UW-Whitewater: Reporting Substantive Program Changes to HLC

HLC policy changes, made to align with new federal regulation, took effect on July 1, 2020. The changes include a requirement to notify the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) when making substantive changes to a program, defined as:

- Change in the mode of delivery of a program
- *Aggregate* change of 25% or more of the "clock hours, credit hours, or content" of a program. *Note the changes are aggregate over the ten-year review period. Programs should revise, add, modify as needed, changes will be tracked in Courseleaf.*

Institutions need to document their own definition and process used for calculating the percent of curriculum change.

The method to document these changes are as follows:

- *When submitting program change forms in Courseleaf, provide the percent (%) of curriculum changed by calculating the total program credits divided by how many credits being changed.*
    - *Example: 120 total undergraduate program credits/12 credits (4 courses at 3 credits each) = 10% credit change*
- *If a program learning objectives have changed and are not accompanied by a curricular change that would be covered in the above options, estimate the percent (%) change to the program due to the change in the learning objectives*
- *If greater than 25%, we are required to report this to the HLC*

The method above should work for most programs. However, some programs will require additional guidance. To better support programs and ensure consistency in application, refer to the following guidelines:

- *For programs with emphases, calculate the percent program change for each concentration and report the highest percent program change.*
    - *Example: 120 credit undergraduate program with two emphases (each 15 credits); one emphasis replaces two 3-credit courses (6 credits) required in the emphasis and the second emphasis replaces four 3-credit courses (12-credits), resulting in a 10% change.*
- *If a course in a program is removed and replaced with a course of the same credit value, the number of credits changes is counted only once (e.g., a 3-credit course removed and a 3-credit course added in its place)*
    - *Example: 60 graduate program credits/3 credits (1 course at 3 credits) = 5% credit change*
- *If a program is increasing or decreasing credits, the credit difference/change is calculated for the credit change.*
    - *Example: 52 credit graduate program increases to 55 credits= 3 credits/52 = 5.7% credit change. A 124-credit undergraduate program decreases to 120 credits= 4 credits/124 = 3.2% credit change*
- *If a program is making changes to elective courses, only report changes that will impact coursework completed by all students in the program.*
    - *Example: 120 credit undergraduate program has 3 elective options (9 credit) in which students complete 2 of the electives (6 credits fulfil elective requirement). If the program changes one of elective courses (3 credits of the 9 credits available), no need to report change.*

- o *If in the example above, the program changes 2 of three elective options (changing 6 of the 9 credits), the program would report a 3-credit change because students will have to select at least one of the new elective options to fulfill program requirements.*
- *If program learning objectives have changed and are not accompanied by a curricular change that would be covered in the above options, please estimate the % change to the program due to the change in learning objectives.*