Southeast Community College Area - NE

HLC ID 1898

OPEN PATHWAY: Mid-Cycle Review   Visit Date: 8/14/2017

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Context and Nature of Review

Visit Date

8/14/2017

Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

Scope of Review

- Mid-Cycle Review

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

There is no institutional context.

Interactions with Constituencies

There are no interactions.

Additional Documents

There are no additional documents reviewed.

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

SCC's mission statement was developed using a formal strategic planning process, which included both internal and external constituents, and was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2015. This mission statement incorporates requirements for the College as set by the State of Nebraska. A link to the mission is clearly illustrated on the college's homepage.

The college lists several programs to assist students transitioning to higher education. Annual program advisory board meetings and the holding of DACUMS, when needed, support the college's mission of a "proactive and evidence-based approach" to higher education; these are important to ensuring community needs are being met appropriately. The college's enrollment profile shows consistency in enrolling different types of students despite a general reduction in college enrollment overall.

The college's strategic goals are directly related to the college's mission. The college's annual budget is aligned with the college's strategic plan. Budget resource requests within the college are required to be rationalized as to how they relate to the Strategic Plan. This includes personnel and equipment, along with any other resources requested. Departments at the college are required to have annual plans to include at least three annual goals, strategies to achieve the goals, and measurements of success. This process allows the departments and programs to be responsive to community needs, as well as needs of the college as a whole.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

Rating

Met

Evidence

The college's mission is clearly available through a link on the college's home page. The mission is also highlighted on the college's Strategic Plan, which is linked to the college website. Additionally, the college's mission and core values are highlighted on marketing materials, as well as within the college catalog and course schedules. The college's mission and values are also embedded in the faculty contract.

This mission was developed as part of the 2015 strategic planning process. The Strategic Plan, which is directly related to the college's mission, clearly provides annual updates as to how the college is performing compared to its goals. The strategic planning document provided as part of this review process clearly illustrates priorities of the college, including nine strategic goals and sixty-five strategic objectives.

The college clearly identifies intended constituents of their programs and services on their website. An example is the statement of "We welcome students of all races and nationalities, women and men, veterans, people with disabilities, and students of all ages in our programs and activities" under the "About Us" link on the college's home page. The website also clearly illustrates programs and services provided by the college. The institution's nature and scope are also clearly illustrated in the college's strategic plan. The mission clearly indicates that the college provides "accessible, dynamic, and responsive pathways to career and technical, academic transfer, and continuing education programs."

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The college's mission is to empower and transform its students and the diverse communities that it serves. Enrollment data is broken down by ethnicity and gender. Compared to its peers in Nebraska, the college does not enroll as many minority students. However, the local diversity index shows its minority enrollment is greater than the diversity in its service area. Enrollment data shows that increases in Black and Hispanic students have increased over the past four years. Overall, the college has a more balanced gender enrollment than its peer institutions in Nebraska. The SCC's Milford campus is 94% male. To improve gender balance, the college will be offering transfer and health science courses.

SCC has students enrolled representing 19 countries. A core value of the college is promotion of opportunities and advancement for a diverse and dynamic student, faculty/staff, and community population through the creation of a positive, compassionate, and reflective culture. In January 2017 the college president issued a college-wide statement reaffirming the colleges long held beliefs in supporting inclusiveness in education.

SCC's commitment to diversity is evident in its 2015/2019 Strategic Plan; one of SCC's goals within its plan is to promote cultural understanding and enrichment through global and diversity education opportunities. In 2015/2016, 31 unit strategies were included to address better serving its diverse student groups.

SCC has an office for Access, Equity, and Diversity. The Vice President of Access, Equity, and Diversity presents updates to the Board of Trustees regularly. The college has appropriate non-discrimination statements for admissions and employment in English and Spanish. The statements are included in major publications and on the website. Global Education at the college provides opportunities for college credit, international travel, and service learning. The recruitment plan includes a focus on recruiting a more diverse student population.

SCC Faculty and staff are required to complete three hours of diversity training annually. The college recently contracted with Workplace Answers to provide the program on-line to faculty, staff, and administration.

