

Probation period extended

HLC notes progress, allows more time for key improvements

Luna Community College will remain accredited while it continues on probation with the Higher Learning Commission.

The Higher Learning Commission Board of Trustees made that determination as part of its meeting Nov. 7-8 in Chicago and formally notified Luna administrators on Nov. 21.

Probation will continue into 2020. The additional time will allow Luna to remedy areas found to be out of compliance with accreditation criteria, specifically Core Components 2A and 5A.

The HLC will schedule a site visit no later than June to evaluate Luna's progress toward meeting those core components. In November 2020, the HLC Board of Trustees will revisit the matter, determining whether the institution has demonstrated full compliance.

Luna has been on probation with the HLC since late June 2018, when the college was upgraded from the show-cause order issued the previous year. The HLC in 2017 found Luna to be out of compliance with several criteria required for accreditation, prompting the show-cause order —

the first such sanction since becoming accredited in 1982.

Luna's unified response to the original show-cause order resulted in the upgrade to probation in the summer of 2018.

After the show-cause order was lifted, Luna hosted a site-visit team made up of administrators from other institutions; that team submitted a report finding that while Luna has progressed considerably, it still needs to meet three of 21 criteria required for accreditation.

With help from many faculty and staff, along with some from the student body, Luna President Dr. Rolando Rael led a collaborative effort to develop and prepare a comprehensive response to the HLC. In some cases, Luna took new steps to address some findings and documented actions and ongoing work to address others.

Subsequently, the HLC's Institutional Actions Council found that Luna has improved in a variety of areas, most recently finding that the college is meeting or exceeding criteria in 19 of 21 core components considered. Again Luna responded to the IAC recommendations with additional actions as prescribed.

During a hearing before the IAC, Rael asked that probation be lifted. He has pledged to continue the progress made while acknowledging that improvement must be viewed as



Students and tutors make use of study time in Luna's Academic Center for Excellence.

an ongoing process.

"We are pleased that the Higher Learning Commission has recognized the progress we have made toward attaining accreditation free of sanctions," Rael said. "We also acknowledge that there is much work still to do. Make no mistake about it; accreditation remains important to us. It is a formal recognition of the quality of instruction and service to students and the communities we serve. We will continue to work to attain the formal validation that accreditation provides. We must remain proactive about improving the college in every facet of our operation. But the bottom line for us remains the heart of our mission — creating opportunities for our students. That has been and continues to be our priority as an institution."

For more information on the process, see the Accreditation link on the Luna website, luna.edu.

Luna online business program No. 1 in nation for affordability

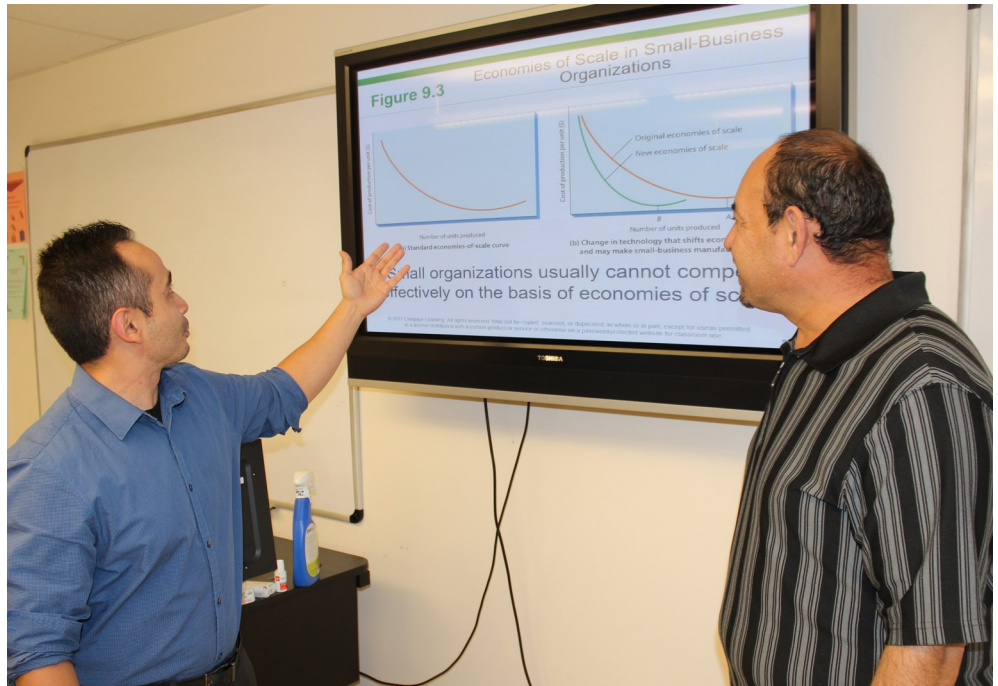
Program rated
among best overall
by Intelligent.com

Luna Community College's online associate degree in business administration has been ranked among the best programs in the U.S., as reviewed by the independent website Intelligent.com.

