentials**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

The Detroit Regional Chamber's Credit Mobility Coalition, a partnership of 13 colleges, is creating seamless pathways for students. The Coalition aims to align industry certifications with degrees, helping students leverage their skills into credit. Attendees will learn how the Coalition scales credit for prior learning for learner-centered mobility.

**Amber Neher**, *Detroit Regional Chamber*  
**Danielle Zaragoza**, *Education Strategy Group*  
**Mathew Devereaux**, *Davenport University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-40 - **Demystifying Finance for Higher Education Leaders**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Join a panel of experienced finance professionals for a candid discussion on budgeting, instructional efficiencies, and compliance. Learn how to engage with finance teams effectively and uncover strategies that support informed decision-making across diverse institutional context

**Janet Smith**, *Pittsburg State University*  
**Corey Back**, *Indiana University Indianapolis*  
**Tony Major**, *Eastern New Mexico University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-41 - **Disruption by Design: Increasing Impact by Rethinking How We Work**

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Scottsdale Community College reimaged strategic planning, program review, and budgeting to create a “golden thread” from mission to money—all through shared governance. This session will share practical strategies for simplifying processes, increasing transparency, and building data-driven decision-making systems to strengthen institutional effectiveness, streamline operations, and support long-term sustainability.

**Lori Lindenberg**, *Scottsdale Community College*  
**Jamie Martin**, *Scottsdale Community College*

#### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences  
With Accreditation**

**Teaching, Learning and  
Student Success**

**HLC's  
Academies**

**Building a Sustainable  
Future**

**New to HLC**

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-42 - Elevating Online Education: Best Practices & Quality Assurance at NTU

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This presentation will detail Navajo Technical University's online learning initiatives, focusing on Quality Matters standards, assessment strategies, and effective use of Blackboard Ultra to foster student success. It will emphasize efforts to meet State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements guidelines and U.S. Department of Education mandates while enriching Indigenous education.

**Coleen Arviso**, *Navajo Technical University*

**Prince Boahene**, *Navajo Technical University*

**Ursula Pawlowski**, *Navajo Technical University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-43 - Integrated Process of Accreditation, Institutional Storytelling and Community Engagement

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session will explore an integrated approach to accreditation that moves beyond standard project management to focus on authentic community engagement, institutional storytelling, and integrated planning. Practical examples and methods demonstrate how institutions can turn accreditation challenges into institutional triumphs and an elevated drive towards greater continuous improvement.

**Neely Patton**, *Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-44 - Is Your President Present in Accreditation? Does it Matter? (Yes!)

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

College presidents often come into their role with limited experience in accreditation and/or a presumption that “others have it covered” when, in fact, there is much to be gained through understanding the process and being authentically engaged and supportive. There are internal and external benefits – some are unexpected; all add value.

**Thom Chesney**, *Southwestern College (NM)*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-45 - Navigating Change of Control: Lessons From a Three-Institution Affiliation Process

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Fort Hays State University successfully completed a Change of Control application involving the affiliation of two technical colleges, creating an innovative model for rural higher education collaboration. This presentation offers a roadmap of actionable strategies, challenges overcome, and transferable insights from our two-year journey through HLC's Change of Control process.

**Angela Pool-Funai**, *Fort Hays State University*

**Jennifer DeLuca Brown**, *Fort Hays Tech | North Central*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-46 - Redefining Workforce Equity: Women in Trades Model at Stephens College

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Stephens College's Women in Trades Program offers an innovative, equity-driven approach to workforce development through strategic partnerships with unions, employers, school districts, and nonprofits like Show Me Central Habitat for Humanity. This session will demonstrate how short-format, credential-based pre-apprenticeships can empower nontraditional learners and drive sustainable institutional transformation.

**Scott Taylor**, *Stephens College*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-47 - Using AI Isn't Cheating: Reframing Academic Integrity and Assessment

**Zurich A-D** First Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Outdated rules are making students feel like artificial intelligence (AI) is cheating despite future-ready skills demanding it. This session reframes academic integrity as a design challenge, not a discipline issue. Learn to align assignment and assessment with ethical AI use and empower faculty to prepare students for the world ahead.

**Jean Hess**, *Marian University*

## 2:30 p.m.

2:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

### Networking Break and Expo

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**Regency Ballroom Foyer** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**Zurich Ballroom Foyer** First Floor Swissôtel

2:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

### SHARE FAIR: Assessment Academy Projects

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

Discuss the objectives and outcomes of projects completed in HLC's multi-year program, the Assessment Academy, with recent graduates during this session. View these posters to learn about promising practices for institutional improvement.

3:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

C-48 - **Featured: Capitol Hill to the State House: Navigating Federal and State Higher Education Advocacy**

**Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**FEATURED PRESENTATION**

Join Sarah Spreitzer and Heidi Tseu, ACE's federal and state government relations experts, for a session on strategies to advance higher education across the current federal and state political landscape. Topics will include areas of proactive engagement and resources to get involved.

**Heidi Tseu**, *American Council on Education*

**Sarah Spreitzer**, *American Council on Education*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

C-49 - **Assessment Academy: Lessons From Mentors and Scholars**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

Participants will learn about successful practices gleaned from hundreds of Assessment Academy participants. Shared practices touch on implementing and sustaining successful assessment efforts. Current technologies will be noted. Led by an experienced Mentor and Scholar from HLC's Assessment Academy, strategies for successful assessment approaches will be highlighted.

**Susan Murphy**, *Central New Mexico Community College*

**Julie Furst-Bowe**, *Winona State University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

C-51 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Sweeney and Brzuzy**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Steph Brzuzy**, *Higher Learning Commission*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

C-52 - **Open Pathway Updates: Student Success Quality Initiative**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

This session provides an overview of a recent change to the Open Pathway that permits eligible institutions to conduct a Student Success Quality Initiative in place of the Year 4 Assurance Review. Topics include eligibility criteria to select this new option, timing of activities and other considerations.

**Andrew Lootens-White**, *Higher Learning Commission*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-53 - **Substantive Change: Part 1**

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Intended for institutional representatives who are new to substantive change, this presentation will cover various aspects of HLC's requirements and processes, including: review processes, screening forms, applications, off-campus activities, official letter requests and more.

**Stephanie Kramer**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tamas Horvath**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Nicole Perez**, *Higher Learning Commission*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-50 - **Ensuring Confidentiality and Data Security in AI**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

With the expansion of artificial intelligence (AI), it can feel like the speed of change has surpassed your ability to keep up. Attend this session to learn about HLC's use of AI, good practices and gain practical insights to ensure the privacy and security of your data.

**Jon Davenport**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tim Ahlenius**, *Americaneagle.com*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-54 - **50 Years: West Virginia Programs Driving Degree Completion**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

For decades, West Virginia's Board of Governors Associate of Applied Science and Regents Bachelor of Arts programs have helped adults complete degrees by honoring prior learning and workplace training. Supported by coordinators, "big books," and WVROCKS, these pathways have enabled more than 50,000 graduates statewide.

**Beez Schell**, *West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission*

**Andrew Gooding**, *Marshall University*

**Lucy Kefauver**, *West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-55 - **Cocurricular Assessment within a Holistic Student Success Data Strategy**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Learn how a large university serving nontraditional students with online offerings established an institutional cocurricular assessment framework with a data-rich dashboard and cross-functional committee governance structure. The presenters will share how they break down silos, sustain a continuous improvement cycle, and foster student success with a holistic data strategy.

**Amy Thomas**, *Capella University*

**Linh Dao**, *Capella University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-56 - Coordinating Accreditation Across Campuses by Leveraging Institutional Resources

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

The University of Kansas leveraged existing resources through Microsoft to plan, write, organize and coordinate hosting a mock preparatory and comprehensive visit. The presentation will focus on the use of these resources to create systems for collaborating with the branch campus on communication, evidence collection, and Assurance Argument writing.

