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By NCTA News

## **NCTA to host review team**

CURTIS, Neb. – Like an annual physical at the doctor’s office, a thorough examination and review of institutional health and academic operations is a high priority for college campuses.

Re-authorization of a regional accreditation of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture has been in the works since early 2019. Next Sunday, site reviewers arrive in Curtis for the final exam.

“The college is currently undergoing a regular evaluation by our regional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC),” said Eric Reed, chair of NCTA’s general education division.



*NCTA students lead four peer reviewers on a Higher Learning Commission site visit of campus in 2016. (Mary Crawford/NCTA News photo)*

A peer review team from within the 19-state region conducts the site visit February 10-11.

“Accreditation involves making sure NCTA meets the standards of higher education in the U.S. and demonstrates sufficient institutional self-knowledge and advancement,” explains Professor Reed, coordinator for the HLC reauthorization.

Post-secondary accreditation gives prospective and current college students, their families and the public confidence that a degree or credential earned at NCTA is meaningful.

“Without HLC accreditation, the college wouldn’t be able to participate in federal student aid programs, for example,” Reed said.

Earlier in January, NCTA submitted a 100-page “argument” providing evidence that NCTA meets all the criteria for accreditation as laid out by the HLC.

The HLC-appointed peer review team, which consists of four administrators or faculty from U.S. colleges, studies those documents, requests additional evidence, if needed, and then creates the list of topics and individuals tapped for conversations when the team arrives at NCTA.

Jennifer McConville, NCTA associate dean, has served on several HLC review teams.

“I’ve gained great insights as a peer reviewer. Students and the public gain confidence with accreditation,” says McConville, a former NCTA agribusiness professor.

NCTA is no stranger to accreditation. The college was initially HLC-certified in 2004, then reauthorized every four years since. The last site visit was in 2016.

“It’s a healthy process in self-evaluation, measurement of goals and outcomes, academics and institutional processes,” said Kelly Bruns, interim dean.

“We look forward to working with peer reviewers from Arizona, Oklahoma, Kansas and Wyoming in this review and site visit,” Bruns said.

For additional information on the HLC process for NCTA, which is officially listed as the University of Nebraska – Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, see <https://go.unl.edu/paas>

~ *Mary Crawford, NCTA News*

Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/6ihu>

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