RockValleyCollege
ACCREDITATION
MATERIALS

R⊚ckValleyCollege

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February 4, 2019

I am proud and humbled to present the Higher Learning Commission Assurance Argument for Rock Valley College. It has been over a two-year journey developing our comprehensive review and crafting the assurance argument, and the process has provided the college community a valuable opportunity for deep reflection and focus. In addition to assessing our strengths, we have more importantly acknowledged areas where we can improve. The entire process, while challenging at times, has been enlightening and rewarding.

The entire college community, including various leadership teams, were intimately involved in the process and I personally witnessed the collaboration of dozens of colleagues who have participated in what we all accept as one of our most important responsibilities as a college. The numerous committees have researched, written, questioned, shared, challenged, and rewritten throughout this time. The commitment and resolve of these team members cannot be understated, and I am grateful for their service.

As this community's college, we touch the lives of over 23,000 citizens in our district each year. That is not a responsibility we take lightly. We are very proud of the services Rock Valley College provides to our students and community as we strive to serve our stakeholders' current and future needs. Each criterion was not only carefully evaluated and reported upon, but broadly discussed with faculty, staff, administrators, students, our Board of Trustees, and the communities we serve.

As this phase of our continuous quality review and accreditation process concludes, we look forward to the team visit to discuss our findings and share results and plans with them and our college community.

It is our pleasure to offer this Assurance Argument and begin the next phase of the reaccreditation process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Doug Jensen
President, Rock Valley College

R⊚ck Valley College

Executive Summary | 2019

RockValleyCollege

Accreditation Assurance Argument
Executive Summary

Criterion 1 – Mission
The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's options.

The mission statement of the College, "Rock Valley College empowers students and community through lifelong learning," addresses the breadth of learning opportunities outlined by the State's mission for community colleges. Through the supporting evidence provided, the College has demonstrated that its mission is clearly and publicly articulated and that it guides the institution's operations. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review in light of Criterion 1.

Strengths:	Challenges:
1. The College continues to have a well-published, clearly defined mission document that is consistent with the mission for community colleges defined by the State.	1. While the mission document was reviewed and revised through a Mission Review Committee in 2015 which the Board approved the revision in 2016, the College still lacks a formal procedure for the regular review and affirmation of its mission document.
2. The College mission document is operationalized and supported by additional public documents, including but not limited to the College Catalog; Student, Faculty and Employee Handbooks; and strategic planning documents.	2. The College has procedures and potential to develop a diverse workforce; however, data indicate that hiring and retention practices have not increased the diversity of faculty and staff and are not representative of the community served.
3. Credit and non-credit learning opportunities, as well as student support services, address and support the College's mission document.	3. While the College continues to offer learning opportunities addressing diverse learning needs, the breadth of the mission of a community college in conjunction with the educational and training needs of the community challenge the resources of the College, especially in light of fiscal instability of the State.

Actions as a result of the comprehensive review:

- Within the next fiscal year, the College's HLC Steering Committee will develop and propose a recommendation to the College's Executive Leadership Team for the formal, systematic review of the mission document.

- Within the 2014 assurance argument, Human Resources had initiated an evaluation of best practices for retaining a diverse workforce. With turnover in Human Resources since that time, the audit of the search committee process and subsequent improvements to recruitment, hiring, and retention process have not been implemented. Human Resources will develop a timeline for this audit.

- In addressing the closing of achievement gaps noted based on race and ethnicity at the College, the Retention Committee will identify and promote strategies to support the academic success of minority students on campus. This committee will also work with PAIC and ATLE on supporting the professional development of full-time faculty, adjuncts, and staff in improving teaching and learning to further address the learning needs of a multicultural society.

Criterion 2 – Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct
The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

As stated in the Criterion 1 Summary, the College, like other community colleges in Illinois, was established to serve a public purpose in providing post-secondary educational opportunities. As stated in the HLC Guiding Values, "What the students buy, with money, time, and effort, is not merely a good, like a credential, but experiences that have the potential to transform lives, or to harm them." Given this "solemn responsibility," the College must act transparently in a manner consistent with its mission.

Critical to the College operating with integrity is governance that is, "freely, independently, and rigorously focused on the welfare of the institution and its students" (HLC Guiding Values). Certainly, Academic Affairs administration, staff and faculty play a significant role in this governance through their oversight of academic matters. Furthermore, it is critical for the College to demonstrate that the governing board (i.e., the College's Board of Trustees) and administration, places the well-being of the institution, "above the interests of its own members and the interests of any other entity" (HLC Guiding Values).

Through the supporting evidence provided, the College has demonstrated that it acts with integrity and that the conduct of its governing board, administrators, faculty, and staff is ethical and responsible. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review for Criterion 2.

Strengths:	Challenges:
1. The College has policies and procedures for tracking financial transactions.	1. While policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the institution operations with integrity, procedures are not always clearly articulated or readily accessible; employees are not always aware of them or how to find them.
2. The College has a comprehensive web site, as well as resources (e.g., catalog and student handbook) that are updated annually.	
3. The College has a strong academic honesty policy and a system in place to track students who have violated it.	2. Campus climate/morale has been affected by recent contract negotiations and reduction in force actions taken during a time of declining enrollment and lack of State funding.
4. The Board of Trustee's adoption of Committee of the Whole meeting structure allows greater focus on discussion; agendas and minutes of Board meetings are publicly available, and time is	

designated at each meeting for visitors to address the Board. 5. The College has an intellectual community fostered by clear protections of academic freedom and support for various lectures and events for both the campus and community. 6. The College has an Institutional Research Board that works to ensure that scholarly activities are conducted appropriately. 7. The College administration, faculty, and staff are present and active in the public and private sectors of the community.	

Actions as a result of the comprehensive review:

- The College has implemented new policies for the Board of Trustees and employees to provide explicit expectations around conflict of interest.

- The College will continue to celebrate its successes and recognize the efforts of its faculty and staff on campus and in the community.

Criterion 3 – Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support
The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

The College is committed to providing the community of its service district with quality learning opportunities the focus on student learning, consistent with the guiding value of HLC and consistent with the institution's core value of excellence. In this, the College asserts its intent to set high expectations and promote teaching and learning excellence as stated with its mission document. The evidence provided within this section of assurance argument demonstrate the ways in which the College strives to consistently provide a high-quality education. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review of the College in light of Criterion 3.

Strengths:	**Challenges:**
1. The College has clear and concise ISLO that are aligned to course objectives on all Master Course and instructor syllabi. 2. Assessment continues to become more normalized within departments and integrated into department work.	1. Students still self-advise and miss critical information to help them persist and complete. 2. Many departments still need to close the assessment loop and use findings to change curriculum. 3. The faculty's use of the learning management system to support student learning is inconsistent, and the student evaluation of faculty

3. Several campus buildings have been updated to include state-of-the-art equipment and much needed improvement to lab and student spaces. 4. The institution is responsive to the academic needs of its community by working further to develop specific programs appropriate to the workforce, transferability, and pathway initiatives. 5. Student Services provides a variety of opportunities for student support and development. 6. Academic Affairs and Student Services work collaboratively together on enrollment, retention, and persistence strategies.	doesn't adequately address online and hybrid classes to the extent of face-to-face classes. 4. Engagement and programming for special populations is not as robust as needed based on retention and completion rates.

Actions as a result of the comprehensive review:

- Committees have been formed to help identify and address ways to support diversity initiatives within student support departments as well as in the classrooms of all disciplines. These initiatives will help support special populations for persistence and retention toward completion.

- The Distance Committee is developing minimum usage guidelines for the learning management system, as well as student evaluation of faculty tools that will more equitably address learning in online and hybrid classes.

- Academic and Student Affairs is working collaboratively on block scheduling; the College is investing in scheduling software to optimize space utilization and support a more comprehensive ways to meet student programming needs.

- The College is instituting an advanced technology center and working with community partners to identify high priority occupations and ways to support students through pathways.

- The College is working to identify what an appropriate full-time to part-time faculty ratio is in relation to its student population and programming needs. Academic Deans are using schedule and curriculum planning to inform a multi-year staffing plan. The Adjunct Instruction Working Group (AIWG) has been formed to address recruitment and retention of qualified adjuncts.

Criterion 4 – Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

In addition to promoting excellence in teaching and learning, the College strives to be a progressive, relevant learning institution. Essential to this aim is operating within a continuous cycle of review and evaluation. Not unlike other institutions of higher education, the College is challenged by consistent engagement in the assessment and program review processes across all programs and disciplines. Nonetheless, the College has demonstrated that it continues to develop these process and acts as an institution that engages in and promotes continuous improvement. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review in light of Criterion 4.

Strengths:	Challenges:
1. The College has established a consistent, clearly-defined course assessment process.	1. The level of engagement in assessment for student learning remains inconsistent across programs and disciplines.
2. The College has a mature and continuously evolving process for Program Review.	2. The College needs to expand efforts to engage the institution as a whole in the program assessment process. Specifically, the College needs to ensure that data collected to inform program assessment are consistently used to inform continuous program improvement.
3. The College has recognition through specialized accreditation for many of its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, which speak to their quality and rigor.	3. Communication of the results of program review and assessment can be further strengthened. The more members of the College community that are involved in these processes, especially in providing feedback and recommendations, the stronger the College's programs and courses will be.
4. The College uses Advisory Committees to promote community collaboration to ensure that program content is relevant and innovative in meeting regional needs.	4. The College needs to identify a process to more effectively collect post-graduation outcomes across its programs. In doing so, these data could more readily inform continuous improvement needs.

As a result of the comprehensive review:
- The College has taken steps to move beyond the data collection and reporting elements of institutional assessment to taking action based on those results. As a result of Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment, the Assessment Committee recommended the College focus on improving written communication skills across the College. All divisions discuss in a division meeting how their departments could address this within their courses. The Writing Center has supported this initiative, taking the lead to enhance communication about writing and support for student writing and providing support for faculty development.

- The Assessment Committee has taken steps toward a review process for assessment planning and reporting. In this process, faculty members of the committee will provide feedback on information reported with TaskStream to improve and further develop a professional understanding of expectations of the assessment process.

- Academic Deans have begun to use common agenda topics scheduled for specified division and department meetings to facilitate meaningful conversations across the College on meaningful data points such as program review, assessment, and DFWI rates.

Criterion 5 – Resources, Planning, and Instituional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Through the evidence provided, the College has demonstrated that the College values quality, integrity, and efficiency in planning and management of resources entrusted to its operation by the public. In concert with the HLC Guiding Values, the College upholds this trust through careful, strategic planning that guides, as well as supports, budgetary and financial decisions that address the mission of this institution. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive for Criterion 5.

Strengths:	Challenges:
1. New and renovated facilities include spaces and technology that enhance teaching and learning.	1. At the beginning of the comprehensive review process, the College did not have an integrated strategic plan to guide resource allocation and divisional/departmental work plans.
2. The College has developed processes for balancing the budget without reliance on State funding.	2. Many departments are understaffed.
3. Hiring processes ensure that new employees (faculty and staff) meeting the minimum qualifications.	3. The College lacks the tools necessary to make financial projections that would facilitate decision making.
4. Beginning with the fiscal year 2018 budget planning, budget requests and approvals can be done online.	4. When experienced employees retire or otherwise leave the College, institutional knowledge is lost and new employees do not receive adequate training.
5. Curriculum Committee has well-documented procedures that are aligned with state requirements.	5. Orientation and training for Board members is limited.
6. Recommendations made through assessment and program review processes support budget requests.	6. Faculty and staff committees rarely include student members or solicit student input in decision making.
	7. Processes for developing new Board policies does not include faculty and staff input.

7. The current strategic planning process has included multiple opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input. 8. The College considers regional workforce needs when developing credit and noncredit programs. 9. The College closely monitors state funding, local equalized assessment values, and enrollment when setting and managing the budget. 10. The College invests in technology to create operational efficiencies (e.g., Recruit, Advise, Virtual Desktops, Ad Astra, and Follow-me Printers). 11. Key Performance Indicator Reports, Data Briefs, and other data reports inform decision making and provide evidence of performance. 12. The College is developing processes that turn five-year academic program review into an ongoing continuous improvement process.	8. College departments that are not included in the Illinois Community College Board program review process are not regularly reviewed. 9. Planning occurs at the leadership level with limited involvement from faculty, staff, and students. 10. Environmental scanning plays a limited role in budgeting tuition revenue. 11. The College does not invest in the human resources required to implement efficiency-building technologies. 12. Use of the College's accountability management system (TaskStream) could be expanded to nonacademic departments.

As a result of the comprehensive review:

- The College is in the process of developing an integrated strategic plan with aligned divisional and departmental plans.

- The current strategic planning process has included multiple opportunities for information sharing and gathering feedback from faculty and staff.

- Divisions and departments will be asked to align their plans with the College's strategic plan.

- The College will investigate tools which will provide financial benchmarks for the College to use in order to aide resource allocation.

- The College will implement the Colleague Finance Self-Service Module.

- The College will update the committee pages of the Quarry to include list of members, purposes, agenda, and minutes for all College-wide committees.

Rock Valley College

Assurance Argument | 2019

Criterion 1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1.A.1: The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and adopted by the governing board.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) identifies a common mission for the State's community colleges. As a part of this mission, community colleges are intended, [t]o provide high-quality, accessible, cost-effective educational opportunities for the individuals and communities they serve."

The College's mission document (i.e., mission statement, vision statement and core values) have been developed to align to the mission for community colleges as outlined by ICCB. The mission document outlines the College's commitment to students of all ages and the community at large by guiding day-to-day operations and informing strategic planning.

Mission Statement / Vision Statement	Core Values
Mission Statement: Rock Valley College empowers students and community through lifelong learning. **Vision Statement:** Rock Valley College empowers the community to grow as a society of learners through well-designed educational pathways, leading to further education, rewarding careers, cultural enrichment, and economic-technological development.	**Core Values:** <u>Learner-centered Community</u>. Rock Valley College is dedicated to providing affordable lifelong learning opportunities that foster student success. <u>Mutual Respect.</u> At all times, Rock Valley College upholds the dignity of each individual by being ethical, respectful, fair, and courteous in communications and actions. <u>Excellence.</u> Rock Valley College maintains high expectations for teaching and learning and holds itself accountable for promoting continuous improvement. <u>Diversity.</u> Rock Valley College promotes, celebrates, and embraces differences, including cultural and ethnic diversity and diversity of thought. <u>Collaboration.</u> Rock Valley College fosters innovative, enriching partnerships within the college community and among others that serve the region. <u>Innovation.</u> Rock Valley College is a forward thinking institution that explores creative approaches for the future. <u>Public Trust.</u> Rock Valley College honors and upholds its commitment to the community through integrity of actions and efficient use of resources.

Through a process that is inclusive of College faculty and staff, its governing board, students and community participants, the mission document has evolved with revisions taking place in 1985, 1992, and 2001. At the time of the last assurance argument, the College noted that it did not have a formal, systematic process of regular review of the mission document. To this end, a Mission Review Committee including faculty and staff members, students, a College Trustee, and community members representing various industries and demographics was formed in 2014. After much work, recommendations were made to College leadership and the governing board for revisions to the mission document, which were subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees on July 28, 2015.

After the recommended revisions were approved by the Board of Trustees, the Mission Review Committee was disbanded. The Board of Trustees agreed to affirm the mission document annually. This is done as part of their process during their reorganization meetings when they "re-adopt" the Board Policy Manual of which the mission document is a part.

Nonetheless, the College still needs a formal, systematic process that outlines regular review of the mission document to maintain its currency in aligning with the ICCB mission and the needs of the community it serves. The College's HLC Steering Committee will develop recommendations for the Executive Leadership Team to consider for establishing this regular review process.

1.A.2: The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

Academic Programs: Through the College's commitment to its mission of empowering students and community through lifelong learning, the College offers a wide variety of course and degree options that give students the opportunity to transfer on to continue their education, to obtain the necessary training to successfully enter the workforce, and to expand their interests and knowledge through non-credit and credit offerings.

- General Education at the College is designed to offer the College's community with learning opportunities to "develop the knowledge, skills, and habits reflected in the lives of educated persons and basic to all professions so that the College's students are capable of leading rewarding and responsible lives as productive, global citizens (page 5 of the College Catalog)." The general education core curriculum (GECC) provides the foundation for the College's degree programs and supports many of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) certificates. Planning for success guidelines are available to students to help them understand and plan for the GECC requirements for the degree they are working to obtain. Details about the GECC are outlined on pages 40-45 of the College Catalog.

- Transfer degrees include the Associate of Arts (A.A.), the Associate of Science (A.S.), and the Associate in Engineering Science (A.E.S.). Description of these degrees are provided

in the on page 38 of the College Catalog.

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) includes the Associate in Applied Sciences (A.A.S.) degree and several certificate programs "in response to employment needs of the [C]ollege's district." (on page 52 of the College Catalog) and are, therefore, developed in collaboration with advisory committees. A comprehensive list of these certificate programs can be found on pages 53-54 of the College Catalog.

- Developmental Education is designed to address student learning needs for those that are not college-ready in reading, English, and mathematics. The placement criteria to determine whether or not a student will need to enrollment in developmental education courses are outlined on the Placement page College web site and can be found on page 18 of the College Catalog.

- Non-credit educational opportunity is available at the College to address the College's mission as it relates to the lifelong learning and training needs of the residents within District 511, including offerings from Adult Education, Community and Continuing Education, Whiz Kids, the Center for Learning in Retirement, Golden Eagles Fitness, Traffic Safety, Truck Driver Training, Cold Forming Training, and the Business and Professional Institute. Apprenticeship programs often combine both credit and non-credit courses to help their participants address their learning requirements.

Student Support Services: To support our students' success and ensure the quality of their experiences, the College offers an array of student support services, including the following:
- Academic Advising
- Career Services
- Personal and Success Counseling
- Disability Support Services
- Intercultural Student Services
- Testing Center
- Tutoring Center
- Writing Center
- Math Lab
- Student Life

These services are documented in the pages 28-30 of the College Catalog, as well as on the Student Services page of the College web site.

In addition, the Estelle M. Black Library, housed on the College's main campus, supports the academic needs of students and faculty at all of the College's locations, as well as serving as a regional public library for residents with District 511. The College's library has 744 registered community patrons, registering 52 new and lending 482 items (7.76% of total circulation) to all community patrons during fiscal year 2018. Current circulation statics provide an overview of how the library serves students, faculty, and the community at large.

Enrollment Profile: The College recognizes the unique educational needs of each community member, as well as the fact that many have little to no prior experience with college (e.g., in Fall 2017, 65.2% of the College's credit students were first generation college students). To address this, the College has a single portal, the Getting Started Center, for those interested in credit or non-credit offerings to help community members and new students follow a few basic getting started steps to navigate through the various learning opportunities offered.

Each year in compliance with Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) guidelines and expectations, the College submits enrollment numbers for credit and non-credit offerings. The annual report of enrollment is used in conjunction with the tenth-day enrollment reports for the fall and spring terms to develop Student Profile and 10th Day Census Enrollment data briefs. The College uses these data, as well as Enrollment by Zip Code data briefs to inform who within its district, the College is serving. In addition, within the Program Review process outlined by ICCB, enrollment data are provided. These data inform programs and disciplines of the students that enroll in their courses. Through these data, programs and disciplines are able to monitor enrollment trends, as well as determine if they are serving a representative group reflective of the College and district population (see samples of program review data sets). If a program or disciplines enrollment is declining or if it is not serving a representative group of students, the College will determine appropriate interventions ranging from marketing and recruitment to sun-setting a program of study.

1.A.3: The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

The College has annually implemented its Financial Planning Model (FPM) for a number of years. In this process, budget officers work with their supervisors to discuss and plan projected budget needs. Ultimately, through a series of meetings these budget planning documents work their way up to Executive Leadership for discussion with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). For example, the budget manager for the Tutoring Center reports to the Dean of Business and Learning Support. The budget manager for the Tutoring Center makes recommendations in budget planning, which the dean reviews and revises as necessary. The dean then submits these budget planning documents to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, to whom the dean reports. The Vice President then reviews and revises as necessary before submitting them electronically and then reviews them with the CFO. Through this process campus leadership is able to prioritize and align needs to strategic efforts within the College mission. Budgeting and planning priorities are further detailed in the section of the assurance argument addressing Criterion 5.C.

With the on-going challenges of state budgeting in Illinois, the College has adopted a zero-based budgeting process within the FPM. As such, intentional focus has been placed on addressing fiscal responsibility, as well as student and community needs, to ensure that the College continues to fulfill its mission. Additional information about state budgeting and its impact on the College are further detailed in the section of the assurance argument addressing

Criterion 5.

Nonetheless, under the strong leadership of the President, the College successfully overcame a budget deficit of $1.6 million in FY17 to end the year with a balanced budget. Strategically, the College planned to operate with a balanced budget and minimal reliance on state funding from that point. Moreover, despite the fiscal challenges, all College employees received compensation increases in the last two fiscal years. In FY19, the College's Board of Trustees approved the investment of $10.2 million in capital improvements and staffing additions that support and align with the College's mission.

To provide transparency on the college budget, challenges, and strategic efforts, College administrators have provided the College community and the community at large with numerous reports on the state of the college through on- and off-campus presentations. Due to the positive feedback from various stakeholders, including employees, the College has and will continue to provide similar state-of-the-College updates on at least an annual basis.

Additional details of how the College's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission are further detailed in the section of the assurance argument addressing Criterion 5.C.1 of this assurance argument.

Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1.B.1: The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

In an attempt to clearly articulate our mission, Rock Valley College broadly promotes and includes its mission statement on many public documents and platforms, including the following:
- College web site
- Course Catalog
- Student Handbook
- Faculty Handbook
- Social media platforms
- Graduation program
- back of employee business cards
- Employee Handbook

The College mission statement, vision statement, and core values guide strategic planning. Alignment of strategic efforts to these core documents can be seen in past College-wide strategic plan, academic plans, and Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, as well as in the current iteration of the College Strategic Plan which is in development at this time.

1.B.2: The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.

The mission document was last reviewed and revised in 2015 and have been affirmed annually at the installation of officers for the Board of Trustees. In the process of self study for the development of this assurance argument, as well as the process of developing a new College-wide strategic plan, the mission, vision, and core values statements continue to express the overall effort and persistent focus of the College on being the community's college, and empowering those living within its district. Thus, through the mission document, the College is able to operate strategically with an emphasis on well-designed educational pathways for learners of all ages that promote lifelong learning, both personally and professionally, as well as foster the development of key and collaborative partnerships to improve the culture of education and educational outcomes within the region.

1.B.3: The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

The College's mission document succinctly articulates the complex, wide variety of College offerings and the constituents the College serves. This document establishes the College as providing, "well-designed educational pathways, leading to further education, rewarding careers, cultural enrichment, and economic-technological development." The document also establishes the commitment of the College to collaboration, stating that, "Rock Valley College fosters innovative, enriching partnerships within the College community and among others that serve the region." As stated previously, the mission document, affirms the intent of the College to be the district's first and best option for higher learning, career skills training, and personal enrichment. As such, the College's constituents are the community members within District 511. With its credit and non-credit offerings, the College impacts the lives of 23,000 community members every year.

Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1.C.1: The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

The College continues to address its role in a multicultural society as an employer and as an institution of higher learning. This is, in part, outlined within the mission document. For example, two core values in its efforts to empower the community through lifelong learning are Diversity and Mutual Respect. Diversity notes that, "Rock Valley College promotes, celebrates, and embraces differences, including cultural and ethnic diversity and diversity of thought," while Mutual Respect notes that, "[a]t all times, Rock Valley College upholds the dignity of each individual by being ethical, respectful, fair, and courteous in communications and

actions." Specific strategies that the Colleges uses to act on these core values are detailed below.

Addressing the College's role as an employer in a multicultural society: The College encourages the hiring of diverse candidates through its recruitment and search processes in an effort to develop a faculty and staff that reflects the community served, including but not limited to diversity of thought, background, and experience; gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation; and race and ethnicity; and income. As stated in the College's Equal Opportunity Statement, the College will, "provide equal opportunity in its admissions, employment and educational programs and activities consistent with federal and state law. Notification of the Equal Opportunity Statement and Americans with Disabilities Act are also found on the Employment Opportunities page of the College web site and page 15 of the Employee Handbook.

Recruitment of diverse candidates for open positions is a key step in this process. Like many institutions of higher education, the College publishes open positions on its web site and through local and national media and professional outlets. In an effort to reach out to a diverse pool of candidates, the College also advertises open positions with a number of online and local resources, including diversejobs.net, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Growth Enterprises, LaVoz Latina, Booker Washington Community Center, and Illinois Department of Human Services.

The College also recognizes that community events it hosts or participates in provide additional opportunities to diversify its employee pool. To this end, the College plans to have representatives attend more job fairs focused on diversity to further enhance the College's efforts to recruit a diverse pool of applicants. For example, Human Resources Generalists will attend job fairs to focus on making connections with and building awareness of employment opportunities at the College diversity to further enhance its efforts to recruit a diverse pool of applicants. Job announcements will be distributed to local organizations including non-profits who focus and work with diverse individuals, including but not limited to the following: United Way of Rock River Valley, IGNITE Rockford, Carpenter's Place, YWCA, Winnebago County Diversity Council, Womanspace, Diversity of Rockford Illinois Inc, Rise up Rockford, Rockford Youth Activism, La Voz Latina, and American Association of University Women (AAUW) Rockford.

Furthermore, the College's search committee processes for hiring faculty and non-faculty positions are also intended to promote the hiring of diverse candidates. Search committee training is required of all search committee members, regardless of the type of position they are seeking to fill. In this training, general search committee guidelines are provided. Search committees are encouraged to interview self-identified diverse candidates that meet the position requirements. Additionally, guidelines are provided pertaining to the prohibition of pre-employment medical requirements by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA), such as avoiding questions that elicit responses regarding physical or medical condition and how well a person with a disability would be able to perform on the job. All

candidates selected for interview and the questions to be asked are also submitted to Human Resources for approval to ensure that appropriate, inclusive procedures are being followed. Starting in Spring 2019, Human Resources plans to have a representative guide and participate in every hiring committee to further support the use of inclusive procedures. Finally, while not formally documented in the hiring procedures or the search committee training, all supervisors and search committee chairs are asked to develop a diverse, representative search committee.

To promote retention, Human Resources will offer Safe Colleges online training for staff that targets diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect. The Employee Development Committee and the Academy of Teaching and Learning Excellence (ATLE) has also offered sessions at faculty and staff development days to foster an inclusive learning community grounded in mutual respect through a series of sessions on understanding white privilege, Safe Zones, microaggressions, and universal design, as well as Title IX training. In addition to supporting the ATLE in presenting on the topics above, the College's Promoting an Inclusive Community (PAIC) committee provides employees with book discussions and #WhatsUpWednesday presentations to better understand diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as promote mutual respect. Recently, the Board of Trustees approved and additional $300,000 in professional development funding that could be used, in part, to enhance efforts these efforts.

Retention also depends upon relationship building. Human Resources will extend welcome visits to new employees within the second or third week of their start date to inquire about how things are going within their job and if they have questions about the College or their position. The ATLE offers new faculty and adjuncts a learning opportunity through their Excellence Academy that creates an on-line community of learners. An ATLE faculty liaisons meet with new faculty to make sure they are acclimating to the College and to teaching, that they understand are being supported in the tenure process, and that they have access to the resources they need for their classroom and for their students. In addition to their tenure chair and committee, new faculty also can request a faculty mentor. An ATLE faculty liaison provides mentoring of adjuncts online through the Excellence Academy. This online space provides an opportunity for new faculty and adjuncts to build a virtual community of learners. Faculty, adjuncts, and staff have face-to-face opportunities for communication and collaboration through committee, department and division meetings, as well as professional development days.

Opportunities for professional development to promote diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect will be addressed further in section of the assurance argument detailing Criterion 3.

As a part of the comprehensive review process, employee data was reviewed to determine the degree to which the demographics of faculty and staff at the College were proportionate to the community and the student body. These data were compared to similar data reported in the College's 2014 Self-study Narrative. Results indicate that the demographics of the faculty and staff are not proportionate, especially when looking at race and ethnicity. These data indicate that the staff is still disproportionately white with fewer Hispanic/Latino staff as compared to

students and regional demographics based on race and ethnicity. Furthermore, these data indicate that the faculty is disproportionately white and increasingly so since the 2014 data. While efforts are being made with regard to hiring practices, College employees are still not representative of the diversity within our district, and the lack of diversity within our faculty is particularly problematic. These numbers may have been impacted by problems the College faced as a result of reduced enrollment and the state fiscal uncertainty, which has led to individuals leaving staff and faculty positions. Nonetheless, the College recognizes the importance of having a diverse, representative group of employees. Therefore, addressing the College's role as an employer in a multicultural society should continue to be a strategic area of improvement for our College moving forward.

<u>Addressing the College's role as an institution of higher learning in a multicultural society:</u> The College is committed to promoting access to the diverse population of its community and success within an academic environment that acknowledges and supports diverse learning needs.

To provide an academic environment that acknowledges and supports diverse learning needs, the College offers a credit curriculum with liberal arts and science associate degree options, as well as career and technical education certificate and associate degree options. Within the general education curriculum are a variety of courses that expose students to the multicultural society from local to global perspectives. No matter what credit curriculum a student pursues at the College, the institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) define expectations for learning that include global awareness and responsibility, and personal responsibility.

To monitor the success of the College in addressing access and success of its students, the College has identified several Key Performance Indicators (KPI) aligned to both the Public Agenda of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the institution's strategic efforts. The College's KPI are identified into five categories, one of which is Educational Attainment, Access, and Success. The operational definition of this category includes the need to raise success of students throughout the educational pipeline, but also addresses the need to eliminate achievement gaps. To this end, KPI within this category (e.g., persistence, retention, graduation, and transfer rates) are analyzed in terms of successful effort to eliminate achievement gaps, providing the College with insight as to the effectiveness of its efforts to be an institution of higher learning in a multicultural society.

1.C.2: The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

In addition to the processes documented above in 1.C.1, the College has formed departments, student organizations and College-wide committees that plan and host co-curricular and curricular events and activities, professional development, and personal development and enrichment opportunities that call attention to the importance of diversity and reflect commitment to human diversity at the College.

For example, Intercultural Student Services supports the diverse needs of international, multicultural, first generation, and student-athlete populations, among others, through valuable, student-centered programming and events (e.g., Minority Male Leadership Conference, Sister-to-Sister Conference, Hispanic Leadership Conference, and the International Student Showcase). Student Life supports a variety of clubs (e.g., Multi-cultural Club, Association of Latin American Students, Black Student Union, Japanese Multimedia and Culture Club, Gay Pride Alliance, and Intervarsity Christian Fellowship) and club activities, as well as plans and hosts events and month-long celebrations for Black History, Women's History, and Hispanic Heritage months that reflect and celebrate diversity.

The College has been awarded two TRiO Student Support Services grants, one that serves low-income, first-generation students and the other that serves students with disabilities. These programs serve over 140 students at the College each year. TRiO Support Services provides individual and group services to students so that they may overcome class, academic, social and cultural barriers to complete their education. These programs provide holistic and comprehensive advising and instructional support, in order to help undergraduate students be successful at and graduate from the College.

In conjunction with the College's mission document, Disability Support Services leads the campus community in its commitments to recognize and appreciate disability as a valued aspect of diversity, to design more welcoming and inclusive environments, and to ensure that all aspects of campus life are universally accessible. Disability Support Services has outlined a mission, vision, and student learning outcomes to frame their efforts. They provide a handbook, faculty and staff resources (e.g., keys to collaboration, accommodations and services, and universal design); and student resources (e.g., tips for talking to instructors, transitioning to college, and peer mentoring).