**Alyssa Maglone**, *University of Kansas*

**Caitlin O'Connor**, *University of Kansas*

**Gina Wyant**, *University of Kansas*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-57 - Evolving IR Into a Modern Data and AI Powerhouse

**Grand Ballroom B** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

What happens when you dismantle the traditional Institutional Research (IR) Office and rebuild it into a strategic powerhouse for data, AI, and governance? This session shares the five-year transformation journey at the University of St. Thomas, offering a blueprint for rethinking IR's role in the age of AI.

**Karen Julian**, *University of St. Thomas*

**Sushant Khullar**, *University of St. Thomas*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-58 - Integrating AI Across the Curriculum With an AI Competency Framework

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session will introduce the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration Plan and Competency Framework developed and implemented at the University of Wisconsin-Superior to support instructors to teach with, about, and amidst generative AI and to provide students with the knowledge and skills to be informed AI users in the workforce.

**Jamie White-Farnham**, *University of Wisconsin-Superior*

**Liza Hendrickson**, *University of Wisconsin-Superior*

**Josh Stangle**, *University of Wisconsin-Superior*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-59 - From Metrics to Meaning: Developing a Community-Based Indigenous Success Framework

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session shares a participatory, community-driven process that expands definitions of student success by centering Indigenous values and research methods at the Institute of American Indian Arts. Attendees will learn actionable approaches to holistic metrics and collaborative methods with a focus on meaningful measurement, strategic planning, and inclusive, cross-institutional effectiveness.

**Tamara Johnson**, *Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development*

**Jesse Morris**, *Institute of American Indian Arts*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-60 - Navigating Your First Year as an ALO

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This interactive session will explore key components and successful strategies that an Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) can employ in their first year in the role. Learn how HLC is an ally in the accreditation process, and how to become an accreditation liaison and champion on campus.

**Angela Walmsley**, *Concordia University Wisconsin*

**Sarah Holtan**, *Carroll University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-61 - The Quality Initiative: Redevelop Academic Program Review Using Assessment

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

For its Quality Initiative Project, the University of Saint Francis redeveloped its Academic Program Review Process to become more efficient, practical, streamlined, formative, mission-focused, and budget-aligned. This presentation will provide information on operationalizing a data-informed academic program review process, key factors to consider, and the assessments used to track and improve the process.

**Carole Splendore**, *University of Saint Francis*

#### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences  
With Accreditation**

**Teaching, Learning and  
Student Success**

**HLC's  
Academies**

**Building a Sustainable  
Future**

**New to HLC**

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

## C-62 - **Working Together: Strategic Services Sharing at Rural Community Colleges**

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

We will describe how two small Ohio colleges are collaborating to share personnel in institutional research (IR) and Title IX tasks, and how one of the colleges partnered with a larger college for grant services, resulting in a tenfold increase in annual grant awards, including National Science Foundation grants.

**Bob Haas**, *Marion Technical College*

**Doug Mead**, *Terra State Community College*

**Cory Stine**, *Terra State Community College*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

## SS-2 - **Beyond the Self-Study: What Accreditation Reveals About Institutional Readiness**

**Grand Ballroom F** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### SHOWCASE PRESENTATION

## Interfolio

Are your accreditation cycles being treated as episodic compliance exercises? This session examines how institutions use centralized, verified faculty data to support accreditation while strengthening strategic planning, equity, and retention.

Attendees will gain transferable strategies for reducing reporting blind spots and using accreditation as a driver of continuous institutional improvement.

**Joshua Gianitsis**, *Interfolio from Elsevier*

**4:15 p.m.**

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

## C-63 - **Criteria for Accreditation: Criteria 1 and 2**

**Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

In this session, an HLC staff liaison and experienced peer reviewers will explore Criterion 1. Mission and Criterion 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Rita Gulstad**, *Central Methodist University*

**Lisa Perez-Miller**, *Pratt Community College*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

C-64 - **Office Hours for Institutions Seeking Accreditation**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

This session is intended for institutions that are not yet accredited by HLC and are seeking accreditation with HLC. Staff will be available to answer questions from attendees about the seeking accreditation process and associated requirements, and to answer general questions that developed while attending the conference General Program.

**Andrew Lootens-White**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

C-65 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Bordenkircher and Stanesa**

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Tom Bordenkircher**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Jamie Stanesa**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

C-66 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Marr and Solomon**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**John Marr**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

C-67 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Stenson and Wornhoff**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Amanda Wornhoff**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

C-68 - **Architects of Transformation: Student Affairs Leadership in Strategic Planning**

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION**

This session highlights how student affairs professionals can lead inclusive, ongoing strategic planning. Using the University of Iowa's mid-cycle assessment and Seymour's Organizational Learning Cycle, participants will explore identity, infrastructure, and intentionality as pillars for reducing barriers, fostering collaboration, and driving institutional resilience and student success.

**Mackenzie Lechlitner Kirby**, *University of Iowa*

**Mirra Anson**, *University of Iowa*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-69 - **Beyond Compliance: How a Faculty-Developed Training Drove RSI Success**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION**

This presentation explores how College of Menominee's Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) training meets federal and institutional requirements while fostering faculty collaboration. Presenters share data, development strategies, and lessons learned from designing an instructor- training program. Attendees will gain insights, sample strategies, and an adaptable model for enhancing online teaching quality.

**Ann Walenski**, *College of Menominee Nation*

**Eric Jurgens**, *College of Menominee Nation*

**Sarah VandeCorput**, *College of Menominee Nation*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-70 - **Leading With People: Building Accreditation Readiness Through Institutional Collaboration**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION**

This session will explore how a small institution successfully prepared for its Year 10 comprehensive evaluation by prioritizing people over processes. Through trust-building, collaboration, and inclusive engagement, the institution fostered a mission-driven approach that unified the campus community and strengthened institutional identity, resulting in a smooth and meaningful accreditation experience.

**Beth Pauley**, *The University of Charleston*

**Dan Silber**, *University of Charleston*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-71 - **Mission Meets Workforce: AMETA Center as Sustainable Higher Ed Model**

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

#### **INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION**

Discover how Mid-State Technical College's Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering Technology, and Apprenticeship (AMETA™) Center aligns mission with workforce needs. Learn how strategic planning, data-driven decision making, and cross-sector partnerships created a \$23 million, award-winning training hub—offering practical frameworks to build sustainable, mission-driven initiatives that strengthen enrollment, resources, and workforce impact.

**Chris Severson**, *Mid-State Technical College*

**Ryan Kawski**, *Mid-State Technical College*

**Shelly Mondeik**, *Mid-State Technical College*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

## C-72 - **Providing Student Support in a Corrections Environment**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Pima Community College has sought to maximize learner success in its Prison Education Program. The College has faced challenges in providing student services such as tutoring, academic advising, financial aid, and disability resources. Through interdepartmental collaboration, services have been offered in new, creative ways for incarcerated learner success.

**Alexandra Beer**, *Pima County Community College District*

**Melissa Stoddart**, *Pima County Community College District*

**Colin Sullivan**, *Pima Community College District*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

## SS-3 - **Federal Regulations, Immigration, and Endowments: Trump Administration Changes Impacting Institutions**

**Grand Ballroom B** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### SHOWCASE PRESENTATION

## HUSCH BLACKWELL

Join Husch Blackwell attorneys as they explain legal changes to higher education implemented by the Trump Administration.

We will provide an update on the regulatory legal landscape regarding federal laws and regulation, the status of student visas, and policies on endowments. The session will also analyze ways to address financial shortfalls.

