

Higher Learning Commission Core Criteria

Source: ncahlc.org



Criterion One
Mission



Criterion Two
Integrity:
Ethical and
Responsible
Conduct



Criterion Three
Teaching and
Learning: Quality,
Resources, and
Support



Criterion Four
Teaching and
Learning:
Evaluation and
Improvement



Criterion Five
Resources,
Planning, and
Institutional
Effectiveness

HLC | Peer reviewers from the higher learning commission visited Truman State last week, touring the campus and engaging students during a roundtable discussion

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Cooper said the students emphasized how Truman offers a variety of experiences and support to students of different majors. Cooper said she thinks the accreditation process went well, and the peer reviewers had a positive experience.

"The accreditors seemed very receptive to the school and indicated that the visit on the

whole had been enjoyable for them," Cooper said. "They acknowledged the enthusiasm everyone had for their school, their classes, their clubs and their professors, and I think that will reflect in their report."

Sophomore Allegra Flores is a student worker for Truman's accreditation team. Flores, who was also at the luncheon, said her role on the accreditation team was to as-

sist Vittengl in any way necessary by editing documents and researching information.

Flores said she thinks the discussion yielded the honest student opinions the accreditors were looking for.

"All of the students that I was with shared a lot of positive personal experiences that I think reflected well for Truman," Flores said.

MEASLES | Health professionals weigh the risk of disease outbreak at Truman and agree the odds of widespread measles outbreak in Kirksville are slim at this time

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Higgins said it is important these students also realize not being vaccinated affects more than just themselves.

"We want them to see this is a decision they are making not just for themselves," Higgins said. "Often they don't realize that they would be putting people at risk who can't get vaccinated for medical reasons. Once you explain this could affect a pregnant woman and she could lose her baby, or the herd immunity could be compromised, they tend to be much more willing to get the vaccine."

Lou Ann Gilchrist, Dean of Student Affairs, said her de-

partment's first step if a measles outbreak were to occur would be to contact the Adair County Health Department and develop a plan to protect vulnerable people who cannot receive the measles vaccine for religious or medical reasons.

She said her department has experience with localized outbreaks of disease, but has not faced an epidemic of contagious disease on Truman's campus. She said her department successfully contained a single case of contagious meningitis a few years ago, and the situation provided a good example of how the department might react to larger-scale outbreaks of contagious diseases such as a measles epidemic.

"There was the bird flu concern a couple of years

ago, and we had a task force that looked at how we might handle an epidemic of those proportions," Gilchrist said. "We did have an individual diagnosed with a very contagious form of meningitis a few years ago — we met with his close associates and got a list of people who might have been affected. The key thing with that particular disease is letting people know if they were exposed to ensure they get the treatment they need."

Gilchrist said the department's response would vary significantly based on the type of outbreak. She said airborne diseases pose a much greater risk than dis-

ease that require more personal contact.

Gilchrist said Truman's response would depend on what type of disease students are exposed to and the degree of contact infected students have had with others. She said Truman has found safe and secure places in residence halls for ill students on campus in the past to prevent this type of issue.

"The possibility of spreading contagious disease is great when we're all living and interacting so closely with each other," Gilchrist said. "It's something we always need to be vigilant about to ensure our most vulnerable people are taken care of."

Biology professor Susan Guffey said students usually

are immunized against measles with the MMR vaccination at a young age. She said this is because most school districts in the Midwest require students to receive the vaccination before they arrive for kindergarten.

The measles vaccine contains an attenuated live virus — the virus is not "dead," but is weakened to a point where it will generate an immune response in the immunized individual but will not cause the disease, Guffey said.

Guffey said a vaccinated person's immune system responds to the attenuated virus in the same way it would a pathogenic measles virus — the immune system's B-lymphocytes form antibodies and generate memory clones of protective B-lymphocytes. If the virus ever enters the body again, the body's memory clones encounter the virus and begin producing antibodies, she said.

Guffey said the measles virus first manifests itself as a respiratory infection accompanied by a cough, sore throat, swelling around the eyes and fever. She said the fever increases and the sickened person develops a skin rash.

"The disease lasts for several weeks, plus you're very contagious for others," Guffey said. "In serious cases, you can have complications that can affect your ears, your respiratory system, cause encephalitis in the brain — if we can avoid that by getting vaccinated, we want to not risk those complications."

Guffey explained that herd immunity allows those who are unvaccinated to be protected from the disease by those who are. She said if someone carrying the virus encounters Truman's population, those who were vaccinated could not become carriers of the disease and

FULBRIGHT | Truman continues to excel by producing Fulbright scholars

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Di Stefano said applications open March 31 and close Sept. 15. "The program is widely recognized for its selectivity and well-recognized across the world," Di Stefano said. "I believe our students are incredibly capable and we help them see that there are opportunities like this one that is accessible to them is extremely valuable."

Italian professor H. Marie Orton was a former Fulbright recipient and served on the national Fulbright selection board before teaching at Truman. Orton currently advises Fulbright candidates through the application process. She said after being a Fulbright participant and serving on the board, she knows what the program requires of candidates.

Orton said Truman has been recognized every year as a top producer since joining the program. She said she thinks Truman in particular has been successful because of students' service-minded nature and experience in teaching and research.

"Schools often get recognized by the committee for being good schools," Orton said. "Truman has a very solid reputation for sending very solid candidates ... I feel like we really help our students. Luckily, we have a really great track record of people getting the award."

thus provide a barrier for those who are unable to get vaccinated against the virus.

"We surely do have students who aren't vaccinated for medical reasons, so it's very important everyone is vaccinated to protect those individuals," Guffey said.

Guffey said the MMR vaccine is 93 percent effective, although immunity rises to near 97 percent for those who receive a booster. She said there always is a small chance a vaccinated individual didn't develop the appropriate immune response to an attenuated virus.

Vaccines generally are much less dangerous than any complications that might arise from receiving them, Guffey said.

"The risk of all the complications from measles is much, much worse than any risk of autism," Guffey said. "There are even worse diseases parents aren't vaccinating against, too — if parents don't vaccinate for tetanus, well, that's an extremely serious disease with a long recovery. People can and do die from

diseases that they could have been vaccinated against."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 170 cases of measles have been reported throughout 17 states from Jan. 1 – Feb. 27. Cases resulting from four outbreaks represent 89 percent of these cases, according to the CDC. Six hundred and forty four instances from 27 states were reported to the CDC during 2014, the largest number since measles was eradicated from the U.S. in 2000, according to the CDC. No measles cases have been reported in Missouri during 2015, according to the CDC, although many instances have been reported in neighboring Illinois.

Measles still is common in many areas of the world, including parts of Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa, according to the CDC. The disease likely returned to the U.S. through international travelers who were carriers of the virus, and the majority of Americans who have been subsequently infected were unvaccinated, according to the CDC.

Truman's HLC Peer Reviewers

Gar Kellom
Director of Student Support Services at Winona State University

Michael Gealt
Executive Vice President and Provost at Central Michigan University

Kara Odell
Financial Analyst at University of Northern Colorado

Faye Vowell
English Professor at Western New Mexico University (former VPAA at Western New Mexico University and Emporia State University)

Beth Pellicciotti
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Quality Programs at Purdue University Calumet.

Source: Press release from University President Paino's Office

"The possibility of spreading contagious disease is great when we're all living and interacting so closely with each other. It's something we always need to be vigilant about to ensure our most vulnerable people are taken care of."

-Lou Ann Gilchrist, Dean of Student Affairs

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