Each year, the College's English as a Second Language (ESL) program serves nearly 700 residents who are not native English speakers, teaching them how to improve their speaking, reading, and writing skills. Classes range from providing basic language skills for beginners to helping advanced students prepare for higher education, further training, or a career. Classes are offered several times during the year at numerous locations throughout the community. Additionally, the College's Refugee & Immigrant Services program serves approximately 350 refugee adults and children each year. The program, established in 1978, assists many arrivals e from the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burma, Cuba, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. In total, the current staff members of the program speak seven languages in order to best serve the refugees from various countries. The College is the only community college in the state to feature a program of this nature. Furthermore, last year, the College's citizenship program served approximately 200 adults and children from 30 different countries. The citizenship program offers citizenship application and education services to refugees and immigrants in the community who are eligible for the services. Last year alone, 187 applications were completed and over 60 people attended education classes.

The College also has a College-wide committee, Promoting an Inclusive Community (PAIC), that is designated to "enhancing and sustaining an institutional culture of equity and social justice that fosters diversity and inclusion." The PAIC committee has four goals – advocacy, institutional and program assessment, programming and development, and to serve as a resource. Through its efforts, PAIC has served as a clearing house for organizational efforts related to diversity, promoting conversation, fostering professional development, and supporting initiatives to create a climate of acceptance for diversity in all its manifestations. For example, PAIC has hosted a Stand Against Racism event annually since 2012. The event includes an open discussion of current events and timely racial issues in our society, as well as a symbolic march of solidarity at the College's location in downtown Rockford. The event brings together diverse populations from the College and the community. PAIC also hosts monthly events throughout the academic year (What's Up Wednesdays and Thursday Thoughts) that have covered topics such as immigration, undocumented dreamers, the "#MeToo movement, and Voting 101. PAIC also spearheaded the development of the College's Safe Zone program to increase awareness of issues and concerns of the LGBTQAI+ community, as well as develop a network of allies in employees across campus.

Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1.D.1: Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

The College's mission documents explicitly acknowledge the College's obligation to the community it serves. The Public Trust Core Value states that the College honors the trust of the public and upholds it through "quality service, integrity of actions, and efficient use of resources." Many of the College's actions and decisions as an educational institution reveal the extent to which it addresses its obligation and service to the public. The College does this through its credit and non-credit academic programming. However, it also serves the public by collaborating to addressing regional need, providing public service, supporting growth and enrichment for residents, exposing community members to post-secondary opportunities, and providing access to learning opportunity.

Collaborating to address regional need: The College has established many successful partnerships with both educational institutions and local industry leaders to enhance and grow College programs. Some of those key partnerships include AAR Corp in conjunction with the Aviation Maintenance program, City of Rockford and Winnebago County with the Advanced Technology Center, the cold forming industry, Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, regional high schools (e.g., Dual Credit, Running Start, and Pathways), NIU@RVC Engineering, OSF/St. Anthony College of Nursing with degree programs in the College's Health Sciences Center and support of its Wellness Clinic, regional higher educational institutions (e.g., Rockford University and Highland Community College), and The Workforce Connection (more details

about this partnership are provided in the section of the assurance argument addressing 1.D.3).

Providing public service: The College provides a Traffic Safety program that provides curriculum developed by the National Safety Council (NCS) for individuals receiving traffic citations. The program offers for classes to educate individual on defensive driving best practices and to help prevent injuries and potentially save lives . This program serves nearly 8,000 citizens from Winnebago, Boone, Carroll, Lee, Ogle , Jo Davies, and Stephenson counties.

Supporting cultural enrichment for residents: Socially, the College's Starlight Theater provides a creative outlet for both students and the community. Community members not only can attend the performances, they can also audition to perform in the shows or volunteer to help on event nights. Starlight is the very definition of Community Theater and is considered one of the gems of the region.

The College has several academic areas that engage the community in cultural enrichment opportunities, including, but not limited to, the following:
- CIS engages community members in various opportunities to develop technical literacy, including multi-generational Hour of Code sessions at least once a month and in various locations in the community. This department also promote Girls Who Code and Ozobot sessions, and are exploring how to engage middle and high school students through Raspberry Pi.

- Art annually hosts two art shows for the region, one of the College's student art and the other a regional art competition.

- Music annually hosts several band, orchestral, and jazz band performances and regional high school competitions.

- Mass Communications and Modern Languages have offered film festivals.

- Composition and Literature host a visiting writer.

- Academic Affairs sponsors faculty presenting on topics of interest and expertise through the First Tuesday Lecture series.

Exposing community members to post-secondary opportunities: The college has formed numerous community partnerships both within and outside of academics. College leaders stress publicly that we are "this community's college." The College hosts many community events throughout the year that draw visitors to campus and assist community organizations. Athletic events such as Rumble in the Rock and the Rising Stars Classic are examples of partnerships with our local high schools focused on showcasing local athletes and providing them a larger venue at which to compete. Similarly, academic events are hosted by the College for students in elementary school through high school, including the Youth Groundwater

Festival, Science Olympiad, WYSE Academic Challenge, ICTM Regional Mathematics Contest, First Robotics competition, Bridge Building competition, and Stateline Quiz Bowl. Annual events such as College Night and FAFSA Night, as well as Career Fairs held in conjunction with Rockford University, are meant to serve the entire community. While the College has a role and potential benefits from hosting these events, the College ultimately provides a service to residents in the community who may never choose to attend the College. For example, College Night showcases over 150 colleges and universities for our residents to learn more about. FAFSA Nights are designed to educate students and parents on the financial aid process whether or not they intend to attend the College.

Providing access to learning opportunity: The College has multiple locations, including campuses in Northeast Rockford, Southeast Rockford, and downtown, as well as an Aviation Career Education Center located at the Chicago-Rockford International Airport and a Cold Forming Training Center near downtown Rockford. The College's locations are also accessible via the Rockford Mass Transit bus services with two bus stop locations on the College's main campus.

Furthermore, the College has made great efforts to keep affordability top of mind for the community we serve. The College has maintained a tuition rate that is the sixth lowest among the 48 community colleges in the state of Illinois, while still offering the highest quality programs and instruction. Citizens 62-64 years of age who are residents of District 511 qualify for a reduced tuition rate of $25 per credit hour, while those 65 and over who are district residents may attend credit classes tuition free. Additionally, all Adult Education classes offered by the College, including High School Equivalency/GED and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes are offered for free to in-district residents.

1.D.2: The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

The College is a public community college. As such, it does not generate financial returns for investors or contribute to a related or parent organization. As has been described in prior sections of this chapter, the educational responsibilities identified and defined in the mission and related documents are consistent with the mission and public agenda for community colleges identified by the State.

Furthermore, the Rock Valley College Foundation, a separate 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporation, supports the educational responsibilities of the College through scholarships and by funding grants for the College's faculty and staff to enhance programs and services, as well as support activities that complement the College's educational offerings. Contributions to the College go through the Foundation to minimize exposure to potential external interests.

1.D.3: The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

The College engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs in a number of ways, including the following:

Engaging in community outreach activity: The College recognizes through its mission document that a key activity is to provide lifelong learning opportunities, cultural enrichment, and support to regional economic need. As stated previously in the section of the assurance argument addressing 1.A.2, the College addresses this in various ways.

Establishing formal partnerships to address a common issue or concern: The College frequently engage with community, local business, and K-12 educational leaders to discuss their needs and how the College can assist in address those needs. These discussions have recently led to high priority college initiatives, including Linking Talent with Opportunity and Pathways. In 2017, the College began engaging in discussions with the superintendents of the high schools in our district about a new pathways model that would allow students as early as the ninth grade to begin exploring career paths to high priority occupations. Within the pathways initiative, students would be able to earn up to 16 college credits, in some cases industry certifications, and graduate high school college-ready in Math and Reading.

With a strong endorsement from regional superintendents, the College reached out to community leaders for additional support. As a result, the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois awarded the College an educational-based grant for Linking Talent with Opportunity in the region that is worth $675,000 over three years. The grant will fund pathways through a collaboration between the College and Highland Community College that will ultimately serve over 20 regional school districts. Additionally, the Rock Valley College Foundation awarded the college $225,000 over three years to help fund this pathways initiative.

In 2017, the College was also awarded a grant to serve as the lead organization in administering nearly $1.8 million of federal funds under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to provide workforce services to both individuals and businesses. To carry out these services, the College has formed partnerships with Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES). The College has been acting as a service provider to dislocated workers in the region for over 30 years, but this new opportunity allows the College to lead the effort regionally by taking that experience and forging a new partnership that includes Goodwill of Northern Illinois and continue what has been a prosperous partnership with IDES.

This collaborative approach with Goodwill will help build the local workforce through targeted training to individuals who are seeking employment and needed support for local employers. An emphasis will be placed on aligning local talent with employer needs, ensuring that the training received is what is needed to support the region. Some of the services this consortium will work together to provide will include career advising and counseling to adults and

dislocated workers, training in high demand areas based on demonstrated local needs, and job search and placement assistance, all with a focus on improving relationships with employers.

<u>Participating in critical conversations:</u> Being a part of critical conversations that address the issues and concerns of the community is essential to being responsive to its needs. To this end, administration, faculty, and staff of the College hold positions on a number of governing boards and committees of various community organizations that include, but are not limited to the following: Transform Rockford, Workforce Development, Rockford Regional Health Council, Chamber of Commerce, District 205 Academies, and Regional College Readiness Collaboration with Northern Illinois University and seven other community colleges in Northern Illinois. By having College representation at these various conversations, the institution partakes in and contributes to decision-making that impacts the community, as well as gains insight into issues that the institution could directly, systematically address.

The College also hosts conversations with various community stakeholders to glean specific insight into the College's programs and their continued effectiveness in addressing regional need. One example of such conversations is found in the College's hosting of a National Coalition of Advance Technology Centers (NCATC) conversation with College leadership; post-secondary education leaders; economic and workforce development organizations; local, regional, and state officials, architect firm leadership; and technical faculty and staff in the advanced technology related areas. The <u>results of this conversation</u> have led to the College's strategic effort with Linking Talent with Opportunity, that in part, addresses the need for an Advanced Technology Center. Furthermore, curriculum in the areas of mechatronics and supply chain are in development and working through the College's Curriculum Committee in preparation for delivery in conjunction with the Advanced Technology Center and in response to regional need. Similarly, additional curriculum that will be developed in the upcoming year based on feedback from this process include revision to CNC and IST curriculum and certificates.

Another example of critical community conversations were those held to inform the improvement of its Business offerings. The College has noted that while individuals with business certificates and degrees continue to be in demand with the region, the enrollment in these courses and its certificate and degree programs has been declining. To revitalize the program focus groups with regional business owners and staff agencies were held to glean insights in to the skills and credentials desired to address hiring needs of business students. This information has led to a redesign of Business 101, which will be presented to the College's curriculum committee in January 2019, as well as identification of new stackable certificates that better address regional need, such as those in human resources. Work on the revision of the business curriculum will continue throughout 2019 and will be further informed by its Advisory Committee, which is consists of and is led by community members.

As is the case with business, the College uses advisory committees for its CTE programs. These advisory committees are designed to engage faculty from each of the programs in conversation with community members directly working or providing service within a given field (e.g., the

advisory committee for the nursing committee has community representatives from regional hospitals, as well as other health care providers). A recent review of the advisory committees found that participation involved more faculty than community professionals and that communication was perceived as being one-way by those community professionals. As such, the College has engaged in revision of advisory committees. In the revision, a community member representing the field serves as either the chair or the co-chair of the committee. The committee structure also has a requisite membership and a charter that outlines the collaborative effort of the group. Programs that have engaged in this revised advisory committee structure to date include:

- FY18: Automotive Maintenance and Welding

- FY19: Automotive Maintenance, Welding, Business, Graphic Arts, Fire Science, and Criminal Justice

Monitoring regional economic need: The College has identified several Key Performance Indicators (KPI) aligned to both the Public Agenda of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the College's strategic efforts. One of the five KPI categories is Addressing Regional Economic Need, which addresses the College's effort to support State and regional economic development. KPI Summary Reports for this category include the monitoring of labor market data for the region. The KPI Summary Reports are used along with other, more in-depth labor market data to inform decisions about which programs should be maintained, revised, grown, or eliminated. For example, as mentioned above, even though the enrollment numbers in business courses had shown decline, the labor market data showed a regional need for certificate and degree graduates. As such, the decision was made to revise the program to ensure that it was relevant and innovative in addressing regional need. On the other hand, the College's building and construction maintenance program was seeing declining enrollment. This was coupled by labor market data that indicated a decreased need in the region for certificate and degree graduates in this area. As such, the College decided to sunset the program, which ended with the Spring 2018 semester.

Criterion 1 - Summary

The mission statement of the College, "Rock Valley College empowers students and community through lifelong learning," addresses the breadth of learning opportunities outlined by the State's mission for community colleges. Through the supporting evidence provided, the College has demonstrated that its mission is clearly and publicly articulated and that it guides the institution's operations. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review in light of Criterion 1.

Strengths:
1. The College continues to have a well-published, clearly defined mission document that is consistent with the mission for community colleges defined by the State.

2. The College mission document is operationalized and supported by additional public documents, including but not limited to the College Catalog; Student, Faculty and Employee Handbooks; and strategic planning documents.

3. Credit and non-credit learning opportunities, as well as student support services, address and support the College's mission document.

Challenges:
1. While the mission document was reviewed and revised through a Mission Review Committee in 2015 which the Board approved the revision in 2016, the College still lacks a formal procedure for the regular review and affirmation of its mission document.

2. The College has procedures and potential to develop a diverse workforce; however, data indicate that hiring and retention practices have not increase the diversity of faculty and staff and are not representative of the community served.

3. While the College continues to offer learning opportunities addressing diverse learning needs, the breadth of the mission of a community college in conjunction with the educational and training needs of the community challenge the resources of the College, especially in light of fiscal instability of the State.

Actions as a result of the comprehensive review:
- Within the next fiscal year, the College's HLC Steering Committee will develop and propose a recommendation to the College's Executive Leadership Team for the formal, systematic review of the mission document.

- Within the 2014 assurance argument, Human Resources had initiated an evaluation of best practices for retaining a diverse workforce. With turnover in Human Resources since that time, the audit of the search committee process and subsequent improvements to recruitment, hiring, and retention process have not been implemented. Human Resources will develop a timeline for this audit.

- In addressing the closing of achievement gaps noted based on race and ethnicity at the College, the Retention Committee will identify and promote strategies to support the academic success of minority students on campus. This committee will also work with PAIC and ATLE on supporting the professional development of full-time faculty, adjuncts, and staff in improving teaching and learning to further address the learning needs of a multicultural society.

Criterion 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

The College operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions through careful development, review, and implementation of policies and procedures. When existing policies and procedures are found to be inadequate, those policies are expanded and clarified.

Financial functions: The College establishes policies to operate with integrity and transparency in its financial functions. These policies are contained in Article 5, Finance, of the Board Policy Manual . Several of these policies provide the foundation for the College's financial functions, including the following:

- 5.10.030: Financial Reports (Implemented and Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 5.10.040: Annual Budget (Implemented and Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 5.10.050: Accounting (Implemented 3/26/09; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 5.10.090: Capital Asset and Depreciation (Implemented 5/22/07; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 5.10.110: Fund Transfer Agreement with Rock Valley College Foundation (Implemented 12/11/01; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 5.10.120: Purchasing (Implemented 3/24/09; Last Revised 10.23.18)

The College also operates with transparency with regard to its budget, financial condition, and the selection of vendors for various goods and services. Annual Budget Statements and Audited Financial Statements are posted on the College's webpage on the Financial Reports page. Information on the most current open bids, quote requests, and bid results; how to be added to the permanent bid list; and diverse vendor enterprise use can be found on the Bidding Information and Vendors section of the web page.

Processes used to implement these policies and address the financial functions of the College have resulted in fiscally responsible budgeting grounded in sound practice which has been recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada

(GFOA). The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and Illinois Compiled Statute require all community colleges annually submit and publish audited financial statements, which present the financial position of the College. GFOA awards the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting as its highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting. RVC has received this award each year since the submission of the 2007 fiscal year audited financial statement.

Academic functions: The College establishes and follows fair and ethical academic policies and process. These policies are contained in Article 4, Students, of the Board Policy Manual. Several of these policies provide the foundation for the College's academic standards, including the following:

- 4.20.010: Academic Integrity (Implemented and Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 4.20.020: Intellectual Property and Copyright Act Compliance (Implemented 12/17/13 and Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 4.20.070: Standards for Academic Progress (Implemented and Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 4.20.080: Academic Appeals (Implemented and Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 4.20.090: Academic Forgiveness (Implemented and Last Revised 4/8/14)

Process to operationalize these policies are outlined for faculty and staff in the Academic and Student Affairs Standards and Procedures Manual and for students in the Student Handbook. Additional details of how the College operates with integrity in academic functions are provided in the section of this document addressing core component 2.E.

Personnel: The College establishes and follows fair and ethical personnel policies and processes which are updated and reviewed as necessary. These policies are contained in Article 3, Human Resources, of the Board Policy Manual. The College provides administrators, faculty, staff, and students with policies and procedures that inform them of their rights and responsibilities, including the following:

- 3.10.050: Employee Code of Ethics (Implemented 11/25/03; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 3.10.120: Conflict of Interest - Employees (Implemented and Last Revised 12/11/18)

- 3.20.070: Employee Discipline (Implemented 9/23/08; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 3.20.090: Employment of Related Parties (Implemented and Last Revised 04/8/14)

- 3.30.080: Jury Duty/Compulsory Witness (Implemented 12/19/12; Last Revised 04/8/14)

- 3.30.090: Family and Medical Leave (Implemented 1/16/09; Last Revised 04/8/14)

- 3.30.150: Child Bereavement Leave (Implemented and Last Revised 3/28/17)

Processes for College employees that are aligned to the policies in the Board Policy Manual are provided within the Employee Handbook and the Academic and Student Affairs Standards and Procedures Manual.

The full-time faculty, campus police, and support staff are unionized, and so conditions of employment for these employees are further articulated through each group's collective bargaining agreement (CBA). For example, in the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Faculty Association the Evaluation Policy is outlined in Section 5.9 and covers both tenured and probationary faculty members. The purpose of the evaluation is to help promote effective teaching, assure accountability and provide a basis for tenure decisions. Constructive feedback from peers, colleagues, and students is used with the goal of improving performance, as well as advancing professional development. The Faculty Association leadership works with College administrators to address any concerns that arise with individual faculty. Furthermore, the Labor Management Committee and Contract Review Committee (CRC), joint committees of faculty and administrative leadership, meet regularly to clarify contract language.

Two additional, non-representative employee groups exist at the College: Educational Support Personnel (ESP) and Professional Staff Association (PSA). ESP is comprised of all full-time and continuous part-time non-exempt hourly employees in identified confidential positions. PSA is comprised of all full-time and continuous part-time exempt employees, except those deemed by the President to be part of the Executive Leadership Team. PSA has an executive committee and meets regularly throughout the year in order to identify issues likely to affect members and propose strategies to optimize member employment at the College. The president of PSA typically meets regularly with the President and at any time has the opportunity to address the Board to provide updates on issues and concerns of its membership. Employees are also encouraged to have a representative from their group present during the complaint/grievance process.

The Human Resources (HR) department ensures ethical and fair practices are followed through collective bargaining agreements, formal complaint processes, clearly outlined hiring practices, and training for those serving on search committees. The search processes are available on the Quarry, and HR staff provides support throughout the process and routinely evaluates applicant pools for diversity. The Human Resources office also communicates employees' responsibilities and obligations under relevant laws (e.g., Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), sexual harassment, and the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act).

Auxiliary Functions: The College establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for auxiliary functions which are updated and reviewed as necessary. These policies are contained in Article 2, Operations, of the Board Policy Manual. The policies within Article 2 provide direction for the areas of Compliance; Safety and Security; Institutional Research, Technology and Development; and Auxiliary Services. Specific policies include the following:

- 2.10.060: Identity Theft Protection (Implemented 4/28/09; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.10.070: Records Retention (Implemented 03/24/09; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.10.110: Information Technology Compliance (Implemented 5/26/09; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.20.040: Emergency Response Plan Policy (Implemented 08/28/07; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.20.090: Hazardous Materials (Implemented 5/26/09; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.30.010: Conducting Institutional Research (Implemented 10/26/04; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.30.020: Acceptable Use Policy for Information Technology Systems (Implemented 5/26/09; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.40.010: Facilities and Grounds Rental (Implemented 11/27/07; Last Revised 4/8/14)

- 2.40.060: Disposal of Assets (Implemented 3/21/88; Last Revised 4/8/14)

Through this information, the College has demonstrated that it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Nonetheless, as part of review of policy conducted in conjunction with the 2014 comprehensive review, the College recognized that it needed a stronger, clearer policy on Board and employee conflict of interest than had been provided previously through the Code of Conduct. Due to many transitions, however, the recommended change had not been implemented. This was noted in the current comprehensive review, and at the recommendation of the HLC Steering Committee and College leadership, the Board of Trustees passed an amendment to Section 6 of Board Policy 1.10.010 and a new conflict of interest policy for employees (3.10.120) at the December 11, 2018 meeting of the regular board meeting.

Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

The College provides accurate and up-to-date information on programs, requirements, faculty, cost to students, control, and accreditation relationships through its web site, the College Catalog, the Student Handbook, and marketing materials. While the 2014 assurance argument verified this, the College determined in that comprehensive review that overall the College web site was difficult to navigate. As a result, a redesigned web site was constructed focusing on

potential students as the primary audience. This redesign went live in November 2015 and continues to be the platform for the College's web site today. While much improved, some have indicated that it can still be difficult to find some information. Through the current comprehensive review process, however, the College learned that most people use the "search" function, which users find usually takes them to pertinent information, to mitigate this problem.

Programs. Information on degree and certificate programs can be found through the Academics link on the College home page and in the College Catalog (Transfer Degrees, pp. 38-45 in the 2018-19 catalog; Career and Technical Education Programs, pp. 52-92). Non-credit programs and classes through Community and Continuing Education can be found on the College's web site by accessing the "For the Community" tab. Offerings include "Whiz kids" classes for children; trips and tours for community members; general interest classes in things such as cooking, creative writing, and gardening; and specialized career training in such fields as forklift driving and massage therapy. Community Education also offers robust programming for retired persons through the Center for Learning in Retirement (CLR). Additionally, the Business and Professional Institute (BPI) site provides information on specialized and customized training in fields like truck driving and manufacturing.

The College offers additional non-credit programs to assist students with adult basic education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and other skills. The Adult Education department coordinates these programs, and program information and requirements can be found on the College's web site through the Adult Education link.

Requirements. Consistent with the College's mission, it has an open enrollment policy, but prospective students must complete certain steps to become a student. Information about these enrollment steps can be found through the Admissions link on the College homepage, as well as in the College Catalog (pp. 15-18).

While the College has an open enrollment policy, students interested in taking credit courses must complete placement exams to determine initial placement in English, reading, and mathematics. Information about placement testing can be found through several paths on the College web site, including the Admissions and Testing Center pages.

Illinois law requires that public Colleges and universities accept scores of three and higher on the Advanced Placement (AP) exam. Consistent with that law, the College clearly outlines the way these scores translate into credits on the Credit by Exam page of its web site. This page also outlines how the College accepts CLEP and other types of exam credits.

Some of the Career & Technical Education programs do have specific admissions requirements. For example, most of the Allied Health programs, including dental hygiene, nursing, respiratory care, and surgical technology require successful completion of certain courses, and the nursing program requires students to complete the Test of Essential Academic skills (TEAs). These

requirements are outlined in the College Catalog (Dental Hygiene, page. 66; Nursing, pages 77-78; Respiratory Care Therapy, page 83; and Surgical Technology, page 85). The Certified Nursing Aide (CAN) Certificate, in compliance with Illinois law, requires that students complete a criminal background check before taking the class. In order to accomplish this, students must attend a mandatory information session. Other programs, such as the electrician apprenticeship program, specify that prospective students must go through a selection process established by the Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC) Local Union 364 (College Catalog, page 91). Other programs, such as Aviation Maintenance Technology and Exercise Science do not require the completion of specific courses to be admitted, but they do require prospective students to complete an application. These applications are available online in their program pages.

Faculty and Staff. A faculty and staff directory is accessible through the "MyRVC" area on the College's web site. Contact information (typically including email addresses and phone numbers) are listed, along with the person's title and department/division. Department main numbers are also listed. The College's comprehensive review revealed that one of the limitations of the directory is that it does not list the office numbers of faculty, making it difficult for students to find professors. However, students are provided information about the location of faculty offices through floor maps and directories located inside each classroom building, as well as on all instructor syllabi.

Faculty and staff information is also included in the College Catalog (pp. 166-171). This listing provides brief educational histories of the College leadership and faculty.

Cost to Students. Tuition and fees information can be found through the Admissions page of the College web site. The College Catalog outlines policies governing rules regarding tuition, such as in-district versus out-of-district and tuition rates for senior citizens, as well as the refund policy (page 20). Students are also provided easy access to information about Financial Aid through the College web site and the College Catalog (pp. 21-22).

Tuition is clearly listed on the College web site. While course fees are also available online, they are connect to course information. Students can find course fee information when they are searching for courses. To improve transparency, the College can reinforce communications on course fees, how to locate them, and how they figure into the overall cost of their College experience.

In compliance with federation regulations and guidelines, the College web site offers a Net Price Calculator to help students determine the cost of attending the College. This link can be accessed through the Financial Aid web page. Additionally, Career and Technical Education Programs provide gainful employment information. The College webpage includes information about this under the specific programs, but also has a useful drop-down menu that interested parties can use to search any program.

Control. Information about governance and leadership at the College can be found through the About RVC page of the College web site through the Board of Trustees and Leadership Team menu links. This information can also be found in the College Catalog (pages 5 and 166).

Accreditation. The College's accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission, as well as other accrediting bodies with which it has a relationship, can be found through the Accreditation menu link on the Academics page of the College web site. Program-specific accreditation for the College's Career and Technical Education Programs can be found on related programs pages of the web site (e.g. information about the Dental Hygiene program's accreditation can be found on their program web page.)   The College also publishes updates on the status of institutional and program accreditation within its Accountability Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Report.

Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

2.C.1: The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

Consistent with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the College's Board of Trustees holds open meetings with a portion of the time allocated to closed session meetings. The Board meets approximately twice per month. In FY18, the Board adopted a new format and related updated Board Policy 1:10.050. The updated policy provides for a Committee of the Whole that consists of every Trustee and meets monthly for discussions in preparation for the Regular Meeting of the Board. This meeting is a time for presentations and discussion of items on the agenda rather than for voting on Board actions. The agenda, meeting packets, and minutes for both the Committee of the Whole meetings and the regular board meetings are available to the public through the Board of Trustees page on the College's web site as soon as they have been approved by the Board at their subsequent Regular Meeting. Employees can also access them through the President's page of the College's intranet, the Quarry. Board meeting agendas and packets are also posted to the College web site.

The minutes of the open sessions of regular board meetings and the Committee of the Whole meetings reflect the deliberations of the Board of Trustees. Each regular meeting includes approvals of standard financial and operational reports (personnel reports, purchase reports, etc.), as well as updates from the President, Leadership Team, Trustees (including the Student Trustee), Committee Chairs, and Liaisons. Topics discussed at board meetings are shown in the Board Topics Table. This includes both Committee of the Whole that began in 2018 and Regular Meetings of the Board. The table shows that a considerable range of topics is discussed at the Board meetings.

2.C.2: The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

Operating under the Open Meetings Act, the Board of Trustees considers the interest of members of the College community through Communications and Petitions at each meeting. Review of minutes indicate that communications and petitions reflect topics of greatest interest and concern of internal and external constituencies.

2.C.3: The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.

The Board has been governed by a Code of Ethics that includes language regarding conflict of interest. Conflict of Interest policies, one for Board members and one for employees, were approved at the December 2018 Board meeting.

2.C.4: The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Day-to-day Management. Per the Board Policy Manual, the Board delegates the day-to-day management of the institution to the College President. The President, who serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in turn, delegates management responsibilities to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and across areas of the College as identified through the institution's organizational hierarchy. Under the direction of the President (CEO) and through the assistance of his Administrative Assistant, the ELT includes the following:

- Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs & Chief Academic Officer (CAO)

- Vice President/Chief of Operations

- Vice President of Finance & Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

- Vice President of Community Outreach & Strategic Partnerships

- Vice President of Workforce Development

- Executive Director of Human Resources

- Executive Director of Communications and Marketing

All operational and academic functions of the College report up to the President through the members of ELT. Day-to-day management is guided by College Policies and Procedures.

Academic Matters. The oversight of academic matters (i.e., academic and student affairs) has been delegated by the Board of Trustees and the College President to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs who serves as the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and is supported by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Academic Deans, Academic Chairs, and faculty in this oversight of academic matters, as well as the Vice President of Student Support, Student Support Deans, area supervisors, and staff.

Academic and Student Affairs is guided in the daily management of academic matters for the College by the Academic and Student Affairs Standards and Procedures Manual, College strategic documents, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association. Several committees made up of faculty and staff serve to support this effort, including, but not limited to, the CAO Council, Curriculum Committee, Assessment Committee, and Distance Education Committee.

Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

The 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement directly addresses freedom of expression, pursuit of truth in learning in Section 5.1. Moreover, Section 5.4 of that same document addresses intellectual property and states that, "All materials that pertain to classroom instruction such as class syllabi, tests, handout materials, web design and lectures created by faculty, shall be the sole ownership of the faculty who created them. A faculty member may sell, lease, assign, or transfer any rights to his/her instructional materials." Additionally, any original work, such as a textbook, video, or story, that the faculty member creates, will remain the property of the faculty member, not the College. However, while there is a general rule that a person who creates work is the author of the work, there is an exception for "works made for hire."

The Student Government Association (SGA) at the College is a representative body elected by students and serves as their voice on campus. SGA provides a forum for the College's students to voice their opinions and supports student interests, and meets with the College President on a regular basis. The SGA constitution explicitly states in its Preamble that it promotes the "basic principles of freedom of expression."

The College further promotes freedom of expression in a variety of ways, including the following:
- a public lecture series, First Tuesday, that showcases faculty expertise and research

- a variety of other lectures, such as the David M. Caskey Memorial Lectures and the Visiting Writer series

- student organizations regularly exhibit their research or sponsor speakers that promote understanding of many different topics (e.g., the annual Honors in Action showcase organized by the Omicron Eta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and the International Showcase organized by the Multi-Cultural Club).

- art shows, concerts, and film screenings

- student newspaper, The Valley Forge, and a creative writing publication, Voices.

Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

2.E.1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

Institutional Research and Effectiveness provides effective oversight of research on campus. In order to facilitate this oversight, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was created to ensure that research is done consistent with the College's Board Policy 2.30.010, as well as with regulations by the Department of Health and Human Services through the Protection of Human Research Subjects (45 CRF 46). The IRB consists of the Vice President of Institutional Research, the Vice President of Student Support, faculty members, from both science and non-science disciplines, and a community member unaffiliated with the College. The College's IRB procedures are outlined on the College web site.

Institutional Research and Effectiveness also provides support for faculty, staff, and students engaging in research. Staff in Institutional Research and Effectiveness assists with all aspects of research, including design, data selection, and data analysis. This support allows them to guide the College community to the IRB process, when applicable, and it ensures that research conducted at the College is in compliance with all College regulations and policies.

2.E.2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

The College maintains a policy on Acceptable Use for Informational Technology in Section 2:30:020 of the Board Policy Manual and provides guidelines for students in the ethical use of information resources through the Terms and Conditions page of the College web site, page 32 of the Course Catalog, and page 38 of the Student Handbook. Also note that this shows on the computer screen of all campus computers during the log in process; individuals need to accept the policy to enter the login screen.