**Hayley Hanson**, *Husch Blackwell LLP*

**Lisa Parker**, *Husch Blackwell LLP*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

## SS-4 - **AI Shouldn't Write Your Accreditation Reports (But It Can Help)**

**Grand Ballroom F** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### SHOWCASE PRESENTATION



This session is for anyone who wants to use AI thoughtfully—not blindly. AI is ubiquitous, but still feels risky. Explore how AI can be used responsibly and strategically to synthesize evidence, review narratives, and engage with stakeholders while keeping decision-making in human hands. Get real examples and actionable insights.

**Glenn Phillips**, *Watermark*

## 5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

## **CLIC Design Camp** *(By Invitation Only)*

**Randolph 3** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

### NETWORKING

Representatives from institutions participating in the CLIC Design Camp will gather to connect and network after completing a five-month virtual experience regarding the Credential Innovation model.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Eva Sitek**, *Higher Learning Commission*

# Monday, March 23

## Day at a Glance

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7:30 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

**Complimentary Continental Breakfast**

Sponsored in part by

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9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

**KEYNOTE: The New Student Reality**

10:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

**Networking Break and Expo**

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10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

**FEATURED: Microcreds and EdTech**

12:30 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

**Lunch and Discussion With Tribal College Representatives**

*(Pre-Registration Required, Tribal Colleges Only)*

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1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

2:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

**Networking Break and Expo**

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

**FEATURED: Shifting Landscapes: Higher Ed & Immigration Policies**

3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

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## 7:30 a.m.

7:30 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

### Complimentary Continental Breakfast

Riverside Hall Lower Level Hyatt East Tower

Sponsored in part by

Anatmage®

## 8:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m.–8:30 a.m.

### SHARE FAIR: Comprehensive Evaluations and Assurance Reviews

Riverside Hall Lower Level Hyatt East Tower

Visit this Share Fair to learn from institutions that recently completed a comprehensive evaluation or Open Pathway mid-cycle Assurance Review. Stop by to meet representatives from a variety of institutions, discuss their experiences, and ask questions.

## 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

### Keynote: The New Student Reality: Understanding and Responding to the Pressures Shaping Today's Learners



Grand Hall Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

Today's college students are navigating a fast-changing world where technology, uncertainty, and social pressures converge to shape how they learn, connect, and thrive. This session brings together diverse voices to explore how institutions can better understand and respond to the realities shaping student lives. Attendees will leave with a clearer picture of today's student mindset and concrete approaches for strengthening the readiness, connection, and resilience of students through institutional action.

**Timothy Renick (Moderator)**, Georgia State University

**Zainab Okolo**, The Jed Foundation

**Lindsay Page**, Brown University

**Justin Shaifer**, Fascinate Media

The presentation will also be broadcast to:

**Crystal Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

**Regency Ballroom** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

## 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

### **Networking Break and Expo**

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**Regency Ballroom Foyer** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**Zurich Ballroom Foyer** First Floor Swissôtel

10:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

### **SHARE FAIR: Quality Initiatives**

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

Visit this Share Fair to learn from institutions that recently completed a Quality Initiative. Stop by to meet representatives from a variety of institutions, discuss their experiences, and ask questions.

## 10:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### **C-73 - Civic Learning: Preparing Students for Life Beyond Graduation**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **HLC PRESENTATION**

Attend this panel discussion to learn how two institutions are developing processes to track the impact of their civic learning activities on student success. Gain insight into potential approaches for your institution's initiatives, including core requirements, volunteer activities, capstone projects, community initiatives and career activities after graduation.

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Josephine Kershaw**, *Jefferson College*

**Susan Larson**, *Concordia College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### **C-74 - Comprehensive Evaluations and Assurance Reviews in Canopy**

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **HLC PRESENTATION**

Comprehensive evaluations and Assurance Reviews are now in Canopy! See how the system works from both the institution's and peer reviewer's perspectives. We will allow lots of time for Q&A.

**Jon Davenport**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Vince Coraci**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**William Mahoney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-75 - **Integrating Industry Certifications into Degrees**

**Zurich A-D** First Floor Swissôtel

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Learn about new resources designed for institutions to successfully prepare students for living-wage careers through pathways that integrate associate degrees and industry certifications.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Rufus Glasper**, *League for Innovation in the Community College*

**Karen R. Elzey**, *Workcred*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-76 - **Proactive Planning To Be a Teach-Out Receiving Institution**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Join this session for a brief presentation on HLC's policies and guidance for institutions interested in serving as teach-out receiving institutions, followed by a robust discussion with two institutions that developed and executed successful teach-out agreements and served students from closing institutions.

**Jamie Stanesa**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**James Moore**, *West Virginia Wesleyan College*

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tracy Schuster-Matlock**, *St. Ambrose University*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-77 - **Substantive Change: Part 2**

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### HLC PRESENTATION

This presentation will provide an overview of HLC's different substantive change applications, documents required to submit complete applications, how to navigate the decision-making process and tracking your substantive change requests in Canopy.

**Stephanie Kramer**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tamas Horvath**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Nicole Perez**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-78 - **The Evolution of Assessment: From Practice to Purpose**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Explore how assessment has matured into a learning-centered practice with lasting institutional impact. Drawing on insights from HLC's Assessment Academy and the multi-decade evolution of the practice, this session offers practical takeaways from HLC staff members and a Senior Scholar that can be adapted to strengthen assessment and student learning.

**Claire Berkley**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Susan Hatfield**, *Winona State University*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-79 - **AI and Academic Integrity: A Levelled Framework for Human Learning**

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Garden City Community College launched a mission-driven institutional artificial intelligence (AI) framework in 2025. It centers supporting human cognition, providing shared standards for levels of AI use, emphasizing academic recordkeeping, and supporting community integrity. This presentation will share our process and product—emphasizing our mission-driven approach—and preliminary results.

**Jamie Durler**, *Garden City Community College*

**Marc Malone**, *Garden City Community College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-80 - **Evidence-Based Advising: Achieving Significant Gains in STEM Student Persistence**

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session highlights how a STEM college raised student persistence above university-wide benchmarks through proactive advising, mentoring, and outreach. Drawing on a concept from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, participants will gain proven strategies, outcomes, and lessons learned to strengthen persistence among non-traditional students.

**Shannon Resowski**, *University of Michigan-Flint*

**Stephen Turner**, *University of Michigan-Flint*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

## C-81 - **Maximizing Value: NC-SARA's Role in Institutional Success and Savings**

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

NC-SARA (National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements) reduces bureaucracy and administrative burdens for institutions. This presentation demonstrates how to leverage SARA's value to build a sustainable future. Learn how it helps institutions reduce costs, with a median annual savings over \$156,000, and improves resource allocation for long-term viability.

**Emilie Crawford**, *NC-SARA*

**Marianne Boeke**, *NC-SARA*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-82 - **Mission-Driven Inquiry: A Transformative Framework for the Criteria for Accreditation**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Learn how an HLC member institution used the revised Criteria for Accreditation to reimagine the accreditation process as a purposeful reflection that strengthens mission integration. This interactive session introduces Mission-Driven Inquiry, a practical and scalable “how-to” framework for applying the Criteria to promote mission-centered institutional improvement and build campus-wide engagement.

**Shawna Herwick**, *Southeast Community College Area*

**Nicholas Salestrom**, *Southeast Community College Area*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-83 - **Partnering for Impact: Workforce Development Aligned with Mission and Sustainability**

**St. Gallen** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

In this session, presenters will share how a large, urban community college aligns workforce partnerships with mission and sustainability. Strategies include co-developing workforce-driven programs (credit and non-credit), leveraging paid internships and apprenticeships, and embedding work-based learning throughout the curriculum.

