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April 10, 2024

Dr. Robert Davies
President
Central Michigan University
106 Warriner Hall
Mount Pleasant, MI 48859

Dear President Davies:

Attached is a copy of the Multi-location Visit Report completed following the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visit to Central Michigan University (the institution). As detailed in the report, the pattern of operations at the locations appears to be adequate and no further review or monitoring is necessary.

Within the Multi-location Visit Report, you will find brief comments on the instructional oversight, academic services, student services, facilities, marketing and recruitment information and adequacy of assessment of student performance. Please consider these comments as advice for continued improvement of the additional locations.

Per HLC policy, completion of these visits and fulfillment of the requirement will be noted in your institution's history record and the completed report will be included in your institution's permanent file.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Multi-location Visit or the attached report, please contact accreditation@hlcommission.org.

Sincerely,
Higher Learning Commission

cc: Shellie Haut, Accreditation Liaison Officer
John Marr, HLC Staff Liaison

Multi-location Visit Peer Review Report

Institution: Central Michigan University

Additional Locations Visited:

Location Name	Location Address (<i>street, city, state and ZIP code</i>)	Date Reviewed
Traverse City Center	2200 Dendinos Drive, NMC University Center, Suite 101, Traverse City, MI 49684-8069	02/20/2024
Southfield Center	26555 Evergreen Road, Travelers Tower, Suite 119, Southfield, MI 48076-4204	04/04/2024

Peer Reviewer

Name: Roberta C. Teahen, Ph.D.

Institution: Ferris State University Title: Associate Provost Emeritus and DCCL Faculty

Instructions

In order to document effective administrative systems for managing multiple additional locations, please complete the following. For each item, check **adequate** or **attention needed**, and indicate in Comments the institution's strengths and/or opportunities for improvement in controlling and delivering degree programs off-campus. If comments pertain to a specific location, they should be included along with the identity of that location.

Submit the completed report as a PDF file at hlcommission.org/upload. Select "Final Reports" from the list of submission options to ensure the institution's materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member. The report is due within 30 days after the last additional location is visited.

Overview Statement

Provide information about current additional locations and the institution's general approach to off-campus instruction. Describe the growth pattern at the institution since the last review of off-campus instruction. Provide information about the involvement of external organizations or other higher education institutions.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

Central Michigan University (CMU) is evolving its extended operations, having shifted from what was called the Global Campus to what is now called Innovation and Online (I/O) that is designed to better integrate the activities with the main campus. This transition began in 2022. The I/O group is a part of the Academic Affairs Division at CMU. The Director of I/O reports to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs at CMU. The personnel interviewed at both the Traverse City and Southfield locations have extensive experience with CMU and are well qualified for their roles. CMU is moving toward greater centralization of services with reduced staffing at extended physical sites. However, current leaders report that they do not intend to eliminate any sites but rather to right size them in response to a changing delivery model and changed demographics and community needs.

At each of the two locations visited, two key leaders for the new I/O area were present for interviews and they explained the transitions they have planned and implemented and how these are reflective of a variety of factors, including students' preferences for more online instruction that better fits their complicated lives and the declining population and high school graduates in Michigan. They also spoke to plans underway to increase their partnerships with professional organizations, K-12 districts, and the employer communities relevant to their current and possible future offerings. These two individuals fill the roles of Interim/Vice President of Innovation and Online and Executive Director of Business Operations.

These I/O leaders also described the changed University budget model impacting their operations as well as the fact that Colleges whose programs are offering the online and other-location programs benefit from receiving all of the tuition revenue from these offerings, which has resulted in these colleges being in better financial position than colleges not as invested in serving distant students.

These two also spoke extensively about efforts they are making in the two communities to expand their partnerships. In Traverse City (and more broadly northern Michigan), this includes participation in the CMU Rural Health Equity Institute and its situating of its outreach hub with Traverse Connect in Traverse City, the regional, robust and connected economic development organization. At the Southfield location, where CMU is located in a large commerce center of high-rise buildings, the university is well situated to build business partnerships in both the credit and non-credit realms, and it has dedicated resources to a Business Outreach unit to advance that agenda.

