

June 26, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Laurie Shanderson
Chancellor
Methodist College
7600 N. Academic Drive
Peoria, IL 61615

Dear Chancellor Shanderson:

This letter is formal notification of action taken by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) concerning Methodist College (“the Institution”). This action is effective as of the date the Board acted, June 22, 2023. In taking this action, the Board considered materials from the most recent comprehensive evaluation, including, but not limited to: the Assurance Filing the institution submitted, the report from the comprehensive evaluation team, the report of the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) Hearing Committee, and the institutional responses to these reports.

Summary of the Action: The Board reaffirmed the accreditation of the Institution. The Institution meets Core Components 2.C, 3.B, 5.A, and 5.C with concerns. The Institution remains required to host a Focused Visit related to the recent Change of Control no later than September 2023. The Institution is also required to submit an Interim Report, as outlined below, no later than December 2024.

Board Rationale

The Board based its action on the following findings made with regard to the Institution as well as the entire record before the Board:

Methodist College (“the Institution”) meets, but with concerns, Criterion Two, Core Component 2.C, “the governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution’s integrity,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution is aware of its Board of Directors governance issues and has launched corrective actions to address them. These actions include hiring a board development consultant, collecting data to measure board strengths and deficiencies, and making online training materials available for all board members.
- The Institution conducted a skills assessment to gain information where the Board of Directors had knowledge gaps that could be filled by intentional

recruitment. Thereafter, the Institution has begun recruiting new board members with targeted areas of expertise and professional experience outside of the Institution's hospital system and the superordinate entity that owns the hospital system.

The Institution meets, but with concerns, Criterion Three, Core Component 3.B, "the institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments," for the following reasons:

- The Institution has a general education core curriculum that is consistent with its mission and degree programs.
- The Institution assesses its undergraduate student learning outcomes in relation to its general education courses.
- The Institution is revising its catalog, website, and related materials to clarify the requirements of the core curriculum within each major program of study.

The Institution meets, but with concerns, Criterion Five, Core Component 5.A, "through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission," for the following reasons:

- The Institution's administrative structures and collaborative processes are helping to strengthen institutional effectiveness. For example, in 2021-2022, the Institution implemented a revised Nursing curriculum following a broad review of its NCLEX pass rate.
- The Institution has filled its Director of Institutional Research position thereby enhancing its ability to make data-informed decisions. Additional enhancement of institutional effectiveness is anticipated as this position becomes fully integrated into the Institution's operations.

The Institution meets, but with concerns, Criterion Five, Core Component 5.C, "the institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement," for the following reasons:

- The Institution has recently implemented planning-related actions providing no opportunity for the Institution to evaluate their impact on college operations. The Institution's 2023-2026 strategic plan was completed and approved by the Institution's Board of Directors.
- The Institution is finalizing a strategic plan dashboard to track its progress on key performance indicators.

The Board of Trustees of the Higher Learning Commission has determined based on the preceding findings and evidence in the record the Institution has demonstrated that it is otherwise in compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and Federal Compliance requirements.

Next Steps in the HLC Review Process

Focused Visit: The Board maintained the requirement that the Institution host a Focused Visit no later than September 2023 related to its recent Change of Control.

Interim Report: The Board required that the Institution submit an Interim Report no later than December 2024 regarding 2.C, 3.B, 5.A, and 5.C.

Comprehensive Evaluation: The Institution has been maintained on the Standard Pathway with its next comprehensive evaluation (Year 4) in 2026-27.

HLC Disclosure Obligations

The Board action resulted in changes that will be reflected in the Institution's Statement of Accreditation Status as well as the Institutional Status and Requirements Report. The Statement of Accreditation Status, including the dates of the last and next comprehensive evaluation visits, will be posted to the HLC website.

HLC policy¹ requires that a summary of Board actions be sent to appropriate state and federal agencies and accrediting associations. It will also be published on HLC's website. The summary will include this HLC action regarding the Institution.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact your HLC Staff Liaison, Dr. John Marr.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gellman-Danley
President

Cc: Evaluation Team Chair
IAC Hearing Committee Chair
John Marr, Vice President of Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning Commission
Anthea Sweeney, Vice President of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, Higher Learning Commission
Marla Morgen, General Counsel, Higher Learning Commission

¹ COMM.A.10.010, Notice of Accreditation Actions, HLC Public Notices and Public Statements