Additional information on copyright is on the Terms and Conditions webpage and the library webpage. The College librarians provide guidance to students and instructors on copyright-

related issues. The Library web site provides links to copyright basics, including a Copyright and Fair Use Guide, a Copyright Basics Presentation, and a Copyright Bibliography.

2.E.3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

The College takes academic honesty and integrity seriously. Expectations are laid out clearly in both the College Catalog (p. 34) and the Student Handbook (pp. 47-48). In fact, all instructor syllabi are required to include the academic honesty statement.

Students who commit any of the forms of academic dishonesty as outlined in the Student Handbook are subject to the penalties and sanctions agreed upon by the faculty and administration of the College. Detailed procedures regarding academic dishonesty are given in the Student Handbook. In addition to the penalty assigned by a faculty member, a report of the alleged violation and assigned penalty will be made to the Dean of Students Office and documented through Maxient, the College's student complaint management platform.

Moreover, all students who take *STU100: Planning for Success,* which is required for all transfer-students, receive information on academic honesty and the consequences of violating the policy. They discuss the policy, receive an *Avoiding Plagiarism Flowchart* developed by the College's Composition and Literature department, and are tested over the concepts in the midterm or final exam of the course.

When professors identify students that have committed academic misconduct with regard to plagiarism and other forms of cheating, they are able to report students to the Dean of Students. However, oftentimes faculty members elect to manage incidents informally. While this does set an example to students and clarifies expectations with regard to academic conduct, it also reduces the effectiveness of the College to provide an informed, centralized process of monitoring academic misconduct. To address this, Academic Affairs is partnering with the Dean of Students to providing additional, on-going training for academic deans, academic chairs, program coordinators, and faculty the use of the reporting structure to document incidents of academic misconduct through Maxient. In this way, the College will be able to monitor and intervene when students have repeated incidents of academic misconduct, as well as more efficiently implement its complaint resolution process.

Through the Dean of Students, the College's faculty, staff, and administrators are also able to report concerning student behavior to the Behavior Intervention Team (BIT). BIT is comprised of an an interdisciplinary team of the College's professionals, including the Dean of Students, the Personal Success Counselor, the Director of Disability Support Services, and a Sargent of the College's Police Department. This team reviews student cases report to determine what actions will be in the best interests of the students and the College community.

Criterion 2 - Summary

As stated in the Criterion 1 Summary, the College, like other community colleges in Illinois, was established to serve a public purpose in providing post-secondary educational opportunities. As stated in the HLC Guiding Values, "What the students buy, with money, time, and effort, is not merely a good, like a credential, but experiences that have the potential to transform lives, or to harm them." Given this "solemn responsibility," the College must act transparently in a manner consistent with its mission.

Critical to the College operating with integrity is governance that is, "freely, independently, and rigorously focused on the welfare of the institution and its students" (HLC Guiding Values). Certainly Academic Affairs administration, staff and faculty play a significant role in this governance through their oversight of academic matters. Furthermore, it is critical for the College to demonstrate that the governing board (i.e., the College's Board of Trustees) and administration, places the well-being of the institution, "above the interests of its own members and the interests of any other entity" (HLC Guiding Values).

Through the supporting evidence provided, the College has demonstrated that it acts with integrity and that the conduct of its governing board, administrators, faculty, and staff is ethical and responsible. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review for Criterion 2.

Strengths:
1. The College has policies and procedures for tracking financial transactions.

2. The College has a comprehensive web site, as well as resources (e.g., catalog and student handbook) that are updated annually.

3. The College has a strong academic honesty policy and a system in place to track students who have violated it.

4. The Board of Trustee's adoption of Committee of the Whole meeting structure allows greater focus on discussion; agendas and minutes of Board meetings are publicly available, and time is designated at each meeting for visitors to address the Board.

5. The College has an intellectual community fostered by clear protections of academic freedom and support for various lectures and events for both the campus and community.

6. The College has an Institutional Research Board that works to ensure that scholarly activities are conducted appropriately.

7. The College administration, faculty, and staff are present and active in the public and private sectors of the community.

Challenges:
1. While policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the institution operations with integrity, procedures are not always clearly articulated or readily accessible; employees are not always aware of them or how to find them.

2. Campus climate/morale has been affected by recent contract negotiations and reduction in force actions taken during a time of declining enrollment and lack of State funding.

Actions as a result of the comprehensive review:
- The College has implemented new policies for the Board of Trustees and employees to provide explicit expectations around conflict of interest.

- The College will continue to <u>celebrate its successes</u> and recognize the efforts of its faculty and staff on campus and in the community.

Criterion 3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

3.A.1: Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

Maintaining course and program currency. The College offers over 28 degree programs and over 60 course disciplines that can lead to transfer degrees and/or certificate and apprenticeship programs that provide specialized training. These class and program offerings remain current through regular program and course assessment that is consistent with Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) compliance guidelines. Program and course assessment, along with the program review process, are discussed in greater detail in the section of the assurance argument responding to Criterion 4.

The College's transfer courses adhere to the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) guidelines to ensure ability of classes to transfer statewide. The College utilizes faculty expertise to review and approve these courses and establish an appropriate level of performance for students as discussed further in the section of the assurance argument responding to Criterion 3.B.2. Many areas on campus, especially Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, work with advisory boards or outside agencies for licensing or accreditation procedures. Advisory boards typically consist of faculty and community members in related industries and educational institutions with a common purpose. For example, in addition to department faculty, the advisory board for nursing regularly includes members from the following.

- Rockford Public Schools District 205 Health Science Academy

- College Partners:
    - High School Connection representative
    - Division Advisor
    - Perkins Team representative
    - Nursing faculty

- Local Employers
    - MercyHealth Hospital
    - Swedish American Hospital
    - OSF Hospital

- RN-BSN Partners:
  - Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU)
  - Northern Illinois University (NIU)
  - Olivet-Nazarene University (ONU)
  - St Anthony College of Nursing (SACN)
  - University of IL-Chicago (UIC)

- Students
  - One current student from each semester
  - Three graduates of the College's program

In addition to advisory boards, the College maintains regular interactions with local and statewide affiliates to make sure the College's programs are appropriate and current for region. For example, such interactions have resulted in the following:
- Expansion of and increased enrollment in the Aviation Maintenance program

- Partnership with OSF Saint Anthony to provide 4-year (as well as graduate-level) nursing degree options on campus

- Partnership with Northern Illinois University to provide 4-year engineering degree options on campus

- Stronger partnership with regional high schools to enhance Running Start and other dual credit programming and support pathways from secondary to post-secondary education

- Partnership with the City of Rockford and Winnebago County to develop the Advanced Technology Center

Requiring appropriate levels of performance for awarding of degrees and certificates. The College graduation requirements are posted on the web site and in the College Catalog, and students pursuing a degree or certificate must fulfill all requirements. For both AA and AS degrees, students must complete a minimum of 64 credits. The degrees include Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI)- minimum General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) requirements set by the Illinois Community College Board. The College web site has a number of planning guides available for students (e.g., guidelines for health career or radiography prerequisite sheets and math for intended majors). The College web site and catalog outline expectations for each CTE area and certificate.

Appropriate levels of student performance in CTE and certificate areas are also identified by external accreditation and/or industry standard exams in many of the programs. For example, the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) exam for students in the Emergency Medical Technician certificate program has about an 80% success rate for first time

testing. Graduates work with Mercy Health and local fire stations. Several CTE programs, such as Aviation Maintenance Technology, Dental Hygiene, and Respiratory Care, have consistent pass rates at or near 100%.

3.A.2: The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

The College awards Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science degrees. Students may also achieve a variety of certificates or complete coursework towards industry licensures or certifications. The requirements for each of these programs is outlined in the College Catalog as well as on the College web site and is updated annually according to industry and certification standards.

The College does four levels of assessment: institutional, program/discipline, course, and class. Institutional assessment provides consistent general education learning goals for all of the College's students, while program and course assessment help differentiate goals for disciplines and programs, thus informing degrees and certificates. This assessment helps provide clear expectations for the various degrees and certificates awarded by the College. Faculty syllabi must list course objectives and how they align with institutional goals.

Degree programs require a comprehensive general education curriculum. Certificate programs require specific courses based on industry need. With stackable credentialing, some programs such as fire science allow a progression of coursework towards completion of certifications within degree programs. While the learning outcomes may differ from on certificate to the other, they work together in stackable credentialing to ensure that all learning outcomes for the degree are addressed.

In 2014 the College instituted mandatory advising for all transfer students within their first 30 hours of coursework, except those who have transferred in credits from another institution of higher education. In addition, all students who apply to graduate must attend a graduation evaluation to make sure all requirements are met. Students can track their progress online with a program evaluation.

3.A.3: The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

There are numerous processes by which the College ensures consistent quality and goals at all locations (main campus, Downtown, Aviation Center), modes (face-to-face, hybrid, on-line), and methods (regular or compressed semester). All courses adhere to a common syllabus template which requires faculty to identify student learning outcomes and their relationship to the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes. Regardless of delivery mode or method, the learning objectives remain the same. Faculty qualifications, outlined in Section 6.1.1 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association and consistent with expectations

outlined by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and HLC, also remain the same for full-time, adjunct, or dual-credit instructors. A faculty qualifications audit was done recently to make sure all faculty were in compliance. Anyone who was missing necessary credentials because of prior standards or extenuating circumstances was put on a qualifications plan. Faculty teaching online classes must also adhere to additional training requirements that demonstrate their ability to deliver online courses; full-time faculty are mandated to have online training in the faculty contract. The Distance Learning Committee supports Academic Affairs in monitoring instructor credentials and working with faculty to administer professional development and mentoring as necessary. The committee is also working to establish common expectations for use of the Canvas Learning Management System, re-named Eagle as well as institute a method for evaluation of on-line courses for quality.

The College's Credit Hour Compliance Form is used across the institution to affirm credit hour compliance and consistency across delivery methods and length of term.   When a class is offered in a new way or as an independent study, a credit hour compliance form must be submitted to and approved by Academic Affairs, as well as brought to Curriculum Committee as an information item. Credit hour compliance forms for each course are maintained in TaskStream.

The College recently began the Excellence Academy as a way to train new adjunct faculty. This online program gives new instructors an overview of College expectations as well as foundational teaching principles and is led by Academy of Teaching and Learning Excellence (ATLE) faculty liaisons working in conjunction with the Vice President and staff of Academic Affairs. The ATLE is working with academic deans to have all existing adjuncts complete the modules of the Excellence Academy as well to support their development as professional educators.

Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

3.B.1: The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

The College's general education curriculum is guided by the General Education Statement of Philosophy found on page 5 of the College Catalog.

The General Education Program at the College is designed to develop the knowledge, skills, and habits reflected in the lives of educated persons and basic to all professions so that the College's students are capable of leading rewarding and responsible lives as productive, global citizens. In other words, the College intends for its general education program to impart knowledge and concepts necessary for higher education, generally, and for responsible, active citizenship in a participatory democracy. Consistent with the institution's mission document, the general

education curriculum of the College offers students a quality, accessible learning opportunity that prepares them for successful transfer and competitive employment. The connection between the College's general education curriculum and its mission is discussed in greater detail in the section of the assurance argument addressing 3.B.2.

3.B.2: The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO). The College's ISO provide a framework for all courses, but especially the general education curriculum. This framework is based on the following four general learning outcomes that identify areas for expected development for all of the College's students.

- Analytical Reasoning: Student will form logical inferences, judgements, or conclusions from facts or premises related to topics encountered in the classroom, workplace, and daily life.

- Communication: Students will exchange ideas effectively in a variety of settings.

- Global Awareness and Responsibility: Students will develop the knowledge and skills required to responsibly interact with social and natural communities, both locally and globally.

- Personal Responsibility: Students will accept responsibility for their personal and professional wellness and development, positioning themselves for life-long learning.

As a part of every credit course, course objectives are aligned to these four ISLO. This process of alignment is informed by the core components of each ISLO. The alignment is included on all master course syllabi, as well as each instructor syllabi. In doing so, the connection between classroom and course learning expectations and the framework of expectation outlined by the ISLO is made clear to all students. Students completing *STU 100: Planning for Success* , which includes all transfer program students who have no prior college credit earned from an institution of higher education, complete an assignment that requires them to reflect on the ISLO and how they will master them through coursework at the College. The College Catalog and web site also provide information on the ISLO, and posters identifying them are in all College buildings and most classrooms. The College's assessment web page goes into greater detail of expectations for each of the four ISLO and how each are assessed.

While these outcomes capture the spirit of what both transfer- and career-oriented students need to be able to do consistently in order to succeed, finding clear means to measure all of these outcomes has been challenging. The College knew that would particularly be the case

with the Personal Responsibility learning outcome, but Academic Affairs, Institutional Research & Effectiveness, Academic Deans, and faculty involved in the process of identifying the College's ISLO did not want to limit their expectations by the degree to which it would be easy to measure them. As a result, the Assessment Committee works to address this issue as it leads the assessment of the ISLO, which is further detailed in section of the assurance argument that addresses Criterion 4.

Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). In addition to this internal framework for the learning outcomes for all courses, the College also participates in a statewide articulation effort, the IAI. IAI provides a framework for quality and rigor, which includes approving learning outcomes. Through IAI, a General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) is identified. The GECC provides a list of general education requirements that are accepted for transfer by all participating colleges and universities. These general education requirements include communications (9 credits), humanities and fine arts (9 credits), mathematics (3-6 credits), physical and life sciences (7-8 credits), and social sciences (9 credits).

The courses that have been articulated and approved by the IAI governing panels to meet the above requirements are listed in the College Catalog and on the GECC page of the College web site. They are also identified in on-line services as students register and on the master course syllabi and instructor syllabi for each course.

3.B.3: Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

As noted in the section of the assurance argument addressing 3.B.2, each course is required to demonstrate alignment of course objectives to the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO). Because every credit course is expected to address at least some component of the ISLO, the alignment between them and the course objectives are represented on the master course and instructor syllabi for all courses. In this way, upon completion of any degree program at the College, students have completed coursework that meets the degree requirements which by design achieve these intended learning outcomes.

When selecting courses, students choose from a variety of courses from a many disciplines and/or program offerings that meet the degree requirement for their individual program of study. For degrees that are designed to enable students to transfer to bachelor degree programs, students choose the courses that meet requirements of the degree using the appropriate planning sheets which can be found in the College Catalog on pages 40-44, as well as on the College's web site (A.A. or A.S.) . Furthermore, students working toward an applied associate degree programs complete a course of study defined by that degree program's suggested plan of study which are found through page 53 of the College Catalog and with program related information on the College web site (e.g., Manufacturing Engineering Technology A.A.S. plan of study or Manufacturing Engineering Technology certificates plan of study), as well as being available through the Academic Advising. Through prerequisites and

suggested plans of study, students are guided through a curriculum that introduces, reinforces, and guides towards mastery of the desired learning outcomes.

3.B.4: The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

As noted in the sections of this assurance argument addressing 1.C.1 and 1.C.2, the College addresses its role in a multicultural society and education opportunities that recognize human and cultural diversity in its curriculum. Human and cultural diversity is specifically addressed as a learning outcome in the Institutional Student Learning Outcome (ISLO) of Global Awareness and Responsibility. This ISLO states that students will develop the knowledge and skills required to responsibly interact with social and natural communities, both locally and globally. Transfer-seeking students are required to complete general education courses that further provide foundation opportunities for students to develop knowledge, understanding, and skill to better prepare them for living and working in a diverse world. The listing of general education core courses outlined on the appropriate planning sheets which can be found in the College Catalog on pages 40-44, as well as on the College's web site (A.A. or A.S.), further illustrates the variety of curricular opportunities for exploring and understanding the human and cultural diversity of the world. Several of these courses expose students to diverse experiences and perspectives while fulfilling <u>Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) requirements as a non-western culture course</u>, including but not limited to the following <u>non-western courses at the College</u>:

- Introduction to Non-western Visual Art (ART 141)

- History of Latin America I (HST 162)

- History of Latin America II (HST 163)

- History of Eastern Civilization to 1500 (HST 182)

- History of Easter Civilization Since 1500 (HST 183)

- History of the World Until 1750 (HST 192)

- History of the World Since 1750 (HST 193)

- Introduction to Non-western Humanities (HUM 125)

- Non-western Literature Before 1800 (LIT 251)

- Non-western Literature Since 1800 (LIT 252)

- Contemporary African Literature (LIT 260)

- Introduction to Non-western Music (MUS 106)

- Introduction to Non-western Philosophy (PHL 151)

- World Religions (PHL 155)

- International Relations (PSC 269)

- Racial and Ethnic Relations (SOC 295)

Many certificate programs, especially those in the Allied Health field, include practica or internships to prepare students for employment in a diverse work environment. For example, For example, *RSP 111: Introduction to Respiratory Care* discusses diversity in healthcare. Respiratory Care students also complete *RSP 112: Patient Assessment*; expected outcomes of this course include students being able to review a patient's medical record for clinically significant information and describing the preparations and actions required for a successful patient encounter. In *RSP 131: Clinical Practice* I, students are expected to not only describe the needs of patients in the health care setting, but also describe, "significant points relating to organizational, ethical, and legal concepts in health care." In these courses, students are presented various patient cases to develop these competencies, providing them an opportunity to explore human and cultural diversity, as well as diversity of each medical case.

3.B.5: The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

The College's faculty members contribute to scholarship and create work in a variety of ways:
- First Tuesday Lecture Series (Faculty provide lectures that are culturally and historically relevant or timely.)

- CIS Coding (Community workshops are provided throughout the area.)

- Support for David Caskey Memorial Lecture Series and Visiting Writer Series

- Fire Science

- Involvement in regional competitions such as Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics (ICTM) Regional Math Contest and the College's Regional Science Olympiad

- Present at national conventions/organizations

- Publish articles/books

Opportunities abound for students to also contribute to scholarship and creative works at the College both in and out of the classroom:
- Programming IOS Apple Mobile Devices

- Engineering and Technology Capstone Projects

- Accounting Capstone Projects and support of Goodwill Tax Preparation

- Mass Communications Student Documentary Showcase and Public Service Announcements

- Visual Art Juried Exhibition

- Starlight Theater

- Phi Theta Kappa research projects

- Choral and Instrumental Performing Art performances

- Voices

- Model UN

- Valley Forge

- Writing Awards

- Bridge Building Competition

Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

3.C.1: The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

As is the case with many community colleges, the College is continually challenged with balancing full-time faculty and adjunct ratios to provide consistent, effective, high-quality programs that are also cost effective. The College uses several processes to determine sufficiency of numbers to carry out classroom roles of faculty, including program review, monitoring of enrollment and wait lists, and budget planning. During the program review process, programs and disciplines analyze multi-year data that examines issues of course load, including comparisons of full- and part-time faculty-to-course ratios. These data can be used in conjunction with enrollment trends and wait-list data to determine where faculty positions should be added or shifted. For example, with recent faculty resignations and upcoming retirements Academic Affairs has reviewed program review, enrollment trend, and wait list data to determine if the positions should be refilled or reallocated to other areas. Based on this information it was determined that a recent position in Aviation Maintenance would be refilled, but another position in Fitness, Wellness, and Sport would be allocated to another area.

At this time the College has approximately 130 full-time faculty members and 230 adjunct faculty members. For years, the College has maintained a high ratio of full-time to part-time faculty. However, due to funding challenges from the state, the College instituted a reduction of force in 2017 and reduced the class schedule by approximately 20% in order to maximize efficiency in course offerings and achieve and sustain a balanced budget. Details about the state budget crisis, its impact on the College, and the reductions in force are provided in the section of this assurance argument addressing Criterion 5.

The language of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association, full-time faculty have priority in class selection (Section 6.8.1 and Section 6.14) and are guaranteed at least 15 credit hours(Section 6.3.1) with opportunities for overload (Section 6.4). Therefore, at the time of the reduction in force, the College also experienced a reduced the need for adjunct faculty. However, as the College has stabilized, it has an increase need for adjuncts and has established the Adjunct Instruction Working Group (AIWG) to recruit and retain qualified adjuncts. Even so, the College still maintains a higher full-time equivalent (FTE) ratio of full-time to part-time faculty compared to cohort institutions. Additional details about the full- to part-time FTE ratio are describe in the section of this assurance argument addressing Criterion 5.

Academic chairs have responsibility in the hiring of adjunct faculty and provide mentoring and evaluation to them. Academic chairs and other faculty also have the responsibility to serve on hiring and tenure committees for faculty positions as outlined in Section 6.15.1 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association.

Full-time faculty have oversight of curriculum through involvement in the development of new and revision of existing curriculum. Per Section 5.11 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association, all faculty are required to participate in assessment under the direction of the academic chair. Academic chairs also are required to lead their programs or disciplines in the program review processes (Section 6.15.1).
Faculty serve as chairs, co-chairs, and members of many College committees, such as Curriculum Committee, Assessment Committee, Distance Learning Committee, Retention and Completion Committee, and Promoting an Inclusive Community (PAIC). Additionally, faculty have key roles in the Academy of Teaching and Learning Excellence (ATLE), serving as liaisons that develop professional development materials, workshops, posters, sessions, blogs, and newsletters; provide mentoring for new faculty and adjuncts; and support new academic chairs.

Some faculty also serve as advisors and for a number of student clubs.

3.C.2: All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

Faculty give input into minimum instructor qualifications for their respective disciplines. As mentioned previously, the College recently conducted a qualifications audit on all faculty, including adjunct faculty, to make sure that instructors met credential minimums as outlined in

the faculty contract and the minimum standards document. Transcripts from personnel files in Human Resources were reviewed, and incidences where information was inconsistent with minimum requirements (as outlined in Section 6.1 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association) were addressed by the appropriate dean and academic chair (e.g., missing transcripts were requested or work experience was verified and documented and personnel files were updated). In a few cases, remediation plans were put into place.

The process to ensure faculty are properly qualified to teach dual credit classes is outlined in the High School Connections Credit Handbook. High schools identify qualified instructors and submit documents required for the College's academic discipline approval with the Application to Offer Dual Credit Course. These applications are reviewed and signed by the department chair as well as Division Dean. The High School Connections Credit Handbook outlines credential requirements, and the Illinois Senate Dual Credit Bill SB2838 reiterates that dual credit instructors meet college credential requirements.

3.C.3: Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

Section 5.9 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association outlines the procedure and schedule for the evaluation process of all faculty, probationary as well as tenured.

Tenured faculty are also evaluated by students every other semester while probationary faculty are evaluated each semester. The results are summarized and returned to instructors and are included in the tenured faculty in-depth evaluation process per Section 5.9.4 and in the probationary faculty's tenure portfolio. Adjunct faculty are observed and evaluated by department chairs who use the same forms as full-time faculty.

One gap in the evaluation process that is currently being addressed is the process for students to evaluate faculty in on-line courses. The Distance Learning Committee has developed a method of better tracking those who are qualified to teach online and have developed minimum guidelines for qualification which are were into place Fall 2018. The committee is also working on a form to make the observation/evaluation of online courses easier for students as well as for Deans. The committee plans to present the recommendations for this evaluation form to Academic Affairs by Spring 2019.

3.C.4: The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

Per Section 8.2 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association, each full-time faculty member is given $500.00 in professional development funds each fiscal year. Faculty are allowed to use these dollars for professional development activities (e.g.,

registration, travel, and materials at conferences or workshops) or materials related to the faculty member's program or discipline (e.g., membership in professional organizations, books, subscription and publications, or technology). Faculty are allowed to share any portion of this $500.00 with any other faculty member to help colleagues cover costs that exceed this dollar amount.

In addition to this professional development allowance, $200.00 per faculty member is placed into a Supplementary Professional Development Fund. Faculty can apply for these funds for additional support for professional development activities and materials. The Supplemental Professional Development Fund Committee reviews these applications and determines the distribution of funds.

After a minimum of six years of full-time service, full-time faculty are eligible to apply for sabbatical. Types of leave, leave eligibility and compensation, and the procedures for requests and approval are outlined in Section 8.5.7 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association . Within this process the Faculty Sabbatical Leave Committee (FSLC) and the Administrative Sabbatical Leave Committee (ASLC) determines which applicants should be considered for approval of sabbatical leave, forwarding the recommendations to the Chief Academic Officer who then makes recommendations to the College President. The President then presents a list of applicants recommended to the Board of Trustees who has the final decision in granting sabbatical leave. Following this process, the College awarded sabbatical for two faculty in 2014, one faculty in 2015, and one faculty in 2016. No faculty applications were recommended to the Board of Trustees in 2017 and 2018.

Per Section 6.7.3 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association, all full-time faculty will participate in three professional development days per academic year that are designed and organized by the College's Academy for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ATLE). These professional development days are built on five basic priorities: Understanding Our Students, Understanding Our Profession, Understanding Our Institution, Understanding Our Community, and Understanding Our Wellness. Plenary and breakout sessions built around this framework cover topics including universal design, microaggressions; EAGLE, the College's learning management system, use and support; teaching excellence; understanding how learning works, assessment, and community resources.

In addition to coordinating on-campus professional development days, the College's ATLE supports new faculty orientation and development. The development is provided in either hybrid or on-line delivery of nine modules through the College's learning management system. These modules, which comprise the basic components of the ATLE Excellence Academy, cover topics of orientation to the College and its learning management system, the tenure process, how learning works, learning outcomes, and instructional design and delivery. Adjunct instructors are also able to engage in the Excellence Academy to support their professional development as professional educators. This replaces the College's face-to-face one-day Adjunct Faculty Institute, so that adjuncts now have an on-going, online, self-paced set of learning opportunities that provides them with feedback from an experienced faculty

member, connections to other faculty and adjuncts, and support from staff. Once the basic course is completed, faculty and adjuncts can elect to continue additional training modules. The College's ATLE also provides resources for professional development of full-time and adjunct faculty through various workshops, the Faculty Toolbox on the learning management system, and one-on-one sessions in using the learning management system, engaging in the assessment process, and using the accountability management system.

3.C.5: Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

In response to the 2018 administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, (CCSSE), students' provided the following feedback with regard to instructor accessibility:

- When asked if they "Used email to communicate with an instructor," 67% of responded with "very often" or "Often."

- When asked if they "Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor," 53% responded with "Very often" or "Often."

- When asked if they "Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor," 35% responded with "Very often" or "Often."

- When asked if they "Discussed ideas from [their] readings or classes with instructors outside of class," 20% responded with "Very often" or "Often."

- When asked if they "Received prompt feedback from instructors on [their] performance," 63% of respondents responded with "Very often" or "Often."

Per Section 6.7.1 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association, faculty are required to hold a minimum of 250 minutes of office hours each week during the regular fall and spring semesters and are available to students by appointment during the summer term. One hundred of those minutes can be held online to better support students. Regular office hours are posted on faculty office doors, within course information on the learning management system, and on all instructor syllabi. In addition, all syllabi provide contact information for the faculty, including their office location and phone number, as well as their College email address.

While adjuncts are not bound by the faculty contract guidelines, they are also expected to hold at least one office hour per-week per class and to follow the syllabi guidelines. Each classroom building has a designated adjunct office space suitable for meeting with students.

3.C.6: Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

All College positions require minimum qualifications set forth by hiring managers that correspond to the level of education and experience necessary for success (e.g., Tutor Supervisor, Academic Transfer Advisor, and Athletic Coach).

All staff participate in development days and mandatory Human Resources training on issues such as Title IX and diversity. More training is planned as staff aren't always as updated on these issues as faculty. Additionally, staff in areas such as financial aid and disability support services attend conference and trainings as required to keep up with changes in laws and regulations. Staff can apply to attend conferences and training when opportunities arise provided funds have been allocated and are available through appropriate departments. Recently, the Board of Trustees approved $300,000 in funds to further support professional development of staff.

Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

3.D.1: The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

The College provides an array of support services relevant to its student population. Academic services include Academic Advising, Tutoring and Writing Center, Math Lab, Science Resource Room, and Health Science Resource room. Cultural and social support is gained through the Student Life Office and International Student Services Department. Economic support is gained through Financial Aid and the Food Pantry located on campus. Personal support is given through Personal Counseling, as well as the Disability Support Office and TRIO programs. The College has recently invested in the hiring of several student support services staff, including a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Specialist, Financial Aid Program Manager, Intercultural Student Services Manager, New Student Enrollment Coordinator, and two new Retention Specialists. While most of these positions are housed in the Student Center, the Retention Specialist positions are housed within classroom buildings for better visibility and student access so that the specialists can work directly with students on barriers to their college success.

Additionally, the advising department has worked to streamline and promote the College's Early Alert process, adding a shortcut on every faculty member's computer desktop and closing the loop on all submissions. Faculty are encouraged to report students who may have need for outside classroom support early in the semester so the faculty and support staff can work together to best help students be successful.

The College conducted the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in Spring, 2018. The survey provided the College with valuable information pertaining to students' use of support services and pertaining to students' satisfaction with support services.

3.D.2: The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the student are adequately prepared.

As mentioned in 3.D.1, the College has several support services the meet the academic needs of its students. The Tutoring Center provides content tutoring for most classes as well as study skills help to the general student population. Staff also assist students who wish to review material for placement testing. The Writing Center helps student writing across the curriculum, as well as specialized writing help (i.e. job or college application), and the Math Lab provides walk-in help; both are staffed by either full-time or adjunct faculty. The Library Staff provide workshops both in and out of the classroom on best practices for research.

The College web site outlines procedures required for getting started and the placement procedures. The Testing Center stays current on placement testing recommendations from external bodies as well as State changes. Peer mentors are available to answer new student questions and help direct incoming freshman. All first-time students are required to meet with an academic advisor who will guide them in registering for appropriate classes based on their placement scores, academic plan, and personal needs.

The College has a defined developmental course sequence in mathematics, reading, and composition for students identified as underprepared through scores on mandatory placement tests. These pre-100-level courses are designed to assist students in gaining the skills necessary to become college ready and pursue their academic goals. A developmental math course sequencing chart helps students who do not meet the prerequisites for college-level math courses better plan for degree or certificate attainment. Reading and composition have been exploring delivery models (e.g., co-requisite model) that might better support the learning needs of developmental students while moving them through the developmental to college-level sequence at a more efficient pace.

3.D.3: The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

The College has six full-time academic advisors available on the main campus for general and transfer advising during half hour one-on-one appointments. Since 2014, first-semester students are mandated to meet with an advisor. Because of the limited number of advisors, the department maintains an open advising lab to serve students. The downtown campus has scheduled advising once a month.

Specialized advising happens in many technical programs, such as Nursing, Aviation and Engineering. A dedicated advisor is housed in the Health Science Building to help direct students in most healthcare related fields.

Students can also use an online advising tool through Student Planning software, which provides pre-loaded electronic degree plans that helps students map out academic terms through degree completion. Student account activity is monitored by College academic advising staff.

Students are also required to complete a student academic degree plan as part of the mandatory *STU 100: Planning for Success* course. Instructors for this course walk students through the Student Planning software and require students to complete an appointment with an academic advisor to go over their academic and career goals.

3.D.4: The institution provides to student and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

The College monitors its infrastructure and resources in order to provide optimal support for teaching and learning.

Technological infrastructure. Students are provided with access to the College network at the time of enrollment, as are full-time faculty and adjuncts upon their employment. That access includes a College email account, access to Online Services and the College's learning management system (LMS), EAGLE.

The Academy for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ATLE) offers training, resources, and support to both full-time and adjunct faculty through EAGLE Support, the Distance Learning Committee, the Excellence Academy, and several breakout sessions at professional development days. Students are also supported by EAGLE Support through walk-in appointments and a series of boot camps delivered in conjunction with the *STU 100: Planning for Success*.

Additional information about the infrastructure and resources is provided in the section of the assurance argument addressing Criterion 5.

Scientific laboratories. State-of-the-art laboratories are available to students enrolled in the Life and Physical Sciences at the main campus in the Jacobs Center for Math and Science (JSCM). Additionally, students enrolled in the nursing and allied health programs use labs, including state-of-the-art simulation labs, in the new Health Science Center (HSC) on the main campus. All of these labs allow students to prepare to engage in clinical practice sites throughout the College district.