A possible variable going forward is that the University's president has announced his retirement plans, with a plan to exit his presidential role by the end of 2024 but with continuing contracts for advising the next president and teaching. He has been a driving force, it appears, in the University's outreach efforts. In a March 8, 2024, release from CMU Communications, the current president is quoted as saying: "CMU takes seriously its outreach role to support and serve local and regional educational priorities . . . We know that the best solutions and optimal quality of living come from abiding alliances so every person in the community can attain their full potential."

Following the pandemic, significant programming has shifted to online offerings. In fact, from face-to-face enrollment numbers in the education program at the Traverse City location of 65 in AY22, the current face-to-face group numbers 4. This group is basically just finishing the program that has now moved entirely online. Similarly, from Academic Year 2020 when there were 126 students enrolled in Face-to-Face enrollments at the Southfield Center, the current count is 10, with a significant decline each year from AY21 through AY24.

Another contrast is that Southfield, located in a much larger population area of the state, offers a much wider array of programs, although that number has declined as well. At the time of the April 2024 visit, CMU offered a Bachelor of Applied Arts/Bachelor of Science, Administration Major; Bachelor of Science: Option in Community Development; and Bachelor of Science: Information Technology Major,

Organizational Leadership Major, Political Science Major, and Psychology Major. The University provides several specializations within its degrees.

It is not only the outreach sites that have experienced enrollment declines. Since 2014 when the university's total enrollment was 26,363, by 2023, that number was 14,423, a decline of 45 percent.

Overall, as noted above, CMU is experiencing significant realignment in its operational model for distance students, but it appears to be a thoughtful, detailed approach to respond to the changing higher education landscape in Michigan as well as nationally. They describe their initiatives as somewhat like a rising Phoenix, building anew from ashes – although the exact terminology for this rebirth is still to be refined. CMU has extensive background in delivering at a distance, as the HLC Institutional Status report lists 11 Michigan locations; 11 out-of-state locations (all at military sites); and 6 out-of-country locations (all in Canada).

Institutional Planning

What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively plans for growth and maintenance of additional locations? Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is adequate. Describe whether the financial planning and budgeting process has proven effective at additional locations.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

CMU main campus representatives interviewed indicated that budget planning begins with a historical review of the prior three years' revenue and expenses when considering funds requested by the local sites. In 2008 CMU shifted to a different budget model that is still in the process of transition. In this model, I/O is not a revenue generating unit but is rather a service unit. All revenue and expenses accrue to the Colleges offering the programming. It was reported that this shift was just to craft a more effective budget approach but it is also true that CMU has endured significant enrollment losses over recent years, which is surely negatively impacting overall revenues.

No written plan for the distant campuses was provided but it appears that the directions are to further enhance online programming and diminish face-to-face offerings at sites while simultaneously enhancing outreach and support services to students. It was clear from conversations with CMU personnel that there are many plans that exist and that are and will be implemented. There are also plans to configure customized offerings for particular employment/employer communities.

One initiative that holds some promise is a grant proposal underway in alignment with the Governor's 60x30 initiative, which they are engaged with in partnership with multiple other agencies. Another is their move toward micro-credentials and stackable credentials; and yet another is their expanded utilization of techniques for awarding credit for prior or concurrent learning. It is clear that planning is underway to adapt to the changing environment to assure sustainability of quality programming.

Staff indicated that they are working with community partners, including community colleges, to identify needs and attempt to fill niches. Another example of this is CMU's partnership with the Discovery Water Research Center being collaboratively developed in the Traverse City area as well as the rural health initiative mentioned above.

Local site personnel at both locations report that their budget is sufficient for supporting their current efforts. All personnel were able to speak to many professional development opportunities provided by CMU as well as support for their participation externally. When specifically asked what people most needed, they all reported that they felt well supported to do the work they have. They also could provide examples of specific trainings they requested that were made available to them for their ongoing development. Not surprisingly, some would appreciate additional personnel but they believed they were adequately supporting the students they have with the people they have.

Site personnel also felt that they had input to both planning and budget processes and the multi-location report appendices shared the forms in use for them to request additional resources. Staff were also able to identify examples of how their budget requests had been honored through existing university processes and the flow of that system.

CMU has a strategic plan that was approved by Trustees in September 2023 for the period from 2023-2028. That plan includes Priorities, objectives, and SMART goals. It appears that the university's plans would fully support the work of the I/O unit. Examples of priorities include: Priority One - Inspire student and scholarly success – prepare bold leaders and learners who innovate and adapt in a rapidly changing world; Priority Four – ensure institutional sustainability – embrace sustainable operations that ensure wise stewardship of our resources. As it approved this plan, the Board also requested that reports of progress be provided to the Board each September, adding some accountability to the plan's expectations.