**Judith Tomasson**, *Central New Mexico Community College*

**Amardeep Kahlon**, *Central New Mexico Community College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-84 - **Past Credits, Future Graduates: A Blueprint for Student Comebacks**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Highland Community College recently launched the Scottie Gold Initiative, a transformative program to support former students in completing their degrees. This program provides up to 12 credit hours tuition-free for qualified students to return to the College and complete their degree. This session outlines lessons learned in creating this program.

**Vincent Bowhay**, *Highland Community College*

**Eric Ketchum**, *Highland Community College*

**Jennifer Schiller**, *Highland Community College*

#### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences  
With Accreditation**

**Teaching, Learning and  
Student Success**

**HLC's  
Academies**

**Building a Sustainable  
Future**

**New to HLC**

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-85 - **Reimagining Faculty Qualifications: One College's Approach**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Coconino Community College will share its evolving approach to faculty credentialing, developed in response to HLC policy updates. Our model balances accreditation compliance with fair hiring practices and institutional mission, offering a flexible, innovative framework for identifying highly qualified faculty across diverse academic and professional backgrounds.

**Jennifer Jameson**, *Coconino County Community College*

**Matthew Hernando**, *Coconino County Community College*

**Sarah Rencher**, *Coconino County Community College*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-86 - **The Year is 2040: Futures Thinking for Strategic Planning**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

How can higher education prepare for an uncertain future? The College for Financial Planning applies futures thinking methods to strategic planning and academic programming. Participants will learn how CFFP uses collaborative, data-informed processes to construct future scenarios for financial education and translate them into strategic priorities and new programming opportunities.

**Amy Rell**, *College for Financial Planning, Inc.*

**Bethany Alden-Rivers**, *College for Financial Planning, Inc.*

**Jeffrey Barnette**, *College for Financial Planning, Inc.*

10:30 a.m.–11:15 a.m.

### C-87 - **Writing an Assurance Argument in Times of Challenge and Change**

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Bradley University underwent its Year 4 Assurance Review in July 2025 during a time of institutional challenge and change. The established organizational structures that support faculty and staff collaboration resulted in an honest and accurate Assurance Argument, a successful review, and continued organizational support for accreditation work.

**Jennifer Burge**, *Bradley University*

**11:15 a.m.**

11:15 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

### **Networking Break**

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**Regency Ballroom Foyer** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**Zurich Ballroom Foyer** First Floor Swissôtel

11:45 a.m.

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

C-88 - **Featured: Microcreds and EdTech: Open Badges to LERs and LinkedIn Public Private Partnerships to Canadian Higher Education Policy**

**Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**FEATURED PRESENTATION**

Drawing on a diverse background spanning higher education and workforce development, tech and international policy across multiple countries, Jake Hirsch-Allen will discuss the evolution of microcredentials and the various technologies that support them. From Microsoft and LinkedIn partnerships with numerous State governments to experiments spanning verifiable credentials, digital wallets, online- and work-integrated-learning, listen to what's worked and what's not, in the tumultuous recent history of short term credentials.

**Jake Hirsch-Allen**, *The Dais*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

C-89 - **Federal Compliance Overview**

**Grand Ballroom F** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

In November 2025, HLC's Board of Trustees adopted changes to HLC's Federal Compliance requirements, which are effective September 1, 2026. This session provides an overview of HLC's Federal Compliance requirements with an emphasis on practical tips for preparing a Federal Compliance Filing.

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Bob Haas**, *Marion Technical College*

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

C-90 - **Helping Students Succeed**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**HLC PRESENTATION**

The meaning of student success varies by institutional context and environment. In this session, an HLC Senior Scholar will moderate a session of three recent Academy graduates who will share their experiences, highlight initiatives they have implemented to advance student success, and discuss their ongoing efforts.

**Janice Denton**, *University of Cincinnati*

**Christina Corsi**, *Lakeland Community College*

**Mary Pflanz**, *Donnelly College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-91 - **HLC Peer Corps: What It Is and How to Apply**

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### HLC PRESENTATION

In this session, HLC staff members will introduce the role of the Peer Corps and expectations for peer reviewers. The application, selection and training process for new peer reviewers will also be presented.

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Julia Goeke**, *Higher Learning Commission*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-92 - **The Focused Visit**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Focused visits examine specific aspects of an institution or follow up on concerns identified by a previous evaluation process. This session will discuss preparation of the institutional report, the on-site visit and the decision-making process.

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Steve Eckman**, *York University*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-93 - **An Indigenous Approach to Sustainability at Tohono O'odham Community College**

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This presentation features an holistic sustainability effort, describing the cultural framework, exploring the College's simultaneous involvement in the formation of a comprehensive sustainability plan from an Indigenous perspective, and revealing key recommendations for other institutions seeking solutions to fiscal, cultural, student success, and natural resource issues.

**Adrian Quijada**, *Tohono O'odham Community College*

**Brennen Jensen**, *Blue Strike Environmental*

**Ofelia Zepeda**, *Tohono O'odham Community College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-94 - **Beyond Internships: Embedding a Work-Based Learning Model Across All Programs**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Southwest Tech, the 2025 Aspen Prize winner, redefines student success through its Work-Based Learning (WBL) Model. This session highlights how embedding pre-career awareness, career exploration, preparation, and application across all programs ensures higher graduation rates, equitable access, and transformative post-college outcomes – helping all students graduate into family-sustaining, high-wage jobs.

**Mandy Henkel**, *Southwest Wisconsin Technical College*

**Cynde Larsen**, *Southwest Wisconsin Technical College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-95 - **Crafting an Effective Interim Report for Institutional Transformation**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session offers a practical, campus-wide approach to preparing an interim report addressing HLC concerns. Presenters will share strategies, project management tools, and collaboration practices for effective and actionable report preparation, emphasizing ownership, alignment with strategic planning, and organization around the Core Components of HLC's Criteria.

**Emily Monti**, *John A. Logan College*

**Joseph Dethrow**, *John A. Logan College*

**Stephanie Chaney Hartford**, *John A. Logan College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-96 - **Credit for Prior Learning and Credentials in Workforce Pathways**

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session will explore how technical certificates were embedded into associate degree pathways to create stackable, workforce-aligned credentials. Highlighting two integrated models, it covers curriculum design, employer collaboration, and measurable outcomes—demonstrating a scalable approach that enhances employability, supports regional workforce needs, and aligns with HLC standards for academic innovation.

**Enid Halewyn**, *Blackhawk Technical College*

**Rachael Briggs**, *Blackhawk Technical College*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## C-97 - **Due Diligence and Decisions: Navigating the Change of Control Process**

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This presentation explores how two Midwestern Catholic universities pursued a strategic combination through due diligence and decision-making. It highlights accreditation, governance, and institutional responsibilities within the Change of Control process, offering insights into navigating complex transitions while advancing Education Together—a shared vision rooted in mission, transparency, and sustainability.

**Tracy Schuster-Matlock**, *St. Ambrose University*

**Amy Novak**, *St. Ambrose University / Mount Mercy University*

**Todd Olson**, *Mount Mercy University*

### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences  
With Accreditation**

**Teaching, Learning and  
Student Success**

**HLC's  
Academies**

**Building a Sustainable  
Future**

**New to HLC**

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-98 - **Empowering Change: A Participatory Model for Academic Portfolio Reviews**

**St. Gallen** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### **INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION**

Discover how a participatory academic portfolio review drives strategic change through transparent processes, stakeholder engagement, and data-informed decision-making. Gain actionable strategies for evaluating and categorizing programs to support institutional effectiveness, resource planning, and continuous improvement, drawing on insights from the University of Illinois Springfield's portfolio review experience.

