HLC Criterion 3 – Teaching & Learning for Student Success: Briefing

Across all components of Criterion 3, Kalamazoo Valley demonstrates a systemic and mission-aligned approach to educational quality, faculty and staff excellence, student learning support, continuous assessment, and improved student success outcomes. These integrated practices ensure students receive rigorous, equitable, and engaging learning experiences preparing them for transfer, employment, and lifelong success.

Educational Programs & Academic Rigor (3.A)

1. Maintains rigorous learning outcomes across all programs, including Associate degrees (AAS, AS, AA), Certificates, Certificates of Achievement, and stackable Career Academy credentials.
2. Aligns programs with external accreditation and licensure bodies (ACEN, ASE, CAAHEP, CODA, CoARC, ACF), demonstrating program quality and regulatory compliance.
3. Uses advisory boards across occupational programs to ensure alignment with employer needs, workforce trends, and emerging technologies.
4. Ensures transferability through Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA), MiTransfer Pathways, and articulation partnerships with multiple universities.
5. Follows a structured, faculty-driven curriculum governance process with three levels of review for course and program modifications.
6. Implements Simple Syllabus and Canvas Course Standards to ensure consistency, clarity, and quality across all modalities and locations.

Intellectual Inquiry, General Education & Experiential Learning (3.B)

1. General Education framework intentionally incorporates Institutional Learning Outcomes (Critical Thinking & Problem Solving; Communication & Expression).
2. ILO assessment ensures all students practice core competencies across programs, regardless of discipline or degree pathway.
3. Students conduct research, analyze information, interpret data, and create written, oral, artistic, and technical work in multiple programs.
4. Hands-on learning includes labs, clinicals, project-based learning, simulations, design studios, culinary production, and community-focused applied projects.
5. Internships with 150+ employers provide career-aligned experiential learning, with strong employment outcomes.
6. Multicultural programming, museum exhibits, art shows, and Visiting Writers Series foster global awareness and civic engagement.

Sufficiency & Qualifications of Faculty and Staff (3.C)

1. Hiring processes include search committee training addressing equity, compliance, and bias-awareness.
2. Faculty qualifications follow CMOP 4120 and HLC credentialing expectations, with Xitracs used for documentation and verification.
3. Tested Experience pathways allow industry professionals to qualify for teaching in applied fields with proper evidence and oversight.
4. Staff qualifications aligned with functional responsibilities in advising, counseling, financial aid, and student services.
5. Comprehensive onboarding for new faculty and staff integrates mission, student needs, and college expectations.
6. Faculty Success Center supports development through OTA, ACUE, workshops, accessibility training, and technology coaching.

7. Balanced FT/PT staffing and a 23:1 student-to-faculty ratio support strong instructional quality and continuity.

Student Learning Support & Teaching Resources (3.D)

1. Systematic data collection (intake surveys, financial wellness surveys, retention data) identifies student needs and informs resource allocation.
2. Academic supports include tutoring, Writing/Math Centers, virtual support, library services, technology loans, and Testing Centers.
3. Holistic advising integrates academic, career, and readiness services through Guided Self-Placement, Valley Orientation, and specialized advising for Veterans, KVAAP, Promise, and international students.
4. Basic-needs programs—Valley Food Share, KV Circle Center—address food and material insecurity.
5. Learning spaces include simulation labs, skilled trades facilities, New Media studios, science labs, and modern classrooms.
6. Ambient learning, digital displays, and cultural installations extend learning beyond classrooms.

Assessment of Student Learning (3.E)

1. Assessment framework updated to align with revised ILOs (Critical Thinking; Communication).
2. All faculty submit Course Learning Outcome (CLO) assessment data each semester through a centralized system.
3. Power BI dashboards allow departments to analyze trends by modality, part-of-term, and assessment activity.
4. ILO cycle alternates annually, ensuring focused assessment and improvement.
5. Use of assessment data has driven curricular improvements in math, general education, and program-level redesign.
6. Cocurricular assessment uses Learning Life Outcomes (LLOs) and cross-department teams to drive improvement in advising, student services, and leadership development.

Program Review & Curriculum Improvement (3.F)

1. Program Review shifted from a 5-year compliance model to a 2-year improvement-focused cohort system.
2. Six required collaborative activities include mission alignment, data analysis, curriculum review, relevance forecasting, SWOT analysis, and creation of measurable action plans.
3. Faculty-driven process integrates advisory board data, Perkins indicators, and industry standards.
4. Resulting improvements include curriculum modernization, resequencing, development of new programs, and workforce-aligned pathways (e.g., ELT pre-apprenticeship).
5. Transfer and General Education disciplines complete review collectively to ensure coherence across general education pathways.

Student Success Outcomes & Continuous Improvement (3.G)

1. Student success monitored through KPIs including retention, persistence, completion, and transfer benchmarks.
2. IPEDS and Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP) support peer comparison and trend analysis.
3. Completion rates for full-time first-time students meet or exceed peer institutions.
4. Strategic Enrollment & Retention Planning, Adult Learner Task Force, and Student Parent initiatives address identified barriers.
5. Implementation of EAB Edify strengthens data governance and analytic capacity.
6. Targeted initiatives include Near Completion outreach, early alert through roster verification, and advising interventions.
7. Perkins V performance indicators inform improvement for Career & Technical Education programs.