



# WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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## *Annual Accreditation Report*

*April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016*

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*Casper College • Central Wyoming College • Eastern Wyoming College • Laramie County Community College  
Northwest College • Northern Wyoming Community College District • Western Wyoming Community College*

# **WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACCREDITATION ACTIVITY**

## **APRIL 1, 2015 – MARCH 31, 2016**

This summary is provided in compliance with W.S. 21-18-202(e)(i), which requires the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) to “report the findings of institutional and specialized accreditation studies.” Because continued North Central Association – Higher Learning Commission (HLC) institutional accreditation is reaffirmed for various periods of time and institutions applied for candidacy at various times in the past, each of the Wyoming community colleges is at a different phase of the on-going regional accreditation process. An HLC regional accreditation schedule is provided on page seven.

A schedule for specialized program accreditation status begins on page nine. Each Wyoming community college has at least one program with program accreditation agency affiliation.

## **ACCREDITATION BY THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION (HLC)**

The Higher Learning Commission is an independent corporation. The HLC is one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. The HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region. Institutional accreditation is a voluntary process that serves the critical purposes of quality assurance and institutional and program improvement. Colleges that are accredited by the HLC continually evaluate their overall institutions and programs in light of the criteria for accreditation set forth by the HLC.

## **THE CRITERIA FOR (HLC) ACCREDITATION**

### **(January 1, 2013)**

The Criteria for Accreditation are the standards of quality by which the WCCC determines whether an institution merits accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation. They are as follows:

#### **Criterion One: Mission**

The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

#### **Criterion Two: Integrity (Ethical and Responsible Conduct)**

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

#### **Criterion Three: Teaching and Learning (Quality, Resources, and Support)**

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

#### **Criterion Four: Teaching and Learning (Evaluation and Improvement)**

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

## **Criterion Five: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness**

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

# **PATHWAYS TO HLC REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION**

The WCCC maintains processes for determining eligibility for accreditation, for achieving candidacy status, for achieving initial accreditation, and for maintaining accreditation. The WCCC is now replacing PEAQ with two new Pathways, the Standard Pathway and the Open Pathway. The AQIP Pathway will continue largely unchanged.

## **Standard Pathway**

The Standard Pathway seeks to achieve the following goals:

- To reduce the reporting burden on institutions by utilizing as much information and data as possible from existing institutional processes and collecting them in electronic form as they naturally occur over time
- To enhance rigor by checking institutional data annually (Institutional Update) and conducting comprehensive evaluations twice in the ten-year cycle
- To integrate as much as possible all HLC processes and requests for data into the reaffirmation of accreditation cycle

The Standard Pathway is available to all accredited institutions at any time, unless the institution is on Probation or under a Show-Cause order, when it follows a separate process. Some institutions are limited to the Standard Pathway. Two comprehensive evaluations take place in a ten year cycle: one in Year 4 and one in Year 10. Both quality assurance and quality improvement are integrated into these comprehensive evaluations as well as Federal Compliance. In addition, the institution addresses quality assurance and improvement through interim monitoring, as required. In the Standard Pathway, both assurance and improvement are directly related to the Criteria for Accreditation.

The components of the comprehensive evaluation in the Standard Pathway are:

1. An Assurance Review;
2. An Improvement Review;
3. A review of Federal Compliance;
4. An on-site visit; and
5. If applicable, a multi-campus review

## **Open Pathway**

The Open Pathway seeks to achieve the following goals:

- To enhance institutional value by opening the improvement aspect of accreditation so that institutions may choose Quality Initiatives to suit their current circumstances
- To reduce the reporting burden on institutions by utilizing as much information and data as possible from existing institutional processes and collecting them in electronic form as they naturally occur over time
- To enhance rigor by checking institutional data annually (Institutional Update) and conducting Assurance Reviews twice in the ten-year cycle
- To integrate as much as possible all HLC processes and HLC requests for data into the reaffirmation of accreditation cycle.

Two Assurance Reviews take place in the ten-year cycle; one in Year 4 and one in Year 10. The Year 4 review occurs asynchronously via the HLC's online Assurance System and without a visit. The Year 10 review also is conducted with the Assurance System but includes a visit to the campus, as noted below. Between Years 5 and 9 of the ten-year cycle, the institution proposes and completes a Quality Initiative which focuses on institutional innovation and improvement.

