

Public Disclosure Notice

Columbia College Chicago Financial Distress Designation

Effective: July 10, 2024

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has assigned a Financial Distress designation to Columbia College Chicago, in Chicago, Illinois, based on the college's Board of Trustees declaring an Adverse Circumstance pursuant to its policies and procedures on or about May 20, 2024. HLC has determined that the declaration constitutes a financial emergency, which demonstrates that the college is undergoing a significant challenge to its fiscal capacity.

A Financial Distress designation is a consumer protection mechanism meant to apprise the public that current conditions at an accredited college or university raise serious concerns about its resource base to support its educational programs per HLC's Criteria for Accreditation, including Core Component 5.B. HLC does not undertake any independent evaluation of the institution in advance of assigning a designation.

Columbia College Chicago remains accredited while it pursues efforts to remedy concerns that have led to the designation.

What the Financial Distress Designation Means for Students

In most cases, colleges and universities will continue to accept the college's credits for transfer and admission to other higher degree programs and institutions. As all colleges and universities define their own transfer credit and admission policies, students interested in other institutions are advised to seek information on individual transfer and admission policies.

Next Steps

The institution will host an advisory visit no later than November 2024 on various HLC requirements, including Core Component 5.B. HLC anticipates that the designation will remain in place until the advisory visit process concludes. Following action on the advisory visit by an appropriate decision-making body, HLC will determine whether the designation can be removed or if other action is necessary.

To provide transparency for all stakeholders, HLC publishes a [Directory of Institutions](#) on its website. The directory includes information about a college or university's accreditation status, recent activities and upcoming activities.

About the Higher Learning Commission

The Higher Learning Commission accredits approximately 1,000 colleges and universities in the United States. HLC is a private, nonprofit accrediting agency. It is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Questions? Contact info@hlcommission.org or call 312.263.0456.

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