

July 8, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Richanne Mankey
President
Defiance College
701 N. Clinton St.
Defiance, OH 43512

Dear President Mankey:

This letter is formal notification of action taken by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) concerning Defiance College (“the Institution”). This action is effective as of the date the Board acted, June 26, 2025. 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 determined that the Institution is no longer out of compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and removed the Institution from Probation and assigned interim monitoring. This action also resulted in the Board continuing and reaffirming the Institution’s accreditation. The Institution meets Core Component 5.B with concerns. The Institution is required to submit an interim report, as outlined below, no later than March 31, 2026.

Substantive Change: HLC policy¹ states an institution removed from Probation shall be subject to additional requirements for substantive change for three (3) years following the removal of Probation.²

Notification Program: HLC policy³ states that the Institution remains ineligible for the Notification Program for Additional Locations until it has completed three (3) years in good standing as required for access.

¹ INST.E.20.010, Probation.

² INST.G.10.010, Substantive Change.

³ INST.E.20.010, Probation.

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:

Defiance College (“the Institution”) now meets without concerns Criterion Three, Core Component 3.A, “the rigor of the institution’s academic offerings is appropriate to higher education,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution has made significant progress and improvements with respect to its academic programs, including through the development of a syllabus template that includes information regarding course modality and delivery and the strengthening of feedback on curricular change through new forms that ensure timely feedback is provided to faculty submissions.
- The Institution created an enhanced curriculum review process that evaluates course sequencing based on data from Student Learning Outcomes or Major Learning Outcomes.
- The Institution developed a process for gathering evidence to help determine which programs should be maintained, enhanced, or concluded.

The Institution now meets without concerns Criterion Four, Core Component 4.A, “the institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution now has a robust and consistent process for program review.
- The Institution uses data from its program review process to make decisions and recommendations regarding program health and viability.

The Institution now meets without concerns Criterion Four, Core Component 4.B, “the institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution now has processes and practices for its assessment cycle that provide for strong program review.
- The Institution’s assessment processes and practices allow for faculty engagement, data informed decision-making, and “closing the loop” activities, such as program improvement and program viability decisions.

The Institution now meets, but with concerns, Criterion Five, Core Component 5.B, “the institution’s resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future,” for the following reason:

- While the Institution has made significant progress with respect to its resource base, further evidence of continued progress toward financial stability is needed, including continued improvement in the Institution’s planning processes, fundraising, budgetary performance, and enrollments.

The Institution now meets without concerns Criterion Five, Core Component 5.C, “the institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution's Board is now active in assessing the institution's progress toward its goals, evaluating the President and monitoring key environmental aspects that may affect the Institution.
- The Institution now links program review and budgetary decisions.

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

Next Steps in the HLC Review Process

Interim Report: The Board required that the Institution submit an interim report no later than March 31, 2026, regarding Core Component 5.B.⁴

Comprehensive Evaluation: The Institution has been placed on the Standard Pathway with its next comprehensive evaluation for reaffirmation of accreditation in 2028-29.

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.

In accordance with HLC policy,⁵ information about this action is provided to members of the public and to other constituents in several ways. This Action Letter and the enclosed Public Disclosure Notice will be posted to HLC's website not more than one business day after this letter is sent to the Institution. Additionally, a summary of Board actions will be sent to appropriate state and federal agencies and accrediting associations. This summary also will be published on HLC's website. The summary will include this HLC action regarding the Institution.

⁴ Please note: Revisions to HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices will go into effect on September 1, 2025. Institutions will be evaluated against these revised HLC requirements for all reviews conducted after that date, including reviews related to previously assigned monitoring. Institutional reports submitted on or after September 1, 2025, or institutional reports or Assurance Arguments for visits that will take place on or after September 1, 2025, should be written to the revised version of the Criteria or Assumed Practices as applicable. More information, including a crosswalk between the current and revised versions of the Criteria, is available on HLC's website at <https://www.hlcommission.org/accreditation/policies/criteria/>.

⁵ COMM.A.10.010, Notice of Accreditation Actions, HLC Public Notices and Public Statements

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. Stephanie Brzuzy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Barbara Gellman-Danley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Barbara" being the most prominent.

Barbara Gellman-Danley
President

Enc: Public Disclosure Notice

Cc: Chair of the Board of Trustees, Defiance College
Agnes Caldwell, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean,
Defiance College
Evaluation Team Chair
IAC Hearing Committee Chair
Stephanie Brzuzy, Vice President of Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning
Commission
Marla Morgen, Vice President and General Counsel, Higher Learning Commission
Mike Duffey, Chancellor, Ohio Department of Higher Education