Library. The Estelle M. Black Library provides a quite learning and study center on campus. The space includes a computer commons area on the main floor, as well as two teaching labs equipped with computers and Smart room technology. Library services are to all faculty and students at all of the College's locations with delivery service available for hard copy materials and online data bases.

Performance spaces. Currently available performance spaces include the Starlight Theater, the Performing Arts Room (PAR) located on the lower level of the Educational Resource Center, and the Physical Education Center (PEC) . Starlight Theater provides a venue for community theater while the PAR is used for instrumental programs, practice spaces, and some performance events. The PEC hosts College athletics and regional athletic events, such as Rumble on the Rock, as well as College and regional high school graduation ceremonies and college and job fairs.

3.D.5: The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

While many of the College's courses inherently address the effective use of research and information resources through regular instruction, some classes specifically focus on them as part of their learning objectives. The English sequence of courses (*ENG 101: Composition I* and *ENG 103: Composition II*), including developmental sections (*ENG 097: Essentials of Writing* and *ENG 099: Introduction to College Writing*), are prime examples, as are the technical writing class (*ENG 110: Introduction to Technical Writing*), introductory speech class (*SPH 131: Fundamentals of Communication*) and the *STU 100: Career Planning* class.

In addition to specific courses, all students have access to library faculty who rotate times at an information desk and are available to work directly with students through in-class workshops. The Tutoring and Writing Center is also available to work directly with students on research and information resources, including the online tutoring platform, UpSwing.

Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

3.E.1: Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

The College maintains a robust offering of clubs and organizations, each with funding provided by the College budget. Each club/organization has a faculty or staff advisor that helps with marketing and programming. The College has an award winning Model UN team, an active Student Government Association, and a club, SOS, in which students help other students gain access to resources they need to stay in College (e.g., food and clothing). The College also has an award winning student newspaper, The Valley Forge, as well as a literary magazine, Voices, that is faculty directed but student produced.

In addition to clubs and organizations, the College has a large athletic program, and the coaches and athletic director work with faculty to make sure the athletes are successful both as athletes as well as students.

Student-athletes at Rock Valley College are involved in numerous learning experiences outside of the classroom. All athletes are required to participate in four hours of study hall per week. Additionally, each of the College's eight athletic teams are required to participate in a minimum of three community service events each year and are often called upon to support various campus events. The athletics teams at the College have competed regularly at the national level in the last several years, which has not only put a national spotlight on the College and its athletes, but has provided the athletes with enriching experiences outside of the campus and community. Additional details about the learning experiences for the College's athletes are provided in the section of this assurance argument addressing 4.B.2.

3.E.2: The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

The College's mission to empower students and community through lifelong learning is demonstrated throughout its credit (i.e., transfer degrees and career and technical education (CTE) certificates) and non-credit (e.g., community and continuing education and business and community outreach) courses, and through co-curricular opportunities (e.g., clubs, athletic and academic teams, and events). In an effort to reach as much of its community as possible, the College offers learning opportunities at multiple locations, in a variety of times and course-lengths, and through a variety of modes on delivery (i.e., online, hybrid, and face-to-face). Details of how the College demonstrates claims about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission are further detailed in sections of the assurance argument addressing 1.A.2, 3.B.1, and 3.E.1.

Criterion 3 - Summary

The College is committed to providing the community of its service district with quality learning opportunities the focus on student learning, consistent with the guiding value of HLC and consistent with the institution's core value of excellence. In this, the College asserts its intent to set high expectations and promote teaching and learning excellence as stated with its mission document. The evidence provided within this section of assurance argument demonstrate the ways in which the College strives to consistently provide a high quality education. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review of the College in light of Criterion 3.

Strengths:

1. The College has clear and concise ISLO that are aligned to course objectives on all Master Course and instructor syllabi.

2. Assessment continues to become more normalized within departments and integrated into department work.

3. Several campus buildings have been updated to include state-of-the-art equipment and much needed improvement to lab and student spaces

4. The institution is responsive to the academic needs of its community by working further to develop specific programs appropriate to the workforce, transferability, and pathway initiatives.

5. Student Services provides a variety of opportunities for student support and development.

6. Academic Affairs and Student Services work collaboratively together on enrollment, retention, and persistence strategies.

Challenges:

1. Students still self-advise and miss critical information to help them persist and complete.

2. Many departments still need to close the assessment loop and use findings to change curriculum.

3. The faculty's use of the learning management system to support student learning is inconsistent, and the student evaluation of faculty doesn't adequately address online and hybrid classes to the extent of face-to-face classes.

4. Engagement and programming for special populations is not as robust as needed based on retention and completion rates.

Actions as a result of the comprehensive review:

- Committees have been formed to help identify and address ways to support diversity initiatives within student support departments as well as in the classrooms of all

disciplines. These initiatives will help support special populations for persistence and retention toward completion.

- The Distance Committee is developing minimum usage guidelines for the learning management system, as well as student evaluation of faculty tools that will more equitably address learning in online and hybrid classes.

- Academic and Student Affairs is working collaboratively on block scheduling; the College is investing in scheduling software to optimize space utilization and support a more comprehensive ways to meet student programming needs.

- The College is instituting an advanced technology center and working with community partners to identify high priority occupations and ways to support students through pathways.

- The College is working to identify what an appropriate full-time to part-time faculty ratio is in relation to its student population and programming needs. Academic Deans are using schedule and curriculum planning to inform a multi-year staffing plan. The Adjunct Instruction Working Group (AIWG) has been formed to address recruitment and retention of qualified adjuncts.

Criterion 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

4.A.1: The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

The College engages in a systematic, College-wide program review process that is designed to support continuous improvement, College-level planning, and decision making. Program review at the College also demonstrates accountability of programs and aids in the improvement or discontinuation of programs so that the College is better able to address the needs of the district served by the institution. Academic Affairs, with the assistance of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, has developed a program review process framed by common expectations of information to be included. Additionally, the College has provided templates with guiding questions and common data sets to inform the completion of program review, as well as staff support with analysis as needed. This College's program review process is consistent with expectations outlined in the Illinois Community College Board's (ICCB) Program Review Manual and Administrative Rules of the Illinois Community College Board (1501.303.d).

To kick off the annual process of program review, Academic Affairs hosts an orientation meeting to roll-out the process for those programs to be reviewed within a given year. The orientation gives those who will be completed the program review documentation an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the timeline, expectations, tools, and supports available.

Academic program reviews are completed by Academic Chairs, who may delegate portions of the program review to faculty peers as needed to ensure a robust review process. Non-academic program reviews are completed by area administrators and staff. Academic Affairs and Institutional Research and Effectiveness provide documentation and guidance to support the process.

Institutional Research and Effectiveness provides each program with a consistent data package, which includes multi-year comparisons of student demographics (e.g., average age, gender, race/ethnicity, first-generation status, and intent or goal at the College), student enrollment (e.g., unduplicated headcounts and credit hours overall of by course), and student

success indicators (e.g., grade distribution and DFWI rates). ICCB Occupational Follow-up-Survey (OFUS) results and labor market information are also provided for program reviews of career and technical education (CTE) programs. Programs already have access to reports of assessment plans and results through an accountability management system, TaskStream, but they are also provided as part of the data package. The College is developing a Program Vitality Report to compliment the data that are already available for program review.

In 2017, the College decided to move the use of Word-based templates submitted electronically and in a hard-copy notebook to an online platform within its accountability system, TaskStream. As the College was completing the set-up for this, ICCB implemented a new template. The College did a cross walk with the new state templates, including the Academic Disciplines Template, CTE Template, and Student and Academic Support Services Template. After doing so, the College spoke with ICCB about using a template that combined the state template with the existing templates used in the institution's program review process. With ICCB approval, the College began using this new template through TaskStream (see sample layout).

Per ICCB guidelines, the College is required to complete a Recognition Report once every five years to determine the extend to which the College is compliant with its expectations. As a part of this process, the College is asked to review the program review process, considering timelines, materials, and timelines. In 2016, the College completed its most recent ICCB Recognition Report (Section 4.B). Within this document the College demonstrated its compliance, which was affirmed by ICCB when they concluded the recognition status of the College as Recognition Continued.

While it is important to complete program review in response to compliance expectations, the College is committed to engaging in a program review process that yields a living document to inform program quality and improvement. In support of this commitment, program review results are required to be shared out. At the end of the program review cycle, the academic chair and dean of each program in review present to College leadership. In doing so, vision for continuous improvement can be shared and refined. Programs can also work more effectively with their dean and College leaders to prioritize and plan for continuous improvement actions. To further enhance continuous improvement efforts, within the current program review cycle, the College will begin implementing an annual monitoring report in which programs can update progress toward and, as needed, refine action items. Key findings and resulting actions of the program review process are also shared with the College and its community with accreditation outcomes in the Accountability Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Report.

4.A.2: The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

The College evaluates all credit that it transcripts. Transcript evaluation guidelines are communicated clearly on page 16 of the College Catalog and on the College web site. These guidelines are further detailed in section 4.A.3 of this assurance argument

4.A.3: The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer

Transferring credit from another institution of higher education. The College welcomes students transferring from other colleges and universities, including reverse transfer, and honors credit granted by regionally accredited institutions. Students who have credits from another institution of higher education and plan to earn a degree or certificate at the College must submit an official transcript, in a sealed envelope from the issuing institution, to Records and Registration, along with a transcript evaluation form. Awarding of transfer credit procedures are outlined in Section 5 on pages 21-22 of the Academic and Student Affairs Standards and Procedures Manual.

These procedures include that the College accepts credit only for regionally accredited institutions, except for the Aviation Maintenance Program, which also accepts transfer credit from Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved institutions. While the College does accept 100-, 200-, and 300-level credits for transfer, it does not accept developmental credits or those 500-level or above; 400-level credits may be accepted with the permission of the appropriate academic dean. Only credits that apply to a student's desired degree or certificate are transferred, and a maximum of 44 credits are accepted. Whenever possible, the College's course equivalents for 100- and 200-level credits are awarded. If that is not possible, up to 21 credits of electives may be granted. The College does not honor substitutions and/or waivers made at another institution, unless approved by the appropriate academic dean, and accepts transfer grades of "D" only if the student's overall GPA is 2.0 or higher.

Credit for military experience. The College Catalog has a policy on the acceptance of military credit. The evaluation of military transcripts is similar to the evaluation of transcripts from other post-secondary institutions. In order for credit to transfer, the course content must be similar to the College's course content. Vocational elective credit may be awarded if an equivalent course cannot be identified. Review of a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214) may result in the award of four Physical Education (PE) credits; however, only three PE credits can be counted toward degree completion. In response to the new Credit for Military Experience Act, (HB3701), the College will explore using ACE, American Council on Education, to conduct and facilitate academic reviews of military courses and occupations.

Credit for prior experience. The College offers several opportunities to earn credit for knowledge obtained outside of the traditional college classroom. For all testing programs, official transcripts must be submitted directly from the specific credit-by-exam testing program, and College residency requirements must be met for all students using credit-by-exam towards a degree. Each testing program recognized by the College has its own credit awarding criteria, and credit earned by examination will not be awarded for the same course more than once.
- Proficiency exams are given at the College for specific courses in several divisions. Students who wish to receive credit by examination should contact the proper divisional chairperson or director for information about what is available. Students must submit a

proficiency examination application for exams that meet their needs. The credit hour nonrefundable fee is 50% of the regular tuition rate for that semester; the receipt for this fee serves as admittance to the testing session. Credit will be recorded after successful completion of the exam, meeting the divisional requirements.

- The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) gives students an opportunity to demonstrate prior learning and to earn credit for that knowledge. Certain fees apply for taking CLEP exams at the College. Credit awarded is based on CLEP score(s) earned and submission of official CLEP score report(s) to the Records and Registration Office for evaluation.

- Credit is granted to students who have participated in the Advanced Placement (AP) program. Credit awarded is based on AP score(s) earned and submission of official AP score report(s) to the Records and Registration Office for evaluation. AP credit is then recorded on a student's transcript.

- Dantes Subject Standardized Test (DSST) is a national credit-by-exam program offers students an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge acquired outside of the traditional classroom setting. Students who have passed DSST may receive credit by having scores sent to the College's Registrar. DSST credit awarded by other accredited institutions and transferred to they College are evaluated and accepted per the existing transcript evaluation policy. If a student has received credit for any courses by having been enrolled in those courses, the grade will stand and the credit by examination will not be given.

Articulated credit. Articulated credit provides students with the opportunity to acquire College credit for previous high school course work in order to facilitate easy transition into a College Career and Technical Education (CTE) program without requiring duplication of that course work. Regional high schools have full responsibility for the course offering and advise students of requirements for articulation of the course for college credit. In order to do so, high school complete an application form and follow a process for obtaining approval to offer articulated credit. To offer courses for articulated credit, an articulation agreement between the College and the regional high school is developed. To be awarded articulated College credit, students must successfully complete identified high school courses and then subsequently complete at minimum an additional nine credit hours with the College. Students must then apply for articulated credit.

4.A.4: **The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses and programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.**

Prerequisites, rigor, and expectations for student learning. Faculty hold responsibility for determining and monitoring prerequisites, rigor, and expectations for student learning. The Curriculum Committee governs the addition of both courses and programs to the curriculum, as well as any substantial changes. Furthermore, prerequisites, rigor, and student learning are all reviewed within the assessment and program review processes. In Section 5.11 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association, the responsibility of assessment of student learning is charged to full-time faculty. Additionally, per Section 6.15.1, the academic chair coordinates assessment and program review.

The approval process for all new courses or programs is initiated by the submission of the College's New Course of Program Approval Form, which must be signed by the appropriate department Chair, Dean, Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs, and the Curriculum Committee Chair. The Curriculum Committee is charged with reviewing the master course syllabus, including prerequisites, course objectives, student learning outcomes, and assessment, prior to approval of the course or program. Courses offered as dual credit are required to adhere to the prerequisites, course objectives, and assessment methods defined in the Master Course Syllabus.

The College has instituted a course assessment cycle in which each course is assessed at a minimum of once every five years. Each section of the course is assessed, including traditional and compressed formats, online offerings, and for dual credit. A comprehensive credit hour compliance audit is also completed as part of the assessment. In this audit, the department reviews documentation to ensure it reflects current practice and that appropriate forms have been approved for all formats of the course, including lengths (i.e., compressed or semester-long) and delivery method (e.g., face-to-face, online, hybrid). Through this process, appropriate rigor and expectations are consistently maintained.

Access to learning resources. The College provides access to learning resources for students studying at all locations. The College offers students regular access to the Tutoring Center, Math Lab, Writing Center, and academic computer labs on its main campus. The College's Downtown location and Stenstrom Center for Career Education also provide academic computer labs and library delivery service. All students, including those enrolled exclusively online, in dual credit, or in the Aviation Maintenance Technology program at the Aviation Career Education Center have access to online learning resources through the Estelle M. Black Library and Upswing, a 24-hour, online tutoring platform.

Faculty qualifications. The College has clearly defined minimum instructor qualifications, as seen in Section 6.1 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty

Association. Faculty qualifications are monitored by Human Resources and Academic Affairs. Faculty qualifications are in full compliance with the requirements of the Higher Learning Commission, as well as the Illinois Community College Board. Qualifications are consistent across programs and disciplines, except where specialized credentials are required by specialized accreditation (e.g., Nursing).

Students taking dual credit courses on campus are woven into classes with other of the College's students; as such, their instructors meet all contractual qualifications. Students enrolled in dual credit courses offered at the area high schools are assured to be receiving instruction from an instructor who has the same qualifications as designated for College faculty. Courses must be approved by the College before they are offered as dual credit, ensuring the course maintains the course rigor and expectations.

Academic Affairs, Human Resources, and Early College share the efforts to review transcripts of any new dual credit instructors prior to hiring, just as is the practice with adjuncts. Early College maintain a roster of the approved instructors teaching dual credit, providing a reference for consistent monitoring of the credentials and transcripts each term and year, in accordance with the state law and regulations, as well as accreditation standards. Until this year, non-faculty instructors teaching dual credit classes at the high schools are considered adjunct faculty and received mentoring and evaluation from the department's academic chair per Section 6.15.1 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Faculty Association. Within the new pathways initiative, those non-faculty teaching dual credit on campus are considered adjuncts as stated above, but those teaching dual credit in the high schools will be considered employees of the school district. While these employees must meet minimum qualifications to teach as defined by the College and will receive mentoring and support from the College's faculty, staff, and administrators, evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the procedures of the school district.

4.A.5: The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

The College seeks and maintains specialized accreditation appropriate for its programs, including but not limited to Automotive Maintenance, Aviation Maintenance Technology, Fire Science, Graphic Arts, Nursing and Allied Health programs, and Welding. A table summarizing the specialized accreditation and status for each of these programs is reported in the Accountability Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Report. The data in this report indicate that the specialized accreditation are current for all programs.

4.A.6: The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

The number of the College's students transferring to top receiving institutions in Illinois is summarized in the Transfer Rate Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Report. Five of the fourteen schools represented are public 4-year institutions, five are private 4-year institutions, and four are 2-year institutions. Northern Illinois University, the closest public four-year institution, remains consistent in receiving the most student transfers from the College. Additional data from the Transfer Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Report indicate that students from the College tend to perform as well as native students of the transfer institution.

Students pursuing a certificate or Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) generally intend to secure gainful employment using their credentials. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) used to require its institutions to administer the Occupational Follow-up Survey (OFUS) six months after program completion for selected Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs each year. Data collected during the follow-up study include objective for attending college, educational status, employment status, relationship of job to College's program, hours worked per week, hourly salary, job satisfaction, location of employment (within or outside the College's district), and satisfaction with the College. When ICCB no longer required its institutions to administer OFUS, the College decided to continue to do so in an effort to have a greater understanding the post-graduation success of its students. The College uses OFUS data to inform CTE Program Review, and a new advisory committee structure is being piloted in select CTE programs which reviews OFUS data within their processes. Response rates to follow up surveys are sometimes low, which make the data somewhat difficult to generalize. ICCB has partnered with IBHE and IDES to create a tool that will provide more comprehensive data about student employment outcomes, The College recently received access to this tool and will use these data in the future.

Some programs with specialized accreditation also collect job placement data by other means. For example, the Respiratory Care Program conducts an annual graduate survey to maintain accreditation with the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. Data collected with this survey include job title, length of employment, salary, and employer. The Surgical Technology Program also collects job placement information for its accrediting body. Both programs use job placement data to monitor effectiveness in preparing graduates for the workforce.

Certain CTE programs also monitor licensing exam pass rates to determine whether students are prepared for employment. Detailed information about pass rates and resulting program improvements can be found in the accompanying Federal Compliance document.

Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

4.B.1.: The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

Assessment for student learning is conducted at several levels to provide a comprehensive understanding of student learning. The structure of academic assessment at the College includes institutional, program or discipline, course, and class levels, all of which are complementary and used to inform decision making, accountability, validation, and improvement. Goals for student learning and processes of assessment exist in each level of assessment and are archived in TaskStream, the College's accountability platform.
Institutional Assessment. At the institutional level, assessment refers to student learning and development across the College, regardless of program of study or discipline. As a result, the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO) are assessed at the institutional level with the expectation that all College graduates will have advanced their development in Analytic Reasoning, Communication, Global Awareness and Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility through their learning activities at the College.

The ISLO are well-publicized on classroom posters, the College website, and the College catalog. All students pursuing an AA or AS degree are required to take STU100: Planning for Success, which contains activities for exploring the ISLO. In addition, the ISLO are mapped to course objectives on the Master Course Syllabi and all instructor syllabi.

Program or Discipline Assessment. At the program or discipline level, assessment measures academic success across the courses within the program or discipline. Through this process, academic administrators, staff, and faculty are able to determine if curricula provide adequate scope and sequence to lead students to successful knowledge and skill acquisition, as well as certificate and degree completion. Each program or discipline has unique student learning outcomes, even if when credentials are stack-able. For example, each Fire Science certificate has its own set of learning outcomes that are subsets of the corresponding Associate of Applied Science Degree. Program and discipline goals and learning outcomes are documented in TaskStream.
Course Assessment. At the course level, assessment is designed to measure success of a particular course. This takes into account the success of students in achieving outcomes regardless of the instructor, the length of the course, or the method of delivery. Learning objectives specific to each course are indicated on the Master Course Syllabus and are the same across all course sections.

Class Assessment. At the classroom level, assessment is designed to measure individual student success in achieving the course objectives. While the course objectives are consistent

across all sections of the given course, the instructor may vary the method of student assessment within limits. Recommended methods of assessment are outlined on the Master Course Syllabus and instructor-specific methods are outlined on the instructor syllabus.
In the past, Institutional Research and Effectiveness had randomly selected a number of instructor syllabi for a compliance audit. However, since the fall of 2017, each division reviews all instructor syllabi each semester to ensure consistency with the Master Course Syllabus and requirements for instructor syllabi as outlined by the Instructor Syllabus Template. In this process, faculty are allowed to have a different look to their syllabi as long as all of the elements outlined by the Instructor Syllabus Template are presented in the same order as on the template and all details from the Master Course Syllabus are accurately represented.

The College has established processes to assess student learning at all levels; these process are described in section 4.B.2.

4.B.2: The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

The College maintains robust systems of assessment that provide rich data that are used to improve student learning.

Institutional Student Learning Outcome (ISLO) Assessment Process. For several years, faculty from a variety of programs and disciplines have evaluated student work samples with respect to the ISLO. Student work samples are collected from courses that span levels (e.g., 100- and 200-level courses) and content areas (e.g., English and Psychology). These work samples come from assignments embedded into students' regular coursework to provide an authentic measure of student learning. Samples are randomized and organized into electronic forms for scoring based on their alignment with the ISLO.

Composite scores are calculated for each ISLO component by comparing ISLO checklist ratings to learning expectations based on credit hours earned. This method of scoring allows for students who have completed their program to be held to a higher standard than those with 30 or more credits and students with 30 or more credits to be held to a higher standard than those with fewer than 30 credits.

Each students' composite score is represented as the percentage of points earned relative to the number of ISLO sub-components scored. These percentages are then averaged to create an institutional score for each student learning outcome component. If the average score is 80% or higher, then the outcome is generally considered to be achieved at the institutional level. If the average score is at least 60% but less than 80%, students are generally approaching achievement. Learning outcomes with an average score lower than 60% have been identified as areas in need of improvement.

Assessment for ISLO Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Reports for 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 are available for review on the College Assessment webpage. These KPI reports are also shared to the College through presentations with the following:

- Board of Trustees

- Deans Council - includes Academic Deans, Student Service Deans, CAO, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Academic Affairs staff

- CAO Council - includes CAO, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Services, Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Academic and Student Service Deans, Academic Chairs (faculty), and Academic Affairs staff

- Faculty through division/department meetings

The College has had challenges in assessing the Personal Responsibility and Global Awareness and Responsibility ISLOs. To partially remedy shortfalls in assessment data, the College has used CCSSE data to provide relevant measures.

The College's student data from the 2018 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was used to provide more information as to students' progress on Global Awareness and Responsibility. Survey results demonstrated

- When asked whether students participated in a community-based project (service-learning activity) as part of a regular course, 21% responded that they had.

- When asked if they had serious conversations with students who differ from you, 94% had.

- When asked how much the College emphasizes, encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds, 84% answered affirmatively.

The College's student data from the 2018 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) also was used was used to provide more information as to students' progress on Personal Responsibility. Survey results demonstrated:

- When asked how much the College has helped them in learning to work effectively with others, 92% answered affirmatively.

- When asked how much the College has helped them in learning effectively on their own, 94% answered affirmatively.

- When asked how much the College has helped in encouraging them to spend significant amounts of time studying, 97% answered affirmatively.

- When asked how often they come to class without completing assignments, 5% responded "very often," 9% responded "often," 57% responded "sometimes," and 30% responded "never."

- When asked how much time they spend preparing for class, 3% indicated more than 30 hours, 6% indicated 21-30 hours, 18% indicated 11-20 hours, 30% indicated 6-10 hours, 42% indicated 1-5 hours, and 1% reported spending no time preparing for class.

After reviewing ISLO assessment results for the 2017-2018 academic year, the Assessment Committee recommended finding more robust measure of Personal Responsibility. Allied health programs that include observations of student behavior during clinicals might serve as good examples of how to observe and assess Personal Responsibility.

Program / Discipline Assessment Processes. Accredited programs (e.g., Dental Hygiene) have strong program assessment processes. Other programs engage in program assessment by ensuring that their courses contain outcomes that will culminate in the stated program outcomes. Since course assessment processes at the College are strong and course objectives are mapped to program outcomes, Academic Chairs are encouraged to use course assessment results to facilitate program assessment. The Assessment Committee has recognized program assessment, especially centralized documentation, as an area that could be improved.

Course Assessment Process. Course assessment is designed to measure success across all sections of a particular course (e.g., ENG 101, MTH 099, or SOC 190) and includes all course delivery modalities (e.g., face-to-face, internet, hybrid). As such, course assessment provides for a consistent level of academic rigor and provides faculty with assurances that students can progress to the next level within a specific curriculum or program. Also, since the majority of our students transfer individual courses, if not degrees, course assessment data affirms for students and transfer institutions that our students' coursework adequately prepares them for further higher education.

Key components of the assessment cycle include review and update of the Master Course Syllabus (MCS) in TaskStream to keep learning outcomes and course content current, creation and implementation of an assessment plan, analysis and documentation of assessment findings, and identification of next steps for continuous improvement.

TaskStream assessment software is used at the College to manage and archive assessment data, support and inform the structure of assessment, and focus efforts of faculty and administration on using assessment to promote student learning and success. Within TaskStream, faculty chairs can verify that outcomes are accurate and up to date on the Master Course Syllabi. They provide an assessment plan, assessment findings, and upload operational plans and status reports as needed.

The College monitors the status of academic year course assessment, reporting this out to the Divisions through the academic deans and chairs. Values represent the percentage of courses

scheduled for assessment that had something documented in TaskStream. Consistent with the 5-year program review cycle determined by ICCB, courses are expected to be assessed at least once every five years.

Recent monitoring data indicate that the College is generally seeing an improvement in the percentage of plans and findings reported. However, Master Course Syllabus review is being completed in just over half of the courses schedule for assessment, suggesting that many are either overlooking this step in the process or simply failing to affirm that the task has been completed within TaskStream. Furthermore, while 61% of the courses scheduled for assessment have documented assessment plans, only 36% have documented assessment findings.

The College also compares course assessment progress for calendar years 2012 through 2014 and academic years 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018. These data suggest that course assessment progress, at least in the compliance components monitored, are impacted by faculty designating time to work together and have conversations about assessment, as well as having access to more efficient tools with which to work.

For example, the greater percentage of plans and findings documented in 2017-2018 was likely impacted by faculty having designated time during Development Days to work as departments on documenting and discussing 2017 plans and findings. Similarly, documentation of assessment plans and findings increased for academic year 2017-2018, which was likely the result of more Academic Chairs gaining familiarity with and using the new TaskStream assessment platform. Since many faculty have commented that TaskStream is more user-friendly than the previous assessment management system, its use has most likely contributed to the increase in documentation.

As process improvements increase the level of participation in assessment activities, the College can shift from a focus on compliance to a focus on closing the assessment loop (i.e., using assessment findings to improve student learning). College-wide gains in assessment documentation and use of assessment findings may be further achieved through additional assessment efficiencies.

Course assessment information is made available in the form of KPIs on the college assessment webpage (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018).

Class assessment process. Faculty are free to conduct classroom assessment within the guidelines set forth by the Master Course Syllabus, which is lists potential methods of student assessment. Occasionally, faculty teaching different sections of the same course will use common assessments to facilitate course-level assessment.

Co-curricular assessment process. Co-curricular assessment of student learning is not as well-developed as assessment in curricular programs; however, the College uses evidence from the co-curriculum to validate student learning whenever such evidence is available.

For example, student-athletes are involved in numerous learning experiences outside of the classroom. All athletes are required to participate in four hours of study hall per week. Study hall sessions are monitored by full-time athletics staff and coaches to ensure the time is being spent on homework and class projects.

Additionally, each of the College's eight athletic teams are required to participate in a minimum of three community service events each year. Many teams exceed the required three community service days. Examples of community service activities include reading to kids at local schools, volunteering at food pantries, instructing at special needs basketball clinics, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, serving Thanksgiving dinners at homeless shelters, and greeting kids with a high-five as they arrive at school in the morning.

Beyond the off-campus community service efforts, our athletes are also often asked to assist in various capacities at many campus events, such as the Golden Futures 5K, Rumble in the Rock, Rising Stars Classic, and National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) national tournaments hosted by the college, including the women's basketball tournament held last March and the women's soccer tournament held last November. In addition to developing our athletes as leaders, these service projects in the community and on campus teach our student-athletes important life lessons that align with the college's ISLO of Communication, Global awareness and Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility.

The athletics teams at the college have competed regularly at the national level in the last several years, winning 13 national championships since 2011 alone. These experiences not only shine a national spotlight on our college and our athletes, but they provide our athletes with enriching experiences outside of our campus and community.
In addition to the athletics program, students learn through co-curricular experiences such as membership in clubs and organizations, financial aid counseling, student life programs, and mentoring. The College recognizes a need to establish clear learning outcomes for these co-curricular experiences, develop and implement assessment plans, and use assessment results to improve student learning through the co-curriculum. The Assessment Committee should seek members from co-curricular areas to ensure these needs are met.

4.B.3: The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

Institution assessment. Institutional Research and Effectiveness builds an annual Assessment for Student Learning Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary report focused on Institutional Assessment. This KPI Summary Report is first shared with the Assessment Committee in the fall semester. The Assessment Committee reviews and provides recommendations for areas of focused attention. For example, the Assessment Committee recommended focused attention in Communication in the 2017-2018 academic year based on ISLO results. Actions included faculty increasing their promotion of the Writing Center to students needing writing support. In the 2018-2019 academic year, the Assessment Committee recognized the need to gather more information for the Personal Responsibility ISLO and made the recommendation that more

information regarding Personal Responsibility be gathered to better assess the outcome.

Program/Discipline and Course Assessment. As part of the annual course assessment process, results are provided to Academic Chairs who input the information into TaskStream. Together, faculty departments evaluate whether students have achieved the learning outcomes at a satisfactory level based on benchmarks set by the department. Departments then have an opportunity to provide an Operational Plan (e.g., CIS 254, NAD 101, PSY 170, RDG 099, and SOC 290) based on the assessment results. The action plans are recorded in TaskStream for further assessment purposes.
Institutional Research and Effectiveness builds an annual Assessment for Student Learning Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary report focused on course and program assessment. The reports from 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018 include examples about how assessment has be used to improve student learning.

The College uses a continuous quality improvement model for program review which includes information gained from course and program assessment for student learning. All programs and disciplines submit program review reports to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) on a five-year cycle. Two essential components of the Program Review are responses to the questions "What assessment methods are used to ensure student success?" and "Did the review of program quality result in any actions or modifications?"

4.B.4: The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Academic Affairs, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and the Assessment Committee work together to ensure that assessment practices are robust and active. Academic Affairs has conducted workshops with academic deans to better understand the assessment process, assessment at the College, and the use of TaskStream. As such, academic deans are expected to provide assessment leadership to the academic chairs and other faculty within their divisions. Institutional Research and Effectiveness provides a full-time Director of Outcomes Assessment to provide leadership and support for assessment. The Assessment Committee is co-chaired by the Director of Outcomes assessment and a faculty member who receives release time to help support the assessment efforts of the College. The Assessment Committee is largely comprised of faculty from a diversity of instructional areas. These members act as liaisons to their respective departments, sharing Committee feedback and direction.
Since the last comprehensive review, the College has Invested in TaskStream, an accountability management system. The prior platform was not user-friendly; the Assessment Committee advised the College to implement use of TaskStream to address this barrier to comprehensive assessment practice at the College. Doing so has brought about major improvements. Assessment information is now easily aggregated and reports and analytics are run with relative ease. This has improved the communication of assessment information throughout the College.