In 2015, the college was recognized by ACCT for the Charles Kennedy Equity Award for providing leadership in providing access to education through its Learn to Dream Scholarship program. For 20

years SCC has co-hosted the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Breakfast to secure scholarships for graduates from the six Lincoln public high schools.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

Rating

Met

Evidence

SCC's mission reflects its commitment to the public good. As part of the process to review its mission and develop its first Strategic Plan, in 2014 representatives of the college held community forums in all 15 counties of the college service area to seek input regarding local needs and to develop priorities in the plan. A positive, significant community engagement in 2016 resulted from 170 meetings held by administrators with both internal and external constituencies to communicate the college's new Strategic Plan. Other evidence of the college's obligation to the public was its successful active leadership role in communicating the role and public benefit of community colleges to the Nebraska legislature as it debated reducing State support to its community colleges. The comprehensive 2015-2016 survey of employees was further evidence of its understanding and commitment to serving the public good.

The college's commitment to its educational responsibilities is demonstrated by the percentage of operating funds dedicated to instruction, academic and student support services, and institutional scholarships. Budget decisions appear to be directly tied to the Strategic Plan as evidenced by the linking of requests for expanded dollars directly to objectives in the Strategic Plan. Examples provided related directly to educational responsibilities. This financial support for public educational responsibilities is communicated and accessible to the public by monthly financial reports to the Board of Governors. The reports are posted on-line and are available to the public on the college's website. However, other than a current report, other monthly financial reports were not readily accessible on the College's website.

The college responds to the needs of its service area through numerous programs and services. As discussed previously, SCC has extensive engagement with its external constituencies through community forums and other meetings held by college representatives. Additionally, the college maintains program Advisory Committees to gain input regarding employer and community needs. Its large and growing Continuing Education Division (27,606 enrollments in 2016-2017) is a reflection of the institution responding to community and employer needs. The development of the Strategic Plan and resulting accomplishments are evidence of its responding to the needs of the communities it

serves.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Evidence

SCC's mission statement was developed using a formal strategic planning process, which included both internal and external constituents, and was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2015. The mission is clearly evident both through the college's website and other marketing/promotional materials. The college's strategic goals are directly related to the college's mission, including academic and support services to help meet employer needs. The college's strategic planning process allows institutional departments and programs to be responsive to community needs, as well as needs of the college as a whole, while fulfilling the college's mission and following the college's strategic plan.

The college's commitment to diversity is evident in its Strategic Plan. The college acknowledges gaps in diversity and embeds strategies on how to close these gaps through its Strategic Plan, including goals to promote cultural understanding and enrichment through global and diversity education opportunities. The college publicly provides statements of non-discrimination and requires faculty and staff to regularly participate in professional development to increase training in diversity.

The college's commitment to its educational responsibilities is demonstrated by the percentage of operating funds dedicated to instruction, academic and student support services, and institutional scholarships. Evidence of the college's obligation to the public includes its successful active leadership role in communicating the role and public benefit of community colleges to the Nebraska legislature as it debated reducing State support to its community colleges. Lastly, the college regularly solicits the input of advisory boards to ensure they are meeting the employment needs of the community by providing highly skilled students.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - 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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

It is clear from the Assurance Argument documents that SCC operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. Numerous policies and procedures contained in the College Handbook, Student Handbook, College Catalog, and Faculty Association constitution and contract and Professional Association contract guide the behavior of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. These documents contain specific policies and procedures to guard against discrimination, harassment, and conflicts of interest and to ensure that the college operates with integrity.

Monthly financial reports are provided to the Board of Governors charged with overseeing the budget. Although not providing the latest financial information, a financial Fact Book available on the website provides further information to external and internal constituencies (2014 data was the latest provided). An annual audit by an independent firm provides additional oversight of the College's financial operations. SCC has a history of consecutive unqualified audits.

SCC's code of ethics outlined in the College Handbook explicitly directs employees to "be honest and demonstrate integrity" and to "be accountable and show respect for others." The Strategic Plan even includes a goal intended to promote professionalism; i.e., Goal 9.6: "maximize a positive and engaging and organizational environment by encouraging input, reflective and transparent communication, and compassion and respect toward the views and ideas of others."