Particularly significant for the I/O functions is Priority Two that is included below along with its objectives:

“Engage Communities — Cultivate and enrich reciprocal partnerships with university stakeholders to ensure a lasting impact in the communities we serve.

Objectives

- Champion the interests of rural and under-resourced populations through collaborations.
- Embrace and enhance the historic connection between the university and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe through active listening, cooperative partnering, and reciprocal learning to build on longstanding local connections and establish networks for broader collaboration with tribes across the Great Lakes region.
- Engage alumni, donors, community and business leaders, among others, to provide mutually beneficial real-world and hands-on experiences for students through curricular and co-curricular partnerships.
- Leverage and develop strengths of CMU with the needs and interests of our communities to build and sustain dynamic relationships.

These objectives lend confidence that the outreach efforts that CMU has historically been known for should be expected to be supported in coming years.

The site visitor did not particularly probe what controls are in place to assure the adequacy of information to students, although the CMU website has extensive information and the interviewer was provided with examples of the multiple forms of correspondence that are sent to admitted students about how to register, how to access services, and more. At both locations, local personnel spoke with pride of their great responsiveness to student inquiries, through multiple modes, including text, in person, video meetings, and telephone calls.

Admission information is easy to navigate on the website, with distinct links for dual-enrollment students, international students, and online students, as well as others. It appears easy to apply and to get questions answered, including the costs of tuition and financial aid. The tuition information is easy to follow, as they provide detailed amounts by credit or semester and for multiple different student groups, such as undergraduates with fewer than 56 credits; upper division students; graduate students; military personnel; and online students. Important to this review is the fact that online students pay somewhat less at the upper division than on-campus students (\$458 vs. \$498) and there are significant price breaks for federal and state employees and military personnel. Military enrollees pay just \$250 per credit in this upper-division category.

Facilities

What evidence demonstrates that the facilities at the additional locations meet the needs of the students and the curriculum? Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; handicapped access; and other (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.)

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

The Traverse City location is in what is called the University Center (UC), an extended Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) location. Many NMC offices, including the Foundation, Strategic Initiatives, and Extended Educational Services, are housed at this site. The classroom building is a former corporate headquarters building acquired by NMC many years ago and converted into an educational facility. Classrooms are bright, well equipped, well maintained, and appropriate for college-level instruction. Classroom space includes two rooms commonly used by CMU that seat 14 students in a classroom space and 20 in a computer lab. Classrooms at this location are shared with other University partners, NMC programming, and community entities. Classroom and computer lab space is not dedicated to CMU. Signage at the site is adequate, making it easy to find the CMU office and parking is ample. The building is located on the Boardman lake and at the entrance to an extensive and popular walking trail. There are not currently on-site food facilities, but within about 1 mile of campus are multiple fast-food options.

Within the building are multiple conference rooms, classrooms, offices, and more that can be requested for use by CMU programming. Public transportation in Traverse City is somewhat limited, but there is a public bus system that runs not only on regular routes that include NMC stops but also on an on-demand basis. Taxi and Uber/Lift services are available, but they are also somewhat limited.

There is a current movement underway by NMC to move the UC partner offices to the main campus for better visibility and probably space utilization adjustments by NMC as well. NMC has also experienced significant enrollment loss over recent years, and there is currently a community-wide survey being conducted about future uses of the many and disparate properties operated by NMC. It is conceivable that the University Center location would become one that does not fit into the long-range plans of the College.

At the Southfield site, there are three classrooms that seat 25, 15, and 12 students respectively, along with a 24-station computer lab. There is administrative space that provides sufficient space for an assistant director, advisors, faculty, and other personnel. There are also meeting spaces as well as an on-site cafeteria (that serves the entire building) as well as a well supplied Market Place for purchases when the cafeteria is not open or if consumers prefer these options. The CMU space has its own entrance with highly visible signage close to ample marketing in an upscale, new-appearing commercial district of high-rise buildings with nationally known tenants. The availability of transportation options was not explored, but since this is an urban area, it is expected that services of taxis and Lyft/Uber would be readily available as would public bus transportation routes. The CMU location is almost adjacent to a major artery, I-696, which makes it easy to access from major highways.

