



# Accreditation Basics

**ALL COLLEGE DAY | AUGUST 18, 2023**

*TODAY: Learn more about Accreditation!  
Attend 30-minute virtual Breakout Sessions  
beginning at 1:00 p.m. Check the All College Day  
digital program for schedule and details.*



## What is accreditation and the Higher Learning Commission?

Accreditation is an important indication for current students, prospective students and the community that a college is operating acceptably.

The U.S. Department of Education describes the accreditation process like this: *“Accrediting agencies ... develop evaluation criteria and conduct peer evaluations to assess whether ... those criteria are met. Institutions and/or programs that request an agency’s evaluation and that meet an agency’s criteria are then ‘accredited’ by that agency.”*

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is one of several regional and national organizations that accredits institutions of higher education such as PCC. It is a private educational association, not a government agency.

### What are the HLC’s Criteria for Accreditation?

- ▶ **CRITERION 1:** “The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.”
- ▶ **CRITERION 2:** “The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.”
- ▶ **CRITERION 3:** “The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.”
- ▶ **CRITERION 4:** “The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.”
- ▶ **CRITERION 5:** “The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.”

### In addition, the HLC has established a set of Assumed Practices and Federal Compliance expectations.

- ▶ **ASSUMED PRACTICES** are “practices shared by institutions of higher education in the United States” that are “not expected to vary by institutional mission or context.”
- ▶ **FEDERAL COMPLIANCE** regards assurances given to the U.S. Department of Education by the HLC that its “member institutions are complying with the expectations of specific federal regulations including, when applicable, Title IV program responsibilities.” Title IV refers to federal financial aid to students.

*Source: hlcommission.org*

## What is Pima’s current status with the HLC?

*Pima is FULLY ACCREDITED by the HLC. The College is seeking to Reaffirm its Accreditation.*

# What are key events in the Reaffirmation of Accreditation process?

**JUNE-OCTOBER 2023, CRITERION DRAFTS:** Teams of Pima employees are developing an Assurance Argument that will be submitted to the HLC to demonstrate our compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation.

**AUGUST 2023-APRIL 2024, HLC TOWN HALL MEETINGS:** The Town Halls are designed to provide updates on the Assurance Argument and to gather employee and community insights. Attend all or part of each session.

## 2023

### DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

August 28, 2023, 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

*Virtual available*

### DESERT VISTA CAMPUS

Sept. 19, 2023, 2:00 p.m.-7:45 p.m.

*Virtual available*

### MAINTENANCE & SECURITY

Oct. 18, 2023, 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

### NORTHWEST CAMPUS

Nov. 9, 2023, 2:00 p.m.-7:45 p.m.

*Virtual available*

### 29TH STREET COALITION CENTER

Dec. 8, 2023, 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

## 2024

### AVIATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Jan. 17, 2024, 2:00 p.m.-7:45 p.m.

### DISTRICT OFFICE

Feb. 15, 2024, 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

*Virtual available*

### WEST CAMPUS

March 14, 2024, 2:00-p.m.-7:45 p.m.

*Virtual available*

### EAST CAMPUS

April 16, 2024: 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

*Virtual available*

*Visit [pima.edu/townhalls](http://pima.edu/townhalls) for more information.*

**DECEMBER 2023, REVISIONS OF REPORTS:** A draft of the Assurance Argument and of the Branch Campus Reports, covering Desert Vista, East and West campuses, will be reviewed.

**FEBRUARY 2024, MOCK VISIT:** A comprehensive simulation of the December 2024 visit will be held throughout the College.

**JUNE 2024, EMBEDDED REPORTS:** Drafts of two Embedded Reports are due for College review. These reports will be included in the Assurance Argument. One Embedded Report covers eight locations where the College conducts or oversees teaching. The other Embedded Report concerns Dispute Resolution.

**SEPTEMBER 2024, ASSURANCE ARGUMENT REVISIONS:** Various College entities will review the Assurance Argument draft.

**OCTOBER 2024, ASSURANCE SYSTEM LOCKED:** All evidence associated with the College's Assurance Argument must be submitted to the HLC.

**DECEMBER 9-10, 2024, HLC VISIT:** Peer reviewers from the HLC will visit Pima. Peer reviewers are currently employed by or recently retired from U.S. colleges and universities.

# Who at Pima is developing information to submit to the HLC?

More than three dozen of your co-workers – faculty, staff and administrators – are working to develop Pima’s Assurance Argument and other information to submit to the HLC.

## HLC Executive Steering Committee

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## How can I learn more about Reaffirmation of Accreditation at Pima?

- ▶ **THIS AFTERNOON:** Attend 30-minute virtual Breakout Sessions beginning at 1:00 p.m. Check the All College Day digital program for schedule and details.
- ▶ Visit [pima.edu/townhalls](http://pima.edu/townhalls) for details about the Town Hall meetings.
- ▶ Visit [pima.edu/accreditation](http://pima.edu/accreditation) for more background and context.



PimaCommunityCollege