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HLC Accreditation Review Affirms Cedarville's Core Identity

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Cedarville University continues to be recognized by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for fulfilling its mission and meeting the high-quality academic expectations of educational institutions it requires for accreditation.

Four years ago, the HLC reaffirmed the University's accreditation through 2026. During the 2020 checkpoint evaluation, HLC offered no findings on its final report, indicating continued adherence to the accreditation criteria.

The university submitted a 35,000-word report to an HLC team of peer reviewers outlining adherence to the university's mission statement and the Criteria for Accreditation. The university undergoes periodic reviews related to five core criteria as part of HLC requirements.

"We must present and support Cedarville's mission, integrity, resources, student learning, and overall operations," said Dr. Sandra Yang, associate professor of music history and coordinator of the accreditation process for the university. "This most recent report included 654 pieces of evidence."

Cedarville's Office of Assessment and Accreditation Services also played a key role in developing the 2020 report, as well as Tom Betcher, director of assessment and accreditation services; Mandy Nolt, assistant director of assessment and accreditation; and a team of 25 faculty and staff.

"The key word here is accountability," said Dr. Thomas Mach, vice president for academics. "They want to see that we are constantly improving every year based on our evidence to ultimately maintain our mission."

"Dr. Yang was the perfect choice to lead this process," said Mach. "She is someone who loves the institution and will sacrifice for it, who respects and is respected by everyone equally and who is very conscientious with details and the weight they carry. I've never seen anyone who can manage the details as well as she does. Nothing slips."

Cedarville's 2020 report considered a new mission statement for the university. "Dr. White wanted us to spend time as a community thinking about our mission statement, and we changed it to 'Cedarville University transforms lives through excellent education and intentional discipleship in submission to biblical authority,'" Mach shared. "With that, our 2020 report had to show how in every component and area, we were meeting this new mission as a university."

Cedarville first gained accreditation in 1975. The university's clear adherence to its faith-based mission has been maintained throughout its accreditation and reaccreditation history process with the HLC.

“Back in the 60s when we started seeking accreditation, people were concerned that it may hurt our Christian identity, but the HLC is just concerned that we operate within our mission,” Mach shared. “None of our reviewers have criticized our Christian goals, because that’s what our mission states and who we truly are.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,550 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.

Written by Heidie Raine