



BETHANY
COLLEGE

SELF-STUDY 2010 SUMMARY

Purpose of accreditation

Bethany College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) on a 10 year cycle. The HLC is an independent corporation affiliated with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) which accredits institutions of higher education in 19 states. Accreditation involves a thorough evaluation of a college's academic curriculum, student life program, administrative structure, financial stability, and relationships with outside constituents. Bethany College has been accredited by HLC since 1932.

Criteria of Accreditation

Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

Bethany College operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

- Bethany College's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the College's commitments. *The Guiding Principles identify the College's Mission, its Values, its Promise to students, and Bethany's Vision. The Principles are publicized on campus, on the College's website, and in recruitment materials.*
- In its mission documents, Bethany College recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves. *The College believes in the inherent worth of all human beings and thus values Hospitality and Community while continually striving for diversity in enrollment and equality for all.*
- Understanding of and support for the Mission pervade Bethany College. *The Guiding Principles have been thoroughly reviewed since 2007 in an inclusive process and now shape and direct the actions of the College.*
- Bethany College's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the College to fulfill its Mission. *Governance and administration at the board, staff, faculty, and student levels have all been clarified and strengthened in recent years.*
- Bethany College upholds and protects its integrity. *The College ensures the integrity of its operations through policy statements and codes of conduct that comprehend all Bethany campus constituents.*



10 Recent Accomplishments

Bethany College has made tremendous strides in recent years. The ten accomplishments include:

1. Completion of \$1.5 million investment into the campus green project including an attractive front entrance, a new promenade of flags, a limestone amphitheatre, new sidewalks, upgraded emergency lights and renewed landscape.
2. Academic facilities upgrades including a laboratory addition to Nelson Science Center.

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

Bethany College's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

- Bethany College realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends. *The Bethany board, president's council, faculty and staff senates all shape organizational goals by studying current trends in technology, demographics, market and educational developments, and the College's unique heritage.*
- Bethany College's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future. *Bethany is strategically organizing the physical, technological, financial, and human resources to address the current needs of its constituents and set the College on a path of sustainable success.*
- Bethany College's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of the College's effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement. *The College's Board of Directors and Administration have developed a well-defined set of dashboard indicators and benchmarks to monitor progress.*
- All levels of planning align with Bethany College's Guiding Principles, thereby enhancing the College's capacity to fulfill those principles. *Strategic planning and the budgeting process are directly linked to Bethany's Mission, Values, Promise, and Vision statements.*



Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

Bethany College provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

- Bethany College's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible. *The faculty has made broad and deep progress in academic assessment, most notably in General Education.*
- Bethany values and supports effective teaching. *The College hires highly qualified professors, offers them opportunities for continuing professional development, provides them with instructional technology, and supports their governance of the academic curriculum.*
- Bethany College creates effective learning environments. *Academic advising, academic support services, and a variety of additional learning opportunities are well-developed and widely used by students.*
- Bethany College's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching. *A combination of new, rejuvenated, and otherwise well maintained classrooms, studios, performance spaces, and athletic facilities serve Bethany's students.*



Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

Bethany College promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with the College's Guiding Principles.

- Bethany College demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning. *This commitment can be seen in the new Honors Program, the Pearson Distinguished Professorship in Swedish Studies, a partnership with Harlaxton College in Grantham, England, and numerous other programs from tuition remission to available library resources.*

- Bethany College demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skill and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs. *Breadth is provided by the evolving General Education program, several cross-disciplinary courses and majors, and also the well-established Experience-Based Education program.*
- Bethany College assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society. *Assessment in curricular and co-curricular programs has led to significant advancements in instructional technology and a remarkably large number of opportunities for social involvement on the Bethany campus.*
- Bethany College provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly. *Guidelines for ethical conduct are in place for both curricular and co-curricular programs.*



Criterion Five: Engagement and Service

As called for by its Guiding Principles, Bethany identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

- Bethany College learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations. *Extensive surveying is done among all campus constituents as well as among alumni in addition to advisory groups.*
- Bethany College has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities. *This can be demonstrated by both the increased representation of constituents in governance, planning and servant leadership along with successful campaigns such as the planned Pearson Chapel and Welcome Center.*
- Bethany College demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service. *Bethany College's town-and-gown relationship with Lindsborg and the surrounding communities includes shared facilities, collaboration on special events and the annual partnership of the Bethany Oratorio Society, a model of college and community cooperation.*
- Internal and external constituencies value the services Bethany provides. *Faculty and staff are welcome participants in many local and regional institutions and events.*

3. *Athletic renovations to Anderson Stadium, Anderson Baseball Field and Hahn Gymnasium along with an addition of a new fitness and wellness center enhance the participatory experience for the entire campus community.*
4. *The opening of a new apartment-style residence hall that houses up to 67 students.*
5. *Technological advancements with the addition of 13 smart classrooms.*
6. *Overall enrollment of more than 600 students, a 14 percent increase over the past three years.*

Continuing Challenges

Bethany College is committed to meeting the following needs:

- Balance its budget
- Increase student enrollment
- Develop a culture of data-based decision making
- Improve morale in the wake of recent staff and faculty reductions
- Increase compensation for staff and faculty
- Update handbooks for staff and faculty
- Further develop academic program assessment



Progress and Strengths

Bethany has made tremendous progress in several areas that were regarded as challenges when the College was last accredited in 2000:

- A thorough renovation of the campus's buildings and landscape



7. *Continuous top tier ranking from U.S. News & World Report.*
8. *Reaccreditation for the Education Department (2008) and Athletic Training Department (2008).*
9. *The start of a sustainable movement illustrated by a trayless cafeteria, permanent recycle bins throughout campus and a shared community garden.*
10. *Successful fund-raising that includes \$9.75 million, a 34 percent increase over the previous three years in the worst economy since the Great Depression, as well as meeting the \$1 million Pearson Challenge for a new chapel and welcome center.*

- The creation of a new Bethany College Brand Manual to provide a stronger sense of institutional identity and to articulate a uniform message
- A consolidation of responsibilities and a clarification of reporting structures within the College administration
- Steady growth in the effort to assess student learning



Among Bethany's many strengths identified by the current self-study are:

- A sophisticated strategic plan, including a revised set of Guiding Principles
- Thoroughly revised faculty and staff governance systems
- Academic innovation, including new majors, Bethany Academic Support Services (BASS), the Honors Program, and Harlaxton Study Abroad Agreement
- The strong connection to Lindsborg and its Swedish heritage
- New instructional technology
- A new full-time Director of Assessment and Research
- Widespread and enthusiastic student participation in volunteer activities, co-curricular groups and organizations, and service opportunities



Building for the future...



The Bethany College Self-Study 2010 is online at www.bethanylb.edu/selfstudy2010.