Supporting and overseeing these policies and procedures is an organizational structure that has recently been augmented with additional personnel positions in areas such as Human Resources. These additional personnel ensure standard Human Resource functions and integrity in hiring practices.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - 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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The college's website clearly indicates program offerings under the "Academics" tab of the homepage. Information includes program, type of degree awarded upon completion, and campus where the program is offered. Clicking on an individual program link will redirect to program details, including an overview of the program, types of jobs available upon completion of the program, and contact information for a core faculty member in the program. Programs with specific accreditation have this highlighted on the program's page, including contact information for the accrediting body. An example can be seen with the Medical Assisting program.

Each program's webpage has a link to assess the estimated cost (including in-state vs. out of state tuition, fees, textbook costs, and approximate time to complete the degree. This page also shows any "special program requirements." For example, the Adult and Juvenile Service and Corrections program shows a requirement of a "C" or better in all CRIM classes, as well as ENGL1010, and clearly states that a background check will be performed on each student in the program.

Each program's webpage also has a link to contact information for faculty members within that program. This contact information includes name, campus, related work experience, academic credentials, telephone number, and e-mail address. It might be beneficial to students for the institution to also list a faculty member's office number (location) in this area. The general college directory, which is accessible from the college's home page, includes information regarding name, location, department, position, phone, and e-mail for college employees.

There is no obvious accreditation affiliation on the college's homepage, however accreditation information can be located by clicking on "Quicklinks" on the homepage and then "Accreditation." On the Accreditation webpage, there is also a link for specific program accreditation, which includes the accrediting body and date of next review. General tuition and fees costs are also available by clicking the "Costs" link on the college's homepage.

Lastly, a master course syllabus provides important information to students regarding instructor information, catalog description, course objectives, learning outcomes, major topics to be discussed, required textbook(s), methods of evaluation, and grading scale.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - 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.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
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.
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.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The SCC Board of Governors is an elected board representing a 15-county area in southeast Nebraska divided into five voting districts. Board members focus their efforts on policy research, policy development, and policy monitoring, taking a high-level, long-term view of college operations in a policy governance model. Board members represent their constituencies but are also responsible for meeting the needs of the district as a whole.

The Board's priorities are clarified by its organization into four teams:

- Equity and Human Resources Team
- Finance and Facilities Team
- Planning Team
- Executive Advisory Team

These teams research and develop policy proposals and monitor implementation to advance the institution. Evidence did not demonstrate that Board members regularly review and revise policies once created. Regular team reports are evidenced in the Board's standard agenda. Recent Board minutes provided show evidence of substantive discussion of strategic planning, budget, and bond resolutions, indicating the board's focus on important institutional matters.

The Board also receives reports from internal constituencies, namely, the administration, faculty, student government, and one academic program monthly. All Board meetings include a period of public comment for external constituents. Evidence was also provided detailing a series of public listening sessions throughout the 15-county service area and attended by multiple Board members. From these sessions, the Board recognized the need to locate additional facilities nearer to constituents' home communities.

The Board has a clearly written policy and procedure detailing the meaning of conflicts of interest and how they are to be avoided. No evidence of policy monitoring reports by the Board or the administration are provided to show compliance with these policies.

The Board's responsibility to delegate management authority to the President and administration is evidence in two separate policies, A-3 and A-9. Evidence was provided that the President establishes annual performance goals collaboratively with the Board and reports monthly and annually on the college's progress toward these goals. Evidence further shows that 9 of 11 Board members responded positively that they have a clear understanding of the President's role; no information was provided regarding the two who did not.

Evidence was not provided that the Board expects the faculty to oversee academic matters. However, that evidence can be found in Criterion 3.C.1., specifically Policy A-13 on instructor responsibilities.

In summary, the SCC Board's policy governance model and its organization, policies, procedures, and practices all support the conclusion that it is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Evidence

SCC's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning are evidenced in its core values of Integrity, which includes "transparency and ethical practices," and Innovation, which is defined as "Commitment to inquiry and the respectful challenging of assumptions to promote creativity, alternative points of view, and opportunities for ongoing discovery." Further evidence is found in Strategic Goal 9.6, "maximizing a positive and engaging organizational environment by encouraging input, reflective and transparent communication, and compassion and respect toward the views and ideas of others."

The application of these principles is evident in the college's support of faculty research and creation of intellectual property, seen in the college policy manual, as well as faculty's ability to be creative in their instructional methods within the college's standard syllabi.