The College reports out as an institution on assessment for student learning in two Key Performance Indicator Reports, one addressing institutional assessment and the other addressing course and program assessment. Assessment Key Performance Indicator Reports are available to internal and external stakeholders on the Assessment page of the College website.

Each fall and spring Development Day features sessions where faculty are given time and assistance working in TaskStream. Several Development Day assessment workshops have also been offered to faculty to help those who may be new to assessment.
The focus of all of these efforts is to build a culture of assessment for student learning at the College that is based on establishing strong, measurable outcomes; collecting valid and reliable data; and using that data to inform meaningful conversations that lead to continuous improvements in student learning.

Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

4.C.1: The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

The Vice President of Student Services has been charged with establishing the defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion. The Enrollment Management Team (EMT) meets weekly to discuss enrollment and retention themes and is charged with defining the goals for retention and persistence, which will lead to completion of degree and certificate programs. Subcommittees have been and will be established to provide a more focused approach. The first of these subcommittees, the Retention and Completion Committee has already been formed. Membership in this committee includes the President, CAO, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Services, Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Executive Director of Early College, Dean of Enrollment and Retention, Dean of Students, Athletic Director, Director of Financial Aid, Director of Records and Registration/Registrar, Director of TRiO Programs, Personal and Success Counselor, Manager of Academic and Transfer Advising, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Specialist, two Retention Specialist, four Academic Deans, three faculty, and an administrative assistant. Minutes from the EMT meetings are provided to illustrate the data points are being identified with which to measure the benchmarks. Initial work of EMT and the Retention and Completion Committee has lead to a revision of the College's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (currently in draft form), which includes goals for persistence, retention, and completion.

Retention is a priority for the College, and several strategies have been implemented to support student retention. There has been an increased emphasis on the use of Early Alert for students, through which faculty can advise the Personal and Success Counselor of students who are at

risk for failure or stopping out. Mandatory advising is in place for first-year students and the freshman seminar is required for all students pursuing a transfer degree, and two Retention Specialists have been recently hired with offices in two high-traffic classroom buildings on the College's main campus.

In order to encourage persistence, retention, and completion, the College has entered into agreements with four-year institutions to enable students to transfer to four-year degrees with minimal interruption. One such partnership is with Northern Illinois University, which provides an opportunity for a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering entirely on the College campus. Another opportunity is the co-location of OSF St. Anthony's School of Nursing in RVC's Health Science Center, which will allow the student to complete an associate degree in Nursing, and stay in the same building to complete their bachelor's degree through OSF St. Anthony's School of Nursing

4.C.2: The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) requires annual reporting in these data points, and the College remains compliant. Institutional Research and Effectiveness not only submits these data on behalf of the College, but also reports on student retention, persistence, and completion, as well as transfer rates, on a regular basis through Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Reports. These KPI Summary Reports monitor student performance and also identify achievement gaps. These reports are shared with the Board of Trustees, as well as published on the College web site and through the Daily News, the College's intranet news source. Additionally, ad hoc work groups analyze the data for planning purposes. For example, Disability Support Services looks at persistence, retention, graduation, and transfer rates for students they serve. In doing so, they can monitor the access and success of their students in relation to that of the overall rates of students to further determine how they might best support students.

These data are shared with staff and faculty, but on an inconsistent basis. For example, staff with student services review the KPI in light of their enrollment, retention, and completion goals and dashboard metrics. In doing so, these staff can determine the extent to which their efforts are impacting these large-scale, overall rates. As noted previously four of the seven academic deans participate in the Retention and Completion Committee and, therefore, are more familiar with the data and inform College-wide strategies for addressing these metrics. Additional steps need to be taken to make sure that all academic deans are familiar with these rates, so that they can lead discussions with their faculty at division meetings in such a way that strategies for addressing persistence, retention, and completion are identified and implemented across the College.

In addition to program and degree completion, the College looks at course completion through DFWI data. The DFWI report is conducted at the end of each academic term and is reported to

the Deans, who in turn share out at division meetings. Additionally, Records and Registration regularly reviews graduation applications and conducts degree audits.

The College adheres to Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Student Enrollment and Completion Data (A1) and IPEDS Completion Survey by submitting program completions on an annual basis. Completion data is also analyzed during academic program review. For example, labor market reports (i.e. Occupation Report) are provided as part of the Career and Technical Education data packets. The completion data provided in these packets allow comparisons with other schools offering similar programs, as well as addressing labor market need. Such information can be used to analyze the appropriate number of completers for the market and inform decisions of program elimination or enhancement.

4.C.3: The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to improve its persistence and completion rates as warranted by the data.

The College creates Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Summary Reports of student success in the areas of persistence, retention, and completion rates to support decision-making to increase the success of students as they transition to the next stage of the P-20 pipeline, as well as to minimize, if not eliminate, achievement gaps. Data from the Persistence and Retention KPI Summary Report show a stability in persistence rates and a decrease in retention rates from fiscal year 2016 to 2017, indicating the College is steady in re-enrollment from fall to spring, but not from fall to fall.

Graduation rates by completion time for the College's students compared to peer institutions and the national average are shown in the December 2017 KPI report. Data suggest that the College's graduation rates are consistent with the minimum expectation that the College's students graduate at a rate comparable with peer institutions (30%) and slightly less than the national average of 33%. However, the graduation rates for 100% of normal time falls below the national average, and is in the bottom quartile for peer institutions. This suggests that the College's students are completing their credentials, but not in a timely manner. However, it is important to note that the College's overall graduation rate has increased over the past five years and recently exceeded the national average.

The College examines student success by demographic groups to determine whether any achievement gaps exist. The Persistence and Completion KPI shows how persistence and retention rates, respectively, disaggregated by various demographic groups.
Data within the KPI indicate that full-time students both persist and are retained at higher rates than their part-time peers. Females have trended to remain stable in persistence but decrease in retention.

Of particular concern is the achievement gap between Black/African American students and their peers in other racial/ethnic groups. Data suggest that goal, certificate, or degree attainment is less likely for Black/African American students as compared to their white peers. For fiscal year 2017, the persistence rate of Black/African American students was 9

percentage points below the rate of their Hispanic/Latino peers and 13.5 percentage points below that of their White peers. There is a similar gap with retention. In fiscal year 2017, Black/African American students were 11.1 percentage points below their Hispanic/Latino peers and 9.2 percentage points below their White peers.

The Graduation Rate KPI shows the disaggregation of graduation rates by gender and race/ethnicity. Subgroup data show that gender gaps in graduation rates continue, with female students consistently having higher graduation rates than their male peers across comparison groups. Data describing graduation rates for race/ethnicity subgroups also indicate that gaps exist. While graduation rates for Hispanic/Latino students are increasing, they are decreasing for Black students. The graduation rate for students graduating who entered in 2013 for Black/African American students was 8%, while the rate for Hispanic/Latino students was 35%, and the rate for White students was 32%. A subcommittee has been formed to create action steps to narrow the achievement gaps that exist.

The College holds to the value that student retention, persistence, and completion of programs are vital. As such, the College institutes a model of continuous improvement in order to consistently serve the community better. As a result of the efforts of these committees, the College has already identified areas which can strengthen enrollment and retention, including the addition of Retention Specialists, which will provide more intrusive approach to advising, and the African American Completion Rate team, which is prioritizing strengthening retention and completion rates for African American students and other underserved populations.

The Dean of Student Success, along with Academic Affairs, has begun to explore research-based models of instruction to better meet the changing needs of the students. The developmental reading program has considered alternative models of instruction, in order to more effectively address the needs of their students, including a learning community between the lower levels of developmental reading and writing. The compressed model allows students to complete both levels of developmental reading in one semester, thus shortening the time to college coursework. Several years ago, the math department changed their instructional model, chunking math courses into 2 credit courses, thereby allowing for students to have achievements as they move along the developmental math pathway. They also established alternate paths, focusing on general math or algebra, depending on the student's degree program.

New efforts include considering models from Complete College America, beginning with a design and implementation of co-requisite support, with the intention of diminishing the stop out opportunities between developmental education and essential gateway courses. This approach is being piloted in the spring semester, with specific data points being measured to allow for a more successful scaling up. The region is also involved in a transitional math initiative, whereby students in high school are given the opportunity to complete a fourth year of math which aligns with the College's general math course, and with successful completion they are considered college-ready upon entrance.

4.C.4: The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

The College has identified persistence, retention, and graduation rates as Key Performance Indicators (KPI) aligned to the College category of Educational Attainment, Access, and Success. This category is aligned to the IBHE Public Agenda Goal to increase educational attainment and is defined by efforts to raise success at each stage of the education pipeline. Persistence and Retention Rates also are aligned to the College category of Educational Quality, which is aligned to the IBHE Public Agenda Goal to improve transitions along the educational pipeline. The College uses the IPEDS definitions of retention and graduation rates in order to make comparisons with peers and national averages. In addition to complying with IPEDS requirement of reporting retention for first-time, first-year students, the College disaggregates persistence and retention by enrollment status (full-time vs. part-time), gender, race/ethnicity, age, intent (e.g., prepare for transfer or prepare for future job), site location, and instructional method (e.g., face-to-face and online) for all students (first-time, transfer, and continuing). While these procedures reflect current best practice, the College recognizes that the IPEDS graduation rate is not a comprehensive method for defining completion for community college students. In an attempt to better understand the success of various student groups, Institutional Research and Effectiveness is beginning to analyze completion by enrollment status (full-time vs. part-time), age, developmental status for Reading and Math, and number of credit at point of entry (transfer vs. first-time). The College also will calculate and analyze on-time completion rates by program for certificates covered by Gainful Employment.

The College will use the following goal/intent categories defined by the Illinois Community College Board:
- Prepare for transfer to a four-year college or university
- Improve skills for present job
- Prepare for a future job immediately after attending community college
- Prepare for GED test or improve basic academic skills
- Personal interest/self-development -- not career oriented
- Unknown/Other

Because preparing students for transfer is part of the College's mission, Transfer Rate has been identified as an additional KPI aligned to the College categories of Educational Attainment, Access, and Success and Educational Quality. IPEDS transfer-out rates, disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity are compared over time and with peer institutions. Furthermore, the College

uses National Student Clearinghouse data to track student movement to specific transfer institutions (e.g., Northern Illinois University, Rockford University, and Illinois State University) and general types of institutions (i.e., two-year and four-year schools). The College also collects GPA's from receiving institutions to monitor the level of rigor in preparing students for transfer. These data indicate that the College's students tend to earn higher GPA's than transfers from other community colleges and native students at the 4-year institutions for which data are available. Thus, the College's transfers tend to be competitive with other students at the same level.

Criterion 4 - Summary

In addition to promoting excellence in teaching and learning, the College strives to be a progressive, relevant learning institution. Essential to this aim is operating within a continuous cycle of review and evaluation. Not unlike other institutions of higher education, the College is challenged by consistent engagement in the assessment and program review processes across all programs and disciplines. Nonetheless, the College has demonstrated that it continues to develop these process and acts as an institution that engages in and promotes continuous improvement. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive review in light of Criterion 4.

Strengths:
1. The College has established a consistent, clearly-defined course assessment process.

2. The College has a mature and continuously evolving process for Program Review.

3. The College has recognition through specialized accreditation for many of its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, which speak to their quality and rigor.

4. The College uses Advisory Committees to promote community collaboration to ensure that program content is relevant and innovative in meeting regional needs.

Challenges:
1. The level of engagement in assessment for student learning remains inconsistent across programs and disciplines.

2. The College needs to expand efforts to engage the institution as a whole in the program assessment process. Specifically, the College needs to ensure that data collected to inform program assessment are consistently used to inform continuous program improvement.

3. Communication of the results of program review and assessment can be further strengthened. The more members of the College community that are involved in these

processes, especially in providing feedback and recommendations, the stronger the College's programs and courses will be.

4. The College needs to identify a process to more effectively collect post-graduation outcomes across its programs. In doing so, these data could more readily inform continuous improvement needs.

As a result of the comprehensive review:
- The College has taken steps to move beyond the data collection and reporting elements of institutional assessment to taking action based on those results. As a result of Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment, the Assessment Committee recommended the College focus on improving written communication skills across the College. All divisions discuss in a division meeting how their departments could address this within their courses. The Writing Center has supported this initiative, taking the lead to enhance communication about writing and support for student writing and providing support for faculty development.

- The Assessment Committee has taken steps toward a review process for assessment planning and reporting. In this process, faculty members of the committee will provide feedback on information reported with TaskStream to improve and further develop a professional understanding of expectations of the assessment process.

- Academic Deans have begun to use common agenda topics scheduled for specified division and department meetings to facilitate meaningful conversations across the College on meaningful data points such as program review, assessment, and DFWI rates.

Criterion 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Core Component 5.A

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

5.A.1: The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

The College offers programs and courses on its main campus as well as other satellite locations and in multiple methods of delivery. The College ensures resource sufficiency to support operations wherever and however programs are delivered through its strategic planning documents, as well as planning and review process as described below.

Fiscal Resources: The College's fiscal resources are under the supervision of the Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the Executive Director of Finance. Community Colleges in Illinois were set up to have revenue come from three primary sources: local property taxes (33.3%), student tuition and fees (33.3%) and state funding (33.3%). The College's fiscal year 2019 budget is $108 million on a projected total revenue of $108 million. However, as the case with many institutions of higher education in Illinois, the College's local taxes as a percentage of funding has steadily decreased over the past 10 years. Between 2009 and 2016, the equalized assessed valuation (EAV) decreased by approximately 20%, or $4.6 million in property tax revenue. If property tax revenue would have stayed at the amount received in 2009, the college would have received an additional $15.2 million between 2009 and 2016. However, for both 2017 and 2018 levy years, the EAV have had a slight increase. Not only has EAV's declined, but state revenue declined noticeably during the same time period. Beginning in fiscal year fiscal year 2015, the state funding became volatile and it was uncertain whether or not the College would receive 100% of the appropriated amount, $6,692,124. In fact, the College did not receive 100% of their appropriation during the Fiscal Year. Then in fiscal year 2016, state funding became even more uncertain as the state had not passed a budget prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. When the state budget was finally passed, the College's appropriation declined 82.2% from $6,692,124 to $1,188,100. The state budget impasse continued into fiscal years 2017 and 2018. It wasn't until July 2018, the state passed a budget for both fiscal years 2017 and 2018. The College has currently received 100% funding from the state appropriations for both fiscal year 2017 and 2018.

As illustrated above, two of the three revenue sources for the College were decreasing. Therefore, in order to help offset these decreases, the College needed to raise its tuition and fee revenue by increasing the tuition rate per credit hour. Due to these increases, the revenue earned through student tuitioon and fees has remained fairly consistent. Though tuition/fees as a percentage of total funding has remained similar in fiscal years 2014 compared to 2018 tuition rates have increased from fiscal years 2014 to 2018. In-district tuition and fees rose from $97.00 per credit hour in fiscal years 2014 to $125.00 in 2018. The current tuition rate is below the state average of $140.75 per credit hour.   Nevertheless, per *110 ILCS 805/6 of the Public Community College Act* and *ICCB Rule 1501.505*, in-district student tuition and fees may not exceed one-third of the per capita cost as defined in the chargeback reimbursement calculation. The College's per capita cost has only slightly increased from 2008 to 2017, $368.46 to $381.58. This limits the rate the College can charge to $127.19. Therefore, even though the College's tuition rate is lower than the state average and second lowest in the ICCB peer group, the College was unable to raise tuition for fiscal year 2019.

The College also leverages grant funding to help maintain a level of currency in program delivery. The major grant source for this funding is the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act-Postsecondary Perkins Program. Per funding requirements, the College is able to use the funds to support the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The College has also received grant funding from the Rock Valley College Foundation, $225,000 for three years, and from Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, $625,000 over three years. Each of these grants are to begin partnerships with the local schools in developing career pathways. Therefore, in order to offset the declines in all three revenue sources, the College implemented tuition increases to help offset the decreases in credit hour enrollment and a new course fee structure.

Not only did the College take steps to increase their revenue stream from tuition and fees, but it also began to review its cost structure for both academics and operations. As part of this process, the College implemented unit cost analysis in 2017 and zero based budgeting. This resulted in balanced fiscal years 2018 and 2019 budgets which were not reliant on state funding.

With this fiscal condition, it is critical to be transparent and communicate the state of the College to the staff. Therefore, during the Spring 2018 Development Day, the President provided an overview of the State of the College. Not only did the President present at the staff development day, but also provided this presentation to the Board of Trustees and the Professional Staff Association, while College leadership gave the same presentation to their respective areas during their monthly meetings.
Despite these challenges, the College's net position continues to strengthen.

Since the annual budget is based on a specific enrollment goal, enrollment is monitored regularly through weekly meetings with the Enrollment Management Team, monitoring through a daily enrollment report and a dynamic enrollment report that look at revenue generated by daily enrollment, and is managed through various strategies including call

campaigns that target specific groups of students (e.g., those that have not completed financial aid, those that are enrolled in fall but not yet in spring, those on wait lists).

Human Resources. The College's Human Resources are under the supervision of the Executive Director of Human Resources, whose department includes Human Resources generalists, Human Resources Analyst, and a Benefit and Wellness Coordinator. The Executive Director of Human Resources reports to the Vice President of Operations/Chief Operating Officer.

The Executive Director of Human Resources works closely with the Executive Leadership Team to monitor the human resource needs of the College, reviewing justifications for new and reallocated positions and unit reorganizations. The employees are the College's largest and most valuable asset with salaries, wages, and benefits totaling $29,910,407, which comprises 54.55% of the operating funds expenses of fiscal year 2019. Declines in state funding, local property tax revenue and enrollment, coupled with the fact that salaries and benefits comprises 54.55% of the operating budget expense, the College implemented a reduction in force (RIF) of staff in 2015 and faculty in 2017. At the time of the faculty RIF, the College's enrollment had decreased 16.56% from fiscal years 2012 to 2017 while the number of full-time faculty remained constant. Not only did the number of full-time faculty remain constant, but 80% of the faculty full-time equivalent (FTE) is comprised of full-time faculty, compared to the College's peer average of 58% and the state average of 48%.

According to fiscal year 2018 employee data submitted to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), the College's staffing includes over 670 full- and part-time employees to ensure that programs can be maintained and best serve the College's students and community. In 2018, the Administration proposed, and the Board approved, the addition of several positions to support enrollment and retention. As enrollment grows, positions will continue to be added according to priority needs. Human Resources oversees hiring and evaluation of employees. Human resources provides a quarterly report to the Board of Trustee's in regards to the College's staffing.

Physical infrastructure. The College's physical plant is managed by an experienced Executive Director of Facilities which reports to the Vice President of Operations/Chief Operating Officer and collaborates closely with the administration and the Board in annual and long-range planning.

The College footprint consists of 551,558 assignable net square footage of which 214,865 (38,9%) is assigned to classrooms and labs, while 32,731 is allocated for the College's library and 92,163 for College offices. This footprint includes multiple locations to serve a wider area of the College's district. As the College adds to its footprint, changes are planned for and incorporated into the Facilities Master Plan. The College is currently undergoing a comprehensive review and update to this plan which will be brought to the Board of Trustees in May 2018.

In 2014, the College entered into an agreement with the Greater Rockford Airport Authority (GRAA) in an effort to expand its Aviation Maintenance Technology Program. The resulting partnership provided for the College to build the state-of-the-art, 40,000 square foot Aviation Career Education Center and double the enrollment in the program.
In addition, the College renovated the main and lower level of its Woodward Technology Center in order to provide students an updated, state-of-the-art learning environment for engineering and engineering technology programs. The Rock Valley College Foundation raised $6 million for this renovation, which also supports an agreement between the College and Northern Illinois University (NIU). In this partnership students were provided with an opportunity to earn a four-year degree on the College's campus.

In 2016, RVC Downtown moved to a new location that still allows the College to serve downtown Rockford and residents living on the west side of the district. There is a Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD) bus stop directly across from RVC Downtown, which makes the building accessible to residents who rely on public transportation. In addition to offering a variety of courses that lead to a degree or certificate, RVC Downtown also offers adult education, General Educational Development (GED), and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Services available include academic advising, records and registration, financial aid, tutoring, and computer labs.

Despite challenges from decline in revenue, the College has continued to improve it's educational facilities to enhance the learning environment. In Fall 2018, the College opened the Health Science Center (HSC) to help meet the growing demand for nurses and other health care workers in the region. The HSC is a 79,000 square foot, four-story building which provides world-class learning facilities to nursing students beyond the associate's degree, as OSF Saint Anthony College of Nursing occupies space within the building and offer bachelor's, master's and doctorate degree options in nursing. This collaboration provides a seamless way to earn a four-year nursing degree on the College's campus.

Not only did the College open it's HSC for the Fall of 2018, but also the newly renovated Classroom Building I (CLI) was opened. This building houses developmental reading, composition, literature, mass communications, humanities, philosophy, modern language arts, graphic art, art, history, political science, sociology, and psychology.
In 2018, the College partnered with OSF Healthcare to build a wellness clinic on the College's campus. The wellness clinic, RVCare, is available to any employee and family members (above 18 months of age) who are covered under the College group insurance plans. RVCare sends no bill to the insurance company and requires no co-pay for its services to eligible members.

During 2018, the College began discussion with the City of Rockford and Winnebago County to pursue renovating property to create an advanced technology center on the west side of Rockford. The College will lease space in this facility to offer advanced technology programs. In addition to discussion on an advanced technology center, the College is working with the Rock

Valley College Foundation to raise funds for a *Communiveristy Bus* which will provide opportunities for the College to take learning out into the community.

Technology infrastructure. The College has a technology infrastructure which provides support for the delivery of academic programs and administrative services. The College's technology infrastructure is overseen the by Executive Director of Information Technology and is supported by the Information Technology department. The Executive Director of Information Technology reports to the Vice President of Operations/Chief Operating Officer, who is a member of the College's Executive Leadership Team.

As mentioned previously, despite fiscal challenges with the state, the College has continued to provide robust technology for its students. These include, but not limited to:

- Simulation labs for the allied health students
- State of the art administration cabinets and carts for medication dispensing
- Latest computer technology for graphic arts
- Smart rooms in all the new and renovated classrooms
- Increased number of computer labs
- Increased technology for students with disabilities
- Beginning stages of virtual desktop infrastructure
- Improvements to wireless canopy

While technology has expanded in the classrooms during the fiscal challenges, the College had to delay life-cycle replacements. However, during fiscal years 2018 and 2019, the Board of Trustee's approved $300,000 for life-cycle replacement computers for employees. In addition, the College is moving toward a virtual desktop environment for employees.

5.A.2: The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to any superordinate entity.

The College allocation process continues to place an emphasis on academics as demonstrated in the audited financial statements for fiscal year 2018. Instruction and academic support received the most funding as combined they account for 42.3% of the Operating Expenses. Student services and general institutional support account for 20.9%. The remaining expenditures are attributed to plant and operations (9.3%),public service (10.4%) auxiliary services(2.5%), deprecation (9.9%) and student financial aid (4.7%).
Since the fiscal year 2018 budget, the College has used a zero-based budgeting process, which requires departmental budget managers to justify each dollar requested. Furthermore, budget managers may not request more funding than prior years. If additional funding in requested, the request must be submitted with the justification of the needed expenses and approved by

the Executive Leadership Team. The Executive Leadership Team will prioritize the requests for additional funding in alignment with the College's strategic direction.

Zero-based budgeting provided the budget managers and vice presidents with a line item detail of their cost allocations. It has also shed some light on gaps in the College's budget process. For example, budget managers require on-going training in the budgeting process. To address this, the Vice President of Finance/CFO provides a budget training session during the staff development days. Moreover, the process highlighted the need for a current College-wide strategic plan so that College leaders could prioritize and approve additional funding requests in a meaningful way. The College is in the process of developing a strategic plan which should enhance this component of the budgeting process.

5.A.3: The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

The College's mission and core values are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities. The following are examples of how the College aligns its resources to address the core values of the institution:

- Learner Centered Community is supported by
    - Maintaining a low tuition rate
    - Center for Learning and Retirement and Community Education Programs
    - Affordable community events such as Starlight Theater Productions
    - Science Olympiad

- Excellence is supported by
    - 5-year program review process
    - Program accreditation for allied health
    - Annual faculty and staff evaluations
    - Student learning outcome assessments
    - Model UN

- Collaboration is supported by
    - Community partnerships, not limited to
        - Northern Illinois University
        - City of Rockford
        - Nine K-12 schools districts within the College's district
        - Highland Community College and its K-12 school districts
        - Running Start Programs
        - Regional Math Competitions
        - Partnerships with local hospitals for clinical sites
        - Regional hospitals

    - Internal Collaboration
        - Adjunct Instructor Working Group (AIWG)

- Enrollment Management Team
- Ellucian cross-functional teams
- Perkins grant
- Assessment
- Curriculum

- Innovation is supported by
  - Allied Health simulation equipment
  - K-12 Pathway development
    - Game Changer Grant
    - Linking Talent to Opportunity Grant
  - Virtual Desktop initiative
  - CIS faculty working with community (e.g., hour of code, Raspberry Pi, and Ozobot workshops)
  - Pathways to Results with advisory committees

- Diversity
  - International Student Services
  - Various campus events
  - Student clubs and organizations
  - Promoting an Inclusive Community (PAIC)
  - TRiO programs
  - Retention and Completion Committee

- Mutual Respect
  - Dean of Students / Title IX
  - Disability Support Services
  - Employee code of conduct
  - Student code of conduct
  - PAIC
  - TRiO

5.A.4: The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

In order to ensure the College hires qualified staff, Human Resources has developed procedures for hiring supervisors to follow; separate procedures are in place for hiring faculty and non-faculty positions. The College utilizes an applicant tracking software in which human resources will review the applicant's qualifications before forwarding their application onto the hiring supervisor. This ensures that only applicants which meet the minimum qualifications are viewable to the hiring supervisors and committees. In some staff positions, testing is required before a candidate can be interviewed, while faculty and academic dean positions require a teaching demonstration. Writing samples are also required for several positions, including faculty, academic and student service deans, and administrators.

Once faculty and staff are hired, they are required to participate in the new employee orientation program. During this program, they will be presented information on the mission, state of the college, Academic Affairs, employee benefits, Rock Valley College Police Department, Information Technology, Rock Valley College Foundation, RVCare Wellness Clinic, FERPA, payroll, harassment and sexual harassment policies, and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

The faculty attend employee orientation, but also get specific training on topics including the tenure process, faculty mentoring, the annual review process, processes and timelines of the Registrar, process of the Dean of Students, and the Academy of Teaching and Learning's (ATLE) Excellence Academy.

Annual performance evaluations are completed for every employee with evaluations forms tailored to the employee's classification. However, the goal setting and evaluation process is implemented inconsistently throughout the College. The College is reviewing this process to reflect best practices and needs of the College. Faculty and staff who are not meeting expectations are put on a development plan.

The College also realizes how critical continued professional development is for staff to retain their competitive edge as well as be on top of the latest technologies and practices in their areas of expertise. However, due to the fiscal challenges, professional development was for a time set aside in order to maintain a balance budget and continue to provide students an enriching learning environment. Even though professional development had been reduced for departmental budgets, the College still offered professional development through staff tuition waivers for classes and allowed employees to attend class during work hours at the discretion of their supervisor.

However, due to the gap in professional development there has been a need developed for specific training programs, such as:
- Training for Budget Managers
- Colleague Training – the College's ERP system
- Supervisor Training
- EEOC and Employer liability training
- Risk Management

While the budget constraints from the state budget issues have created restraints to professional development for employees, the College has drafted a professional development model to address the on-going professional development and training needs of faculty, staff, and administrators. In September 2018, at the administration's request, the Board of Trustees approved an additional $300,000 funding specifically for professional development. This funding will allow the College to formalize its professional development model and address

some of the professional development and training needs which have become more evident over the past few years.

5.A.5: The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Budgeting is a process which is scheduled to begin in October to ensure a budget will be brought to the Board of Trustees in June for approval. This allows for the College to have an approved budget in place prior to the beginning of their fiscal year, which is July 1st. Each year the Vice President of Finance/CFO presents a timeline to the Executive Leadership Team to review. This timeline includes the following milestones: roll out of online Financial Planning Model (FPM); data entry of budget requests by the Budget Managers; approval of the department budgets by the appropriate Vice President; submission of the Vice-President approved departmental budgets to Finance; preliminary budget review by the Executive Leadership Team. These milestones lead up to presentations to the Board of Trustees including equalized assessed valuation (EAV) assumptions, tuition and fee increases, and expenditure assumptions in February; preliminary budget approval in April; and the public hearing and final budget adoption in June.

As noted above, the first step in the budget planning process is the roll out of the online FPM. Prior to the fiscal year 2019 budget, the budget process included submittal of budget requests to Finance. These would then be manually entered into the FPM, delaying the budget process and creating opportunity for data entry error. The roll-out of the online FPM created efficiencies in the budget process and allowed the Vice Presidents to review and approve their budgets online. Even with implementation of online budgeting, the College can further improve the process. Finance will continue to working closely with Information Technology to improve the online budgeting process.

To monitor budgets, Finance provides the Board of Trustees with quarterly financial reports that include details of the College's healthcare and payroll costs, as well as cash analysis and operating funds financial statements. Departmental budget managers can monitor their budgets with their access to budget to actual reports generated from Ellucian Colleague. In September 2017 in order to restrict spending to budgeted amounts, Finance turned on the fund's availability feature in Ellucian Colleague.

In addition to the above, the College has an annual audit performed by an independent auditing firm. The audit not only reviews the College's financials, but also their internal controls, policies and procedures, and compliance with Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) requirements. The audit is then presented to the Board of Trustees. The College continues to receive the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (CAFR) and has received this distinguished honor since 2007.

Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

5.B.1: The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies – including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students – in the institution's governance.

The Board Policy Manual governs the College's operations. The manual was initially approved in April 2014 as a dynamic document to which new policies are added and existing policies can be revised. Policies are developed by College administration, with input from faculty and staff, and approved by the Board of Trustees. The manual defines policy as "a basic assumption or principle established by the Board of Trustees as a guideline for discretionary action by the administration, faculty, and staff in conducting the affairs of the College to achieve the stated goals or objectives" (Board Policy 1:10.070). Operational procedures are established by administrators, again with input from faculty and staff, to carry out Board approved policies and otherwise ensure institutional effectiveness.

Policies and procedures are reinforced throughout several documents including the Faculty Handbook and hiring procedures, the Employee Handbook and hiring procedures, and the Student Handbook. The Employee Handbook and Student Handbook are current, but the Faculty Handbook needs an update.

As a state entity, the College must comply with the Open Meetings Act established by the Illinois General Assembly. Compliance with this act ensures that both internal and external constituents are informed of actions taken by the Board of Trustees. Meeting materials, including agenda and minutes, are publicly available on the College's web site and meetings are open to all constituents. Each Board meeting includes an opportunity for communications and petitions (i.e., public comment) so that internal and external constituents may address the Board members directly.

The College has six employee groups. Each of these groups has a means to influence College governance.

> Faculty. The College's faculty are unionized and directly influence policy and procedure through contract negotiations and the resulting collective bargaining agreement. The Labor Management Committee provides a means for ongoing conversations between the Faculty Association and College leadership.

> Administration. Administrators consist of the President's Executive Leadership Team and other Vice Presidents that have direct contact with the President on a regular basis.

These individuals have responsibility for developing College policies and procedures with input from appropriate staff members.

Professional Staff Association (PSA). PSA officers meet with the President on a regular basis to share concerns of their constituents. The group meets regularly and often invites guests from the Board of Trustees and College Administration to answer questions.