**Brandon Schwab**, *University of Illinois Springfield*

**Michele Gribbins**, *University of Illinois Springfield*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-99 - **Leading Through the Lens of the New Criteria**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION**

This presentation will show how University of Wisconsin-Stout leveraged lessons from Assurance Arguments while preparing for a comprehensive evaluation. The session highlights our step-by-step approach, including forming an Assurance Argument team, assigning ownership of Criteria, managing the process through a Teams site, and using an iterative writing-and-review cycle.

**Meridith Wentz**, *University of Wisconsin-Stout*

**Bridget Dewees**, *University of Wisconsin-Stout*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-100 - **Leveraging Department and Committee Reports to Strengthen Decisions and Budgeting**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION**

Learn how North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS) streamlined end-of-year reporting from departments and committees to strengthen decision-making, align budgeting with strategic goals, and foster cross-campus accountability. This session provides a practical framework and tools to improve transparency, collaboration, and institutional effectiveness adaptable to any higher education setting.

**Kara Gruenberg**, *North Dakota State College of Science*

**Gary Abbott**, *North Dakota State College of Science*

**Heather Retzer**, *North Dakota State College of Science*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-101 - Mapping Emerging Dimensions of Student Success to NSSE's Measures

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

#### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

Emerging dimensions of student success include relationship-rich education, career experiences, and integrated academic challenge and support, and such interventions benefit from evidence. This session introduces the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)'s new Student Success Framework to apply engagement data to student success dimensions, share results, and highlight institution examples.

**Jillian Kinzie**, *Indiana University Bloomington*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-102 - Power of the Nudge: Measuring the Impact of Proactive Outreach

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Student persistence and academic achievement are critical factors in higher education. Both often seem illusive. This quantitative study examines whether proactive faculty student outreach positively impacts student course completion and performance, as measured by the number of Fs and withdrawals, in online business courses at an open-enrollment university.

**Catherine McBride**, *Colorado Technical University*

**Cynthia Solari**, *Colorado Technical University*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### C-103 - The ALO Role and Substantive Change

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

An institution's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) shares their experience managing HLC processes for notification and application for substantive change. This session will provide an overview for preparing successful change applications. Actionable strategies and transferable insights will allow participants to reflect upon how they can approach substantive change at their institutions.

**Carole Splendore**, *University of Saint Francis*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### SS-5 - Supreme Court Update for Higher Education Institutions

**Zurich A-D** First Floor Swissôtel

#### SHOWCASE PRESENTATION

**HUSCH  
BLACKWELL**

Husch Blackwell attorneys will take a high-level look at recent Supreme Court decisions and federal regulatory changes that impact campuses. Topics include: 2024-2025 Supreme Court update and the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. We will assess and anticipate the regulatory landscape as we navigate the ongoing challenges from a legal perspective. *Note that this is a high-level presentation on federal regulatory requirements and is not a discussion of Federal Compliance filing or review during the accreditation process.*

**Hayley Hanson**, *Husch Blackwell LLP*

## 12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### Lunch and Discussion With Tribal College Representatives

**Grand Ballroom B** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Welcome to attendees from Tribal Colleges and Universities as we gather for this year's update and conversation. The session immediately follows the annual luncheon gathering.

**Jamie Stanesa**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Barbara Gellman-Danley**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Elmer Guy**, *Navajo Technical University*

## 1:45 p.m.

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-104 - Considerations for Interim Monitoring

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Presenters offer an overview of the interim report process, providing insights into how the analysis is done, sharing models of best practice, and exploring efficient, effective, and productive strategies to approach writing your interim report.

**Lee Bash**, *Graceland University*

**Jackie Freeze**, *Western Wyoming Community College*

**Sherilyn Poole**, *Governors State University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-105 - Criteria for Accreditation: Criterion 4

**Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

In this session, an HLC staff liaison and an experienced peer reviewer will explore Criterion 4. Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning.

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Daisy Halvorson**, *Waldorf University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-106 - HLC's Credential Lab Innovation Center

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Attendees will learn about HLC's Credential Lab Innovation Center pilot program and the framework for credential innovation. The "Design Camp" pilot for colleges and universities included change leadership, skills validation, alignment to labor market needs and strategic planning for transformation.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tara Laughlin**, *Education Design Lab*

**Melanie Booth**, *Nectary Solutions*

**Brooks Doherty**, *Rasmussen University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-107 - Tracking and Reporting Changes to Existing Educational Programs

**Grand Ballroom F** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

HLC policy and federal regulations require that institutions notify HLC of certain changes to existing educational programs. This session will review HLC requirements, and a panel of institutional representatives will share their methods for tracking programmatic changes so that timely notification to HLC can be made when required.

**Tom Bordenkircher**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Shawna Herwick**, *Southeast Community College Area*

**Ryan Morgan**, *Central State University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-108 - Using Professional Development to Build Engagement and Advocacy Around Assessment

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

Hear strategies from different institutions on how they have implemented professional development tools to generate engagement and institutional advocacy for successfully improving assessment efforts across their campuses.

**Janet Smith**, *Pittsburg State University*

**Laura Busey**, *Blue Ridge Community and Technical College*

**Monica Quattlebaum**, *Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas*

**Jeremy Tutty**, *Maricopa Community Colleges-Chandler-Gilbert Community College*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-109 - Aligning Student Activities With Institutional Learning Outcomes

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This presentation introduces a scalable assessment model for co- and extracurricular learning. Initially designed for individual events, it now supports semester-long engagement aligned with Institutional Learning Outcomes. Attendees will gain adaptable tools, templates, and strategies to embed intentional assessment into student-led, diversity, equity and inclusion, and student life programming.

**Andrea Walton**, *Illinois Central College*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-110 - Beyond the Main Campus: Multi-Location Site Visit Across Diverse Locations

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Arkansas State University – Newport provides participants with actionable strategies to effectively communicate expectations and key information to internal teams and external partners and shares a practical framework for planning and executing successful multi-location site visits across diverse locations (including high schools and correctional facilities).

**Anna K. Westman**, *Arkansas State University-Newport*

**Typhanie Myers**, *Arkansas State University-Newport*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-111 - **Building Confidence for a Successful Comprehensive Evaluation**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Preparing for a comprehensive evaluation? Discover how Nebraska Methodist College navigated the process. This session will share practical strategies for success - building infrastructure and teams, gathering evidence, writing the Assurance Argument, and engaging the campus in the whole process - offering lessons adaptable to institutions of any size.

**Will Roberts**, *Nebraska Methodist College of Nursing and Allied Health*

**Lindsay Snipes**, *Nebraska Methodist College of Nursing and Allied Health*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-112 - **Developing Programs to Support Social and Economic Mobility of Students**

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Social and economic mobility of students is a significant objective at many institutions. But what does that mean for institutional programs and long-term planning? This presentation details the use of industry data, student profiles and wage data to focus institutional resources on programs that directly impact social and economic mobility.

**Larry Sanderson**, *Santa Fe Community College*

**Yash Morimoto**, *Santa Fe Community College*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-113 - **From Checkboxes to Meaningful Change: Faculty Development for Assessment**

**Zurich A-D** First Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session highlights faculty development as the key to advancing meaningful assessment of student learning. We share layered strategies including microlearning, mentoring, consultations, and communities of practice that build faculty capacity. Participants will gain adaptable approaches to support sustainable, mission-driven assessment practices at their own institutions.

**Lou Jensen**, *Creighton University*

**Gail Jensen**, *Creighton University*

**Guy McHendry**, *Creighton University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-114 - **Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Accreditation**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session introduces an AI-powered tool developed by an HLC member institution to manage their accreditation with HLC. Designed for institutions with diverse missions, the tool enhances submission quality and efficiencies, and provides real-time support. Attendees will learn how AI can transform accreditation work across institutional types.

