HLC Accreditation 2025
Institutional Accountability Plan Charter

Prepared by the HLC Planning Group, September 2022
Institutional Accountability Plan Charter:
Outline of planning & execution of all necessary tasks to ensure continuous improvement and successful Reaffirmation of Accreditation following the HLC Comprehensive Evaluation and Peer Review in 2024-25
Plan Objectives:

• Recruit Reaffirmation Co-Chairs and Committee Co-Chairs
• Recruit members for Executive, Steering, Federal Compliance, Planning, and Criterion Committees
• Identify, gather, and generate evidence that KU meets the HLC Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices
• Establish and manage the Quality Initiative
• Prepare and submit a Federal Compliance Filing, including Worksheet on the Assignment of Credit Hours
• Prepare and submit the Assurance Argument and Evidence File
• Gather public comments, conduct surveys, etc.
• Host an on-site Peer Review Team visit at the Lawrence and Medical Center (Kansas City) campuses
• Prepare and submit an institutional response to the final report
HLC Planning Group:

- Barbara Bichelmeyer, Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor
- Jennifer Roberts, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Graduate Studies
- Mike Werle, Dean of Postdoctoral Affairs and Graduate Studies
- Jean Redeker, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & ALO
- Gina Wyant, Director, University Assessment/Assurance System Coordinator
- Stefani Buchwitz, Director, Self Graduate Programs/HLC Reaffirmation Operations Manager
- Cara Nossaman, Senior Management Analyst for Institutional Effectiveness/HLC Reaffirmation Project Manager
- Robin Lehman, Assistant Director for Programmatic Strategies/HLC Communications Manager
- Cari Alfers, Executive Assistant
- Cindy Pemberton, Consultant for HLC Reaffirmation
Institutional Accountability Plan Priorities:

- **Evidence and Assurance Argument** – The comprehensive self-study is an evidence-based submission with accompanying narrative limited to 35,000 words. The HLC now requires a broad range of proof that demonstrates compliance with the criteria and core components.

- **Identified Areas of Needed Improvement** – KU has identified several areas that require improvement in order to meet HLC requirements and assure educational quality. All identified areas have been or are in the process of being addressed.

- **Quality Initiative** – To ensure continuous improvement, HLC requires institutions to designate one major improvement effort to be undertaken between years 5 and 9 of the 10-year review cycle. KU has chosen “Developing and Scaling an Integrated Structure of Evidence-Based Assessment to Foster a Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement at KU.”
## Key Milestones:

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<th>Mo/Yr</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 2022</td>
<td>Establish committee leadership: executive, steering, federal compliance, planning group</td>
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<td>April 2022</td>
<td>Committees begin forming; designated committee members attend HLC Conference</td>
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<td>May 2022</td>
<td>University-wide review of evidence to identify gaps for each criterion; initiate changes</td>
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<td>June 2022</td>
<td>Quality Initiative Proposal Submitted to HLC (Academic Affairs)</td>
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<td>August 2022</td>
<td>Official kick-off of reaffirmation process with all committee members</td>
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<td>September 2022</td>
<td>Steering Committee and Criterion Committees begin meeting and are provided list of evidence needed</td>
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<td>October 2022</td>
<td>Federal Compliance Committee begins meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2022</td>
<td>Steering Committee holds quarterly meeting; hears subcommittee updates &amp; provides guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2023</td>
<td>Executive Committee meets to hear update</td>
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<td>Team members attend HLC Conference</td>
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<td>April – September 2023</td>
<td>Criterion Committees complete criteria reports; Steering Committee reviews criteria drafts and requests clarifications/additional info as needed</td>
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<td>August 2022</td>
<td>HLC Assumed Practices documented; Federal Compliance Packet completed</td>
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<td>April 2024</td>
<td>Designate editor to synthesize and polish criteria reports, write intro &amp; changes since last review</td>
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<td>Write Quality Initiative Report reflecting on accomplishments and strategies used</td>
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<td>September 2024</td>
<td>Share self-study draft with university community</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2024</td>
<td>Submit Assurance Argument and evidence to HLC</td>
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<td>Spring 2025</td>
<td>Peer Review Team Conducts Evaluation Visit</td>
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Communication Plan:

- hlc2025.ku.edu will be the primary method for distributing project-related information

- Variety of communication tools will be utilized to disseminate HLC information and progress to university community and other stakeholders

- Jennifer Roberts, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Graduate Studies, is the primary contact person for HLC’s Reaffirmation of Accreditation

- Regular HLC Planning Group meetings will ensure that project milestones are being met and efforts are underway to lead to successful reaffirmation of accreditation

- A semi-annual update will be provided to the Executive Leadership Committee

- MS Teams will be used as a repository for evidence and other important data and documents (drafts and final versions)
Constraints:

- Assurance Argument is limited to 35,000 words; evidence documents are the primary focus of the self-study
- KU is reported on as one university in the Assurance Argument
- HLC Criteria for Accreditation are fixed and must be adhered to
- The Federal Compliance requirements are non-negotiable
- KU will not have any influence regarding the selection of the peer review team that will conduct our HLC comprehensive evaluation
Identified Risks:

• KU has identified several areas of needed improvement to be addressed before the comprehensive evaluation occurs. Among them are these:
  ▪ One-university mission statement must be adopted and approved by KBOR
  ▪ Catalog does not list all program offerings and many program requirements are outdated
  ▪ Faculty credentials are not sufficiently documented
  ▪ No routine/institutional collection of syllabi for every course offering and no mechanism to ensure required elements are included
  ▪ Tested experience policy is inadequate and does not address graduate courses

• An interim monitoring report was submitted in September 2022 to address a “Met with Concerns” ranking on Criterion 4B in KU’s mid-cycle review in 2019; KU’s remedial actions are in process

• KU has experienced significant changes in leadership over the past 10 years

• Changes to the Criteria for Accreditation have taken effect since the last comprehensive self-study in 2015