Luna was listed among the top 59 such programs in the nation, the website reported this past month. Additionally, Luna ranked as the No. 1 most affordable in the U.S.; the current tuition rate is \$38 per credit hour. Overall, the program's Intelligent.com score was a 99.05; that is second overall only to top pick Pennsylvania State University (99.9).

Rankings were based on scores in student engagement, potential return on investment and leading third-party evaluations, according to the website. Each of the 417 programs evaluated were compared based on curriculum quality, graduation rate, reputation and post-graduate employment.

As with the other programs considered in this ranking, Luna's associate of business administration is regionally accredited – an important consideration for those wishing to continue into a bachelor's degree program in business, as is



recommended and encouraged. In addition to Luna's probationary accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs accredits the business program.

The complete ranking is available at <https://www.intelligent.com/best-online-associate-in-business-administration-degree-programs/>.

Intelligent.com is a Seattle-based website that provides “unbiased research to help students make informed decisions about higher education programs,” according to the site. “The website offers curated guides which include the best degree programs as well as information

about financial aid, internships and even study strategies. With comprehensive, user-friendly guides and hundreds of program rankings, Intelligent.com is a trusted source among students and prospective students.”

In fall 2018, Luna's online associate degree program in business administration also ranked No. 1 in the nation in terms of affordability, according to the site OnlineU, which rates programs that can be taken over the web.

For more information on Luna Community College's programs in business and other academic and vocational studies, please visit luna.edu.

Winter break begins Dec. 16

Luna Community College in Las Vegas and its campuses in Mora, Santa Rosa and Springer will be closed from

Monday, Dec. 16 through Sunday, Jan. 5 for winter break.

The college will resume its regular hours on Monday, Jan. 6. The

first day of 2020 spring classes will be Monday, Jan. 13. The last day for students to register for the spring semester is Tuesday, Jan. 28.

Register now for Spring 2020!

Beat the rush and set your schedule early!

Registration continues through Jan. 28; first day of classes is Monday, Jan. 13.

Thank you for being a student at Luna Community College!



College Scorecard:

The U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard has the most reliable data on college costs, graduation and post-college earnings. Visit collegescorecard.ed.gov



Accreditation

FAQs & Update, Winter 2019

On Nov. 7, 2019, the Higher Learning Commission, the agency that accredits Luna Community College and others in a 19-state region, extended the college's probation. On Nov. 21, 2019, the HLC informed the college it will remain on probation. While on probation, Luna Community College remains accredited.

Luna Community College is fully committed to excellence and is working diligently toward meeting all criteria for accreditation.

What is the Higher Learning Commission, and what is the goal of an accreditation agency?

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is one of several regional accreditors that accredit colleges and universities. Its mission is "serving the common good by assuring and advancing the quality of higher learning." HLC accredits colleges and universities in a 19-state region of the United States, including New Mexico. The U.S. Department of Education defines the goal of an accreditation agency "to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels

of quality." Accrediting agencies, which are private educational associations of regional or national scope, develop evaluation criteria and conduct peer evaluations to assess whether or not those criteria are met.

What is accreditation?

Accreditation is the recognition that an institution maintains standards requisite for its graduates to gain admission to other reputable institutions of higher learning or to achieve credentials for professional practice. The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality.

Is LCC still accredited?

Yes. Luna Community College remains accredited while on probation.

Why was LCC placed on probation?

Luna has been placed on probation because it is not in compliance with all criteria for accreditation. Detailed documents related to the Higher Learning Commission board's decision can be accessed by

clicking on HLC's mark of affiliation at the bottom of the college's main landing page at www.luna.edu and following the hyperlinks to the college's profile on HLC's website, or by searching for Luna Community College's profile directly on the Higher Learning Commission's website at www.hlcommission.org/directory.

What is probation?

Probation is a sanction meaning that an accredited institution is no longer in compliance with one or more of HLC's criteria for accreditation. While on probation, the college remains accredited, and it has the opportunity to remedy the issues that led to the sanction. The period of probation is not more than two years.

What does this mean for current or future students?

Luna students may be assured that overall national accreditation remains in place, as do individual national accreditations attained by various academic and vocational programs.

MORE: See Page 5.



A word from President Rael

Dear Luna community members,

Thank you for your continued support of Luna Community College. Recent times may have tested our resolve, but I am pleased to note that we are rising to the occasion and becoming stronger as a result. We have learned — and continue to learn

— about the ways in which we can improve how we function as a college. The process has not been easy, but

it is worthwhile as we work to become better in every aspect of what we do.

