Student Guide:
What students should know about college accreditation
St. Louis Community College will undergo a comprehensive evaluation on January 28-30, 2008, by a visiting team of educators of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). The College has been accredited by the association since initial candidacy in 1964.

In preparation for this visit, the College has been engaged in a self-study process, addressing HLC criteria and requirements for accreditation. As part of this process, the College is inviting comments from the public, including students, related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Written, signed comments must be received no later than one month before the scheduled visit. Comments should include the name, address and telephone number of the person providing the comments. A WWW address is also available below. Comments will not be considered confidential.

Please send your comments to:

Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
30 North LaSalle Street
Suite 2400
Chicago, IL  60602
or
www.ncahlc.org/wrapped/thirdparty.php

WHAT DOES ACCREDITATION MEAN?
St. Louis Community College has a “seal of affiliation” because it has met the criteria established by the Higher Learning Commission.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?
Your credits will transfer to other colleges and universities. Furthermore, federal financial aid and other government help like the Hope Scholarship (tax credit) are available only to students attending accredited institutions.

ARE ALL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES ACCREDITED?
No, but St. Louis Community College and other major colleges and universities in the area are accredited by the HLC.

DOES ACCREDITATION LAST FOREVER?
No, every few years colleges must show that they are worthy of accreditation. Our last evaluation took place in 1998, and we were granted a 10-year accreditation, the maximum available.

WHEN WILL THE VISIT OCCUR?
A HLC team of 12 evaluators will visit St. Louis Community College January 28-30, 2008.

HOW HAVE STUDENTS BEEN INVOLVED?
Students in their classes took part in a CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement) in 2005 and 2006. The results of that survey and others that were given in Cornerstone, online and other designated classes became part of the college-wide self-study. Students from student government associations and other campus organizations gave input to campus coordinators and members of the chapter writing teams. Also, many students participated in course and classroom assessment activities and standardized tests. Information from these were used in the report.

HOW CAN STUDENTS HELP?
Keep informed about your campus and the accreditation effort so that you can talk knowledgeably to the HLC evaluation team when they visit the campus. Visit the NCA Self-Study Web site at www.stlcc.edu/accreditation. Visiting team members may talk to individual students informally or formally to groups of students. Volunteer to be part of a student group that will meet with the HLC team.