**Hal Morgan**, *University of Phoenix*

**Samantha Ronsick**, *University of Phoenix*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-115 - **Measuring What Matters: Student Voice in Faculty Development**

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session highlights New Mexico Junior College (NMJC)'s Quality Initiative using student voice to enhance faculty development for improved student engagement and success. From 2022-2024, NMJC used a data-driven, collaborative approach, deploying targeted strategies and measuring impact. Learn how faculty development, support, and shared governance transformed teaching and learning environments.

**Stephanie Ferguson**, *New Mexico Junior College*

**William Brown**, *New Mexico Junior College*

**Dianne Marquez**, *New Mexico Junior College*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-116 - **Reimagining Recruitment: A Virtual Open House Success Story**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Amid shifting dynamics in higher education and online learning, fostering meaningful connections between prospective students and academic programs is vital. The Virtual Open House initiative was developed to address this need, creating intentional engagement opportunities that enhance student experience while advancing institutional goals for recruitment and success.

**Charlotte Ellington**, *National University*

**Nick Ames**, *National University*

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

### C-117 - **Scaling Access and Equity Through Open Educational Resources**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session explores affordability challenges and the impact of open educational resources (OER) through mixed-methods research on cost savings, retention, and GPA outcomes. Presenters will highlight faculty development initiatives, institutional supports, and policy changes that sustain OER adoption, linking these efforts to equity, accreditation priorities, and institutional effectiveness.

**Brittany Peterson**, *Southern Illinois University Edwardsville*

**Elza Ibroscheva**, *Southern Illinois University Edwardsville*

**Mark Poepsel**, *Southern Illinois University Edwardsville*

#### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences  
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**Teaching, Learning and  
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**HLC's  
Academies**

**Building a Sustainable  
Future**

**New to HLC**

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## C-118 - **Transformative: Shaping College Culture to Elevate Student Learning and Success**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

In 2022, Estrella Mountain Community College adopted a focused strategic planning process emphasizing student completion and wellness. Using a Wildly Important Goal framework, we saw progress in retention, completion and wellness. This presentation highlights implementing 2–3 collegewide goals, key decision and communication strategies, and lead metrics for evaluating success.

**Rey Rivera**, *Maricopa Community Colleges-Estrella Mountain Community College*

**John Snelling**, *Estrella Mountain Community College*

**Minerva Pargas**, *Maricopa Community Colleges-Estrella Mountain Community College*

2:30 p.m.

2:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

### Networking Break and Expo

**Grand Hall** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

**Regency Ballroom Foyer** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

**Zurich Ballroom Foyer** First Floor Swissôtel

3:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

## C-119 - **Featured: Shifting Landscapes: Higher Education's Response to Changing Immigration Policies**

**Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### FEATURED PRESENTATION

Immigrant-origin and international students, faculty, and staff are vital contributors to higher education's mission to build America's national talent pipeline. They support enrollment, teaching and research, fuel innovation, drive economic growth, and strengthen our workforce. However, changing immigration policies have presented challenges for higher education. This talk will explore the complex intersection of immigration and higher education, analyze the latest policy and legal actions, share institutional strategies for navigating immigration policies and offer approaches for supporting students and employees.

**Miriam Feldblum**, *Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education & Immigration*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

## C-120 - **Change of Control, Structure or Organization: Part 2**

**Vevey 3-4** Second Floor Swissôtel

### HLC PRESENTATION

Part 2 will explore special considerations for certain types of Change of Control, Structure or Organization, including those constituting an acquisition followed by a merger or consolidation. This part will also discuss HLC procedure as it relates to guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education for such transactions.

**Robert Rucker**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Sarah Hallett**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**John Marr**, *Higher Learning Commission*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

## C-121 - **Coming Soon: Updates to HLC's Competency-Based Education Materials**

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

HLC is updating documentation and processes to better reflect the changing landscape as we work to ensure quality competency-based education (CBE) offerings. Join this session to learn about the planned changes and provide your feedback.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Tom Bordenkircher**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Jessica Hodell**, *Sinclair Community College*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

## C-122 - **Graduate Education: Considerations for Program Development**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

Thinking about starting a graduate program for the first time, or moving from master's to doctoral level programs? Join this session for an overview of the elements necessary for proposing and offering high-quality, rigorous graduate education.

**Jamie Stanesa**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Steph Brzuzy**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Debora Johnson-Ross**, *Wartburg College*

**Kimberly Muller**, *Lake Superior State University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

## C-123 - **Writing the Narrative for the Assurance Argument**

**Grand Ballroom F** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

### HLC PRESENTATION

HLC staff members and experienced ALOs draw on lessons learned from serving as peer reviewers and preparing for a comprehensive evaluation visit, as they share new insights on telling your institution's unique story and effectively linking evidence to the Criteria for Accreditation.

**Allison Langford**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Lydia Thebeau**, *Missouri Baptist University*

**Meridith Wentz**, *University of Wisconsin-Stout*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-124 - **Aligning Mission With Market: Launching Programs for Emerging Workforce Needs**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Discover how Central New Mexico Community College aligns its mission with emerging workforce and community needs. We'll share a practical model for rapidly evaluating, launching, and scaling academic and workforce training programs that respond to industry demands while maintaining mission alignment, academic quality, and clear pathways for our students.

**Dani Adams**, *Central New Mexico Community College*

**Kristen Ferris**, *Central New Mexico Community College*

**Andrea Sisneros-Wichman**, *CNM Ingenuity*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-125 - **An Integrative, Data-Informed Model for Belonging and Student Success**

**Zurich E-G** First Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Alder Graduate School's project addresses opportunities for increasing belonging, equity, and accessibility to improve learning environments. Presenters will discuss the process of collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data to identify goals, and create and implement a mission-driven improvement plan integrating all areas of institutional functioning to advance belonging and student success.

**Rashida Fisher**, *Adler Graduate School*

**Nikki Marchand**, *Adler Graduate School*

**Asha Dickerson**, *Adler Graduate School*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-126 - **Designing Seamless Transfer Pathways for a Sustainable Postsecondary Ecosystem**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

In this panel, key leaders will discuss the development and implementation of Roadmap 2.0, a strategic collaboration among three Chicago institutions for streamlining the transfer process, including opportunities for scaling across Illinois and nationally, with an emphasis on equitable outcomes and social mobility in today's higher education landscape.

**Nikos Varelas**, *University of Illinois Chicago*

**Megan Hougard**, *Chicago Public Schools*

**Amy Knetl**, *University of Illinois Chicago*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-127 - **From Both Sides: Lessons in a Year 4 Review**

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session offers dual perspectives on HLC's Year 4 review. Presenters will share institutional strategies and peer reviewer insights, highlighting expectations, pitfalls, and effective practices. Participants will gain practical guidance to strengthen compliance, support continuous improvement, and approach their own mid-cycle review with greater confidence.

**Marla Smith**, *Mitchell Technical College*

**Kelly Oehlerking**, *Western Dakota Technical College*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-128 - **From Data to Practice: Building Student Success Through Faculty Development**

**Montreux** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Colorado Technical University developed a comprehensive faculty training program using HLC Student Success Academy data to create a “culture of care” for early-program students. This session demonstrates how data-driven professional development improved student persistence rates through systematic implementation of supportive teaching practices across persistence-challenged programs.

**Jennifer Palmer**, *Colorado Technical University*

**Amanda Herwatic**, *Colorado Technical University*

**Jeffrey Kaplan**, *Colorado Technical University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-129 - **Leveraging Indigenous Culture in the Accreditation Process**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This presentation explores how Red Lake Nation College successfully integrates its unique Indigenous cultural background into its accreditation status through the use of an Institutional Framework, demonstrating how mission-aligned values and outcomes can serve as a powerful engine for institutional improvement even within the rigorous context of accreditation standards.

