

Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Out of the six regional accreditation agencies, the HLC acknowledged the importance of the connection between the institutions and the constituencies that it serves through one of five Criteria for Accreditation.

Criterion 5: Engagement and Service required that institutions stated, “As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways that both value.” The HLC Criteria for Accreditation have been revised and adopted February 2012. They are effective in January 2013.

While there is no longer a standalone criteria titled Engagement and Service, the essential elements are embedded in the criteria in areas including the Guiding Values and the other Criteria including:

Guiding Values, “Education as a Public Purpose”, **Criterion 1 (Mission) D.** The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good. Embedding the commitment in the public good in the institutions’ mission, underscores the importance of the core component.

Other areas include, **Criterion 3**, titled, “Teaching and Learning–Quality, Resources, and Support: The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.” Within this criterion, the service component is under section 3 E, which states, “The institution fulfills its claims for an enriched educational environment.” **Subsections 1 and 2 of section 3 E.**

3.1 – The institution’s co-curricular programs are suited to its mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

3.2 – The institution engages its students and contributes to their educational experience through other activities related to its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, economic development, or others.

Connecting the public purpose of higher education and engagement among the criteria strengthens the importance of the connection to the mission and goals of Campus Compact.