It is important that everyone who believes in Luna and its mission — creating opportunities for students and the communities it serves — contribute to this process of improvement and growth, not only for the sake of accreditation but as we move forward as a leading institution of higher education in northern New Mexico.

Let us join together and help build a community college in which we can all take pride.

Sincerely,
Dr. Rolando Rael
Luna Community College President

In most cases, other colleges and universities will continue to accept the institution's credits in transfer or for admission to a higher degree program. All colleges and universities define their own transfer and admission policies. Students interested in pursuing a higher degree or transferring should contact the college or university they plan to attend so that they are knowledgeable about the admission and transfer policies for that college or university.

Will students be eligible for financial aid while the college is on probation?

Yes. Federal financial aid remains unaffected during this period.

What is LCC doing to ensure that it remains accredited?

Luna is taking action on multiple fronts to strengthen its standing in areas deemed not to meet accreditation criteria. Examples of this include the development of a multi-year planning process to ensure fiscal solvency and increased responsiveness to fluctuations in regional economies, industry needs and workforce demands; increased emphasis on training to ensure all stakeholders understand their roles with regard to shared governance and daily

operations. Luna respects the HLC's decision to place the college on probation, and we see this is an opportunity to strengthen our overall structures and operations and become a premier community college.

When will LCC learn if it remains accredited beyond the probationary period?

The Higher Learning Commission's Board of Trustees will determine whether the institution has successfully demonstrated that it is in full compliance with the aforementioned accreditation requirements and whether probation can be removed. Further review will take place in 2020, with the HLC board meeting in November.

What can a student, employee or a community member do to assist LCC during this time?

Luna Community College students, employees or community members are welcomed to share their views, concerns and ideas with College leadership. Comments can be sent via e-mail from Luna's Feedback/Voice Your Concerns link at luna.edu. The college will also host several open forums over the next several months. The Board of Trustees also allows for public input at each regular meeting. As part of building shared governance at the college, staff, faculty,

students and community members are invited to play an active role on institutional committees that aim to strategically address issues that will make the college stronger in our policies and practices. Luna is your college, and we need your help to make it stronger.

Where can someone get more information on probation?

A link has been set up to provide the general public with access to documents provided to the college by the Higher Learning Commission and documents that are being used to prepare the Probation report including drafts of the report itself. The link can be found on the front page of the Luna Community College website at www.luna.edu. Detailed documents related to the Higher Learning Commission board's decision as it relates to Luna Community College, as well as more information about the probation can be accessed by clicking on HLC's mark of affiliation at the bottom of the college's main landing page at www.luna.edu and following the hyperlinks to the college's profile on HLC's website, or by searching for Luna Community College's profile directly on the Higher Learning Commission's website at www.hlcommission.org/directory.



Making Thanksgiving special for all

Luna STEM Club Treasurer Issac Garcia stands next to 68 donated baskets and turkeys that were distributed to students at the main campus and satellites and to community members on Tuesday, Nov. 26. Luna would like to thank everyone who assisted in this year's Thanksgiving Food Drive.

Attention students who order books through MBS

There will be a free shipping period (\$59 or more) for students who purchase their books on the virtual bookstore from Jan. 6 to Jan. 17. For more information, call Luna Bookstore Manager Ron Duran at 454-2569.

Students win \$100 bookstore vouchers

Ten Luna Community College students each won a \$100 textbook voucher from MBS Direct in a drawing held on Tuesday, Nov. 26.

The winners are: Danika Danielle Hurtado, Ashton Wesley Hansen, Cameron E. Sandoval, Antonio Guadalupe Limon, Daylyn D. Chavez, Chantell Destiny Lujan Gurule, Ivan Moreno Gallego, Sammy Daniel Vigil, Maggi J. Rivera and Alexis S. Lucero.

Winners can pick up their voucher from Luna Chief Financial Officer Donna Flores-Medina or executive administrative assistant Evelyn Montoya at the Maria H. Paiz Administration Building. You may also call Luna Bookstore manager Ron Duran at 505-454-2569.

To be eligible for the drawing, a student had to enroll for six or more credit hours for the spring 2020 semester by 5 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 25.

Luminaria tour won't take place this year

This year, the City of Las Vegas moved back their annual Electric Light Parade one week to Saturday, Dec. 14. The last day for Luna employees for the fall 2019 semester is Friday, Dec. 13. Therefore, Luna Community College will not have a luminaria tour this year.

The Luna Physical Plant Department is currently making a float and will participate in this year's Light Parade. The theme for the parade is "A Magical Christmas, Film and Television."

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The college will resume its regular hours on Monday, Jan. 6. The first day of 2020 spring classes will be Monday, Jan. 13. The last day for students to register for spring semester is Jan. 28.

Solid second take for Reading On The Hill



Audience members and participants enjoy another Reading On The Hill event Nov. 19 at the Luna Humanities atrium.



