



## *HLC Accreditation Evidence*

Title: HLC Co-Curricular Definition

URL: <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/core-component-4-b-what-does-hlc-mean-by-cocurricular.html>

Office of Origin: HLC

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## Core Component 4.B.: What Does HLC Mean by Cocurricular?

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Assessment of cocurricular activities has been a topic of increasing interest in higher education. HLC added two references to it in the revised Criteria for Accreditation and defined “cocurricular” specifically as:

**COCURRICULAR** Learning activities, programs and experiences that reinforce the institution’s mission and values and complement the formal curriculum. Examples: Study abroad, student-faculty research experiences, service learning, professional clubs or organization, athletics, honor societies, career services, etc.

Since the revised Criteria were adopted in February 2019, HLC’s stakeholders have been inconsistent in their interpretation of cocurricular assessment. HLC’s Board of Trustees identified a need for certain clarifications to be made related to HLC’s Core Component 4.B. on assessment of student learning. The proposed revisions, which staff are developing now and the Board will review at a future meeting, are intended to:

1. Clarify HLC expectations of institutions with respect to cocurricular assessment, namely that the institution is only obligated to assess the learning outcomes it claims for cocurricular offerings; and
2. Emphasize the engagement of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members in assessment processes as the major element of good practice HLC will evaluate.

Institutions determine for themselves, based on their mission, what they deem to be cocurricular, as an essential part of, or partner to, their curricular activities (as opposed to “extra-” curricular).

After the Board reviews the clarifying policy language, the policy will then be available for public comment. The Board will review the policy on second reading following the comment period prior to taking final action. HLC will also need to determine when this clarification can go into effect given the needs to update the Assurance System. Regardless of the effective date, these clarifications are being previewed now in an attempt to reduce confusion regarding current expectations related to Core Component 4.B.