The components of the comprehensive evaluation in the Open Pathway are:

1. An Assurance Review;
2. A review of Federal Compliance;
3. An on-site visit; and
4. If applicable, a multi-campus review.

### **Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Pathway**

The Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) is one of several pathways leading to accreditation with the HLC. Others include the Open and Standard Pathways. AQIP differs from the other pathways in that it is premised on principles of continuous quality improvement, and its various processes and requirements are designed to assist institutions in achieving quality improvement, along with reaffirming the institution's accredited status with the HLC once every AQIP cycle. Many institutions have reported transforming their quality cultures since embarking on the AQIP Pathway. Federal compliance is reviewed.

## **WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE HLC ACCREDITATION SUMMARIES**

### **CASPER COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Casper College is preparing for the 2018-2019 academic year reaffirmation of accreditation from the HLC by continuation of a quality initiative and development of an assurance argument. The quality initiative is being completed in the HLC facilitated Persistence & Completion Academy (cohort 3; data development track). The Casper College P&C team will reach the halfway point and will participate in the May 2016 midpoint roundtable academy event. Multiple campus teams are drafting the narrative and gathering evidence to complete the assurance argument in the online HLC reporting portal. The last HLC peer review visit (PEAQ) was in 2009. All progress reports requested from that visit have been successfully submitted.

### **CENTRAL WYOMING COLLEGE (AQIP PATHWAY)**

Central Wyoming College (CWC) underwent a comprehensive re-affirmation visit under the Open Pathway in October, 2015. The college's accreditation status was subsequently re-affirmed by the HLC. As part of the re-affirmation, CWC was required to submit two interim monitoring reports. The first, due in April, 2016, asked the college to make adjustments to its credit hour policy and articulation agreements. That report was accepted by HLC and no further monitoring on those topics is required. The second monitoring report, due in October, 2017, concerns the assessment of student learning. The college is required to submit a variety of evidence of sustainable learning assessment systems.

Upon re-affirmation, CWC became eligible to choose its Accreditation Pathway, and elected to join the AQIP Pathway. CWC will participate in its first AQIP activities in the 2016-2017 academic year.

In August, 2015 CWC opened a new building in its Lander outreach location. Approval of the new location required a visit from HLC, which occurred in April, 2016. Official HLC approval of the new location is expected later in 2016.

Central Wyoming College continues to participate in HLC's 4-year Persistence and Completion Academy, which will conclude in 2018.

### **EASTERN WYOMING COLLEGE (OPEN PATHWAY)**

Eastern Wyoming College (EWC) in Torrington was recommended for a ten-year reaccreditation following the HLC team visit in 2010. A focus visit was completed October 5-6, 2014 emphasizing improving ethnic diversity among students and staff. The Institutional Actions Council of the Higher Learning Commission concurred with the evaluation findings and affirmed that the institution is addressing the concerns related to diversity. Eastern Wyoming College has been accepted and is participating in the Higher Learning Commission Persistence and Student Completion Academy. The next comprehensive visit will be scheduled for 2020-2021.

### **LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE (AQIP PATHWAY)**

Laramie County Community College (LCCC) has participated in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) to maintain its accreditation since 2006. As part of this participation, LCCC worked on several action projects during the reporting period. These are summarized below.

Through the project to Conduct an Environmental Scan of the Albany County Campus (ACC) Service Area, LCCC is examining stakeholders' educational and workforce development needs in Albany County and the City of Laramie. Results will be used to develop academic programming and services to meet those needs and to improve recruitment, retentions, and completions. This project will be completed in fall 2016.

LCCC is implementing the Student Planning module of the Colleague student information system during the 2015-2016 academic year. This module allows for electronic academic planning by students and advisors. As a result of this implementation (to be completed by September 2016), the advising/academic planning process will become more efficient and adaptable to students' ever-changing courses of action.

Through the project Develop an Institutional Projects Coordination Process, LCCC is establishing a formal, centralized process at the College for coordinating institutional projects. Its purpose is to systematically operationalize the Institution's strategic plan and advance the College's mission while making project management more effective and efficient at LCCC. The process will be fully implemented by the end of 2016.

The final project for 2015-16 is to Form a Technology Oversight Committee and Institutional Technology Plan. LCCC has established a new cross-functional committee to provide oversight and guidance for creating and implementing an institutional technology plan, which will be linked to the institution's strategic plan. The effect of this committee will be broad reaching, but most importantly it will create and enhance policies and procedures, which will guide the implementation of the new technology plan. The technology plan will be developed over the course of the next academic year.

