

HLC Institutional Accreditation: The March to March

A Presentation to the Shepherd University Assembly (September 8, 2025)

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What is
institutional
accreditation?

What Accreditation Is

Institutional status required for -

Federal Financial Aid

State Operational Authorization

That sounds *incredibly*
important. Is it really
that important?

YES!

Existential Issue
Everyone's Issue

What is HLC?

What HLC Is

HLC = Higher Learning Commission

The largest of the nation's
institutional accreditors

Shepherd is a member of HLC

Why are we hearing
about this now?

Why Now

10-Year Cycle

Mid-Cycle Eval: Year 4

Reaffirmation Eval: Year 10

Reaffirmation in 2021-2022: Clean

So this is all building up
to something.

What is it?

The March to March

HLC Peer Review Team Site Visit

Monday and Tuesday, March 9-10, 2026

Team of 5 Peer Corps Reviewers

Full scope of access and authority

How are we preparing
for this evaluation?

How We Are Preparing (I)

Assurance Argument

Written to Specified Criteria (as of Sept 1)

Mission, Integrity, Teaching and Learning,
Planning

40,000 Word Limit (+Evidence)

Existence, Use, Effectiveness

How We Are Preparing (II)

Campus Engagement

Governance Structures

Operating Units (Academic, Administrative)

Ad-hoc Efforts

What are the
concerns?

The Concerns

The Old Big Two...and a New Big One

Faculty: Assessment of Student Learning

Admin: Integrated Planning and Alignment

Federal Landscape

What can we do
between now and then
to be ready?

Being Ready

Stay informed – HLC expects this

Shepherd HLC Accreditation page:
www.shepherd.edu/accreditation/

Arrange a conversation between me and
your administrative or academic units

Talk with each other. Ask me questions.
Respond quickly.

We have done this.

We can do this.

We will do this.