**Tami Nendick**, *Red Lake Nation College*

**Nadine King**, *Red Lake Nation College*

**Steve Watkins-Melgarejo**, *Red Lake Nation College*

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**Teaching, Learning and  
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**New to HLC**

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-130 - **Powering Persistence: Embedding State Services for Student Success**

**Vevey 1-2** Second Floor Swissôtel

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

What if students could focus on learning—not survival? This session explores Oakland Community College's partnership with Michigan's Department of Health and Human Services to embed caseworkers. Discover how this replicable model reduces basic-needs barriers and supports persistence, well-being, and student achievement through direct access to vital resources.

**Kristina Marshall**, *Oakland Community College*

**Steven Simpson**, *Oakland Community College*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-131 - **Proactive Preparation for Federal Compliance Review: A Three-Phase Approach**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session presents a three-phase model for preparing the HLC Federal Compliance Filing. Grounded in the federal Seven Elements of Effective Compliance, the approach emphasizes early planning, cross-functional collaboration, and sustainable monitoring to reduce risk, strengthen institutional accountability, and reduce last-minute pressures.

**Laura Myers**, *Ohio University*

**Loralyn Taylor**, *Ohio University*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-132 - **Sailing the Ship of Theseus: Strategic Planning for Sustainable Futures**

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Imagine a strategic plan that mirrors the Greek myth of the Ship of Theseus where parts of the plan continually change while structure remains intact year after year. Instead of re-inventing the strategic plan every five years or so, create a plan that constantly adapts, but never truly ends.

**Brian Inbody**, *Neosho County Community College*

**Sarah Robb**, *Neosho County Community College*

3:00 p.m.–3:45 p.m.

### C-133 - **Unpacking the 2025 Carnegie Classifications**

**Zurich A-D** First Floor Swissôtel

#### VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION

Join us to explore the reimagined Carnegie Classifications. This session will dive deep into the multidimensional Institutional Classification, the new Student Access and Earnings Classification, and the updated research designations. With examples, a live visualization demo, and key insights, come ready to rethink how we define and plan for success.

**Sara Gast**, *American Council on Education*

**Mushtaq Gunja**, *American Council on Education*

## 4:15 p.m.

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-134 - **Asking for a Friend: Anonymous ALO Questions From the Field** **Grand Ballroom D** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

HLC staff members will respond to questions gathered anonymously in this fun and informative session for ALOs. Submit your questions in advance at the registration desk in the Grand Ballroom Foyer.

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Patricia Newton-Curran**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-135 - **Credential Lab Institutional Endorsement Listening Session** **Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Bring your questions and let's explore how an institution's short-term credential program might benefit from an HLC Endorsement! This is a listening session designed for conversations among attendees.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Eva Sitek**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-136 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Bordenkircher and Stanesa** **Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Tom Bordenkircher**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Jamie Stanesa**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-137 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Lootens-White and Myers** **Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Andrew Lootens-White**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Lindsey Myers**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-138 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Sweeney and Brzuzy** **Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Anthea M. Sweeney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Steph Brzuzy**, *Higher Learning Commission*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-139 - **5% Better Learners: Embed Metacognition to Improve Learning**

**Michigan 1** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Would you like your students to learn better? Faculty can help students learn better by embedding metacognitive tools in their classes, tools that students can take with them to other classes and beyond graduation. Interdisciplinary faculty have built metacognitive tools into their classes and their discipline, finding success for students.

**Ed Cunliff**, *University of Central Oklahoma*

**Kathy Smith**, *University of Central Oklahoma*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-140 - **From Scramble to Sustainable: How an Accreditation Playbook Drives Improvement**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Turn accreditation from a one-time event into a lasting strength. Learn how Mid-State Technical College sustains accreditation education between cycles, ingrains it into college culture, and equips faculty, staff, students, and boards through interactive visit simulations and “Tell Your Accreditation Story” exercises that will help you strategize for success.

**Bethine Ellie**, *Mid-State Technical College*

**Sheila Cover**, *Mid-State Technical College*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-141 - **Grow Your Own: Leadership Development for Faculty and Staff**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Truman State University’s Truman Leadership Academy (TLA) is a community-driven leadership development program for faculty and staff. This session will describe the development, structure, and outcomes of TLA, offering a replicable, scalable, low-cost, grassroots model for institutions interested in a sustainable, accessible approach to strengthening leadership development on their campus.

**Tim Walston**, *Truman State University*

**Jonathan Vieker**, *Truman State University*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-142 - **Just a Flesh Wound: Developing a Culture of Data-Driven Decision Making**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

This session will provide institutional leaders with insights into developing a culture of data-driven decision making. Attendees should gain perspective into key data and analytics that can be used to support institutional effectiveness, methods to effectively communicate information, and success stories of data-driven decision making.

**Aidan Dunleavy**, *Butler County Community College*

**Tamara Daniel**, *Butler County Community College*

**Heather Rinckenbaugh**, *Butler County Community College*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### C-143 - **Resilient by Design: Leading Change for a Sustainable Academic Future**

**Plaza Ballroom** Lobby Level Hyatt East Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Rapid changes in higher education require innovative strategies to connect enrollment planning with workforce development. This presentation highlights partnership approaches that help institutions meet student, employer, and community needs, enhance student success, improve organizational outcomes, and ensure long-term academic quality, sustainability, and relevance in a changing educational landscape.

**Suzanne Brown**, *Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing*

**Carole Eatock**, *Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing*

**Christina Garcia**, *Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### SS-6 - **The Broken Bookstore and Student Success: How Institutions Are Fixing It**

**Grand Ballroom F** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### SHOWCASE PRESENTATION



Institutions are facing challenges in providing affordable, reliable access to course materials amid rising costs, dependence on digital courseware and declining sustainability of traditional bookstore

operations. This session explores how institutional leaders are partnering with faculty to improve Day 1 access, address affordability and align course materials strategies with student success goals.

**Ginny Conners**, *BibliU*

**Dan Kinney**, *Iowa Western Community College*

**Michael Moore**, *University of New Hampshire*

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

### SS-7 - **Sponsor Showcase: Cengage**

**Grand Ballroom B** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### SHOWCASE PRESENTATION



5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m.–6:15 p.m.

### **State Partners Reception** *(By Invitation Only)*

**Randolph 3** Concourse Level Hyatt East Tower

#### NETWORKING

Please join us for snacks and conversation with state partners and HLC representatives.

**Marla Morgen**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Brenna Goss**, *Higher Learning Commission*

# Tuesday, March 24

## Day at a Glance

8:00 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

**ALO Coffee and Conversation** *Sponsored in part by*  Interfolio

8:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

**FEATURED: Civic Engagement Workshop**

9:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

### 8:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

**ALO Coffee and Conversation**

**Grand Ballroom B** Ballroom Level | Hyatt East Tower

#### NETWORKING

Join fellow ALOs at a complimentary coffee networking hour to connect and engage about matters related to your role.

*Sponsored in part by*  Interfolio

8:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

### C-144 - **Featured: Civic Engagement Workshop**

**Grand Ballroom F** Ballroom Level Hyatt East Tower

#### **FEATURED PRESENTATION**

This interactive session will explore developing and assessing successful civic engagement initiatives. Participants will share strategies on developing partnerships and funding resources, promoting and sustaining student participation, building and sustaining institutional capacity, measuring and assessing the impact of civic engagement on student success, and integrating civic learning into general education.

**Brian Dille**, *Mesa Community College*

## 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### C-145 - **Exploring the Learning Educational Records (LER) Accelerator Initiative**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **VIEWPOINT PRESENTATION**

Hear from institutions participating in the LER Accelerator initiative as they share insights from their digital credential projects and explore the principles guiding LER adoption and implementation.

