

Chapter 9

Summary and Request for Continued Accreditation

Phoenix College has conducted a comprehensive and rigorous self study for the purpose of institutional improvement and continued accreditation. Participation in this study was widespread and included numerous opportunities for comment and input from the campus community and outside constituencies. The self-study mission, developed early in the process states that

In support of its primary purpose, student learning, Phoenix College will use this self-study to prepare for continuing accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, to evaluate strengths and opportunities for improvement in accordance with the college mission statement, and to use as a guiding document for continuing educational and institutional improvement.

This document and the supporting materials, developed as a result of the work by the self-study team and the internal and external campus community, demonstrate that Phoenix College meets the five criteria for accreditation as outlined by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

With respect to Criterion 1, Phoenix College operates with integrity through its structures, policies, and processes at the college and district levels. The college has publicly stated its mission, vision, and values. Phoenix College's commitment to teaching and learning and to its diverse community, both internal and external, is demonstrated throughout the college in its publications, its policies and procedures, and its academic and non-academic activities. Strategic, operational, and fiscal planning at Phoenix College are all closely aligned with the college's mission. In turn, the college's mission and strategic plans directly support the district's vision, mission, and values.

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With respect to Criterion 2, Phoenix College uses data to understand the diverse needs of its campus community and to plan realistically to meet those needs. In preparation for the future, Phoenix College evaluates institutional effectiveness and assessment of student learning and this plays a significant role in college planning. Sound financial resources and thorough planning support future development of campus facilities, incorporation of new technology, and investments in human resources. All these contribute to quality educational programs.

With respect to Criterion 3, Phoenix College provides evidence that its commitment to quality in learning and teaching is imbued in its culture, history, and processes. Learning for educational, professional, and personal enrichment goals is pivotal to the college and is clearly articulated in college's mission, goals, values, and strategic plan. At Phoenix College, clearly stated learning outcomes, effective teaching and learning environments, and comprehensive teaching and learning resources combine to ensure that Phoenix College will continue to fulfill its commitment to teaching and learning. Furthermore, consistent and comprehensive assessment policies and practices contribute to continued improvement of the teaching and learning experiences.

With respect to Criterion 4, Phoenix College, throughout its 85 year history, has demonstrated responsiveness to the needs of its community by evolving into an institution of higher learning that does more than simply provide degrees that are transferable to the university or certificates needed for employment. Surpassing these traditional functions, Phoenix College provides a rich environment for its students and employees, an environment that instills in them a love for lifelong learning and continually stimulates their educational, professional, and personal goals. Policies and practices throughout the district and the college support an environment of lifelong learning for students, faculty, and staff. Phoenix College ensures that its curriculum is useful to students, graduates, and employees so they may lead productive lives in an ever-changing world. It also provides learning experiences that foster intellectual inquiry and responsible acquisition of knowledge.

With respect to Criterion 5, Phoenix College's commitment to engagement and service are defined by programs and activities which serve the common good and are deemed valuable and beneficial for both the institution and the community. Phoenix College demonstrates that there is interaction between the institution and the community which involves listening to each other's needs and creating opportunities for the mutual benefit of the students, institution, and community. Phoenix College identifies its constituencies in formal and informal ways: by our immediate geographical service area, through enrollment in programs unique to Phoenix College, and by community agency referrals. Constituencies are also created as a result of partnerships through grants initiated, developed, and coordinated by Phoenix College and its community partners.

Phoenix College respectfully requests continued accreditation for a period of ten years by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.