All of the classrooms and office spaces are well lit, well maintained, well equipped, attractive, and comfortable. As noted above, F2F enrollments are significantly lower and the I/O leadership have resorted to leasing out some of their space for a variety of other training/meeting functions to local entities to cover some of their lease costs. The lease for the Southfield location extends through April 2027 at which time we should expect substantial changes, as their space far exceeds their current or anticipated immediate needs.

The facilities available at these two sites would rival the quality to be found anywhere on most college campuses, in part because both are located in what were originally designed as professional business properties that are located in what could be considered premium locations.

Instructional Oversight

What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively oversees instruction at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, faculty qualifications, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

The CMU model for instructional oversight charges the academic colleges for this responsibility. The two colleges most involved with distance offerings are Business and College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS). Through the interviews, it became apparent that the I/O personnel have limited oversight or direct control over their offerings or staffing. For example, I/O personnel are unaware, except anecdotally as heard from students or others, of how well the courses, programs, and/or instructors are rated in their every-course, end-of-course surveys. However, the site visitor did request examples and was able to confirm that the reviews are conducted and that reports are produced. As usual, there was some variation in students' perceptions of their courses both within and across courses, and we should expect that those reviewing this information with the faculty would provide insights and/or feedback as appropriate.

Because advisors are embedded in the Colleges and aligned with them, these individuals pick up some anecdotal information and have a regular working relationship with the personnel of the College. They all felt free to offer comments that may come their way, but they play no role in this instructional oversight. One suggestion I would offer is that there should be some vehicle for providing at least summary

information to the promoters of these “products” at these distant sites and online. The site personnel did not suggest that this was a shortcoming as they expressed confidence that the colleges’ leadership did review this data and regularly perform reviews that would lead to their recommendations for improvements or adjustments in staffing. The colleges recruit and hire the faculty and the colleges write the evaluations of the faculty. The Colleges are assisted by the Faculty Approval Services unit, that is a part of Licensure & Regulatory Services. It appears that faculty hiring is a rigorous process.

The faculty (a total of 8 at two locations) report that they do receive communication from the colleges and that evaluations are conducted. Faculty are also provided with a master syllabus for the course they are scheduled to teach, and they then add to this syllabus with their section-specific information. The syllabi for the courses visited at these two locations were reviewed and they appear to be comprehensive in what is included, with one possible exception.

The two syllabi reviewed for the two courses where students were interviewed each included learning outcomes. They also included a list of assignments and the points associated with each. One was for a student teaching course, which is somewhat different from other courses. In the class-room based course syllabus, there was no cross-walk or linkage available to show which of the assignments would contribute to each of the specified outcomes. It is possible this mapping would be helpful to students as they craft their assignments to assure that their work demonstrates the intended outcome(s).

Students were asked whether they were able to get the courses they needed as they were needed. Each one of the approximate 14 interviewed at both sites indicated that they were.

Another time I would have requested meetings with the academic leadership personnel. In this case, I did not anticipate that the I/O personnel would have so little direct engagement with the curriculum and instruction. However, CMU has documented well its processes in many areas, including curriculum development, assessment expectations, faculty qualifications, and more, so if these processes are consistently followed, as those interviewed believe they are; and if the staff are accurate in their belief that the colleges are fulfilling these expectations, then I can only conclude that instructional oversight is adequate (or more than adequate).

I was provided, at my request, with the resumes of the faculty for both locations, and their qualifications clearly indicated that CMU has employed a highly qualified faculty for these extended offerings. It was good to see at both locations that the faculty not only had the academic qualifications but they also have extensive, relevant field experience associated with their fields. The manual of university policies procedures and guidelines includes “Teaching Faculty Qualifications Policy and Procedures” to guide the hiring process, a policy that was revised in February 2017. I was impressed as well with the faculty’s commitment to their own growth, to innovation, to excellence, and to their students’ learning. Students reported that they believed their faculty were effective.