Various literary publications and student club activities serve as outlets for the free expression of ideas by faculty and staff.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - 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.

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.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Rating

Met

Evidence

SCC responded to the 2012 HLC recommendations regarding procedures for research by creating formal procedures approved by the President. The Office of Institutional Research is charged with the responsibility of receiving and approving all research and data requests. Even though SCC does not have an Institutional Review Board (IRB), all research requests involving human subjects must have been approved by the IRB at the researcher's affiliated institution. Several faculty members pursuing graduate degrees have been able to utilize the new procedures to conduct research on the SCC campus.

Students are provided numerous resources to aid in ensuring the ethical use of information. Library staff provide orientations for more than 1,000 students annually on library resources and ethical citations. The Library Hub (intranet site) features external links on the U.S Copyright Office and copyright law. One of the college's General Education Learning Outcomes is focused on the ethical use of research, appropriate citations, and writing. Courses in a number of disciplines contain related learning outcomes. Composition I was given as an example with its common rubric to evaluate responsible integration of sources. Students are offered further guidance in the ethical use of information by many instructors who use Turnitin, an on-line plagiarism tool. The use of Turnitin has steadily increased.

The college is to be commended for its extensive activities and procedures that demonstrate its commitment to academic integrity. An Academic Integrity Team, comprised of faculty, administrators, and students was established. Academic integrity information was included in the Student Handbook and College Catalog. (While the College Catalog, Student-Athlete Handbook, and Housing Handbook were readily available on-line, the Student Handbook was not easily located.) Numerous examples of violations of academic integrity were given and include "plagiarism," "cheating," "copying work of other students," and "submitting work created for another class or purpose." A statement on academic integrity is also included in syllabi. The statement notes that "cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty are monitored and subject to disciplinary action." Further, General Education Learning Outcome 5 on Ethical Responsibility states that "the student will demonstrate awareness of personal responsibility in one's academic, civic, social, and vocational/professional life." A new academic dishonesty reporting and data collection systems,

entitled TIPS, was established. In addition to holding an Academic Integrity week and poster contest, a new Academic Integrity site was established on the College Intranet. The site includes employee and student resources, Academic Integrity team minutes, video resources, and announcements.

As described, SCC's policies and procedures promote "responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students, and staff."

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Evidence

The Assurance Argument documents that SCC operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. Numerous policies and procedures contained in the College Handbook, College Catalog, and Faculty Association Constitution and contract and Professional Association contract guide the behavior of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Monthly financial reports are provided to the Board of Governors charged with overseeing the budget. While not providing the latest financial information, a Fact Book available on the website provides further information to external and internal constituencies.

Information about the institution is presented clearly and completely to students and to the public. The college's website clearly indicates program offerings with details such as type of degree awarded and campus where the program is offered. Each program's webpage has a link to estimated cost as well as a link to faculty contact information. It might be beneficial for students for the college to include in the contact information the faculty member's office number (location). Even though accreditation affiliation is not listed on the college's homepage, the information can be obtained through "Quicklinks" on the homepage.

The Board of Governors, an elected board representing a 15-county area in southeast Nebraska, is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity. Its policy governance model and its organization, policies, procedures, and practices all support this conclusion. However, evidence did not demonstrate that Board members regularly review and revise policies once created.

The Board has a written policy and procedures regarding conflicts of interest. However, there was no evidence of monitoring reports to show compliance with these policies.

Evidence to support SCC's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning are found in its core values of Integrity and Innovation as well as Strategic Goal 9.6, "maximizing a positive and engaging organizational environment by encouraging input, reflective and transparent communication, and compassion and respect toward the views and ideas of others."

The institution's policies and procedures support "responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge." SCC responded to the 2012 HLC recommendations regarding procedures for research by creating formal procedures approved by the President. The Office of Institutional Research is charged with the responsibility of receiving and approving all research and data requests. Students are provided numerous resources to aid in ensuring the ethical use of information. The college is to be commended for its extensive activities and procedures that demonstrate its commitment to academic integrity.

In summary, as evidenced above, the institution acts with integrity and its conduct is ethical and responsible.