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Trevor Cox**, *University of Central Oklahoma*

**Brad Hamel**, *Northern Michigan University*

**Melanie Booth**, *Nectary Solutions*

**Julia Spears**, *Marshall University*

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### C-146 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Lootens-White and Myers**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **HLC PRESENTATION**

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Andrew Lootens-White**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Lindsey Myers**, *Higher Learning Commission*

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### C-147 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Stenson and Wornhoff**

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### **HLC PRESENTATION**

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**Linnea A. Stenson**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Amanda Wornhoff**, *Higher Learning Commission*

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### C-148 - **The Connected ALO: Building Campus Networks for Continuous Improvement**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) serves as a conduit between the institution and HLC. The most effective ALOs are connectors — collaborating with faculty, administrators, and staff to embed accreditation into the institution's culture. This session explores how ALOs can foster a culture of continuous improvement by building a campus network.

**Jamal Scott**, *National Louis University*

**Kathleen Gorski**, *Harper College*

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### C-149 - **Accreditation Journey From Focused Visits and Monitoring to Open Pathway**

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Actionable strategies Shawnee Community College used for its 2025 comprehensive evaluation, including leveraging existing committees for Assurance Review, organizing evidence collection, crafting the Assurance Argument, and engaging the campus with creative, fun strategies to make accreditation preparation collaborative, practical, and even enjoyable.

**Kristin Shelby**, *Shawnee Community College*

**Wendy Harris**, *Shawnee Community College*

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### C-150 - **Generating Insights From NSC PDP Analysis Ready Data Files**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Institutions participating in the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP) are provided student-level data in the form of Analysis Ready Cohort and Course Files. Although comprehensive in nature, drawing insights from these data sets can be challenging. This presentation will share how one institution addressed these challenges.

**Monte Schaff**, *United Tribes Technical College*

9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.

### C-151 - **New Best Friends: Enhancing Collaboration to Optimize the Student Experience**

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

We will share our experiences integrating student success into our first-year seminar, The Reflective Woman (TRW). Our approach centers students' connection to the university and resources. Over the last two years we have continued to focus on collaboration between faculty and staff to improve student retention, learning, and connectedness.

**Maddie Jarmola**, *St. Catherine University*

**Rachel Neiwert**, *St. Catherine University*

## 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### C-152 - **Canopy Office Hours: Ask Us Anything**

**Regency C** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Drop in during this time to ask questions about HLC's Canopy system. Canopy allows institutional representatives and peer reviewers to easily update their records and stay informed about upcoming reviews and other requirements. HLC staff members will have a live connection to Canopy for demonstration purposes.

**Jon Davenport**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Stephanie Kramer**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**William Mahoney**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### C-153 - **Institutional Team Debrief and Next Steps**

**Regency D** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

In this working session for institutions with two or more conference attendees, HLC annual conference committee members will prompt discussion to help you engage with colleagues from your institution. Reflect on lessons learned during the conference and ponder key takeaways that can inform future priorities at your institution.

**Diane Nyhammer**, *Waubensee Community College*

**Janet Smith**, *Pittsburg State University*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### C-154 - **Office Hours With Liaisons: Marr and Solomon**

**Regency B** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### HLC PRESENTATION

Drop in to this informal Q&A session to ask general questions of HLC staff liaisons.

**John Marr**, *Higher Learning Commission*

**Karen J. Solomon**, *Higher Learning Commission*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### C-155 - **Better Assessment: Helping Academic Departments Tell Their Story**

**Crystal A** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Assessment of student learning has long been an expectation, yet many institutions struggle to demonstrate that faculty use assessment findings to guide improvements to student learning. This session describes one institution's strategy to change the institutional culture to a focus on improvement rather than assessing to meet a reporting requirement.

**Angela Bryan**, *The University of West Florida*

**Carolyn Beamer**, *The University of West Florida*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### C-156 - Making Responsible Use of AI Sustainable: Insights From the Ground

**Regency A** Ballroom Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Our university has undertaken campus-wide initiatives to encourage the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) for teaching, research, and operations. We'll share how the university's guiding principles for responsible use of AI are shaping campus functions and an in-depth look at two cases from faculty research and student advising.

**Anna Smith**, *Illinois State University*

**David Giovagnoli**, *Illinois State University*

**Roy Magnuson**, *Illinois State University*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### C-157 - Mapping Success: Student Success Plans That Transform Outcomes

**Crystal C** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Discover how Southwest Wisconsin Technical College — 2025 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence winner — transformed its student advising model into a nationally recognized best practice. Learn how this holistic, scalable approach improves access, financial readiness, and long-term success, offering actionable strategies for institutions seeking equity and excellence.

**Holly Clendenen**, *Southwest Wisconsin Technical College*

**Katie Glass**, *Southwest Wisconsin Technical College*

**CoraBeth Schmitz**, *Southwest Wisconsin Technical College*

10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

### C-158 - RISE 2030: Re-imagining the Community's College Through Inclusive Innovation

**Crystal B** Lobby Level Hyatt West Tower

#### INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

Discover how Waubensee Community College's RISE 2030 strategic plan advances equity, innovation, and community partnership through four transformative pillars. This session offers actionable insights into designing inclusive strategies that reimagine the community college experience for students, employees, and partners—grounded in mission, driven by vision, and built to inspire institutional change.

**Stacey Randall**, *Waubensee Community College*

**Brian Knetl**, *Waubensee Community College*

**Toya Webb**, *Waubensee Community College*

#### Track Key

**Institutional Experiences With Accreditation**

**Teaching, Learning and Student Success**

**HLC's Academies**

**Building a Sustainable Future**

**New to HLC**

# Thank You to Our Advisory Committees

## Higher Learning 2026 Advisory Committee

This selected group of faculty and administrative leaders at HLC member institutions played a key role in writing the Call for Proposals, reviewing submissions and planning the General Program for this year's conference. HLC thanks the following committee members:

**Casmir Agbaraji**, Navajo  
Technical University

**Daniel Boice**, University of  
Arkansas at Monticello

**Jennifer Brown**, Fort Hays  
Tech | North Central

**Cathy Cline**, East Arkansas  
Community College

**Kevin Cole**, University of  
Sioux Falls

**Lan Dong**, University of  
Illinois Springfield

**Janelle Elias**, Rio Salado  
College

**Rosemary Erickson  
Johnsen**, University of  
Minnesota, Crookston

**Levi Fox**, Southwest  
Baptist University

**Brandon Galm**, Cloud  
County Community  
College

**Kitty Kautzer**, Herzing  
University

**Paula Kinney**, Saint Paul  
College - A Community  
and Technical College

**Debra Lohe**, Saint Louis  
University

**Tony Major**, Eastern New  
Mexico University

**Diane Nyhammer**,  
Waubensee Community  
College

**Ryan Ruda**, Garden City  
Community College

**Emily Sallee**, Park  
University

**Paul Savory**, American  
College of Education

**Jenny Schanker**, Michigan  
Association of Community  
Colleges

**Janet Smith**, Pittsburg  
State University

**Marla Smith**, Mitchell  
Technical College

**Ritu Subramony**,  
University of Illinois  
Chicago

**Mark Valenzuela**,  
Washington University  
in St. Louis

**Jeanine Wald-Roof**,  
Ferris State University

**Heather Weber**,  
Chandler Gilbert  
Community College –  
Maricopa Community  
College District

## 2026 Peer Corps Advisory Committee

**Kristi Archuleta**,  
University of Central  
Oklahoma

**Cory Clasmann**,  
Southeast Technical  
College

**Rita Gulstad**, Central  
Methodist University

**Gail Jensen**,  
Creighton University

**Kathy Parkison**, Indiana  
University Kokomo

**Janet Smith**, Pittsburg  
State University

**Brent Yoder**, Friends  
University



Higher Learning  
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