Institutional Staffing and Faculty Support

What evidence demonstrates that the institution has appropriately qualified and sufficient staff and faculty in place for the location, and that the institution supports and evaluates personnel at off-campus locations? Consider the processes in place for selecting, training, and orienting faculty at the location.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

The University has what is reported to be a highly responsive and well staffed instructional support center (Curriculum and Instructional Support) that especially provides assistance with effective technology deployment and also other pedagogical and curricular design services. I/O faculty and staff make good use of those resources. In addition, the University faculty and staff have developed a very comprehensive Curriculum Authority Document that has been regularly updated over many years and as recently as late 2023. There are also extensive assessment plans as well as ongoing program reviews and samples of these were provided at the reviewer's request.

All CMU faculty are required to go through a faculty orientation process that includes information on policies, procedures, technologies, teaching resources, and support mechanisms. Members of academic departments are also available to assist faculty.

CMU is to be commended for the well qualified advisors who are assigned to new students upon admission and who support the students throughout. These advisors build long-term relationships with their students, and both they and the students reported that there was regular communication between the two in multiple modes – through text message reminders, e-mails, phone calls, etc. The advisors are also affiliated with the Colleges but they are located at the sites and appear to provide robust engagement with distance students.

Student Support

What evidence demonstrates that the institution delivers, supports, and manages necessary student services at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

As discussed in the opening, CMU is transitioning its student support model. Previously student support took a regional perspective, perhaps for a 10-county region. Student support, especially advising, is more closely aligned with the academic colleges. One of the many variables driving this change is the fact that geographic location has become less important with the trend toward more online offerings.

As noted above, advising is robust. Advisors report responding to student inquiries consistently promptly, and the students shared the same view. Students were asked specifically about their experience with financial aid, because this (for a variety of reasons) is often an area of friction for students. At both locations, students reported that they were pleased with the financial aid office's service to them. An in-depth interview with the Financial Aid director at the Traverse City visit would confirm this view. That office seemed very on top of serving their students efficiently and professionally and conveyed a strong understanding of the entire Financial Aid landscape. In fact, in the midst of the national drama surrounding the FAFSA rollout, this Financial Aid director confirmed that she expected to package awards similar to prior years – that these snafus that changed and somewhat complicated the process would not impact the ultimate service to CMU students.

Further, the financial aid director is eloquent in describing the many programs available to CMU students and enumerated many, including the Michigan Achievement Scholarship award for four-year public

institution full-time students that is new this year. Consistent with student reports, this director said they receive few complaints and when there is one, it often relates to incomplete information that can be remedied quickly. She also demonstrated her holistic view of students' needs by noting the many resources available to help students beyond finances, but expressing a desire for more to help with those who are homeless, who need more connection, who have food needs, and overall those with additional needs that extend beyond financial assistance with their college enrollment.

If there is one area (and there are likely many) where CMU excels, it appears to be in the area of advising/encouraging support for students at a distance. The Executive Director/Student Success described CMU's approach to aligning a student with an advisor at admission and then proceeding with a case-management approach throughout the student's journey at CMU. Students attend an online orientation shortly after admission. The advisors report engaging with students in their preferred ways, with some wanting to meet in person more frequently and others interacting mostly online only on occasion. They do have statistics about the average number of touches with each student – 1.72 times each year – but note that this varies considerably among students and with different majors, such as science or education where interactions are more frequent.

Because of the nature of distance students, many also come with transfer credits that take time for advisors to work through. In fact, at the Southfield location, students were asked how many had come with transfer credits from another institution and how they would compare their experience. Each of the ten students had been at another college; and most had attended more than one other college. Several felt they were supported better by CMU and a couple indicated it was about the same.

When asked about faculty's involvement in this advising process, it was reported by CMU personnel that this typically only happened when a student was a junior or senior and not in all cases. Given the positive student feedback, it appears that the use of full-time advising professionals is serving the institution and students well. It may be worth considering whether as students prepare to enter their fields whether a stronger connection between the students and the faculty with ties to the field would be beneficial.

The I/O Director (a main campus employee) spoke extensively about the use of data in their recruitment efforts. It seems that not much is yet done to determine the extent to which distance students are or are not comparable in completion and other factors with traditional, full-time, on-campus students. Most of the examples were about understanding student prospects so they could be more successful in recruiting them. There is a keen recognition that different audiences demand different appeals. The enrollment management system appears robust and is highly supported by technology.