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

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

The SCC Catalog provides information on programs of study and degree requirements related to the Associate of Science and Associate of Arts degrees. Course offerings are well displayed in the course schedule, and students know which courses to select per quarter as part of their academic and/or career and technical pathway. The catalog specifies common academic transfer courses. Exceptionally well-balanced course offerings and electives are noted. It is laudable to see that SCC has faculty advisors and department chairs listed by name in the catalog to support immediate student access.

Curriculum Committee and Curriculum Mapping: courses, programs, and proposals are presented reviewed, evaluated, and modified as needed. DACUMs show that courses and programs are current and of high quality. SCC is moving from a quarter to a semester system. The calendar review team has a specific plan in place to address the quarter to semester conversion as well as a target date of FY 2019-2020. During this process, program length which is currently not aligned with SCC's sister colleges, will be adjusted. A quarter to semester conversion chart for all subject areas is provided. A recent Board of Governor's report shows charts, graphs and a narrative related to the assignment of credits and the length of programs. There has been a decline in the number of certificates and degrees awarded over the last four years. Based on CCSSE data, this is consistent with the decline in general enrollment patterns.

Learning goals and General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO): A dashboard shows whether the learning goal targets have been reached, or where they are in the process. The Early Childhood Program provides an example of the dashboard application. Each discipline develops assessments for specified targets and uses a GELO assessment rubric. Programs have specific core competencies and

learning outcomes based on internal and external accreditation guidelines.

Quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery. The dashboard compares grade distributions of various instructional delivery modes over a four-year period. Textbooks are standardized across the various delivery formats. Course information documents include student guidelines and checklists. The standard master syllabus and sample faculty syllabi are provided as evidence to support the learning goals and expected competencies across delivery formats. All SCC instructors need to follow the same credentialing guidelines regardless of instructional delivery mode or locations. Online faculty are required to take Moodle training to ensure a robust foundation in facilitating an online course.

Dual credit delivery is at the same rigor as on campus instructional delivery.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - 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.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
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.
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.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Strategic Plan Progress Report, SSC Catalog, Curriculum Committee reports, Assessment Committee reports, Board of Governor's reports support SCC as fulfilling its mission in offering general education courses at the appropriate degree level. It appears that SCC is committed to STEM disciplines and programs as demonstrated by the updated computer technology classrooms, expanded technology infrastructure, and a student chapter for the American Chemical Society.

There is a descriptive process in place as to how the general education program/courses are reviewed. A general education assessment rubric is provided to assess core competencies. The Respiratory Program and the Early Childhood Program are examples of how SCC meets program standards which include authentic assessments and differentiation (3B4). General Education Team minutes reflect that SCC has had discussions in determining which core courses are integral to all general education programs. As SCC is decreasing the number of credits for selected programs to match sister colleges, this will be a valuable discussion in moving forward. The college handbook and catalog include information on SCC's foundational underpinning relating to general education expectations.

There are various pieces of evidence regarding the gathering, analyzing, and communicating of information as demonstrated through various course examples and practica. The same holds true for creativity of work as evidenced in illumination creativity/literary awards that are posted online. Some of the programs also show how courses are adapted to meeting learner needs as in personalized curricula.

Results from the Employer Survey and the External Constituencies Survey demonstrate that SCC promotes cultural diversity and is fair to its students and employees. SCC establishes relationships with community and external agencies such as the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and has various offices in place that support human diversity. Faculty are required to complete three hours of diversity professional development on an annual basis. A directory on the Intranet hub is inclusive of all campuses and lists college employees who speak foreign languages; the purpose of which is to engage second language learners in their pursuit of earning. The SCC president published a public statement announcing the college as an open-access institution.

Evidence is provided in students and faculty contributing to creative work and scholarship as demonstrated in regular professional development, in-services, and publications. Student evaluations and other measures are used to give teachers feedback for instructional improvement.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
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.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Student-faculty ratio has improved over the last five years and is currently at 12:1 as evidenced in the Office of Institutional Research documents and IPEDS. Great strides have been undertaken to hire a significant number of qualified faculty to reach this ratio. There is very little turnover in existing faculty. Multiple committees such as the Curriculum Committee and the Assessment Committee contribute to ensuring that there is oversight in curriculum development, implementation, and assessment. The Strategic Plan Progress Report confirms that there are sufficient faculty in non-classroom roles.