### **NORTHERN WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT (AQIP PATHWAY)**

Northern Wyoming Community College District (NWCCD), serving Sheridan, Campbell, and Johnson counties, has participated in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) form of accreditation with the HLC since 2005. The District recently received feedback on its third Systems Portfolio, submitted fall 2015, and the response was quite favorable. With the official process of reaffirmation of accreditation coming in 2018-2019, the institution will send a team to the Strategy Forum in November 2016 and prepare for the site visit in fall 2017.

The District continues to work on Action Projects. Two of our active projects, *Assessing General Education: A Re-Evaluation of Core Abilities* and *Developing and Implementing Writing Intensive Courses in NWCCD Curriculum*, are directly related to student learning. Our third active project, which is nearly complete, is *Developing a Process Addressing Alcohol, Drug and Sexual Assault Awareness*. The District has retired 19 projects.

### **NORTHWEST COLLEGE (STANDARD PATHWAY)**

Northwest College (NWC) is fully accredited through 2018. The comprehensive PEAQ evaluation on November 15-17, 2010 resulted in recommendations in regard to assessment of student learning, governance, and planning. A focused visit in March 2013 resulted in a recommendation for no further reporting until the next scheduled comprehensive evaluation. The HLC has placed NWC into the Standard Pathway for reaffirmation.

### **WESTERN WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE (AQIP PATHWAY)**

Western Wyoming Community College (WWCC) in Rock Springs was accepted as a participant in the AQIP accreditation pathway in July, 2008. Reaffirmation of Accreditation through the AQIP Pathway is on an eight year cycle, with a comprehensive Systems Portfolio due twice in the cycle. Western submitted its first Systems Portfolio in May 2012; our second Systems Portfolio is due in June, 2017, and the process for completing that project is well underway. A leadership team attended the AQIP Strategy Forum in April, 2016, and designed an action project focused on employee onboarding and supervisor training. In accordance with AQIP requirements, and in a quest for continuous quality improvement, Western maintains a minimum of three active action projects during each academic year, with annual updates submitted to the HLC. Western was accepted into the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy in 2014, and these efforts will comprise one action project for the next few years. Additionally, in this past year, other action projects focused on Academic Rigor and a Redesign of our General Education. In the 2016-2017 academic year, we will continue our focus on the General Education Redesign project and the work of the Persistence and Completion project, as well as the new Employee Onboarding and Supervisor Training project.

# HLC Accreditation Schedule

(Last updated April 2016)

<b>References:</b> 1. W.S. 21-18-202(e) (i) and (iii)	<b>Last Comprehensive Visit</b>	<b>Concerns to be Addressed at next Assurance Filing</b>	<b>Reports</b>	<b>Focused Visit</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>	<b>Next Standard, Open, or AQIP Pathway Site Visit</b>
<b>Casper College</b>	March 2009		Assurance Argument 8/31/18			2018-2019
<b>Central Wyoming College</b>	October 2015		Monitoring report on credit hours and articulation agreement submitted April, 2016. Monitoring report on Student Learning Assessment due Oct. 2017. Systems Portfolio due 2018-2019	Location change visit to Lander: April, 2016		2023-2024
<b>Eastern Wyoming College</b>	October 2010			2014		2020-2021
<b>Laramie County Community College</b>	July 2012		Systems Portfolio due 2018			2019-2020
<b>Northwest College</b>	November 2010			2013		2017-2018
<b>Northern Wyoming Community College District</b>	November 2010		Systems Portfolio submitted Nov 2015			2018-2019
<b>Western Wyoming Community College</b>	October 2013		Systems Portfolio due June 2017			2021-2022

## **SPECIALIZED PROGRAM ACCREDITATION**

All seven community colleges offer credit programs which culminate in an Associate Degree or Certificate that are accredited by thirty-one accreditation agencies, associations, boards, commissions, councils, or societies, each specific to an individual program. The seven Wyoming community colleges have a total of 28 programs that have full accreditation status, and one program with “Associate Membership” status. The accreditation status of each of those 29 programs are documented below.