At neither site had any of these students made use of some other central services, such as the writing center, tutoring, or the library. They were all aware of the services and reported often receiving communications about their availability, but they had simply not taken advantage of the services. Especially surprising (and potentially troubling) is that not one student at either location reported that they had made use of the Library. Admittedly, most is available online, but given the expectation in Criteria for Accreditation 3B, I wonder if this presents an opportunity for continuous improvement. 3B states that "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." This discovery is likely related to the practice in education to provide all of the materials required for the course within online platforms. However, not everything valuable to various forms of inquiry will be provided for us; often we must find it; and the most reliable information is not always found in open-access venues. The incorporation of intentional use of library-available resources, along with techniques for discrimination about the value of various resources, may be worth revisiting. This is, of course, an item that would need to be considered by the academic colleges overseeing the curriculum and learning outcomes. Most of the students in the course at Southfield were in their 2nd or 3rd class, so we may get a different result 7-8 courses in; but the teacher education students in Traverse City

were at the end of their program. And teachers, in my experience, may be the most in need of accessing the best and most reliable resources.

Evaluation and Assessment

What evidence demonstrates that the institution measures, documents, and analyzes student academic performance sufficiently to maintain academic quality at the additional locations? How are measures and techniques employed at a location equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus? Consider, in particular, the setting of measurable learning objectives, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of assessment data to maintain/improve quality.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

CMU's visit liaison was asked to provide examples from specific programs offered at the sites of the assessment plans and associated program reviews. These were provided. It appears that these processes are systematically implemented. There is a template for reporting assessment data that includes columns for Measures, Results, and Actions. It was notable that there were few actions indicated in the reports reviewed, but the measures and results were easy to follow and appeared appropriate, especially since several of the examples provided were in Education, where I also have expertise. Individuals are supported in this work by the Curriculum and Instructional Support office that has multiple staff. Assessment data is stored in a Watermark product and the sample reports provided were produced from the repository. The Senate establishes the expectations for assessment and program review, and it is reported that these systems are consistently implemented.

It is clear that the systems that exist for program review, assessment, performance evaluations, and student surveys are consistent across the University with the same processes expected for other-site locations and online.

Notable in the reviews provided was feedback from the Provost about areas for continuing attention/improvement (which is relevant for the next section). Not all provost offices take this extra step of providing their perspectives on improvement actions that could be taken. Several appeared to relate to enrollment, but the feedback was substantive is undoubtedly taken seriously and appreciated.

As mentioned earlier, there is an end-of-course survey and examples of those were provided. The results, as expected, vary both within and across courses. I/O staff report that these do inform the work of the Colleges but I was unable to explore exactly what examples may exist since the only college personnel met with (resulting from my requests for interviews) did not include the academic leadership of colleges. I did, however, meet with several current faculty over the two locations. These individuals are, of course, also responsible for the academic quality of their offerings and talked of the ways in which they have worked to improve their courses.

Advising personnel shared that following each advising intervention that a simple survey is sent, asking students to reply with either smiley or frowning faces. Ninety-four (94) percent of responses report that advising sessions met their needs, among other findings.

There is also a graduate follow-up survey that is administered every two years. The survey appears very comprehensive but no data was requested to see what may have been learned from these surveys nor how many graduates respond to these requests for feedback.

Continuous Improvement

What evidence demonstrates that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at its additional locations? Consider in particular the institution's planning and evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of additional locations and ensure alignment of additional locations with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

The fact that extensive professional development programming is offered by various CMU offices that are available to all faculty and staff is one key indicator of the institutional commitment to continuous improvement. Advisors talked of participating in statewide and national workshops or conferences where they gained insights into good practices in their field. The I/O Leadership participate in UPCEA conferences and talked about the topics relevant to them in recent events and how they were addressing emerging issues, including integration of Artificial Intelligence.

In fact, the renaming of this unit to be Innovation and Online suggests an interest in being innovative, which is ideally directly related to a desire to continuously improve. Most interviewees (advisors, upper I/O leadership, faculty) spoke to the various ways in which they work to stay current in their disciplines and in the use of technology – that seems expansive at CMU.

The faculty and staff interviewed are experienced beyond CMU but also with CMU for extended periods. They speak of the ways in which they continue to seek ways to better serve students. They engage in professional development.

Certainly the move toward more online offerings has demanded some new ways of approaching instruction, and most faculty were able to speak to the ways in which they were adapting their instruction to these new expectations. The changing demographics are also requiring different approaches to recruitment and more.

