

HLC Mid-Cycle Visit 2026

Presenters:

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Accreditation Basics

- Barton is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission.
- Accreditation ensures:
 - Overall Quality of Operations
 - Academic Rigor
 - Transfer of Credit Hours
 - Participation in Federal Aid and Grant Programs
 - Employers Recognition of Accredited Institutions
 - Programs Requiring Licensure
- Standard Pathways Cycle of Accreditation

Accreditation Pathways Comparison

Standard Pathway

- Prison Education Program Visits (September 2025)
 - Ellsworth Correctional Facility
 - Larned State Correctional Facility
- Multi-Location Visits (March 2026)
 - Pratt Community College – Nursing Program
 - Ft Riley Military
 - AMR Topeka
- "Mid-Cycle Visit" (November 2 & 3, 2026)
- 2030 Multi-Location Visit
- 2032 Reaffirmation Comprehensive Visit
- 2032 Federal Compliance Review

Open Pathway

- Prison Education Program Visits (September 2025)
 - Ellsworth Correctional Facility
 - Larned State Correctional Facility
- Multi-Location Visits (March 2026)
 - Pratt Community College – Nursing Program
 - Ft Riley Military
 - AMR Topeka
- Assurance Review (Fall 2026)
- Years 5 – 9 Quality Initiative!
- 2030 Multi-Location Visit
- 2032 Reaffirmation Comprehensive Visit
- 2032 Federal Compliance Review

What is the Mid-Cycle Visit All About?

- Much like the Comprehensive Visit
- No Federal Compliance Report Required
- Assurance Argument Report
- Student Comments Solicited
- Third Party Comments Collected
- Peer Review Team Visits Campus
- Peer Review Team Report
- Visit Becomes Part of Barton's Accreditation History

November 2 | 11:30 – 12:30 | Cavanaugh Room | Lunch with the Board

Assurance Writing 101

- Big Changes from 2022
 - Change from 5 criterion to 4
 - No sub-criterion – more of a narrative style
- Writing Touchstones
 - HLC Elements
 - What exists?
 - How is it used ?
 - Is it effective?
 - Demonstration of the depth of Barton – Variety of examples, programs, etc.

2026 Assurance Argument Criterion

1 – Mission

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

2 – Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

- In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

3 – Teaching & Learning for Student Success

- The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

4 – Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

- The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Board Focus: Criterion 1

1.A. Mission Alignment

- Mission alignment is demonstrated through operational alignment (including the Board of Trustees), Enrollment Profile, and Educational Programming.
- Operationally the Board's governance model is highlighted and strategic planning is mentioned. - pg. 10

1.B. Mission and Public Good

- Board presentations and monitoring reports are used as evidence. – pg. 20

Overall for Criterion 1 – Mission is demonstrated through the offering of exceptional and affordable learning opportunities to support students, the community, and employee needs.

Board Focus: Criterion 2

2.A. Integrity

- The Board has their own section. pg. 34
- Institutional integrity is demonstrated through instructional, stakeholder communication, and fiscal stewardship.

2.B. Transparency

- The Board has their own section. – pg. 40
- Financial reports, budget, and strategic planning which are also Board meeting items – pg. 42

2.C. Board Governance

- The Board has their own section. – pg. 46-47
- Operational components the support sharing governance

Board Focus: Criterion 3 & 4

3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

- Board ENDS as evidence – pg. 64

3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

- Receiving student feedback and monitoring reports – pg. 82-83

4.A. Effective Administrative Structures

- Administrative Structure. – pg. 118
- Fiscal Operations and Sustainability. – pg. 124-125

4.C. Planning for Quality Improvement

- Strategic planning and Board approvals. – pg. 129-130

Introduction to Peer Review Team

Chair: Reva Curry

Vice President of Instruction and Learning Services
Delta College
University Center, Michigan



Reviewer: Julia M. Deisler

Adjunct English Instructor
Santa Fe Community College
Santa Fe, New Mexico



Reviewer: Bernard R. Little

Vice President for Student Affairs
Oakton College
Des Plaines, Illinois



Reviewer: Shari L. Jorissen

Director of Institutional Effectiveness
Anoka-Ramsey Community College
Coon Rapids, Minnesota



Shari Jorissen

Reviewer: Ryan Edwards Crider

Campus President
Metropolitan Community College-Kansas City
Kansas City, Missouri



Possible Peer Reviewer Questions

Mission, Planning, and Strategic Oversight

- How does the board regularly review, reaffirm, and monitor progress toward the institution's mission and strategic plan?
- What data, metrics, or KPI's does Barton administration provide to the Board to measure academic and financial health?
- How is the board involved in planning for major institutional changes, program shifts, or new strategic initiatives?
- What types of agenda items does the Board typically hear during Board Meetings or Board Study Sessions?

Possible Peer Reviewer Questions

Independence, Ethics, and Governance

- How does the Board safeguard its independence from external, political, or undue influence?
- What processes are in place to address potential conflicts of interest among trustees?
- How does the Board evaluate the performance of Barton's President?
- How does the Board support the President? How does the Board hold the President accountable for institutional outcomes?
- How do the Board and the President maintain a clear boundary between governance (policy-making) and management (day-to-day operations)?

Possible Peer Reviewer Questions

Financial, Legal, and Resource Stewardship

- How does the Board acquire the financial literacy to review college audits, budgets, and financial planning?
- How does the board ensure that physical, technological, and human resources align with the institution's educational quality?
- What is the board's role in risk management, including cybersecurity, compliance, and asset protection?
- How are new trustees oriented to their legal, fiduciary, and accreditation responsibilities?

What to Expect After the Visit

- Barton receives a draft Peer Team Report within 30 days.
 - Barton responds to the Peer Team Report.
 - The Peer Team Report goes back to HLC for finalization.
 - HLC will notify Barton of accreditation status.
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- Barton will assess the writing and visit preparation process to note improvements to be made.
 - Barton will begin planning for the next accreditation actions.

The background of the slide features a stylized, light blue illustration of an underwater environment. On the left, there are large, rounded coral-like structures. On the right, there are several fish swimming towards the left. The overall color scheme is various shades of blue, creating a serene aquatic feel.

Questions?

BARTON
COMMUNITY COLLEGE