Variety was the operative word for the Reading On The Hill open-mic event Wednesday, Nov. 19, at Luna Community College.

From poetry and prose recitations to Power Point presentations to stories and songs, the gathering had a little something for everyone. Hosted by Luna's Humanities Department, Reading On The Hill returned to campus after making its debut this past April.

Students from a few Humanities classes formed the core of the event, which is fashioned like the poetry slams and similar open-mic happenings. But the nearly 30 participants included students, faculty and staff from different disciplines, and the diversity of what they presented and performed reflected that.

"The idea is to foster expression and creativity while giving students access to a venue that seems scarce in the local community (i.e. a podium, microphone, and the freedom and time to speak in a modality that best suits the personal or academic bent of the individual)," said LCC Humanities instructor Nathan Baker. Baker served as the emcee and also shared his own creative work, a short story that won recognition from and publication in the Santa Fe New Mexican's Pasatiempo magazine.

Several presenters delivered sometimes bold, sometimes funny, sometimes sad, sometimes defiant expressions of self-identity. One of several multimedia presentations placed a premium on visuals, incorporating video as well as still

photography from recent travels to Mexico. Another focused on sound – the innovative recordings of the Beatles. The father-and-daughter duo of Juan Ortega and Brenda Ortega, each renowned in New Mexico's homegrown music scene, performed a song with guitar accompaniment. Another song, performed a capella, also proved stirring. Two groups of students from a criminal justice class – who'll be taking up opposing sides in an upcoming mock trial – served up a preview of their courtroom clash. Readings of stories, a couple of bilingual entries, and discussions of topics ranging from superheroes to mere mortals, from sports nutrition to gun control, rounded out the two-hour gathering.

Board members recognized



Members of the Luna Community College Board of Trustees were recognized for their service at a recent meeting. Pictured (from left) are Julian Jaramillo, Martin Gonzales, Board Vice Chairman Kenny Medina, Luna President Dr. Rolando Rael, Mark Dominguez and Board Secretary Ernie Chavez. Medina and Dominguez will be returning to the board in January. Board Chairman Dan Romero and Eugenio Perez IV were not present but were also recognized.

Free feast

Several hundred students and employees enjoyed a Thanksgiving luncheon on Nov. 26 at the college cafeteria. Everyone who participated enjoyed a traditional meal that included turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, corn, salad, bread and pumpkin pie. The luncheon was sponsored by Student Senate and Campus Life.



STRESS-LESS



STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

Are you stressed? We can help.

Stress is the body's reaction to harmful situations, be they real or imaginary, and people have stress reactions every day.

We know that the end of semester can be stressful and overwhelming. If you need assistance or anyone to talk to, we can help:

- Semester stress
- Holiday stress
- Resources
- Etc.



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GRAPHIC DESIGN
PHOTOGRAPHY
FILM

LUNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

fall 2019

VIEDIA student showcase ARTS

THURSDAY, DEC. 5

LCC MEDIA ART CENTER ATRIUM

5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

FILM SCREENING at 6 p.m.



Luna students work diligently as they take their final exam in Betsy Sanchez' Math1215 intermediate algebra class. Students have worked very hard to get to this point in the semester with lectures, tests, tutoring and homework. The fall semester at Luna ends this week. The first day of 2020 spring classes will be Monday, Jan. 13. The last day for students to register for the spring semester is Tuesday, Jan. 28.



Luna dental assisting students complete fall semester finals with a presentation of course topics in oral medicine. The Dental Assisting Program is looking to host an open house during Dental Assistants Recognition Week from March 1 to March 7, 2020. Dental Assistants Recognition Week recognizes the diverse contributions they provide to the dental profession and the dental health care of the public. For more information on the Luna Dental Assisting Program, please call Dental Assisting Program Administrator Gloria Pacheco at 505-454-2528.



“Creating Opportunities for You!”

Gerald P. Ortega Wellness Center @ Luna Community College



Take PE 112 or 113, a self-paced class that allows you to work out at your own convenience with weight machines, free weights and cardio equipment. Students and members will log in a minimum of 20 hours during the semester. Training available upon request.

Facility features treadmills, stationary bikes, stair steppers; free weights, cable weight machines; abdominal and core strength equipment; basketball court, boxing room with speed bag and heavy bags; men's and women's locker rooms with showers.

Other classes offered at the center: individual fitness instruction, Zumba, High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT), self-defense.

Call 505-454-2517 for more information.

Open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Monday through Thursday;
7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday.

\$46 a semester for
community members
(enroll in PE 112 or 113)

\$30 a semester for those
age 55 and older

FREE to Luna students
and employees
(sign waiver at business office)

Enrollment is subject to the dates and
policies listed in the academic calendar.



Work out with us!