

Monday, February 18, 2008

Oakland University prepares for 2009 accreditation visit

Oakland University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. Every 10 years, the NCA sends a team of consultant evaluators to campus to review the university for reaccreditation. Oakland University's next scheduled visit is April 2009. In preparation for the visit, the university is undertaking a one-year self-study that involves gathering evidence from across the institution to address how OU is meeting NCA criteria and identify opportunities for improvement.

Reaccreditation is an important process for the university, especially with the new medical school under development. It is essential for all units to respond with information that is requested during the self-study process.

The NCA is a regional accrediting body made up of member institutions in 19 states. The NCA is committed to improving higher education through ongoing evaluation and review. The NCA institutional accreditation process looks at the overall quality of the university and its ability to carry out its mission.

The accreditation is based on five criteria: mission and integrity; preparing for the future; student learning and effective teaching; acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge; and engagement and service. Oakland University's visit will also include three institution specific foci: distinctive undergraduate education and the first year, the medical school, and e-learning.

Oakland University has created an **HLC/NCA Self-Study** Web site to communicate self-study and reaccreditation information to the campus community. In addition, a new feature will soon be added that will allow faculty and staff can give feedback, ask questions and leave comments regarding the processes as the self-study report is written.

Most universities that hold accreditation status receive reaccreditation, but often the NCA will require focus visits on new areas that are still under development during the reaccreditation visit or areas that need improvements. Focus visits typically occur five years after the comprehensive reaccreditation visit.

For more information on the self-study or accreditation process, visit the **HLC/NCA Self-Study** Web site. As the process continues, watch **The News at OU** for updates and special information.

SUMMARY

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Created by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Monday, February 18, 2008
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