Support Staff Association (SSA). The SSA includes full-time and part-time support personnel who are not excluded from collective bargaining based on characteristics of their specific position (e.g., supervisory roll or confidentiality). SSA successfully negotiated its first collective bargaining agreement in 2017. This agreement directly impacts College governance.

Educational Support Personnel (ESP). ESP is a small group of confidential support personnel who are not included in the SSA union. These individuals, by nature of their position, have direct access to College leadership.

Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). Full-time patrol officers serving the College's campus influence College governance through a collective bargaining agreement and recommendations regarding safety and security.

The College's students also have an active voice in College governance. Section 3-7.24 of the *Illinois Public Community College Act,* 110 ILCS 805/3-7.24 states that the Board of Trustees will have one non-voting member who is a student enrolled in the College. The Student Trustee is elected by the student body to a one-year term, participates in Board discussions, casts an advisory vote, and provides an update at each regular Board meeting. The College also has an active Student Government Association (SGA) with a Mission "to support and advocate for the students at Rock Valley College through service and leadership." SGA is governed by its own Constitution and Bylaws and includes the Student Trustee as a member of its Executive Board. SGA officers meet with the College President periodically.

5.B.2: The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

The current Board of Trustees meeting structure provides ample opportunity for its members to become knowledgeable about the institution, provide financial and academic oversight, and meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The Board meets twice per month, once as a Committee of the Whole and once for a Regular Board Meeting. The Committee of the Whole agenda include discussion items from three categories: Teaching, Learning & Communications, Finance, and Operations. Examples of topics presented for discussion include accreditation, data briefs, purchase reports, financial vital signs, memoranda of understanding, proposed policies, and personnel reports.

Regular meetings provide opportunity for the Board to fulfill its legal responsibilities and vote on matters previously discussed at the Committee of the Whole meetings. Agenda items include communications and petitions, general presentations, approval of minutes, action items, other business, and updates/reports. Trustees must approve all new hires of Administration, Administration Leadership, Faculty, and Teaching Specialists, as well as purchases over $10,000. Legal obligations are outlined in the Board Policy Manual.

In depth learning and conversations occur at workshops and retreats. The Board Policy Manual (Article 1:10.040, Section 15) states that "The Board shall attend in-depth workshops or retreats organized for the purpose of assisting Board members to gain greater understanding of the College and issues affecting higher education. Workshops and/or retreats may be scheduled as deemed necessary or advisable." The January 2018 Board Retreat focused on College operating revenues and expenses and helped to frame the current strategic plan. The College is currently planning a board retreat for February 2, 2019.

Public Act 99-0692 requires all community college trustees elected or appointed after January 1, 2017, to complete four hours of training during their first, third, and fifth years in office. In order for a community college trustee to obtain credit for training, the program must be offered by the Illinois Community College Trustees Association or a provider approved by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Currently, all but one member of the Board of Trustees has provided certification of completion of this the required training.

As noted in the section of the assurance argument that addresses 2.C.3, the College has implemented, and the Board of Trustees has approved a conflict of interest policy for both the Board of Trustees and the employees.

5.B.3: The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

The College has several standing and ad hoc committees that enable collaborative efforts to set academic requirements, policy, and processes.

Academic Council. In the recent past, the College had an Academic Council for the purpose of advising the CAO on matters pertaining to the College's academic policies and education programs. Membership of this group included administrators, faculty, and staff from academic and student affairs. The group stopped meeting during the 2017-2018 academic year due to disagreements between the Council and Leadership regarding the Council's charter. The Council has recently been reinstated per the request of faculty and administration. The Council plans to reconvene in February.

Adjunct Instructor Working Group (AIWG). The AIWG is comprised of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and Chief Academic Officer, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer, Vice President of Student Services, Vice President of Community Outreach and Strategic Partnership, Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Executive Director of Communications and

Marketing, Executive Director of Human Resources, and Academic Deans. This group was developed to address the shortage of qualified adjuncts and to increase the College's adjunct pool. The goal of this cross divisional working group, as identified by the AIWG Charter, is to create a timeline and plan to recruit, hire, and retain new and diverse adjunct faculty to meet the total instructional needs of the the College's academic schedule.

Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee is co-chaired by the Director of Outcomes Assessment and a faculty member with release time. Members include administrators and staff from academic and student affairs, a librarian, and faculty from a cross-section of academic departments. The committee plans, monitors, and makes recommendations related to assessment at the institution, program, and course levels. Members of this committee also provide support and professional development to their colleagues.

Chief Academic Officer (CAO) Council. CAO Council is comprised of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs/CAO, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, the Vice President of Student Services, Deans, Directors, Coordinators, Academic Chairs, and Academic Affairs staff. This group meets monthly during the academic year to review new ideas and concepts, problem solve, share information, and to ensure consistency of practice. The group functions as a community of learners and thought leaders.

Curriculum Committee. Comprised of faculty, staff and administrators, curriculum committee engages in approval of changes or development of new curriculum consistent with regional demands.

CAO Deans' Council: Co-chaired by the CAO and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Deans' Council is comprised of academic and student affairs deans and other academic staff. This group meets monthly to support the administration of Academic Affairs in achieving the College's academic mission and strategic initiatives and ensure the enhancement of student learning and success. Academic Deans also meet weekly to have in-depth discussions and workshops related to their various responsibilities.

Distance Learning Committee. The Distance Learning Committee is comprised of faculty from a cross-section of disciplines, Academic Affairs staff, and the learning management system (LMS) administrator. The purposes of the committee include:
- Recommending best practices, processes, and strategies to effectively use the LMS

- Providing training, guidance, and mentoring as part of a peer review process for on-line instruction

- Designing and implementing course review tools for use by Deans and students

- Designing and implementing distance learning planning

- Providing professional development for faculty as it relates to implementation of educational technologies

Enrollment Management Team (EMT). EMT is chaired by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (CAO). Membership includes the President, Vice President of Finance (CFO), Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Success, Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Vice President of Community Outreach and Strategic Partnership, Executive Director of Communications and Marketing, Communications and Marketing Manager, Dean of Students, Dean of Student Success, Dean of Enrollment and Retention, Director of Financial Aid, Manager of Recruitment, Manager of Programmer Support Group, Manager of Financial Services, Manager of Academic and Transfer Advising, Director of Records and Registration / Registrar, Human Resources Generalist, Human Resources Analyst, and an Administrative Assistant. This team was created in June 2018 to address enrollment challenges and meets weekly to exchange information, monitor enrollment, and develop strategies.

Retention and Completion Committee. The Retention and Completion Committee is a sub-committee of the Enrollment Management Team chaired by the Dean of Student Success. Members include the President, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (CAO), Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Vice President of Student Services, Vice President of Community Outreach and Strategic Partnership, Executive Director of Early College, Dean of Enrollment and Retention, Dean of Students, Athletic Director, Director of Financial Aid, Director of Records and Registration / Registrar, Director of TRiO Programs, Personal and Success Counselor, Manager of Academic and Transfer Advising, CRM Specialist, two Retention Specialists, four Academic Deans, three Faculty, and an Administrative Assistant. The purpose of this group is to set goals, develop strategies, and monitor progress toward improved retention and completion. Additional information about this committee is provided in the section of this assurance argument addressing 4.C.2.

Testing Committee. Testing Committee is chaired by the Manager of the Testing Center and comprised of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (CAO) or designee, Vice President of Student Services, Deans, and Director of Records and Registration / Registrar. Additional faculty and staff (e.g., academic chairs, institutional research and effectiveness staff, student services staff, and IT staff) are invited depending on the meeting content and decisions that need to be made. This committee compares placement requirements and processes with other community colleges, approves the use of new tests, sets placement requirements and cut scores, and adjusts placement requirements based on periodic validity studies. The committee is currently working on an implementation plan for the new State requirement that community colleges accept high school GPA for placement. As evidenced by the committees described in this subcomponent, administration, faculty, and staff from across the College are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes. Student involvement, however, is somewhat limited to solicited feedback as needed. Consistent student membership on committees is a challenge a two-year institution where

students are not members of the campus community for long periods of time. The Criterion 5 Committee suggested that student membership on standing committees could be defined within the Student Government Association Bylaws.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

5.C.1: The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
In fiscal year 2018, the College implemented a zero-based budgeting process that requires detailed budget justifications to accompany each request. Requests are reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team to ensure that the proposed budget aligns with the College's mission and priorities. Only requests that are required for operations or continuous improvement, aligned with priority initiatives, and fit within the organization's current capacity will be approved.
According to its mission, the College empowers students and community through lifelong learning. As such, resources are allocated to support credit and noncredit programs that serve students at various stages of life ranging from community programs for children, early college programs for high school students, adult education, degree and certificate programs, and enrichment opportunities designed for retired adults. As described in 5.A.2, financial resources allocated to instruction and academic support exemplify the College's commitment to its educational mission. Instructional expenses comprise the largest portion of all College expenses. Moreover, while total expenses decreased between FY2014 and FY2018, instructional expenses increased.

The College is currently engaged in the development of a strategic plan. This strategic plan identifies the College's priorities through its goals and strategies.

> **Goal 1: Fiscal Stability.** Decrease reliance on state funding.
> - **Strategy 1.A: Instructional Unit Cost.** Reduce the average differential between unit cost and unit revenue without impacting instructional quality.
>
> - **Strategy 1.B: Composite Financial Index (CFI).** Maintain a CFI between 1.1 and 10.0 to remain above the zone for Higher Learning Commission monitoring.

> **Goal 2: Linking Talent with Opportunity.** Develop skills within our community to meet workforce needs.
> - **Strategy 2.A: Pathways.** Create educational pathways that prepare individuals for successful employment.
>
> - **Strategy 2.B: Advanced Technology Center (ATC).** Create an ATC that aligns the College's programs with workforce needs.

Strategies 1.A and 1.B will move the College toward financial stability and allow resource allocation to priorities identified within Goal 2. Examples of how resources are being allocated to pathway development and creation of an ATC include:

- Two multi-year grants from the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois are dedicated to creating educational pathways for high priority occupations. Academic Pathways & Engineering Career Services (APECS)is a three-year ($23,290 per year) grant creating a community based, industry integrated career pathway connecting the NIU Engineering@RVC Program with internships and mentorships. Linking Talent with Opportunity: A Regional Strategy is a three-year ($225,000 per year) grant creating collaboration among the College, Highland Community College, regional K-12 districts, and industry to prepare citizens to meet regional workforce needs.

- In September 2017, the Board committed $21,500 to consulting services from the National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers (NCATC). The purposes of the agreement were (1) to assess the effectiveness of the College's current community and technical education programs as to how they align with and further the workforce and economic development needs and goals of the region and (2) assist the College leadership with plotting a feasibility plan for the Advanced Technology Center (ATC).
- Human resources also have been allocated to support educational pathways, advanced technology programming, and community partnerships. For example, the following new positions have been created within the last two years:

- Director of Pathways Development (June 2017)

- Executive Director of Early College (November 2017)

- Pathway Coordinator (two positions, March 2018)

- Vice President of Community Outreach and Strategic Partnerships (former position reinstated August 2018)

- Vice President of Workforce Development (November 2017)

The College also utilizes the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) to ensure that the allocation of space aligns the physical infrastructure with its mission and priorities. The FMP is designed to be flexible and allow for adaptation as priorities change to meet the community's needs over time. The College is currently operating under the FMP updated in 2017 and undergoing a revision of that plan that will move the College's facilities into the future and align facilities with College needs. The FMP is based on a detailed analysis of existing goals and needs in the College district and current trends in higher education. For example, structures renovated and built under the current plan include:
- Multi-purpose classrooms that can be used as computer labs and lecture space for Composition & Literature

- Health Sciences Center that consolidates the Nursing and Allied Health programs into a single facility on the Main Campus

- Renovations to the Woodward Technology Center to begin addressing current program needs and for the NIUEngineering@RVC Program

- Construction of a new Aviation Career Education Center at the Chicago-Rockford International Airport

- Relocation of Rock Valley College Downtown

- Addition of a Cold-forming training facility

- Addition of a Wellness Clinic (RVCare) for employees and dependents on the College's insurance plan

- Informal learning spaces for students

The next plan will include design and construction of an Advanced Technology Center, as well as the overall reduction and reallocation of space.

5.C.2: The institution links processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

Processes for assessment of student learning and program review are designed to include links to planning and budgeting. The College's Accountability Management System (i.e., Taskstream) allows academic chairs to create operational plans that include action steps and budget needs as part of the course and program assessment cycle (e.g., CIS 254, NAD 101, PSY 170, RDG 099, and SOC 290. Taskstream Status Reports are utilized to provide updates on Operational Plans (e.g., CIS 254 and RDG 099. While these functions are readily available for all courses and programs, they are underutilized, especially for budget planning.

The five-year program review required by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) includes analysis of program quality, cost, and need. These elements are used by program Chairs to make recommendations and establish action plans. Program reviews also are used to support subsequent budget requests. The College plans to add annual updates to the program review cycle to ensure implementation of recommendations. The College also is developing a Program Vitality Report for annual monitoring of program viability (e.g., enrollment, credits earned, recruitment funnel, persistence/retention) to support academic planning.

ICCB Program Review covers Career and Technical Education Programs, Academic Disciplines, Student and Academic Support Services, and Cross-Disciplinary Instruction (e.g., remedial education, adult education, and vocational skills). Other College operations

are evaluated using internal processes, external audits, and state and federal reporting requirements. Examples include:

- Quarterly Financial Reports
- Financial Planning Model
- RVCare Updates
- ICCB Compliance Reporting
- IPEDS Compliance Reporting
- ICCB Recognition Report
- Daily Enrollment Ticker
- Dynamic Enrollment Report
- Student Services Dashboards

Implementation of zero-based budgeting requires that rationale accompany each request. The strongest rationales are based on assessment, program review, operational evaluations, and costs anticipated through the strategic planning process. While most College units are creating links between assessment/evaluation, planning, and budgeting, these links are not centrally tracked and documented. The College could meet this need by expanding use of TaskStream to include noncredit academic programs and operational units.

5.C.3: The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

The College's planning process includes a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. The current strategic planning committee includes the following representatives from the campus community:

- Assistant to the President
- Chief Development Officer
- Chief of Police
- Dean of Students
- Dean, Transitional Opportunities and Career Education
- Director, Business and Professional Institute
- Executive Director of Communications and Marketing
- Executive Director of Early College
- Executive Director of Facilities and Operations
- Executive Director of Human Resources

- Executive Director of Information Technology
- Member, Educational Support Personnel
- President of the College
- President, Faculty Association
- President, Professional Staff Association
- President, Support Staff Association
- Vice President / Chief Operating Officer
- Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs / Chief Academic Officer
- Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Vice President of Finance and CFO
- Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness
- Vice President of Student Services
- Vice President of Community Outreach and Strategic Partnership

This group has been meeting twice a month to develop action steps for the current strategic plan. In order to involve the entire campus community, open feedback sessions were held during the College's Fall 2018 Development Day. In addition, the VP for Institutional Research and Effectiveness has met with the following employee groups to vet action steps:
- Academic Deans
- Professional Staff Association
- Financial Services
- Business Services
- CAO Council
- Faculty
- Student Services

Despite efforts to reach all internal constituents, participation in the vetting process was limited for some employee groups. In some instances, participation was limited by faculty and staff work schedules. In other instances, participation is limited by lack of interest or perceived lack of influence. Some faculty and staff believe that planning occurs at the Board and leadership level without significant employee stakeholder input, while others feel they have had opportunity for input. Leadership will continue to improve communication and offer opportunities for input.

While planning considers the needs of students, the current strategic plan lacks direct student input. Going forward, the College will use the Student Government Association and other student leaders to collect input and opinions.

The College regularly involves external constituents in its planning processes. College leaders are members on several community boards (e.g., Workforce Connection, Region 1 Planning Council, Alignment Rockford, Transform Rockford, and Rockford Promise). Through their involvement on these boards, leaders develop relationships with community members and organizations that benefit both the College and the region. President Jensen, especially, has been vigilant about developing strong relationships with community leaders including superintendents (e.g., Belvidere Community School District #100 and Rockford Public School District #205), government officials (e.g., Rockford Mayor and Winnebago Count Board Chair), business leaders, religious leaders, and economic development leaders (e.g., Rockford Chamber of Commerce Board Chair). Many community members were complementary of his efforts and the efforts of the College to consider regional needs during the Community Conversations held in preparation for the HLC Team Visit.

The College considers regional education and workforce needs when developing new and evaluating existing program offerings. Examples include:

- KPI Summary Report for Addressing Regional Economic Need: Labor Market Study

- Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. reports to validate program need before proposing new programs to Curriculum Committee and when reviewing programs for the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)

- Labor market data distributed by the Illinois Department of Employment Security

- NCATC Member Assistance Program site review, including focus group interviews to support development of an advanced technology center

- Region 1 Planning Council (R1PC) employer survey focused on the need for middle skills workers

- Regular Advisory Committee meetings for career and technical education programs that include industry and alumni membership

- Alumni and employer surveys conducted by Nursing and other Allied Health programs

- Community Survey conducted in 2015
- Memoranda of Understanding for Pathways developed in collaboration with regional school districts. As of December 2018, the College has agreements with Belvidere and Winnebago school districts.

- Conversations with regional hospitals to determine implementation of a Certified Medical Assistant program

- RVC Connect

5.C.4: The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.

The College monitors several factors that impact financial stability. As a community college, there are three main sources of revenue: local property taxes, state revenue, and student tuition and fees. Equalized Assessed Values (EAV) declined by 20% from 2009 to 2016, followed by increases in 2017 and 2018. State funding has been unreliable in Illinois, especially in fiscal year 2016 when the State did not pass a budget. As a result, the burden has fallen on student tuition and fees to generate revenue.

The College has experienced a steady decline in credit hour enrollment since fiscal year 2011. An improving economy has contributed to enrollment decline as more people gain full-time employment with a livable wage. Despite enrollment declines, revenue generated from tuition and fees has remained relatively stable as increases in tuition have offset decreases in enrollment. The College cannot solely rely on tuition increases to maintain a balanced budget. Per 110 ILCS 805/6 of the *Public Community College Act* and ICCB Rule 1501.505, in-district student tuition and fees may not exceed one-third of the per capital cost as defined in the chargeback reimbursement calculation. Until fiscal year 2018, the College was near its maximum allowable tuition rate.

Analysis of this information has led the College to adopt a goal of decreasing reliance on State funding as part of its Strategic Plan. In fiscal year 2017, the College passed a balanced budget independent of State funds with the intention of allocating State money to fund operating reserves, invest in capital projects, and recruit/develop human resources only after it is received.

The College began monitoring the instructional unit cost in fiscal year 2015. The strategy to reduce the average differential between unit cost and unit revenue is part of the current Strategic Plan. Between fiscal years 2017 and 2018, the College reduced the differential from $(34.35) to $(3.62). These data indicate that instructional programs are, on average, lost $3.62 per credit hour in fiscal year 2017 compared to losing $34.35 per credit hour in fiscal year 2017. Most of the improvement resulted from increased revenue from course fees. The College also is considering differential tuition. The College is currently in the process of determining the right size (enrollment) and mix of programs. Unit cost, labor market, staffing, facilities, and student profile are all being considered as the College plans.

5.C.5: Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

The College considers emerging factors as it engages in institutional planning. These factors include technology, demographic shifts, state legislation, and evolving workforce needs.

Technology. With the building of the Health Science Center (HSC) and remodeling of Classroom Building I (CLI), several new learning spaces were created incorporating current technology. New classrooms were equipped with SmartBoards and additional computer labs were added. In the HSC, simulation labs offer Nursing and Allied Health students with near-real-life experiences. New space for the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program includes an ambulance environment.

The College also invests in technological solutions to improve operations. In 2016, the College purchased Ellucian Recruit and Ellucian Advise to assist with recruiting and advising, respectively. Due to turnover in key positions and high maintenance associated with Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions, these tools were not fully implemented. To correct this situation, Student Services added a CRM Specialist position in Fall 2018. The College also recently invested in Ad Astra, a course scheduling tool with analytic capabilities, to facilitate course planning and scheduling. On the operations side, the College converted network printers to "follow me printers," which allow faculty and staff to print from their computer and pick up at any printer on campus by scanning their badge. Beyond, implementation of these new tools, the College continues to explore training from Ellucian or experts from other institutions for full implementation of the Colleague modules and processes already available.

Demographic Shifts. The College monitors its Student Profile each fall and spring to term to keep pulse on the student body demographic. These data are often compared to the demographic profile of the community to determine what service gaps exist. For example, the Retention and Completion Committee recently compared the racial/ethnic profile of students compared to the City of Rockford and confirmed that the Black/African American community is underserved.

The College district, like the state of Illinois, is experiencing a population decline. This decline has influenced the College's goal to "link talent to opportunity." Along with government agencies, local businesses, regional K-12 districts, and other institutions of higher education, the College is working to educate its citizens and keep local talent in the community. The NIUEngineering@RVC program exemplifies these efforts. Students can earn either a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering on the College's campus or a B.S. Technology in Applied Manufacturing Technology offered online, with Rockford-area internship opportunities.

Workforce Needs. Academic planning considers regional workforce needs. The College's focus on developing an advanced technology center (ATC) depends on partnering with area businesses and governments to link talent with opportunity. Examples of how the College monitors workforce needs are provided in sub-component 5.C.3. In addition, the College's

Business and Professional Institute (BPI) provides short-term training based on the immediate needs of regional businesses.

Legislation and Regulations. The College pays close attention to emerging State and Federal regulations when planning. For example, the Illinois Dual Credit Quality Act (SB2338) has been carefully reviewed by academic leadership, including Deans and Chairs, to ensure that the College develops strong partnerships with regional high schools that support dual credit opportunities. The College also has considered The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century (Perkins V) Act in academic planning. Perkins V includes funding provisions that require the College to clean up curriculum codes for Career and Technical Education (CTE) students. The Perkins Team is exploring options to ensure that the College accurately counts its CTE students to maximize Perkins funding (e.g., creation of a pre-allied health track and verification of curriculum codes).

At the institutional level, new budget funds have been created in response to regulations and legislation. Board Report #7478 approves the creation of Fund 19 – Other Postsecondary Benefit (OPEB) Liability Fund and a transfer of up to $3.5 million for fiscal year 2018 in response to a Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncement requiring government entities to recognize their OPEB long-term obligations as a liability. Board Report #7577 approves the creation of Fund 20 – SURS Penalty Liability Fund to budget for State University Retirement System (SURS) penalties the College will incur for annual salary increases in excess of 3%.

Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

5.D.1: The institution develops and documents evidence of performance of its operations.

The College employs a wide variety of processes and tools for documenting evidence of performance, including but not limited to:
- Key Performance Indicator Reports (KPI) are published on the Institutional Research web site. KPI include *Educational Attainment, Access and Success* (persistence and retention rates, graduation rates, and transfer rates); *Affordability* (cost of attendance and financial aid debt); *Educational Quality* (institutional student learning outcomes and course/program student learning outcomes); *Accountability*; and *Addressing Regional Economic Need* (labor market study, community survey, and economic impact).

- Data Briefs about 10th Day Census Enrollment and Student Profile are published on the Institutional Research web site each semester.
- The College participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) every other year and conducts other ad hoc student surveys as needed.

- Plans and results for student learning outcomes assessment are documented in TaskStream.

- Review of CTE programs, academic disciplines and student support services are conducted and documented according to the ICCB Program Review schedule and procedures. The College has added additional items to the templates and documents reports within TaskStream.

- The College completes and submits a Recognition Report to ICCB every five years. In order to be recognized and receive state funding, the College must provide evidence of compliance with instructional, administrative, financial, facility, and equipment standards established by the ICCB.

- Student Services Directors and Deans update and monitor performance dashboards on a regular basis.

- Enrollment is tracked with a daily Enrollment Monitoring Report that compares enrollment and tracks it toward projection goals, as well as the Dynamic Enrollment Report that monitors the fiscal impact of enrollment changes.

- Outcomes of new enrollment strategies are tracked. Examples include the number of students registering for Belvidere late start classes and the number of students registering during finals week mobile registration.

- Marketing and Communications tracks web page traffic to determine effectiveness of marketing campaigns and webpages. For example, reports are available to determine how people found the registration landing page and which links were subsequently clicked.

- The Financial Services Department publishes a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report including audited financial statements. These reports are archived on the College web site for easy access, transparency, and use by College employees for planning purposes.

- Financial updates are presented to the Board each quarter. These reports include year-to-date actual revenues and expenses compared to budget, payroll and health care expenses by month, and faculty and staff headcounts by month.

- Grant evaluations and update reports are completed in accordance with the guidelines developed by the grantor.
- The College completes required data submissions for HLC, IPEDS, and ICCB. These submissions are archived in Institutional Research and Effectiveness and utilized to inform decision-making.

- Accredited programs complete regular comprehensive evaluations.

- Goal setting and performance reviews are conducted for faculty and staff. Faculty evaluations are governed by Section 5.9 of the 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement and include student course evaluations. Staff evaluations are guided by procedures established by Human Resources.

- IT and Maintenance use work order systems to track requests and progress toward completion.

- The Dean of Students Office uses Maxient to track issues that may impact student safety and success such as academic alert, academic integrity, inappropriate behavior, capricious grading, illness/hospitalization, registered sex offenders, student complaints, and Title IV cases. The Maxient Usage Report further describes use of this system and the types of issues tracked.

- Each semester, Institutional Research and Effectiveness publishes two Course Completion Reports. The first course completion report shows the percentage of students passing with an A, B, or C compared with the percentage of students who earn a D or F, withdraw, or take an incomplete (i.e., DFWI). These rates are available by division, department, discipline, and course. The second course completion report disaggregates the College-wide course completion rate by full-time/part-time status, gender, age (traditional/non-traditional status), race/ethnicity, first-time status, and course delivery method (i.e., face-to-face, hybrid, online). These reports are used by Academic and Student Affairs Deans, Chairs, and faculty to monitor success and identify the need for interventions. For example, supplemental instruction has been added to some courses with high DFWI rates.

- Each semester, the Academic Affairs Office conducts a syllabus audit to ensure that all instructor course syllabi include the required components and are consistent with the corresponding master course syllabus. Results of the audit are shared with Deans, Chairs, and Faculty for continuous improvement and professional development.

The College has identified the following limitations to documenting evidence of performance, along with recommendations for improvement.
- Several documents and repositories of information exist without a centralized compilation and analysis of information. However, this limitation is already on a path to improvement. In January 2018, President Jensen implemented a State of the College presentation that compiles many indicators of institutional health. This presentation was most recently updated in January 2019 and continues to evolve. Utilization of TaskStream could also be expanded to include review and improvement of nonacademic units.

- Program review and student success measures should include program completion rates and transfer outcomes (e.g., whether graduates complete a bachelor's degree and whether most credits are accepted by transfer institutions).

- Each program/discipline is reviewed on a five-year cycle. Plans are already being developed to spread program review across the five-year period with annual updates.

5.D.2: The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

As described in core component 5.D.1, the College has several processes in place to document evidence of performance and inform decision making. Examples of how these processes have led to institutional improvements include:
- Analysis of revenues and expenses led the College to develop a budget independent of state funding to ensure sustainability. Details of this analysis are described earlier within Criterion 5.

- As a result of the financial audit, the College discovered that the window for faculty to withdraw students not actively pursuing a course overlapped the midterm date. The College cannot claim apportionment for students withdrawn after midterm. The issue was corrected by adjusting the midterm withdrawal process. Effective with the Spring 2018 semester, the College adjusted the window in which the instructors submit the certified midterm roster to the mid-term date instead of 3 days after the mid-term date.

- TaskStream is used to generate course assessment status reports that assist Deans with monitoring assessment participation. Low participation prompted the Assessment Committee to host open assessment labs during faculty development day. This practice, along with assistance from the Director of Outcomes Assessment, has improved assessment documentation.

- Results of the annual unit cost analysis and use of the unit cost calculator has helped Deans adjust course fees to more accurately reflect course expenses. As a result, the differential between unit revenue and unit cost has improved.

- Conversations with area superintendents led the College to collaborate with high schools to expand dual credit opportunities. Prior to the Linking Talent with Opportunity grant, most dual credit opportunities were available on the RVC Main Campus.

- The Records and Registration Office uses program review findings to improve operations. In the FY13, transcript evaluations took four to six weeks to process. By the FY17 review, the processing time had been reduced to one week. In addition, the

transcript request process has moved online, and the office is working toward charging a request fee to offset departmental costs.

- Financial Aid used the results of a Six Sigma study to reduce the time for verification processing.

- The offices of and financial services and records and registration made several improvements to de-registration process. As a result, the percentage of students dropped for nonpayment during the first deregistration period decreased from 9.4% for Spring 2018 to 6.7% for Spring 2019.

- In December 2018, academic affairs purchased Ad Astra, a course scheduling analytics software, to improve scheduling efficiencies and decisions.

While there are several examples of how the College learns from its experiences and makes improvements, these operational changes are not consistently documented and centrally archived. Use of TaskStream could be expanded beyond student learning outcomes assessment and program review. TaskStream allows opportunity to make recommendations and action plans that would encourage continuous improvement in all areas.

Criterion 5 - Summary

Through the evidence provided, the College has demonstrated that the College values quality, integrity, and efficiency in planning and management of resources entrusted to its operation by the public. In concert with the HLC Guiding Values, the College upholds this trust through careful, strategic planning that guides, as well as supports, budgetary and financial decisions that address the mission of this institution. The statements below summarize the College's strengths, challenges, and actions as a result of its comprehensive for Criterion 5.

Strengths:
1. New and renovated facilities include spaces and technology that enhance teaching and learning.

2. The College has developed processes for balancing the budget without reliance on State funding.

3. Hiring processes ensure that new employees (faculty and staff) meeting the minimum qualifications.

4. Beginning with the fiscal year 2018 budget planning, budget requests and approvals can be done online.

5. Curriculum Committee has well-documented procedures that are aligned with state requirements.

6. Recommendations made through assessment and program review processes support budget requests.

7. The current strategic planning process has included multiple opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input.

8. The College considers regional workforce needs when developing credit and noncredit programs.

9. The College closely monitors state funding, local equalized assessment values, and enrollment when setting and managing the budget.

10. The College invests in technology to create operational efficiencies (e.g., Recruit, Advise, Virtual Desktops, Ad Astra, and Follow-me Printers).

11. Key Performance Indicator Reports, Data Briefs, and other data reports inform decision making and provide evidence of performance.

12. The College is developing processes that turn five-year academic program review into an ongoing continuous improvement process.

Challenges:
1. At the beginning of the comprehensive review process, the College did not have an integrated strategic plan to guide resource allocation and divisional/departmental work plans.

2. Many departments are understaffed.

3. The College lacks the tools necessary to make financial projections that would facilitate decision making.

4. When experienced employees retire or otherwise leave the College, institutional knowledge is lost and new employees do not receive adequate training.

5. Orientation and training for Board members is limited.

6. Faculty and staff committees rarely include student members or solicit student input in decision making.

7. Processes for developing new Board policies does not include faculty and staff input.

8. College departments that are not included in the Illinois Community College Board program review process are not regularly reviewed.

9. Planning occurs at the leadership level with limited involvement from faculty, staff, and students.

10. Environmental scanning plays a limited role in budgeting tuition revenue.

11. The College does not invest in the human resources required to implement efficiency-building technologies.

12. Use of the College's accountability management system (TaskStream) could be expanded to nonacademic departments.

As a result of the comprehensive review:
- The College is in the process of developing an integrated strategic plan with aligned divisional and departmental plans.

- The current strategic planning process has included multiple opportunities for information sharing and gathering feedback from faculty and staff.

- Divisions and departments will be asked to align their plans with the College's strategic plan.

- The College will investigate tools which will provide financial benchmarks for the College to use in order to aide resource allocation.

- The College will implement the Colleague Finance Self-Service Module.