Certainly time will tell, but CMU has a history of success in its endeavors, and there is nothing resulting from this visit that would call into question whether this success would continue into the future. There were lots of examples of adapting to changes in a volatile educational and societal environment.

Marketing and Recruiting Information

What evidence confirms that the information presented to students in advertising, brochures, and other communications is accurate?

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

Promotional materials are largely available online and communicated through what the enrollment management personnel referred to as campaigns. Nothing reviewed raised any concerns. There are also a variety of open houses held to inform students of the possibilities with CMU. While these materials were only cursorily reviewed at CMU's website, no student or other individual indicated that they felt there had been any misrepresentation of what the CMU experience would provide. Some in Traverse City seemed a bit concerned that their program had shifted to so much online, but this same group of students came through the period of the pandemic when there were few options. Students at the Southfield location were happy that most was online because of their personal life situations yet a few said for certain classes – especially in statistics or math – they thought they would do better with face-to-face instruction.

CMU personnel work with the University Communications office where applicable, which reviews all materials distributed externally. These reviews ensure that publications are “factual, inclusive and nondiscriminatory, meet standards of appropriate English usage, and in general conform to the academic and professional image of Central Michigan University” (Multi-Location Report).

While not a misrepresentation by CMU, the only concern expressed by Southfield students was the pace of the 8-week sessions. Several felt that the courses went by so fast that they were not confident that they had or would retain the material. If this view were to persist, students could question whether their opportunity for learning was accurately represented given what most felt was a difficult schedule. Again, it is important to remember that most of these students are just beginning their CMU program and student adaptation to new expectations should be expected to improve. The relative success rates (including on measures of student learning) of accelerated courses vs. longer offerings may be a topic for CMU inquiry.

Somewhat uncharacteristically, and positively, CMU promotes the awarding of credit for prior or contemporary learning. In this way they are trying to better meet the needs of the older-adult students who populate off-campus and online programs. From conversations with CMU personnel, it appears that this may be better developed than found on some campuses and that students actually often benefit from these options.

Summary Recommendation

Select one of the following statements. Include, as appropriate, a summary of findings.

- ☒ Overall, the pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations appears to be adequate, and no further review or monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission is necessary.
- ☐ Overall, the pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations needs some attention as defined in this report. The institution can be expected to follow up on these matters without monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission. The next scheduled comprehensive evaluation can serve to document that the matters identified have been addressed.

Note: In the Summary of Findings below, identify the specific areas needing institutional attention.

- ☐ The overall pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations is inadequate and requires attention from the Higher Learning Commission.

Note: In the Summary of Findings below, identify the specific concerns and provide a recommendation for HLC monitoring.

Summary of Findings:

Extensive detail has been provided above, so I will succinctly summarize the many ways in which no additional HLC follow-up is required for CMU. Their many systems are well documented, with manuals, guidelines, templates, and more. There are multiple technology systems deployed to support all aspects of their operations and staff report actively utilizing the data from these within their areas of responsibility. There is also extensive training available for these systems, along with assistance for online course development, instructional design, assessment, and more. Faculty and staff are well qualified and very experienced for their respective roles. Facilities in use are highly professional, providing for safe and pleasant learning environments. Curriculum development, assessment, and program review are thoroughly documented and consistently implemented. Finally, the institution has demonstrated its ability to adapt to what has become a highly volatile educational environment in which they operate in ways that suggest that they will continue to thrive even as their particular approaches and programs will adjust to changing market demands and opportunities.

Notification Program for Additional Locations Approval Form

Complete this form **only** if an institution has been granted access to the Notification Program for Additional Locations. The Institutional Status and Requirements Report for the institution will indicate whether the institution has access to the Notification Program under the Additional Location Stipulation.

The institution has at least three active additional locations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
During the previous three years, the institution has not been subject to HLC monitoring for issues related to the quality of instruction at its additional locations and campuses, or to the oversight of its additional locations and campuses.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
During the previous three years, the institution has not been placed on Notice or Probation or issued a Show-Cause Order by HLC.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The institution has no other HLC or other legal restrictions on additional locations and/or programs offered off campus.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The institution has appropriate systems to ensure quality control of locations that include clearly identified academic controls; regular evaluation by the institution of its locations; a pattern of adequate faculty, facilities, resources and academic/support systems; financial stability; and long-range planning for future expansion.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No