Not all faculty meet current credentialing requirements; however, there is a Faculty Credentialing Plan of Action form provided for faculty and dual-credit instructors that details the mode of completing credentialing requirements within a specific time period. The Instructional Handbook gives additional information on faculty credentialing. The Faculty Credentials Matrix provides a list of faculty credentials, course teaching qualifications, and work experience at a glance.

Instructors are evaluated on a regular basis. Faculty credentials are updated annually as part of the SCC catalog review process. Faculty observation procedures and evaluations are evidenced in the Instructional Handbook. A sample of a classroom observation form is provided as an artifact. The faculty appraisal form includes components such as faculty expectations, learning, and professional development goals.

There are multiple pieces of evidence in place that demonstrate SCC's commitment in keeping faculty current in their roles as content and educational experts. One such example is the Individualized Development Plan for new instructors who complete several training modules as part of their professional development goals (also noted in the Instructional Handbook). The faculty appraisal form needs to be added here as well, as faculty are appraised on their student accessibility, workload, and initiatives.

Faculty are accessible for student inquiry. What appears to be the most efficient mode of communication with students is the Engaged Learning Initiative webpage that links to various activities and learning experiences to include the Classroom Challenge, the Engaged Learning Experience Show and Shine, Flipped Classroom blogs, and more. Workshops are listed on this splash page. Announcements are regularly updated. Faculty are advisors who are listed by name in the SCC catalog which is conducive for immediate student access. Instructor office hours and contact information is provided in various locations, such as syllabi, etc.

Workshops prepare faculty to be leaders of advising and tutoring sessions. Online course training is offered to those faculty who wish to teach online. This professional development is overseen by the Virtual Learning Division. Professional Development Fridays Analysis breaks down information as to which workshops are offered and the attendance.

CCSSE scores show that SCC's benchmark scores fall no higher than the 3rd decile. The implementation of new programs, assessments and technology will support a positive change to raise the deciles.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
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 students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students 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).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Southeast Community College offers a full complement of student support services, evidenced in its 2017 Student Services brochure, to meet the needs of its diverse student body. Especially noteworthy is the Counseling Assistance Program for Students (CAPS), which offers mental health services on each of the three main campuses. IPEDS, VFA, and CCSSE data as well as locally developed metrics inform the college's ability to match services to students. The college provides evidence of student survey data being used to identify areas for improvement, such as the need to raise awareness of its free tutoring programs.

The college offers a variety of options for students who need learning support and preparatory instruction including a Transitions Lab, an electronic retention alert system to link faculty to student success coaches, and a traditional developmental education sequence beginning with adult basic education through basic and intermediate levels of remediation. The college has redesigned its developmental education courses into modular versus traditional course delivery based on internal analyses of student success. It is unclear whether advising or remediation are mandatory or advisory for students with low placement scores, so some students could be bypassing needed services. Data provided demonstrate that students who take advantage of these services are academically successful.

Advising services for new students, transfer students, and program students are available at all campuses. No evidence was provided on the caseload of professional or faculty advisors to determine if sufficient numbers of each are available. However, CCSSE data indicate that more than half of students are using advising services and 71% of students surveyed are satisfied with the support they receive.

The college acknowledges that physical resources at all campuses will require substantial investment

to replace or renovate outdated facilities that have not kept pace with student or market demand, as evidenced in the 2016 Facilities Master Plan. The college has engaged faculty at the classroom level to create an environment for engaged learning and has responded to faculty's initiatives with some classroom remodeling. Libraries, clinical and simulation labs, and computer resources are provided, and survey data presented indicate that resources are used and students are generally satisfied.

The college's general education learning outcomes (GELOs) for oral and written communication and problem solving include requirements that students use research effectively. CCSSE data indicate that students encounter these requirements in their coursework at a greater rate than at comparison institutions. The college supports this requirement through library presentations, online and face-to-face tutoring, and use of Turnitin software to detect potential plagiarism.

In summary, the college has a variety of resources for students and faculty to support teaching and learning. It uses data to assess their effectiveness and recommend improvements. It is aware of the need for further investment in college infrastructure.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

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

Rating

Met

Evidence

Co-curricular programs at SCC reflect its mission language supporting student success and completion through enrichment programs. The college enhances students' awareness and appreciation of diversity through its global education activities.