- The College will update the committee pages of the Quarry to include list of members, purposes, agenda, and minutes for all College-wide committees.

RockValleyCollege

Federal Compliance Report | 2019

Federal Compliance Filing by Institutions

Effective September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2019

This document outlines the information institutions should provide as part of their comprehensive evaluation. Institutions should answer the questions below and provide supporting documentation where necessary. A list of required and optional appendixes is provided at the end of the document. Please keep answers brief and succinct, and only provide information in the appendixes that is specifically requested.

The institution should refer to the _Federal Compliance Overview_ in completing this form. The overview document identifies applicable HLC policies and provides an explanation of each requirement.

Note that some federal requirements are related to the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices. This document identifies those related Criteria and Assumed Practices so that the institution may cross-reference any material it prepares to address them. The document also provides cross-references to the Code of Federal Regulations; while these cross-references will provide context for HLC's requirements, it is important that institutions write to HLC's requirements and not to the federal regulations cited.

Submission Instructions

This form and all appendixes should be uploaded as a single PDF file in the Forms section of the Assurance System no later than the institution's lock date, unless otherwise noted. The PDF file should include section headings and bookmarks, with titles, for navigation.

Institution name: **Rock Valley College**

Main contact in the financial aid office: **Stacey Kolder, Director**

Number of staff members in the financial aid office: **9**

Identify when the last U.S. Department of Education training for the staff of the financial aid office occurred: **November 26-30, 2018**

Audience: Institutions
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Page 1

Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition

1. Complete the _Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours_. Submit the worksheet and the attachments listed in it as **Appendix A**.

2. What is the length in semester or quarter hours or other applicable units of each of the institution's degree programs? Institutions offering programs at a single degree level may be able to identify a specific number of semester or quarter hours to which all their programs conform; institutions with programs at different degree levels may need to expand their answer, and if so should include a list in Part A, Section 1 of the _Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours_ (Appendix A).

   The College offers three transfer degrees: Associate of Arts (64 credit hours), Associates in Science (64 credit hours), and Associate in Engineering Science (65 credit hours). In addition, the College offers 23 Associates in Applied Science degrees, ranging in credit hours from 64 to 82 credit hours. The complete list of programs and length can be found in Part A, Section 1 of the _Worksheet for Institutions of the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours_ (Appendix A).

3. Are there any differences in tuition for specific programs?

   ☐ Yes
   ☒ No

   If so, please identify the programs and explain the rationale for the difference in tuition.

   Not applicable

For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR §602.16(a)(1)(viii), 34 CFR §602.24(f), 34 CFR §600.2, and 34 CFR §668.8(k) and (l).

Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 3.A. and Assumed Practice B.1.

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

4. What is the institution's process for handling student complaints?

   Students are able to initiate the complaint process by contacting the Dean of Students in person, by email, by telephone, or with the online compliant form. When a student meets with the Dean of Students he/she is given a copy of the complaint resolution process and informed of both the informal and formal complaint procedures. During the meeting, the Dean of Students receives a better understanding of the situation at hand and offers appropriate remedies that can be both informal and formal; however, all students are encouraged to first utilize the informal complaint procedure. If a student is unable to resolve the issue informally, he/she may file a formal written complaint. It is important to note that it is not required for students to complete an informal complaint procedure before moving to the formal complaint procedure.

Audience: Institutions
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Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 2

Students must consult with the Dean of Students before filing a formal written complaint. Written complaints are sent to the appropriate staff or faculty supervisor, who has 30 days to investigate and respond in writing to the student. If students feel the decision of the immediate supervisor is arbitrary or capricious, or if they have new evidence to present, they may appeal the decision in writing within 10 days to the next level supervisor, who also has 30 days to investigate and respond.

For formal written complaints, students must clearly state the nature and basis for the complaint, including names of person(s) for which the complaint is being made against, and any known witnesses. The written complaint must also include specifics of the incident(s) and be signed and dated by the student.

5. Provide the institution's complaint policy and procedure and the web address where the public can find this information. Enter this information in the space below or attach as **Appendix B**.

Appendix B contains the *Procedure for the Resolution of Student Complaints or Conflicts* as it appears in the *2018-2019 Student Handbook*. The procedure is also available to the public at the following web address:

https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/StudentServices/DeanofStudents/complaintprocess.cfm

6. Provide an aggregated report of the number and type of complaints received since the last comprehensive evaluation by HLC and explain their resolutions. Attach as **Appendix C**.

7. How does the institution integrate what it has learned from the complaint process into improvements in services or in teaching and learning?

The College has some specific conflict resolution policies related to common complaints, legislative requirements, and best practices. The following processes are detailed in the Student Handbook.
- Acts of Academic Misconduct (pages 47-48)
- Disability/Accommodation Grievance (page 60)
- Title IX (Sexual & Domestic Violence, Harassment & Discrimination) (pages 61-67)
- Appeal of Capricious Final Grade (pages 51-52)
- Appeal of College Suspension or Expulsion (pages 89-90)

The College utilizes Maxient, a centralized electronic tracking system for monitoring complaints. Through Maxient, the Dean of Students Office tracks all written complaints and appeals by type and completion, including but not limited to academic misconduct, behavioral intervention team concerns, and student complaints.

For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §602.16(a)(1)(ix).

Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.A and Assumed Practice A.3, A.4.

Publication of Transfer Policies

8. Where are the institution's transfer policies published?

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Form
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Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 3

The College's transfer policy is found on pages 17-18 of the 2018-2019 College Catalog. Additionally, the transcript evaluation process is outlined in the Admissions section of the College website and referenced in the Student Handbook. Credit can be transferred in the form of traditional coursework, acceptable test scores, prior learning experiences, and proficiency credit. Information on these subjects is detailed on pages 23-24 of the College Catalog.

Provide copies of the published transfer policies (such as those included in the institution's catalog, on the website or in other appropriate publications) as **Appendix D**.

9. How does the institution disclose articulation agreements, at both the institutional level and the program level, to current and prospective students? (Ensure that the disclosures clearly identify whether the institution 1) accepts credits from the other institution(s) through the articulation agreement; 2) sends credits to the other institution(s) through the articulation agreement; 3) both offers and accepts credits with the institution(s) in the articulation agreement; and 4) what specific credits articulate through the agreement [e.g., general education only; pre-professional nursing courses only; etc.].)

A comprehensive list of articulation agreements can be found on page 48 of the College Catalog. The College also participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), which assures the transferability of General Education and some major specific courses to more than 100 participating Illinois colleges and universities. This IAI General Education Core Curriculum plan is found on pages 39 and 40 of the College Catalog and also on the website under Counseling and Advising.

Provide a list of articulation agreements as **Appendix E** and the web address where the public can access this list. Note that you do not need to provide the full articulation agreements, only the list of agreements that you make public.

Information about the Illinois Articulation Initiative can be found at:
https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/StudentServices/Advising_Counseling/howyourcreditstransfer.cfm?cssearch=372065_1

Information about articulation agreements with individual institutions can be accessed online via the College Catalog: https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/catalog.cfm?cssearch=372069_1

Appendix E consists of the Catalog pages that specifically address articulation agreements.

10. What is the process implemented by the institution to align the disclosed transfer policies with the criteria and procedures used by the institution in making transfer decisions?

Students that transfer credit from another college or university that intend to earn a degree or certificate from the College must submit an official transcript from the issuing institution, along with a transcript evaluation request form. Upon receipt of official transcripts and other documentation, the staff will evaluate the request and render a decision on the transferability of credit from other sources. Transcripts are evaluated according to the criteria listed in the College Catalog on page 17.

Provide evidence (e.g., charts, data, etc.) that institutional decisions regarding transfer of academic credit align with the policy. Provide this information in the space below or attach as **Appendix F**.

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 4

See Appendix F.

For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §668.43(a)(11).

Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.A and Assumed Practice A.5.D.

Practices for Verification of Student Identity

11. Does the institution have students enrolled in distance or correspondence courses, as defined in federal definitions?

    ☒ Yes

    ☐ No

12. How does the institution verify the identity of students enrolled in these courses?

The learning management system (LMS) login procedures include identity verification. Students obtain a username and password through Admissions, where they verify identity with their government issued photo ID. Instructors may require students take exams in a proctored environment through the College testing center.

13. Are there any additional costs (e.g., fees associated with test proctoring) charged directly to the student because of this method?

    ☒ Yes

    ☐ No

14. What are these additional costs?

The College charges a distance learning fee of $53 per class to offset the cost of reduced online course sizes and additional faculty pay for online instruction.

15. How are the additional costs disclosed to students prior to enrollment in a distance or correspondence course?

The additional cost is disclosed on the tuition and fees page of the college website. In addition, all fees associated with a particular course, including the online course fee, are disclosed when students search for courses during registration.

Provide copies of the disclosures and the web address where the public can access such information as **Appendix G**.

16. How does the method of verification make reasonable efforts to protect student privacy?

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 5

Students can only access the learning management system with a username (i.e., student ID) and password. Passwords can only be changed through Online Services with knowledge of a username and last name associated with the account. If students forget their username, the only way to recover it is in person with a valid photo ID. The College complies with all FERPA regulations when handling student information.

For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §602.17(g).

Related HLC Requirement: Core Component 2.A.

Title IV Program Responsibilities

This requirement has several components the institution must address. The institution staff compiling this information should work with the financial aid office and the chief financial officer or comptroller. For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §602.16(a)(1)(x).

17. General Program Responsibilities

    a. What is the current status of the institution's Title IV program (e.g., recertified on date x, provisionally certified on date x, etc.)?

    Rock Valley College submitted a recertification application on March 21, 2018, ahead of the June 30, 2018 expiration date and is currently participating in the Title IV federal aid programs on a month-to-month basis until a new PPA is issued.

    b. When was the institution's most recent Title IV program review?

    The current Financial Aid Director does not have record of a Department of Education Title IV program review since 2015. The College undergoes a compliance audit on an annual basis. The last Single Audit was conducted by Sikich, LLP, May through July of 2018.

    c. Has the institution been audited or inspected by the Office of the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education since the last comprehensive evaluation by HLC?

        ☐ Yes

        ☒ No

    d. Attach the most recent Title IV program review, or other inspection or audit reports since the last comprehensive evaluation by HLC, as **Appendix H.**

    e. List any limitation, suspension or termination actions imposed on the institution by the U.S. Department of Education (hereafter referred to as "the Department") since the last comprehensive evaluation by HLC and the reason for such actions.

        RVC has not had any limitation, suspension, or termination actions from the U.S. Department of Education.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 6

f. List any fines, letters of credit or heightened monitoring imposed on the institution by the Department since the last comprehensive evaluation by HLC and the reason for such actions.

Not applicable as RVC has not had any fines, letters of credit, or heightened monitoring from the Department of Education.

g. What response and corrective actions has the institution taken in regard to these Department actions?

Not applicable as no corrective action has been required.

h. What are the consequences of these challenges for the institution's short- and long-term financial health?

Not applicable

i. What are the findings from the OMB Circular A-133 portion of the institution's three most recent audited financial statements, which identifies material weaknesses in the processing of financial aid?

No material weaknesses in the processing of federal awards were identified.

j. In which of the following Title IV federal financial aid programs does the institution participate? Select all that apply:

☒ Pell Grant

☒ Federal Family Education Loan

☒ Federal Direct Stafford Loan

☒ Direct PLUS Loan

☒ Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant

☒ Federal Work Study

☐ Perkins Loans

☐ Academic Competitiveness Grant

Provide all correspondence with the Department and other documents that explain the above responses as **Appendix I.**

For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §668.16.

18. Financial Responsibility Requirements

a. What were the outcomes of the three most recent Department reviews of the institution's composite ratios and financial audits?

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 7

Community colleges, which are considered local governments, are not required to compute composite ratios for the Department of Education. However, the College does compute composite ratios for the HLC. The College's composite ratios have been "above the zone" for the Fiscal Year's ending June 30, 2015 and 2017. However, the ratio fell to "in the zone" for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2016. This was a direct result of the State of Illinois budget crisis.

According to the FY2016, FY2017, and FY2018 audits conducted by Sikich LLP, RVC is in compliance with the requirements of all major federal programs. It is the auditor's opinion that the schedule of expenditures of federal awards is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole. Some instances of noncompliance were uncovered on other matters required for reporting by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133. However, these findings did not alter the auditor's opinion with regard to major federal programs.

b. Have there been any fines, penalties, letters of credit or other requirements imposed by the Department as a result of these reviews?

There have not been any fines, penalties, letters of credit or other requirements imposed by the Department.

Note: HLC also annually analyzes each institution's financial ratios to determine whether there might be financial concerns. The peer review team checks with the institution and the HLC staff to determine whether HLC or the Department has previously raised concerns about the institution's finances based on these ratios.

c. What actions has the institution taken or does it plan to take in response to any concerns raised by HLC or the Department? (*Related HLC Requirements: Core Components 5.A, 2.B; Assumed Practice D.1.*)

There have not been any concerns raised by the HLC or the Department.

Provide all correspondence with the Department and other documents that explain the above actions as **Appendix J**.

For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR 668.15, 34 CFR 668.23, 34 CFR 668.171, 34 CFR 668.173, and 34 CFR 668.174.

Related HLC Requirements: Criterion 5, Core Components A (resources) and B (administrative capacity).

19. Default Rates. The institution should take steps to avoid excessive loan default rates.
Institutions and teams should use the three-year default rate to complete this section.

a. What are the student loan default rates as provided by the Department for the three years leading up to the visit? (Institutions with evaluations after September must include the most recent cohort default rate in the Federal Compliance Filing or ensure that the most recent rate is provided to the team on-site if the rate was not available when the Federal Compliance Filing was submitted.)

Year 1: 16.6%

Year 2: 15.4%

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 8

Year 3: 14.4%

b. If the institution's default rates are higher than those of its peer institutions, if the institution's rates are rising, or if the rates have exceeded Departmental thresholds or triggered a Department review, what actions has the institution taken in response?

The College's default rates are lower than the average of its peer group established by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), have been decreasing, and have not exceeded the Departmental thresholds or triggered a Department review. No action is required.

Provide any correspondence with the Department related to default rates and any default rate management plan required by the Department as **Appendix K**.

c. Does the institution participate in private loan programs or any loan services that it provides to students directly or that a related corporation provides to its students?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If yes, provide a list of companies that provide loan services to the institution's students and explain the relationship of these companies to the institution.

The College works directly with two lenders that offer private loan services: Sallie Mae and Wells Fargo. The College discourages students to apply for private education loans. Students who inquire about or apply for private education loans without consulting the College receive a letter informing them of the benefits of Federal Student Loans and encouraging them to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students must complete the lower portion of the letter indicating whether or not they want more information on Federal Student Loans. If Students indicate that they do not want additional information, the College will certify the private loan.

Students can apply online directly for a Sallie Mae Private Loan. The institution receives notification from Sallie Mae that a student loan application was submitted. In addition, the College's Loan Coordinator will access the Sallie Mae website to proactively identify new private loan applications.

Students will work directly with a Wells Fargo lending service to apply for a private loan. The College is notified in the event there is a new private loan lender via faxed correspondence.

Provide samples of the loan agreements and disclosure information as **Appendix L**.

For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR §668.201, §668.204, and §668.217.

Related HLC Requirements: HLC Criterion 2, Core Component A (integrity); Criterion 5, Core Components A (resources) and B (administrative capacity); Assumed Practices D.1–5.

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 9

20. Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures. Title IV responsibilities include the legal obligation to disclose information to students and to the public about campus crime, athletic participation and financial aid.

   a. What administrator or office on campus is responsible for ensuring that these disclosures are regularly compiled and published and that the data are accurate?

      The Chief of Police, RVC Police Department, is responsible for compiling and publishing the Campus Security Report, which includes campus crime information. A copy of the report can be downloaded from:
      https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/About/RVCPD/securityreport.cfm?cssearch=372102_1.

      As a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), the College does not offer financial aid related to athletic participation.

   b. Has the institution been the subject of any federal investigation related to any of the required disclosures listed in question 20?

      ☐ Yes

      ☒ No

   c. Does the institution have any findings from the Department regarding these disclosures?

      ☐ Yes

      ☒ No

      Explain any findings related to any of the required disclosures listed in question 20 and corrective action plans the institution may have put together to remedy the findings.

      Not applicable

   d. Provide copies of the information disclosed to students and provide the web address where this information is made available to the public as **Appendix M**.

      For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR §668.40, 668.41, 668.42, 668.43, 668.44, 668.46, and 668.49.

21. Student Right to Know/Equity in Athletics. Title IV responsibilities require that institutions provide to students and the public graduation/completion rates for the student body by gender, ethnicity, receipt of Pell grants and other data as well as information about the process for withdrawing as a student, cost of attendance, policies on refund and return of Title IV financial aid, current academic programs and faculty, names of applicable accrediting agencies, description of facilities for disabled students, and the institution's policy on enrollment in study abroad. In addition, certain institutions need to disclose their transfer-out rate. Also, institutions with athletic programs are required to disclose athletic participation rates and financial support data.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 10

a. What administrator or office on campus is responsible for ensuring that these disclosures are regularly compiled and published and that the data are accurate?

The Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is responsible for ensuring that Student Right to Know disclosures are regularly compiled and published and that the data are accurate.

The Athletic Director is responsible for ensuring that Equity in Athletics disclosures are regularly compiled and published and that the data are accurate.

b. Has the institution been the subject of any federal investigation related to any of the required disclosures listed in question 21?

☐ Yes

☒ No

c. Does the institution have any findings from the Department regarding these disclosures?

☐ Yes

☒ No

d. Explain any findings related to any of the required disclosures listed in question 21 and corrective action plans the institution may have put together to remedy the findings.

Not applicable

e. Attach copies of the information disclosed to students and provide the web address where this information is made available to the public as **Appendix N**.

For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR §668.41, 668.45, 668.48, and 668.8.

Related HLC Requirement: Assumed Practice A.6.

22. Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies. The institution is required to have a Satisfactory Academic Progress policy and an attendance policy as part of the Title IV program.

a. Are these policies readily available to students?

☒ Yes

☐ No

b. Do they satisfy state or federal requirements?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 11

c. Does the institution have any findings from the Department regarding these disclosures?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Explain any findings related to any of the required disclosures listed in question 22 and corrective actions that may have been required by the Department related to these findings.

Not applicable

d. Attach copies of the information disclosed to students and provide the web address where this information is made available to the public as **Appendix O**.

e. Are the policies being appropriately applied by the institution in individual student situations?

Note: HLC does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance unless required to do so by state or federal regulations but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies provide information to students about attendance at the institution.

☒ Yes

☐ No

For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §668.34.

Related HLC Requirements: Criterion 3, Core Component A; Assumed Practice A.5.

23. Contractual Relationships. List any contracts related to academic programs with third-party entities not accredited by a federally recognized accrediting agency. Attach as **Appendix P**. Include the name of the provider, the name of the relevant academic program, what the provider does, the dates when the relationship starts and ends, and the date it was approved by HLC if required.

(The institution should have previously disclosed to HLC all existing contracts and received approval for those contracts as required by HLC policy. Institutions can see the list of HLC-approved contractual arrangements on its Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Report. HLC's substantive change policy requires that the institution notify HLC of any new contracts for up to 25 percent of an academic program, that the institution obtain prior HLC approval before initiating any contract for 25 to 50 percent of a program, and that HLC approve contracts for more than 50 percent of a program only in exceptional circumstances under strict scrutiny.)

For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR §668.5 and 602.22(a)(2)(vii).

Related HLC Requirements: Assumed Practices A.10–11.

24. Consortial Relationships. List any consortial relationships with other entities accredited by a federally recognized accrediting agency. Attach as **Appendix Q.** Include the name of the provider, the name

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 12

of the relevant academic program, what the provider does, the dates when the relationship starts and ends, and the date it was approved by HLC if required.

(The institution should have previously disclosed to HLC all existing consortiums and received approval for those consortial arrangements as required by HLC policy. Institutions can see the list of HLC-approved consortial arrangements on its Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Report. HLC's substantive change policy requires that the institution notify HLC of any new consortiums for up to 25 percent of an academic program, that the institution obtain prior HLC approval before initiating any consortiums for 25 to 50 percent of a program, and that HLC approve consortiums for more than 50 percent of a program only in exceptional circumstances under strict scrutiny.)

For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §668.5.

Related HLC Requirements: Assumed Practices A.10–11.

Required Information for Students and the Public

25. Provide course catalogs and student handbooks. Attach as **Appendix R.**

26. Which sections of the institution's website include required disclosure information? Provide the webpage name and link for each.

Required Information	Webpage Name and Link
Statement of mission, vision, and values	Mission, Vision and Values https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/About/mission.cfm?cssearch=371379_1
Institution's calendar	College Calendar https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/collegecalendar.cfm?cssearch=371380_1
Full descriptions of program requirements, including all pre-requisite courses	College Catalog https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/catalog.cfm?cssearch=371382_1
Requirements for admission both to the institution and to particular programs	In general, RVC is an open admissions institution. https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/ Some programs have selective admission processes. Nursing: https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Courses/Programs/Nursing/nursingdegree.cfm?cssearch=372897_1

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 13

	Dental Hygiene: https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Courses/Programs/Dental/default.cfm Respiratory Care: https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Courses/Programs/Respiratory/default.cfm
Policies on acceptance of transfer credits, including how credit is applied to degree requirements	Transfer to RVC https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/transferinfo.cfm?cssearch=371386_1 College Catalog (page 17) https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/catalog.cfm?cssearch=371382_1
All student costs, including tuition, fees, training, and incidentals; policy on refunds	Tuition and Fees https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/tuition.cfm?cssearch=371388_1
Financial aid policies, practices, and requirements	Financial Aid https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/FinancialAid/index.cfm
Grading information	College Catalog (pages 24-25) https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/catalog.cfm?cssearch=371382_1
Academic standards of progress for recipients of financial aid	College Catalog (page 21) https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/catalog.cfm?cssearch=371382_1 Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/FinancialAid/upload/SAP-Policy.pdf
Residency requirements	Residency Requirements https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/residency.cfm?cssearch=371414_1
Full list of instructors and academic credentials	College Catalog (pages 166-170) https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/catalog.cfm?cssearch=371382_1
Student right to know	Student Right to Know Information https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/InstitutionalResearch/studentrighttoknow.cfm?cssearch=371320_1

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 14

27. What policies and processes does the institution have in place to ensure required information for current and prospective students about institutional programs, fees, policies and related required information is accurate, timely and appropriate? Attach copies of these policies and procedures as **Appendix S**.

   Required information for current and prospective students about institutional programs, fees, policies, and related required information is published in the College Catalog and Student Handbook. These documents are reviewed, revised, and published annually to ensure information is accurate, timely, and appropriate. Appendix S includes a flowchart that depicts this process. Updating the Academic Calendar, which is published on the College website, follows a similar process.

   For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR §602.16(a)(1)(vii).

   Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.A, 2.B; Assumed Practice A.5.

Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information

28. Do the institution's advertisements and recruiting materials provide accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students, and is information about the institution's accreditation status with HLC and other accrediting agencies clear and accurate? If the institution has been placed on a sanction or its programmatic accreditation has been withdrawn, do the disclosures accurately explain this information?

   ☒ Yes

   ☐ No

   Provide copies of these advertising and recruiting materials as **Appendix T**.

29. Which sections of the institution's website include advertising and recruiting information? Provide the webpage name and link for each.

   Admissions Home Page
   https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/index.cfm

   Prospective Students Homepage
   https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Admission/prospectivestudents.cfm

   For the Community Homepage
   https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Community/index.cfm

30. What policies and processes does the institution have in place to ensure advertising and recruiting information to current and prospective students about its programs, locations and policies is accurate, timely and appropriate? Provide copies of these policies and procedures as **Appendix U.**

   Appendix U describes the College's process for ensuring that advertising and recruiting information is accurate, timely, and appropriate.

31. What webpage displays the Mark of Affiliation on the institution's website? Provide a link.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 15

The Accreditation webpage on the RVC website displays the Mark of Affiliation.

https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/Accreditation.cfm?cssearch=371425_1

For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR §602.16(a)(1)(vii) and 602.23(d).

Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.B; Assumed Practices A.5, A.7.

Review of Student Outcome Data

Institutions in their program review and institutional improvement processes are required to consider student outcome or performance data on the full range of their offerings where such data are available. Data can be at the institutional or the program level. Student achievement data typically include retention rates, graduation rates, licensure exam pass rates, employment rates, acceptance to further study or other similar information.

32. How does the institution gather or receive information about student outcomes from academic programs across the institution?

The institution gathers information about student outcomes related to course completion, retention rates, graduation rates, licensure exam pass rates, employment, and continued education.

Course Completion. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness generates and publishes course completion reports each fall and spring. These reports disaggregate college-wide course completion rates by division, department, discipline/program, course, full-time/part-time status, gender, age (traditional/non-traditional), race/ethnicity, first-time status, and course delivery method (i.e., face-to-face, hybrid, online). Course completion rates are available on the College's intranet for review by all administrators, faculty, and staff.

Retention Rates. First-time, full-time cohort retention rates are gathered as part of IPEDS reporting. In addition, the College uses an internally developed report to get a more comprehensive view of retention that includes part-time and non-first-time students. The College is nearing the final stages of a Program Vitality Report that will include retention rates by program.

Graduation Rates. First-time, full-time cohort graduation rates are gathered as part of IPEDS reporting. The College submits enrollment and completion data to ICCB, and ICCB uses that data to populate the IPEDS graduation rates surveys. The College also uses a report generated by its student information system, Colleague, to report on-time graduation rates for programs subject to gainful employment regulations.

Licensure Exam Pass Rates. Academic Chairs and Coordinators collect and monitor exam pass rates for degree and certificate programs designed to prepare students for professional licensure. These data are generally stored within the academic departments. Some departments archive these data in the College's accountability management system, Taskstream.

Job Placement and Employment Rates. Up until FY2016, all Illinois community colleges were required to administer an Occupational Follow-up Survey (OFUS), which collected employment information. After the requirement was lifted, the College continued to administer a follow-up survey

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 16

for internal purposes. Some accredited programs (e.g., Nursing and Dental Hygiene) also administer their own surveys. The data collected by these programs can be accessed by Institutional Research and Effectiveness staff through the Colleges survey administration platform (i.e., Qualtrics).

Recently, the Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Student Assistance Commission, Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, and Illinois State University entered into a data sharing agreement to make outcome data, including employment and wage information, available to the general public via www.ilcollege2career.com. More detailed information, disaggregated by program, will be available to institutional researchers across the State.

Continued Education. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness collects subsequent enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse at the institutional level. Some programs (e.g., Nursing) also collect subsequent enrollment data through graduate surveys. The data collected by these programs can be accessed by Institutional Research and Effectiveness staff through the Colleges survey administration platform (i.e., Qualtrics).

33. List the types of student outcome data available to the institution. Provide this information in the space below or attach as **Appendix V**.

Retention Rates, Graduation Rates, Transfer Rates, Licensure Exam Pass Rates, Subsequent Enrollment, Transfer GPA, Employment, and Earnings

34. Explain how information about student outcomes informs planning, academic program review, assessment of student learning, consideration of institutional effectiveness, and other topics.

Course completion reports are regularly used by administrators to identify courses with D, F, Withdrawal, and Incomplete (DFWI) rates greater than 30%. Faculty members are expected to identify potential reasons for low course success rates and develop solutions. For example, faculty teaching BIO100 and CIS102, in collaboration with student services, began offering supplemental instruction in two sections of each course in Spring 2018.

Job placement data are included in the standard program review data packet for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The College has integrated the OFUS process into its own operations and planning since ICCB no longer requires the data collection. Review of OFUS data during Program Review facilitates examination of program need as well as quality. Licensure exam pass rates also are used to verify and improve program effectiveness.

College-wide persistence, retention, transfer and graduation rates are analyzed as key performance indicators and used by College administration to make decisions. For example, low completion rates for Black/African American students have been a topic of discussion and planning for the Retention and Completion Committee. Moreover, these indicators are used to develop and monitor strategic enrollment management plans. Student success indicators also appear in the State of the College presentation that has been widely shared with internal and external constituents.

35. The federal government is increasingly concerned that institutions and accreditors are taking into account federal metrics in the review of student outcome data. These metrics are best found in the College Scorecard. Explain how information from the Scorecard is incorporated in the institution's

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 17

review of its student outcome data. Please note the loan repayment rate identified on the Scorecard and explain how the institution uses this metric in its review of its own data.

Much of the information from the Scorecard (e.g., costs, debt, retention and graduation rates, and student profile), is incorporated into the College's Key Performance Indicator Reports and Data Briefs, which are discussed internally and available on the College website. Institutional Research and Effectiveness staff use IPEDS directly as a resource for institutional KPI and comparisons.

On account of the growing concern institutions have with regard to student debt, evaluating the loan repayment rate in addition to the college three year cohort default rate allows the College the opportunity to better educate both student and parent borrowers. While never deterring students from the opportunities that student loans provide, the Financial Aid Department loan coordinator works diligently to educate potential and current student borrowers regarding the responsibilities of a loan borrower. Repayment rates, repayment options, impact of defaulting as a loan borrower are all pieces of information that are provided. The College does not auto award Stafford loans; and in an effort to promote knowledge, requires students to complete an internal loan request form. In completing the form, the student must not only provide standard information regarding borrowing history but also complete a budgeting exercise and access online tools specific to understanding how to use a loan repayment estimator/calculator to prepare for the obligations and responsibilities of a loan borrower. In addition to student outreach specifics, the data provided on the Scorecard allows the Financial Aid Office opportunities to determine specific cohorts and trends to enhance reporting tools and maintain outreach.

For more information see Federal Requirement 34 CFR 602.16(a)(1)(i).

Related HLC Requirements: Core Components 4.A–C; Assumed Practice C.6, C.7.

Publication of Student Outcome Data

Student outcome data should be made available to the public through the institution's website—for instance, linked to from the institution's home page, included within the top three levels of the website or easily found through a search of related terms on the website—and should be clearly labeled as such. Any technical terms in the data should be defined, and any necessary information on the method used to compile the data should be included. Data may be provided at the institutional or department level or both, but the institution must disclose student outcome data that address the broad variety of its programs.

36. Are student outcome data published on the institution's website following the specifications above?

    ☒ Yes

    ☐ No

37. How does the institution ensure that the publication of these data accurately reflects the range of programs at the institution?

    All degree and certificate seeking students are included in KPI Reports and Data Briefs. Rather than relying solely on the IPEDS definition for retention, the College provides retention rates for all students disaggregated by various demographic variables.

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 18

38. Provide a link to the webpage(s) that contains the student outcome data.

Institutional Research:
https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/InstitutionalResearch/index.cfm

Gainful Employment:
https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Courses/Programs/gainfulemployment.cfm?cssearch=372201_1

Related HLC Requirement: Assumed Practice A.6.

Standing With State and Other Accrediting Agencies

39. List any relationships the institution has with a specialized, professional or institutional accreditor or with any governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution has a presence. Note whether the institution or any of its programs is on a sanction, is provisionally approved or has lost status with any state agency or accrediting body.

The College is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and governed by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The following table shows the College's relationship with HLC and specialized accreditors. In addition, the Nursing Program has candidacy status with Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).

