



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Welcome to the first edition of the Blue Ridge CTC Reaffirmation of Accreditation Newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide ongoing communication to the college community about the reaffirmation of accreditation process and upcoming Higher Learning Commission (HLC) site visit.

By now, you may have heard that Blue Ridge CTC is seeking reaffirmation of accreditation in March 2020. As part of this process, we must engage in the writing of an Assurance Argument and a comprehensive visit to demonstrate how we continue to meet the Higher Learning Commission's criterion for accreditation. This process affords BRCTC the unique opportunity to express our confidence in fulfilling our mission and to examine the quality and integrity of all aspects of our operations.

Over the next year, we will strive to better understand ourselves through analysis and collaboration, and your participation is an integral component of our reaffirmation effort. I encourage you to keep abreast of accreditation developments and to provide feedback. The importance of this endeavor cannot be overstated. Your hard work and commitment are not only vital but also greatly appreciated. - *Dr. Checkovich*



## HLC TRAINING TAKE-AWAYS

BRCTC is committed to preparing the college for the HLC site visit. Faculty and staff traveled to Chicago to attend assessment training including Emerging Leaders and Strategic Assessment.



1. Aligning the assessments with the learning objectives is important to help students understand the reason for assignments.
2. Engagement and student participation is critical in the learning process, as it helps the student retain more information.
3. The WHY gives the student a reason to learn beyond the letter grade.

**These three teaching strategies increase student desire to complete the program.**



# THE HIGHER LEARNING CONNECTION

MAY 2019



***“The best view comes after the hardest climb.”***

- *Author Unknown*

# BlueRidge

COMMUNITY AND  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

As BRCTC prepares for the HLC visit, one might compare it to preparing to climb a mountain. This newsletter will help the BRCTC community be aware each step of our journey.  
*The first step in climbing a mountain is to understand the terrain ahead.*



**FAQ'S**

**What is the difference between HLC and other accrediting agencies?**

There are two types of educational accreditation: institutional and specialized. HLC provides institutional accreditation. Specialized accrediting bodies evaluate particular units, schools, or programs within an institution.

**Are all BRCTC programs accredited?**

The Higher Learning Commission is an institutional level accreditation agency. Some programs or degrees at an institution (particularly in professional fields) may have accreditation from a specialized agency or association. Students preparing for careers that require licensure should inquire with their state or licensing agency to determine if specialized accreditation of their program or degree is required.

**Does BRCTC offer accredited online degree programs?**

BRCTC is approved by the Higher Learning Commission to offer online degree programs. While BRCTC does have programs in which 50% or more of the coursework could be completed online, the institution does not offer any degree or certificate programs which are fully online.

**Do BRCTC credits or degrees transfer to other HLC accredited institutions?**

Each institution determines its own policies and procedures for accepting transfer credits. The Commission expects institutions to have clear policies on transfer of credit. Questions about the transferability of credits should be directed to the institution that the student is interested in attending.

**What does the HLC Evaluate during a comprehensive visit?**

The Commission evaluates the entire education institution in terms of its mission and the HLC's Criteria for Accreditation. Aside from assessing formal educational activities, it evaluates such things as governance and administration, financial stability, admissions and student services, institutional resources, student learning, institutional effectiveness, and relationships with internal and external constituencies.

**What is the Institutional Update?**

All affiliated institutions are required to complete the Commission's Institutional Update on Organizational Information and Operational Indicators each year. This report, which is completed online, provides the commission with up-to-date information on the scope of activities of each affiliated institution and sufficient information to

understand and respond to significant shifts in an institution's capacity and/or scope of educational activities.

**How do Faculty, Staff, and Students get involved in the accreditation process?**

- Become familiar with BRCTC's mission statement and reflect on faculty, staff, and students contributions to fulfilling that mission.
- Continue to contribute to the ongoing assessment of BRCTC's programs.
- Help to gather existing information and resources at the departmental or program level.
- Attend and participate in dialogue sessions on specific topics.
- Respond to surveys conducted.
- Communicate what HLC is all about.
- Be prepared to talk about individual views and experiences with members of the HLC site visit team should the opportunity to interact with one or more of the team members arise during the site visit.

DID YOU KNOW...?  
**FUN MOUNTAIN FACT!**

**Monarch butterflies** seem to remember an ancient mountain that used to stand where Lake Superior is now, and they still veer around that long-gone obstacle during their migration flight across the lake.




**HLC FUN FACT:**

The HLC utilizes the previous BRCTC Assurance Argument as a standard when training other institutions.

