**Illinois State**

**University**

**Board of**

**Trustees**

**Report No. 2014.10/4000.04**

**Higher Learning Commission Assurance Argument**

**Executive Summary**

On June 24, 2005, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accredited Illinois State University for a ten-year period. The University is now preparing its request to HLC for reaccredition to 2025. The reaccreditation site visit is scheduled for April 20-21, 2015.

Illinois State is one of 54 institutions within the 19-state HLC region selected to test a new accreditation process called Open Pathways. Illinois State completed two quality initiatives between 2011 and 2014, both involving assessment of student learning outcomes. As an Open Pathways pioneer, Illinois State has provided feedback to HLC regarding the quality initiative requirement and other aspects of the new accreditation process.

In advance of the April 2015 evaluation team visit, the University is also required to submit a document called an assurance argument. In it the University presents evidence that it fully meets HLC accreditation standards. The University effort to compile this document began in January 2013 with appointment by President Al Bowman of an accreditation steering committee and seven affiliated work teams. More than 50 members of the university community representing all four divisions and the student body have served on the teams. The effort has resulted in multiple drafts of the assurance argument, each incorporating feedback from a university constituency. Every faculty and staff member and every administrator has been asked to provide input and feedback regarding at least one draft.

The latest draft of the assurance argument (Draft 6) is included with this report for review and discussion by the Board of Trustees. This draft will be revised to incorporate feedback received from the Board and other campus constituents and to incorporate the most recently available information regarding the University. In February 2015, the Board of Trustees will be asked to review and endorse the final draft of the assurance argument prior to its submission to HLC.

More information about the reaccreditation effort, including accreditation standards, a timeline, and a roster of steering committee and work team members, is available at http://accreditation.illinoisstate.edu/.