Accrediting Body	RVC Programs	Accreditation Cycle	Status	Next Review
Regional, Institutional Accreditation				
Higher Learning Commission	All programs and operations	Standard Pathway: 10-year cycle with comprehensive evaluations in years 4 and 10	Accredited	Year 4 Comprehensive Evaluation in 2019
Specialized Accreditation / Affiliation				
Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting	Surgical Technology	10-year cycle	Accredited	2021
American Welding Society	Welding Technology	Annual self-audit; site visit every 3rd year	Accredited facility	2020
Commission on Dental Accreditation	Dental Hygiene	7-year cycle self-study with annual updates	Accredited	2024
Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care	Respiratory Care	10-year cycle self-study with annual updates	Accredited	2021
Federal Aviation Administration	Aviation Technology	Semi-annual site visit determined by FAA	Operations approved	Visits set by FAA
Bureau of Apprenticeship Training (USDOL/ETA/OATELS-BAT)	Apprenticeship Programs	Facility accreditation, curriculum modified via advisory committees	Accredited	Ongoing through advisory committees

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 19

Accrediting Body	RVC Programs	Accreditation Cycle	Status	Next Review
Specialized Accreditation / Affiliation (continued)				
Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Board of Nursing	Associate Degree in Nursing LPN Bridge Program	State directed by National Standards with annual follow-up (based on national licensure exam pass rate > 75%)	Continued process; approved	Summer, annual
Illinois Department of Public Health	Nursing Assistant (C.N.A.)	None; mandatory reporting after completion of each C.N.A. cohort	Continued process; approved	Each 8 or 16 weeks per cohort
National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation	Automotive Technology	Curriculum reviewed every 5 years; instructors need 20 hours in CEs	Certified	2021
Automotive Service Excellence	Automotive Technology	Instructors certified every 5 years	Certified	Ongoing
Office of the State Fire Marshall	Fire Science	Curriculum meets required guidelines of State Fire Marshall's office		
American Society for Clinical Pathology	Phlebotomy	Curriculum meets required guidelines of ASCP; coordinator needs 20 hours in CEs, + certification requirements every 2 years Continued process; approved		2020
Accrediting Council for Collegiate Graphic Communications, Inc.	Graphic Arts	6-year cycle	Accredited	2024

Provide the most recent comprehensive evaluation report and action letter from each institutional or specialized accrediting agency as well as any interim monitoring prepared for that agency. Attach as **Appendix W**.

40. Explain how the institution makes its standing with state agencies and accrediting bodies available to students. Provide samples of those disclosures as **Appendix X** and indicate the web address where students and the public can find these disclosures.

The College Catalog makes the institution's standing with state agencies (page 5) and accrediting bodies (pages 5 and 11) available to students. Appendix X consists of page 11 of the College Catalog, listing accrediting agencies and memberships. Accreditation disclosures are available on the Accreditation webpage:
https://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/Academics/Accreditation.cfm?cssearch=372321_1.

For more information see Federal Requirements 34 CFR §602.28, 34 CFR 668.41, and 668.43.

Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.B; Assumed Practices A.7, C.4.

Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

The institution is responsible for publishing a notice about the visit to its constituents no later than two months before the peer review team's on-site visit and instructing constituents that they can send

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 20

comments to HLC. Local newspapers, institutional websites and alumni magazines are appropriate choices of media in which to solicit public comments. Notices of the opportunity to comment should reach all constituencies but should not unduly burden the institution. Notices of the visit should be published following the format prescribed in the _Procedure on Third-Party Comments_.

Notices should include:

- The purpose and dates of the visit.
- The institution's accreditation status with HLC.
- An invitation to send written, signed comments directly to HLC.
- Contact information for HLC.

Notices should specify that comments must be sent to HLC no later than four weeks before the start of the visit. The comments are compiled by HLC staff members and sent to the evaluation team and the institution three weeks prior to the visit. As third-party comments are an important part of the comprehensive evaluation, HLC also reviews and forwards comments received after the deadline has passed and during the visit.

In cases where comments are of a sensitive nature, HLC ensures that the commenter is aware that comments are typically forwarded to the institution and the evaluation team with identifying information intact. In some cases, HLC may redact the identifying information of the commenter or summarize the comment.

41. Submit a list of constituencies that have received the notice of opportunity to comment. (These groups may include students, parents, alumni, taxpayers, donors, community groups and local businesses.)

- Students were notified via student email and social media channels.

- Alumni were notified via social media, including college social media sites and the RVC Foundation alumni Facebook page. Information also was inserted into an Athletics Hall of Fame event program.

- Community was notified via social media channels.

- Donors were notified via email by the RVC Foundation.

- Press release was sent to media channels, including newspapers, TV stations, and radio stations in the RVC district and was posted on the College's website.

42. What media did the institution use to solicit comments?

Print, TV, and radio media were notified via press release. Some constituent groups also received notification via email and social media.

43. Attach a copy of the notices as **Appendix Y**.

Competency-Based Programs, Including Direct Assessment Programs, and Faculty-Student Engagement

Audience: Institutions
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 21

Note: The definition of competency-based and direct assessment programs (as taken from 34 CFR §668.10) can be found on HLC's website.

44. Does the institution offer any direct assessment programs, as defined in 34 CFR §668.10?

    ☐ Yes

    ☒ No

    Note: HLC policy and federal regulations require that direct assessment programs be reviewed and approved by the accrediting agency before they are initiated. Contact your HLC staff liaison if the institution offers direct assessment programs that have not been approved by HLC.

45. Does the institution offer any competency-based programs?

    ☐ Yes

    ☒ No

46. Provide a list of direct assessment or competency-based programs offered by the institution.

    Not applicable

47. How does the institution ensure that faculty in these programs regularly engage with students? Please respond to the following questions:

    a. Do the faculty members initiate communication on some regular basis with the students in the course(s)? If yes, provide examples of how and when this occurs in each program.

       Not applicable

    b. Do the students have a responsibility to initiate communication with the faculty members on some regular basis that is at least equivalent to contact in a traditional classroom? If yes, provide examples of how and when this occurs.

       Not applicable

    c. Describe the manner in which faculty respond to questions from students about the academic content of the program. Describe the interaction between faculty and students about demonstrating competencies in the program material.

       Not applicable

    d. Demonstrate that in the tasks mastered to assure competency, faculty and students interact about critical thinking, analytical skills, written and oral communication abilities, etc., in the context of the course(s) in question with appropriate guidance by faculty.

       Not applicable

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 22

e. Demonstrate that in the tasks mastered to assure competency, faculty and students interact about core ideas, important theories, current knowledge, etc., in the context of the course(s) in question with appropriate guidance by faculty.

Not applicable

List of Appendixes

Please read each section of this document carefully for instructions on the information and material to be included in these appendixes. Appendixes displayed in italics are optional; the institution may provide the required information either by entering it into this form or by attaching it as an appendix.

Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition
Appendix A.......... Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours

Institutional Records of Student Complaints
Appendix B.......... Institutional complaint policy and procedure, and web address
Appendix C .... Complaints received since last comprehensive evaluation and their resolutions

Publication of Transfer Policies
Appendix D .... Published transfer policies
Appendix E.......... List of articulation agreements, and web address
Appendix F.......... Evidence that decisions regarding transfer align with disclosed policy

Practices for Verification of Student Identity
Appendix G .... Disclosures of additional costs related to verification, and web address

Title IV Program Responsibilities
Appendix H .... Most recent program review or other inspection or audit reports since last comprehensive evaluation
Appendix I .... Correspondence with the Department and other documents explaining the institution's general program responsibilities
Appendix J .... Correspondence with the Department and other documents explaining the institution's actions in response to concerns regarding its financial responsibility requirements
Appendix K.......... Correspondence with the Department related to default rates and any required default rate management plan
Appendix L .... Samples of loan agreements and disclosure information
Appendix M .... Disclosures to students about campus crime information, athletic participation and financial aid, and web address
Appendix N .... Disclosures to students required by student right to know/equity in athletics responsibilities, and web address
Appendix O .... Disclosures to students about satisfactory academic progress and attendance policies, and web address
Appendix P.......... List of contractual relationships
Appendix Q .... List of consortial relationships

Required Information for Students and the Public
Appendix R .... Course catalogs and student handbooks

Audience: Institutions
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 23

Audience: Institutions
Form
Published: January 2018 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: legalaffairs@hlcommission.org
Page 24

APPENDIX A
WORKSHEET FOR INSTITUTIONS
ASSIGNMENT OF CLOCK HOURS AND CREDIT HOURS

Appendix A: Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours

Instructions

This worksheet should be completed by the person(s) at the institution who knows the most about the institution's calendar and credit hour assignments; at many institutions the registrar may be the appropriate person to complete this worksheet. The person(s) completing the worksheet should work closely with the institution's financial aid officer to ensure consistency between what is reported to HLC on this form and what is reported to the U.S. Department of Education (hereafter referred to as "the Department").

Purpose of this form. This form provides the peer review team with a single source of information about the institution's calendar, credit hour policies and total credit hour generation related to the courses for which it provides instruction, and an overview of the institution's pattern of distribution of credit hour assignments. **It is not an inventory of every course the institution offers.** The institution should:

- Report on academic terms and credit for courses that support the institution's certificate and degree programs.
- When appropriate, include in the form brief explanations of the allocation of credit hours.
- Estimate or round off where appropriate.
- **Not** include prior learning, transfer, etc., wherein the institution awards credit but does not provide instruction associated with that credit.

Part A. Assignment of Credits and Program Length. All institutions must complete Part A. Institutions that use multiple calendars may need to complete more than one area of Section 1.

Part A includes:
    Section 1. Institutional Calendar, Term Length and Type of Credit
    Section 2. Format of Courses and Number of Credits Awarded
    Section 3. Policy on Credit Hours
    Section 4. Total Credit Hour Generation
    Section 5. Clock Hours
    Clock Hour Worksheet. Institutions should complete this worksheet only if they offer clock hour courses/programs or are required by the Department to report certain courses/programs to the Department in clock hours for Title IV purposes.

Part B. Supplemental Materials

Section 1: Institutional Calendar, Term Length and Type of Credit

Institutions using multiple calendars across the institution may need to complete more than one area of the chart below. For more information about the terminology and calendaring units referenced in this form, see the 2011–2012 "Federal Student Aid Handbook," Volume 3, Chapter 1, "Academic Calendar, Payment Periods and Disbursements." Definitions in this section are taken from that handbook.

Institution name: Rock Valley College

Calendar	Term	Column 1 Term Length: Number of Weeks	Column 2 Number of Starts
Semester / Trimester Calendar	Standard Format: 14 to 17 week term	16	1
	Compressed Formats: 4, 8 or other week terms within the semester calendar[1]	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12	9
	Summer Term	Reported with Compressed Formats	Reported with Compressed Formats
Quarter Calendar	Standard Format: 10 to 12 week term		
	Compressed Formats: 2, 5 or other week terms within the quarter calendar[1]		
	Summer Term		

[1]*If an institution offers a summer term that is different in length than the typical fall semester, it should report summer term information in this section.*

Non-standard Terms (terms that are not semesters, trimesters or quarters. A non-standard term may have the following characteristics: courses do not begin and end within a set period of time; courses overlap terms, including self-paced and independent study courses or sequential courses that do not begin and end within a term; terms may be of equal or unequal length.)

Calendar	Term	Column 1 Term Length: Number of Weeks	Column 2 Number of Starts	Column 3 Type of Credit
Non-standard Term Calendar	Term One			
	Term Two			
	Term Three			

	Summer Term			

Degree Programs (Optional)

What is the length in semester or quarter hours or other applicable units of each of the institution's degree programs? Institutions with programs at different degree levels may include a list here if an expanded answer is required (see question 2 in the *Federal Compliance Filing by Institutions.*)

Associates in Applied Science Degrees:

Accounting - 65 credits / 4 semesters
Nursing - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Automotive Service Technology - 66 credits / 4 semesters
Aviation Maintenance Technology - 82 credits / 5 semesters
Business Administration - 65 credits / 4 semesters
Cisco Networking - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Computer & Information Systems - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Criminal Justice - 66 credits / 4 semesters
Cross Media Production - 67 credits / 4 semesters
Data Assurance & IT Security - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Dental Hygeine - 80 credits / 5 semesters (including summer)
Early Childhood Education - 65 credits / 4 semesters
Electrician Apprenticeship - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Electronic Engineering Technology - 66 credits / 4 semesters
Fire Science - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Fitness, Wellness & Sport - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Graphic Arts Technology - 67 credits / 4 semesters
Graphic Design - 67 / 4 semesters
Manufacturing Engineering Technology - 65 credits / 4 semesters
Office Professional - 65 credits / 4 semesters
Respiratory Care Program - 71 credits / 5 semesters (including summer)
Sustainable Energy Systems - 66 credits / 4 semesters
Web Programming & Design - 64 credits / 4 semesters

Transfer Degrees:
Associates of Arts - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Associates in Science - 64 credits / 4 semesters
Associate in Engineering Science - 65 credits / 4 semesters

Note: The number of semesters was calculated by dividing the number of credits required by 15 and rounding to the nearest whole number.

Section 2. Format of Courses and Number of Credits Awarded

Guide to Completing This Section

Purpose

In this section, the institution provides an overview of the pattern of instructional hours required for the credit hours it awards. The sample form provides a suggested approach for conveying that information to the peer review team. The institution may make modifications to the chart's format or add brief notes as appropriate to explain credit hour awards, particularly in non-standard or compressed-format classes.

If the institution offers multiple types of terms, such as a compressed-format term and a regular semester term, it should **complete a separate form for each type of term identified in Section 1**. Separate forms will help the peer review team understand how instructional time is related to credit hour awards in each term. The information in this section need not be extensive as long as it explains how credit hours are awarded across various formats at the institution.

This section should not be used to demonstrate that the institution assigns credit hours appropriately in regard to non-contact-hour requirements such as out-of-class group meetings or homework assignments. That issue may be addressed in the institution's credit hour policy, and may be evaluated by the peer review team in the sample of institutional programs it examines during the visit.

Period Reported

An institution may use any recent term that appropriately depicts its credit hour allocations as the basis for completing the *Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses* below.

Key to Rows

- Number of Courses—Count each course offered by the institution in the row corresponding to the number of credits awarded and the column or columns representing the format of delivery through which the course or a section of the course is offered. Do not count sections of the same course if the sections are offered in the same delivery format.

- Number of Meetings—Enter the total number of class meetings (or equivalent) provided in each course with each credit award during the term reported; if the number of class meetings varies, enter a range. For distance, correspondence or other formats, report on instructional time. Do not include study or other time during which students work independently or with other students even though such time may be provided to replace time with a faculty member. Instructional time need not be limited to time spent with all students in the class in a single format.

- Include labs or discussions in the number of meetings if they are a required element of the course, if they do not have a separate course number or credit hour allocation, and if the presence of a lab or discussion is considered significant when the institution assigns credit hours to the course. If a lab or discussion does not meet these considerations, it need not be reflected in this chart.

- Meeting Length—Enter the range (shortest to longest) of meeting times in each category. (*Note:* One hour may be 50 minutes of actual instructional time.)

Key to Columns

- **FTF (face-to-face):** Courses in which instructors interact with students in the same physical space for approximately 75 percent or more of the instructional time.

- **Mixed FTF:** Courses in which instructors interact with students in the same physical space for less than 75 percent of the instructional time, with the remainder of the instructional time provided through distance or correspondence education.

Note: The above explanations arise from HLC's distance education protocol. Institutions may use other thresholds for FTF and Mixed FTF provided that they define them clearly and include the definition on this worksheet.

- **Distance:** Courses in which instructors interact with students through one or more forms of distance delivery.

- **Correspondence:** Courses in which instructors interact with students through mail or electronic interface, typically according to a self-paced schedule.

    Federal Definitions of Distance/Correspondence Education:

    Distance education/course means education that uses one or more of the {following} technologies (i) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor: and (ii) to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies used may include: (i) the internet; (ii) one way and two way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; (iii) audioconferencing; or (iv) videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-Roms, if the videocassettes, DVDs or CD-Roms are used in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in clauses (i) through (iii).

    Correspondence education/course means: (1) Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. (2) Interaction between the instructor and the student is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. (3) Correspondence courses are typically self-paced. (4) Correspondence education is not distance education.

- **Independent/Directed Study:** Courses in which instructors interact with students through a flexible format.

- **Weekend College:** Some institutions may have an evening or weekend college that, while on the same calendar, may structure its courses and credit assignments differently than the same courses offered during the regular day. If courses are offered in the evening or on the weekend as another scheduling option for students, but the courses provide similar class meetings or instructional time as those courses offered by the institution during the regular day, the institution need not report evening or weekend courses in this category.

- **Internships or Practica:** Some institutions may provide internship or practica experiences for which credits are awarded. Institutions that have professional schools in medicine, law, nursing, physical therapy, etc., which often require internships or practica with high credit allocations, should provide brief summative information about the internships but need not include them in the report form.

Examples

- If the institution offers Calculus 210, a three credit-hour course, in FTF and distance formats as well as through the Weekend College, the course should be reported in the row for 3 credits and once in each column corresponding to each course format offered.

- If the institution offers that course in a full 14–17-week standard format as well as in a compressed format, the course should be reported on one form for the standard format and on a separate form for the compressed format.

- If in the FTF format instructors meet with students two times per week for 1.5 hours per meeting for the 14 weeks of the term, the number of meetings should be reported as 28 meetings, and the length of each meeting as 1.5 hours.

NEW: Direct Assessment or Competency-Based Credit Hour Equivalencies

Complete the questions following the chart with regard to direct assessment or competency-based programs.

Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses

Using the above instructions and the following sample as a guide, create a form that provides an overview of the pattern of instructional hours required for the credit hours the institution awards. Complete a separate form for each term length specified in Section 1, Columns 1 and 2, above. Attach the form(s) as **Supplement A1**.

Note: Institutions offering courses with **six or more credits awarded** should include those courses in this form. Identify the number of credits awarded in the first column. In addition, identify the course(s) and explain the reasoning behind the credit allocated to those courses in a narrative attached to the form.

SAMPLE—NOT FOR COMPLETION

Term and Length (e.g., Spring 2011, 16 weeks OR Spring 2011, 5 weeks):

Number of Credits Awarded	Instructional Time	Course Formats						
		FTF	Mixed FTF	Distance	Corresp.	Independent/ Directed Study	Weekend College	Internship or Practica
1 Credit	Number of courses							
	Number of meetings							
	Meeting length							
2 Credits	Number of courses							
	Number of meetings							
	Meeting length							
3 Credits (Example)	Number of courses	119	24	57	14	2	20	4
	Number of meetings	15-45	15-30	15	4-8	3-14	6	6-10
	Meeting length	1-3 hrs.	1-2 hrs.	1 hr.	1-2 hrs.	.5-3 hrs.	4 hrs.	1-4 hrs.
4 Credits	Number of courses							
	Number of meetings							
	Meeting length							
5 Credits	Number of courses							
	Number of meetings							
	Meeting length							

Other Courses Not Reported

List below any other courses that were not included in the *Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses.* Identify the course names, the number of credits allocated, a brief description of how instruction takes place in these courses and how many hours of

instruction are provided. (Such courses might include travel, summer term or other courses that do not fit in the columns above because they have a different delivery format.)

Direct Assessment or Competency-Based Programs

An institution must demonstrate that any direct assessment or competency-based programs that it offers have appropriate credit hour equivalencies.

1. Provide a list of the academic programs available in direct assessment or competency-based format and the required credit hours for each program. Identify the learning objectives for each such program.
   Not applicable

2. Explain how the institution sets credit hour equivalencies for these courses and programs and otherwise ensures that students have sufficient instructional time and out-of-class work to justify the credit allocations for the courses and programs.
   Not applicable

3. How does the institution's credit hour policy explain credit hour allocations or equivalencies established by the institution for these types of offerings?
   Not applicable

4. Identify aggregate learning outcomes information the institution has collected for direct assessment and competency-based programs and explain how the institution reviewed this information and considered it in academic program review and its improvement processes.
   Not applicable

Section 3: Policy on Credit Hours

Does the institution have a policy specific to the assignment of credit?

☒ Yes

☐ No

The institution has policies specific to the assignment of credit at the following levels (check all that apply):

☒ Institution-wide

☐ Delivery-format-specific

☐ Department-specific

☐ Program-specific

Attach copies of all applicable policies related to the assignment of credit as **Supplement A2.**

Section 4: Total Credit Hour Generation

How many credits does a typical full-time or part-time undergraduate student take during a regular term? The typical full-time student takes 14 credits during a regular term. The typical part-time student takes 6 credits during a regular term.

How many credits does a typical full-time or part-time graduate student take during a regular term?
NA

Provide the head count of students earning more than the typical credits taken during a regular term in the most recent fall and spring semesters/trimesters (or the equivalent, for institutions with quarters or non-standard terms).

806 FT and 1122 PT Most Recent Fall Term   Fall 2018 Year

788 FT and 1063 PT Most Recent Spring Term   Spring 2018 Year

Section 5: Clock Hours

This worksheet does not apply to all institutions.

This worksheet is not intended for institutions to demonstrate that they have assigned credit hours relative to contact hours in accordance with the Carnegie definition of the credit hour. This worksheet solely addresses those programs reported to the Department in clock hours for Title IV purposes. Institutions that do not have such programs should not complete this worksheet.

Answer "Yes" to the statement below **only if the institution offers any programs in clock hours or programs that must be reported to the Department in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs.** For example, any program that prepares students for a licensed or professional discipline may need to be reported in clock hours to the Department.

Check with the institution's financial aid officer to determine if the institution has programs of this nature. Such programs typically include those that must be identified in clock hours for state licensure of the program or where completing clock hours is a requirement for graduates to apply for licensure or authorization to practice the occupation. Such programs might include teacher education, nursing or other programs in licensed fields.

Does the institution report clock hours to the U.S. Department of Education with regard to some programs for Title IV purposes?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is Yes, complete the Clock Hour Worksheet.

Clock Hour Worksheet

Only certain institutions must complete this worksheet.

Please review the following instructions.

Complete this worksheet **only if** the institution answered "Yes" in Section 5, indicating that the institution offers programs in clock hours OR programs that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs.

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8):
> 1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
> 1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Institution name: Rock Valley College

Attach as **Supplement A3** a list of the academic programs that are reportable in clock hours based on the information above.

Does the list in Supplement A3 match the list submitted to the U.S. Department of Education?

☒ Yes

☐ No

What is the institution's credit-to-clock-hour conversion policy?
To comply with federal regulation (34 CFR 668.8), federal formula for minimum number of clock to credit hours of instruction, Rock Valley College calculates clock hour to credit using the standard formula to determine if after the conversion the program includes the minimum number of credit hours to qualify as an eligible program for FSA purposes. For determining the number of credit hours in that educational program, a semester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction.

If the credit-to-clock-hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, what are the specific requirements, if any, for student work outside of class?
The College only uses ther federal formula.

Attach the institution's last E-App as **Supplement A4.**

Attach the institution's ECAR as **Supplement A5.**

Attach the institution's most recent program review as **Supplement A6.**

Part B: Supplemental Materials

The institution must include with this document the following supplements as PDF documents.

- Attach a copy of the catalog or other document that contains course descriptions and applicable credit hour assignments as **Supplement B1**.

- Attach the catalog or other document in which the institution has marked or highlighted any course provided by the institution in non-standard terms or compressed format for the term reported. This information can also be provided on a separate list that identifies those courses and how to find them in the course catalog. Attach this document as **Supplement B2**.

- Attach as **Supplement B3** the course schedule for the most recently completed fall and spring terms, including times and meeting dates for all classes at all locations and in all delivery formats. If the course schedule is not available as a separate document, include a URL to access this information online. If a password is required to access this information, include that password.

Note: The peer review team may ask for additional data to examine credit hour production by educational program and by course. These data may include separate breakdowns for general education as well as by delivery format, by course academic unit (semester, quarter, etc.), by level, or by location.

Rock Valley College

HLC Peer Reviewers | 2019

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

EVALUATION SUMMARY SHEET

1144 Rock Valley College

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Rockford, IL 61114-5699

Primary Contact:
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d.jensen@rockvalleycollege.edu

Secondary contact:
Dr. Lisa Mehlig
Vice President of Academic Affairs
Phone: (815) 921-4070
l.mehlig@rockvalleycollege.edu

Evaluation Information

Standard Pathway: Comprehensive Evaluation
Description: Year 4 Comprehensive Evaluation. Visit to include Federal Compliance reviewer:
Dr. George Knox.
Team is set.
Dates of Evaluation: 03/04/2019 - 03/05/2019
Length of Visit: 2
Number on Team: 4
Draft Report Due: 03/18/2019
Final Report Due: 04/15/2019
Action End Date:

Staff Liaison: John Marr

Institution Demographics

Number of Programs:

Associates	30
Bachelors	0
Doctors	0
Masters	0
Specialist	0
Certificate	76

Evaluation Summary Sheet

Legal Status: Public
Carnegie Class: Assoc: Mixed Transfer/Voc & Tech-High Nontrad

Head Count:
Full-time Undergrad: 2796
Part-time Undergrad: 3582
Full-time Graduate: 0
Part-time Graduate: 0

Team

Name/Title/Organization/City, State	Phone/Fax/Email
Chair	Phone: (651) 402-4866
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Cedar Rapids, IA 52404	
Member	Phone: (620) 664-2323
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Hutchinson Community College	
1527 East 26th Avenue	
Hutchinson, KS 67502	

PEER REVIEWER PROFESSIONAL DATA REPORT

Dr. Irene H. Kovala
President (Retired)
Maricopa Community Colleges-Glendale Community College
6000 W. Olive Ave.
Glendale, AZ 85302
Phone: (651) 402-4866
Fax: (480) 731-8872
Email: irenekovala@gmail.com

Sex: Female
Ethnicity: White

Educational Experience

Major	Organization	Degree	Year
Speech Communication	University of Minnesota-Morris	B.A. - Bachelor of Arts	1972
Master of Education	Colorado State University	M.Ed. - Master of Education	1976
Adult Continuing Education	Northern Illinois University	Ed.D. - Doctor of Education	2000

Employment Experience

Title	Organization	From	To
Counselor	Arapahoe Community College	1/1/1975	1/1/1976
Director of Admissions	Eastern Oregon State College	1/1/1976	1/1/1978
Associate Director of Admissions	Portland State University	1/1/1978	1/1/1981
Registrar and Counselor	Itasca Community College (prior to 1982)	1/1/1981	1/1/1982
Director of Admissions and Records	Anoka-Ramsey Community College	1/1/1982	1/1/1986
Director of Student Services	Anoka-Ramsey Community College	1/1/1986	1/1/1994
Associate Dean of Alternative Learning	College of DuPage	1/1/1994	1/1/1996
Dean of Alternative Learning	College of DuPage	1/1/1996	1/1/2001
Vice President for Academic Affairs	Oakton Community College	1/1/2001	1/1/2005
Senior Vice President of	Minneapolis Community & Technical	1/1/2005	1/1/2009

Professional Data Report

Academic and Student Affairs
President (Retired)

College

Maricopa Community Colleges-Glendale   8/1/2011   11/3/2016
Community College

Expertise Summary

Academic	**Administrative**	**Expertise Subject Area**
13.04 - Educational Administration and Supervision	Dean/Director Major Student Life Serv	Experiential Learning
09.0101 - Speech Communication and Rhetoric	Dean/Director Major Enroll Serv	Partnerships (External)
13.11 - Student Counseling and Personnel Services	Dean of Discipline-based Unit	Off-campus Programs and Sites
	President/Chancellor/CEO	Planning
	VP/VC Academic Affairs/CAO	Placement/Testing
	VP/VC Academic Affairs/CAO	International Programs
		Program Review/Evaluation
		Collective Bargaining
		Articulation/Transfer
		Assessment of Student Learning
		Enrollment Management/Retention/Completion

Consulting and Evaluating Experience (other than NCA-HLC)

Consulting Institution	**Topic**
Mt. Hood Community College	Student Affairs Organization
Johnson College	Middle States Initial Accreditation

Professional Affiliations

Organization
ACT, Inc.
Illinois Association of College Admissions Counselors

Professional Data Report

Dr. Trevor Mahlum
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
Casper College
125 College Dr
Casper, WY 82601
Phone: (307) 268-2133
Email: tmahlum@caspercollege.edu

Sex: Male
Ethnicity: White

Educational Experience

Major	Organization	Degree	Year
Secondary Education	Union College	B.S. - Bachelor of Science	1992
Instructional Technology	The University of Wyoming	M.S. - Master of Science	2005
Educational Leadership	The University of Wyoming	Ed.D. - Doctor of Education	2015

Employment Experience

Title	Organization	From	To
Assessment Data Coordinator	Natrona County School District #1	7/1/1997	7/1/2011
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs	Casper College	7/5/2011	

Expertise Summary

Academic	Administrative	Expertise Subject Area
13.0699 - Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research, Other 13.0501 - Educational/Instructional Technology	VP/VC Academic Affairs/CAO Campus Dean/Director	Assessment of Student Learning Distance Education (online) Planning Placement/Testing Instructional Technology Library/Learning Resources

Professional Affiliations

Organization
National Association of Assessment Directors
American Educational Research Association

Professional Data Report

Dr. David Arthur Keller
Curriculum and Assessment Specialist
Kirkwood Community College
P.O. Box 2068
6301 Kirkwood Blvd SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406
Phone: (319) 398-5597
Fax: (319) 398-7106
Email: david.keller@kirkwood.edu

Sex: Male
Ethnicity: White

Educational Experience

Major	Organization	Degree	Year
Mathematics	Simpson College	B.A. - Bachelor of Arts	1995
Mathematics	Colorado State University	M.S. - Master of Science	1997
Educational Policy and Leadership Studies	University of Iowa	Ph.D. - Doctor of Philosophy	2011

Employment Experience

Title	Organization	From	To
Curriculum and Assessment Specialist	Kirkwood Community College	7/1/2013	
Mathematics Professor	Kirkwood Community College	7/7/1997	6/30/2013

Expertise Summary

Academic	Administrative	Expertise Subject Area
13.0407 - Community College Education	Faculty Fellow, Assessment	Program/Curriculum Design and Development
13.0406 - Higher Education/Higher Education Administration	Faculty Fellow, Accreditation	Developmental/Basic Education
13.06 - Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research	Dean/Director Assessment/Institutional Research	Assessment of Student Learning
32.0104 - Developmental/Remedial Mathematics	General Education	Program Review/Evaluation
27.0303 - Computational Mathematics		Faculty Evaluation, Development, Promotion/Personnel

Professional Data Report

Dr. Charlene Widener
Fine Arts and Humanities Department Chairperson
Hutchinson Community College
1300 N. Plum
Hutchinson, KS 67501
Phone: (620) 664-2323
Email: widenerc@hutchcc.edu

Sex: Female
Ethnicity: White

Educational Experience

Major	Organization	Degree	Year
Accounting	Hutchinson Community College	A.A. - Associate of Arts	1991
Theatre	Kansas State University	B.S. - Bachelor of Science	1993
Speech Communication	Kansas State University	M.A. - Master of Arts	1995
Theatre	University of Missouri - Columbia	Ph.D. - Doctor of Philosophy	2005

Employment Experience

Title	Organization	From	To
Part-time Speech Instructor	Brown Mackie College - Salina	10/2/2000	4/27/2001
Fine Arts and Humanities Department Chairperson	Hutchinson Community College	8/12/2002	4/27/2001
Graduate Teaching Assistant and Box Office Manager	University of Missouri - Columbia	8/14/1995	5/14/1999
Theatre and Speech Instructor	Missouri Western State University	8/14/2000	5/10/2002
Part-time Speech Instructor	Johnson County Community College	8/14/2000	5/11/2001
Part-Time Speech Instructor	Blue River Community College	8/16/1999	7/26/2002

Expertise Summary

Academic	Administrative	Expertise Subject Area
09.0101 - Speech Communication and Rhetoric	Department Chair	Program/Curriculum Design and Development
24.0103 - Humanities/Humanistic Studies	Faculty Fellow, Accreditation	Faculty Evaluation, Development, Promotion/Personnel
54.0102 - American History (United		Governance

Professional Data Report

States)

45.11 - Sociology

50.07 - Fine and Studio Arts

50.0507 - Directing and Theatrical
Production

Program
Review/Evaluation
Distance Education
(online)
Developmental/Basic
Education
Articulation/Transfer
Assessment of Student
Learning

R⊚ck Valley College