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<b>Community College</b>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Addictionology</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>Business and Accounting</b>	<b>Dance</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	National Addiction Studies Accreditation Commission	National Association of Schools of Art and Design	Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs	National Association of Schools of Dance
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	2013	2009	2010	2013
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing	Associate Membership
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	Standards review of dance coordinator's teaching load; update on assessment
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	6/1/2016	None	Quality Assurance Report - 2016	None
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	Teaching loads; Publication of Assessment in Student Handbook
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	6/1/2016	2018-2019	2020	2018-2019

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Nursing</b>	<b>Occupational Therapy Assistant</b>	<b>Paramedic Technology</b>	<b>Pharmacy Technology</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing	Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs	American Society of Health System Pharmacists
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	2011	2013	2016	2013
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	None	N/A	Annual report 12/31/16	Mid-term report 2016
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2019	2018-2019	2021	2019

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Casper College</u>	<u>Central Wyoming College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Radiography</b>	<b>Respiratory Therapy</b>	<b>Theatre</b>	<b>Associate Degree Nursing Program</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	Joint Review Committee on Higher Education in Radiologic Technology	Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care	National Association of Schools of Theatre	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	2016	2015	2010	March 2016
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good Standing	Good standing
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual	Annual report	None	A Substantive Change Prospectus report was submitted in April, 2016 for ACEN's approval of curriculum changes. Approval of the changes is expected later in 2016.
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	A follow-up report was submitted in October 2015 addressing non-compliance with Standard Two: Faculty. The report was received, reviewed and accepted by ACEN and the associated sanctions were removed. No further monitoring is required in this area.
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2024-2025	2024-2025	2020-2021	Spring 2021

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Eastern Wyoming College</u>	<u>Eastern Wyoming College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Veterinary Technology</b>	<b>Welding and Joining Technology</b>	<b>Concurrent Enrollment</b>	<b>Dental Hygiene</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	American Veterinary Medical Association	American Welding Society	National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)	Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	October 2015	April 2015	April 2016	June 2010
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Full	Full	Initial Accreditation	Approval without reporting requirements
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	None	None	Annual Report	Self-study 2016
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2017	2018	2022	2017

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Diagnostic Medical Sonography</b>	<b>EMS - Paramedic</b>	<b>Nursing</b>	<b>Physical Therapist Assistant</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP/ CoAEMSP)	Accrediting Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)	Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	Spring 2014	May 2015	March 2012	February 2015
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual Report	Self-study 2020	Annual Report	Annual Report
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2019	2020	Fall 2019	June 2025

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Laramie County Community College</u>	<u>Northern Wyoming Community College District</u>	<u>Northern Wyoming Community College District</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Radiography</b>	<b>Surgical Technology</b>	<b>Dental Hygiene</b>	<b>Nursing</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)	American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA, CODA)	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	Fall 2008	Fall 2013	April 21, 2010	March 13, 2014
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Continuing Accreditation	Continuing Accreditation	Approval without reporting requirements	Continuing Accreditation Accepted Follow-up Report
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual Report	Annual Report	Annual CODA Survey September 2016. Self-Study Document February 2017	None
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None	None Current
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	2016	2023	April 25-26, 2017	Spring 2019

<b>Community College</b>	<i>Northwest College</i>	<i>Northwest College</i>	<i>Northwest College</i>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Art (Associate of Arts)</b>	<b>Music (Associate of Arts)</b>	<b>Nursing (Associate of Applied Science)</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	National Association of Schools of Art & Design (NASAD)	National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, formerly NLNAC (ACEN)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	November 13, 2014	2012	July 15, 2014
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Accredited Institutional Member in good standing	Accredited Institutional Member in good standing	Full Accreditation
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual HEADS data survey (due January)	Annual HEADS data survey (due January) and on-going follow-up on acoustic remedies to the Nelson Performing Arts building as specified in the 2012 self-study memo	Annual Report
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	November 2019	2021-22	Fall 2019

<b>Community College</b>	<u>Western Wyoming Community College</u>	<u>Western Wyoming Community College</u>
<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>Associate Degree in Nursing</b>	<b>Automotive</b>
<b>Name of Program Accreditor</b>	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)	National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF)
<b>Date of Last Program Accreditor Action</b>	February 3-5, 2015	September 1, 2011
<b>Current Accreditation Status</b>	Full Accreditation	In Good Standing
<b>Current Sanctions</b>	None	None
<b>Required Special Visit(s)</b>	None	None
<b>Upcoming Report(s) Including Type &amp; Date</b>	Annual Report due in October	None
<b>Concerns Accreditor Requires to be Addressed</b>	None	None
<b>Date of Next Reaccreditation</b>	Spring 2020	September 2016