Purpose: This document summarizes the key points within UMKC's assurance argument in preparation for the HLC review, and may be used as a reference for the UMKC community engaged in the site visit

Overview: UMKC accreditation review site visit is December 2 and 3, 2019. In preparation for this review, a team from across the campus community has drafted an assurance argument demonstrating how UMKC meets the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) criteria for accreditation, and provided evidence to support assertions. UMKC meets accreditation standards by ensuring operations are guided by its mission, values, and strategic plan, decision-making is ethical, responsible & transparent, offering quality academic programming and regularly assessing program quality with a focus on continual improvement, & demonstrating fiscal responsibility related to resources and financial planning.

Additional details, including the complete components of each Accreditation Criteria & Assumed Practices are at https://info.umkc.edu/accreditation/hlc/.

UMKC's Mission: As an urban research university, the mission of the UMKC is to promote learning through the discovery, preservation and dissemination of knowledge of public value across a broad spectrum of disciplines and fields of study. UMKC celebrates the individual and embodies diversity and inclusion by intertwining these goals with innovation to enable transformational societal impact aimed at bringing cultural, social, health and economic prosperity to the metropolitan, regional and global communities it serves.

UMKC's Vision: UMKC aspires to be an exemplary public urban research university of the 21st Century, pursuing excellence as a human-centric learning and discovery community, fostering equity, diversity and inclusion to enrich the lives of the people and regions it serves.

UMKC Values:
Committed to learning, we agree to:
- Pursue our own growth, encourage our students and support all engaged in learning, discovery, research and service.
- Learn from our mistakes and value feedback from others.
- Explore the ways our experiences and biases shape us, so as to empower ourselves and elevate our communities.

As individuals, we agree to:
- Act with honesty, integrity, transparency and accountability for our decisions and actions.
- Appreciate each person as multitalented, possessing dignity and reflecting diverse social and cultural identities.
- Listen to others with empathy, express our own views with civility and engage in respectful dialogue.

As a community, we agree to:
- Foster a culture of caring and service.
- Avoid assuming intentions or judging others.
- Partner & collaborate with colleagues and constituents in our stewardship of university resources.

Working to create a great university, a vibrant community and a better world, we agree to:
- Ensure that everyone is safe and free from oppression, to fully participate in our multicultural community.
- Engage in critical inquiry and data-informed decision-making that fosters continuous improvement.
- Recognize change as an ongoing opportunity to create a brighter future for each and for all.

Criterion 1. Mission: The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations

Key points:

- UMKC aspires to be an exemplary public urban research university, pursuing excellence as a human-centric learning and discovery community, knowledge translation, fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion to enrich the lives of people and the region it serves.
- In 2018, the campus community engaged in revising the university mission and vision, as well as a strategic plan to serve as a guiding document to translate the campus vision into practice.
- The 2018-2019 strategic plan outlines goals, specific strategies, metrics to evaluate progress, and articulated timelines for achievement.
- UMKC articulates its commitment to diversity across its mission and value statements, as well as its strategic plan. Diversity is broadly defined to include race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, and sexual orientation.

Criterion 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

Key Points:

- UMKC is guided by the University of Missouri System's Collected Rules and Regulations (CRR), which highlights the university's fiscal responsibilities, employee behavior, and general operation of the university.
- The Board of Curators serves as the governing body for the UM System and UMKC, and has the authority to make decisions in the best interest of the system while delegating oversight of academic matters to faculty and campus administrators. The Board is accountable to the state legislature and people of Missouri, sufficiently autonomous, and not beholden to other entities. The Board's activities are guided by specific by-laws.
- The UM System CRR guides the ethical behavior of all employees, as well as a clear statement on academic freedom and freedom of expression.
- UMKC's Office of Research Services is central to ensuring ethical decision-making in research.
- UMKC has specific policies related to academic honesty, integrity, and student codes of conduct.
- The activities and decisions of UMKC and the Board of Curators are transparent and open to public review and scrutiny.

Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

Key Points:

- Academic programs and curricula are guided by faculty and subjected to multiple layers of review and approval throughout the university. Programs have articulated learning goals and outcomes that are assessed regularly.
- Courses are assigned numeric distinctions that correspond with learning goals for each level of study, and learning outcomes for advanced degrees reflect a higher level of complexity.
- Learning goals and outcomes are consistent across all modalities of instruction.

