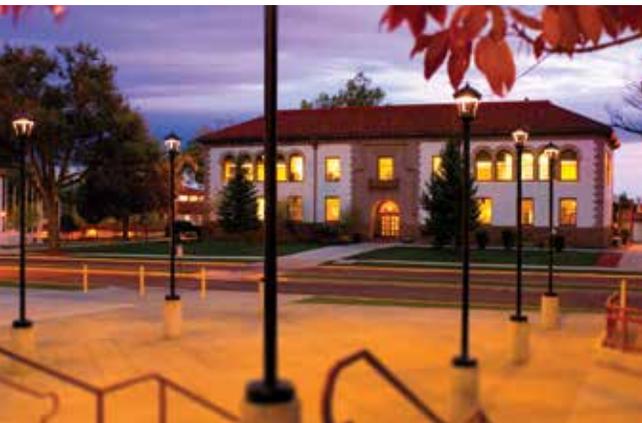


Thank you for your time in reading this brochure regarding New Mexico Highlands' accreditation status. I want to underscore that New Mexico Highlands University is still accredited through our next accreditation visit from the Higher Learning Commission in 2017, and I have allocated resources to ensure we will be successfully removed from probationary status.

I understand there is concern about the Higher Learning Commission placing New Mexico Highlands on probationary status. I consider it my top priority to remove Highlands from probation and build a stronger, more accountable environment. We have already made great strides in accomplishing this, and we will continue sharing our progress on New Mexico Highlands' website at www.nmhu.edu/HLC.



Dr. Sam Minner
President, New Mexico Highlands University



Questions?

Contact Highlands University's
Office of HLC Accreditation
Phone: 505.454.3286
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www.nmhu.edu/hlc



Accreditation FAQs





Accreditation FAQs

In September 2016, Highlands University was placed on probation by our accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission. Highlands University remains 100 percent committed to student success and to meeting all accreditation criteria.

Q: What is the Higher Learning Commission?

A: The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is an independent corporation that was founded in 1895 as one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. HLC accredits degree-granting postsecondary educational institutions in 19 states, including New Mexico. While the HLC is not a government entity, the U.S. Department of Education recognizes the Commission as the verifying agency for federally defined standards.

Q: What is accreditation?

A: The U.S. Department of Education defines accreditation as “the recognition that an institution maintains standards requisite for its graduates to gain admission to other reputable institutions of higher learning or to achieve credentials for professional practice. The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality.”

Q: Why is Highlands on HLC probation?

A: HLC identified nine issues Highlands must address to remove ourselves from probation. This letter identifies the following key areas of concern: clearly articulating the mission and strategic plan, evaluating and orienting contingent faculty, assessing co-curricular activities, designing and implementing the retention plan, ensuring funding and student services at the Highlands centers, stabilizing Highlands’ financial reserves, strategic budgeting, and providing training to the Board of Regents.

Highlands is 100 percent committed to addressing each and every one of these issues. Highlands has already taken many policy actions to resolve these concerns, including the approval of a new Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals in Spring 2016 and the adoption of the Contingent Faculty Handbook.

Q: Is Highlands still accredited?

A: Yes. Highlands’ accreditation remains in effect during this probation period while we address and rectify the Commission’s concerns.

Q: Will the HLC probation affect my degree?

A: No. Students will be considered to have graduated from an accredited institution even though the institution is on probation.

Q: Will my Highlands University credits still transfer? Can I still be admitted to a master’s or doctoral program?

A: While the decision to accept or not accept credits or admissions from another institution remains with the receiving institution, Highlands’ probation should have no impact on the receiving institutions’ decision.

Q: Can I still receive federal financial aid?

A: Yes. Federal financial aid is unaffected by the HLC probation.

Q: What is the timeline for removing Highlands from HLC probation?

A: The University is required to file an assurance filing no later than November 1, 2017 providing evidence that Highlands has resolved the concerns of the HLC Board identified in the probation action and evidence that it meets the criteria for accreditation.

At its meeting in June 2018, the HLC Board will review materials related to this evaluation and determine whether the University can be removed from Probation. If the University has not resolved the HLC Board’s concerns that led to Probation, other action may be appropriate.

Q: What is the University’s position on the HLC probation?

A: While being on probation is not ideal, Highlands has accepted the HLC’s action. We see this as an opportunity to strengthen the systems, structures, and operations of Highlands University. Highlands will emerge from this process as a stronger and more efficient school, ready to face the challenges of the 21st century.

See www.nmhu.edu/hlc for more information. Any additional questions may be directed to Brandon Kempner at 505-454-3286 or HLCinfo@nmhu.edu.