

# 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/](http://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.