- Recently the university engaged in a faculty-driven effort to revise the general education curriculum, whose learning outcomes are consistent with AAC&U's Liberal Education and America's Promise learning outcomes. Critical thinking, culture and diversity, and urban engagement are outcome areas within the general education curriculum.
- UMKC is a research-intensive university that promotes learning through discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge. Students are encouraged and provided opportunities to engage in original scholarship, research, and creativity.
- The university has a sufficient number and continuity of faculty members to deliver classroom and non-classroom faculty roles.
- Over 82% of full-time faculty possess a doctorate or terminal degree in their field of study.
- Each unit has a credentialing coordinator responsible for evaluating instructor credentials against established criteria for degree or tested experience requirements.
- The university has procedures to ensure faculty and instructors are evaluated annually and outlines processes for professional development and advancement, including promotion and tenure, and post-tenure review. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching (FaCET) sponsors forums for the discussion, assessment, and development of high-impact teaching practices.
- UMKC invests in a variety of student support services, including student health and wellness, counseling services, academic support, testing services, disability services, LGBTQIA programming, multicultural and international student affairs, and veteran and military resources.
- Instructional Design and Technology sponsors services for faculty and students that promote effective eLearning.
- UMKC offers a variety of co-curricular programs that enhance students' engagement and educational experience, including the Student Government Association, Multi-cultural Student Affairs and greek life. UMKC also provides students opportunities to engage in service-learning, internships, and community service.

Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

Key Points:

- UMKC regularly evaluates programs through the Academic Program Review (APR), which is governed by university policy.
- UMKC has developed a university-wide assessment plan, clearly articulated and documented general education learning outcomes, documented student learning outcomes, integrated student assessment with program evaluation activities, collaborated between units to evaluate factors linked to student matriculation in program stages, and centralized all assessment activities in the Office of Assessment.
- The Office of Assessment coordinates and provides resources for assessing programs throughout the university, including general education. Academic units develop program-level learning outcomes and assess select student learning outcomes annually.
- The university's Transfer Credit Policy indicates that evaluation of transfer credits is the domain of academic units and departments. The Registrar's Office evaluates the applicability of transfer credits based on precedent from prior decisions on specific courses from institutions, but when precedent is not set, unit curriculum coordinators and faculty with subject matter expertise make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

- Academic units determine the applicability of prerequisite courses.
- The High School/College Partnership program guides dual credit activities, and Campus Coordinators regularly review course materials, syllabi, and ensure the instructors offering college credit in high schools have the appropriate level of formal education and provide professional development as well as feedback to instructors ~~for~~ designed to improve learning experiences.
- The Office of Institutional Research gathers information from recent graduates on employment status and makes summaries available to the public on their website.
- Information gathered compiled within the annual assessment report is a foundation for continual improvement of teaching and learning.
- UMKC's Strategic Plan outlines goals for retention, persistence, and completion, and the Office of Institutional Research evaluates and reports metrics across these criteria.
- The university has adopted a variety of initiatives and technology tools to assist in retention and student success ~~this effort~~, including Roo STRONG, Civitas Learning Predictive data, and UMKC Connect.
- Student success plans are developed and implemented across academic units.

Criterion 5. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

Key Points:

- UMKC continues to improve its infrastructure and processes to improve the student experience with greater effectiveness and efficiency of operations.
- UMKC remains in a strong fiscal position, though fluctuating state appropriations since the Great Recession makes this challenging.
- UMKC operates with clear organizational structures that include appointed and elected faculty and staff positions and committees. Each of these components is guided by CRR, university policies, and Council/Committee by-laws.
- UMKC allocates resources by using a data-driven philosophy to maximize return on fiscal investments.
- The university engages in annual budget planning, Academic Portfolio Review, Strategic Enrollment Management planning, and five-year financial planning and capital improvement planning. Financial decisions are guided by an understanding of current institutional capacity as well as investment in growth areas to better serve the region's workforce development.
- The Office of Planning, Analysis, and Decision Support oversees initiatives associated with continual performance improvement including strategic planning, Federal and State mandated reporting, accreditation studies, program review, ~~assessment of student learning~~, institutional accountability, and academic quality assurance.
- UMKC's Strategic Plan includes metric benchmarks associated with each pillar to measure progress.