The majority of student clubs and organizations are focused on the college's occupational programs, with many closely tied to industry groups and offering students opportunities to put skills into practice and make professional connections.The college has two honor society chapters: Phi Beta Lambda and Phi Theta Kappa. Student organizations for LGBTQ students and Muslim students reflect the college's commitment to diversity. Overall, the college's co-curricular programming are well aligned with its learning goals.

The college has also made use of two data sources, the CCSSE survey and an internal student survey, to identify student participation. Based on findings, the college has altered its program schedule to better align with student availability. It has also identified facility upgrades as a potential factor in increasing participation. A follow-up survey will be used to close the loop on this issue.

Further claims in the college's mission and other defining documents related to the educational environment focus on community engagement and service learning. Evidence from local media describe successful service learning programs for culinary arts students and building trades programs, the latter having built and sold its 100th home for the community. Service projects are also a focus for co-curricular student clubs.

The college provided evidence of a successful Entrepreneurship Center that supports local economic development, which further supports its responsiveness to the needs of its external constituencies as detailed in Core Component 1D.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Evidence

SCC demonstrates clearly that it is committed to offering its students high quality education and an enriched educational environment. Evidence is provided as follows: (1) current and innovative programming of career and technical programs and general education courses with general education learning outcomes; (2) hiring of new faculty to reach a 12:1 faculty to student ratio; (3) faculty credentialing processes as in matrices and forms that follow faculty progress over time; (4) regularly scheduled faculty observations and evaluations to ensure student progress and learning; (5) instructional delivery monitoring and evaluations to ensure that face-to-face, hybrid and online courses are comparable in quality and rigor; (6) professional development to afford faculty the opportunity to be successful as content and pedagogical experts and leaders; (7) faculty availability for student inquiry by the Engaged Learning Initiative splash page which includes blogs, flipped classroom information, and other resources at-a-glance; (8) faculty as advisors noted in SSC Catalog which is advantageous for immediate student access; (9) events that support cultural and human diversity; (10) variety of resources for students and faculty to support teaching and learning. SCC uses data to assess its effectiveness and recommend improvements; (11) student clubs and organizations that focus on the college's academic and occupational programs; (12) co-curricular programming and service projects which are well aligned with the college's learning goals.

Not all faculty meet current credentialing requirements; however, there is a Faculty Credentialing Plan of Action form provided for faculty and dual-credit instructors that details the mode of completing credentialing requirements by September 1, 2022. SSC has been granted an extension for compliance with HLC Policy Assumed Practice b.2.

 SCC is aware of the need for further investment in college infrastructure.

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.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

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

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
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 or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

SCC uses both internal and external processes for its program review. A curriculum review process called DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) is an example of an internal review. Programs are reviewed on a five-year cycle via DACUM workshops, with ten to twelve being reviewed annually. These workshops help ensure that proper subject matter for a given discipline is being taught. One of the metrics of the college's first ever Institutional Strategic Plan is the number of DACUM workshops held. Program review results are presented to SCC's Board of Governors for results. Any programs that do not meet all prescribed thresholds are recommended for continued monitoring.

The college participates in an external program review process conducted through the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) for the State of Nebraska. The review cycle is every seven years and a CCPE template is used. In addition, twenty-four programs at the College undergo some degree of specialized accreditation review through their respective industry or organizational accrediting bodies. Curriculum mapping and submitting results to the Director of Assessment is an example of the institution pursuing continuous improvement.

The Registrar is in charge of the process for evaluating course equivalencies. Transfer students seeking degrees must have a grade of C or better in order to receive credit for a given course. Program chairs also participate in the transfer course evaluation process. Credit for experiential learning by students may be granted through waivers, by examination or CLEP testing, Course transfers for the college's three hundred or so veterans are evaluated by the Registrar, using "The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services." Examples of degree programs offered by SCC that have a specific military-focused emphasis are Electronic Systems and Energy Generation.

Factors SCC uses to evaluate transfer equivalencies and course credit quality include course descriptions, grade levels, syllabi, instructor qualifications, and the date of course completion by the student. The college catalog contains specific institutional policies for the transfer of course credit. For the past twenty-two years, SCC has joined other Nebraska community colleges in participating in the Transfer Nebraska Initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to guarantee the compatibility of statewide common courses in terms of their scope, quality, and intellectual rigor. The number of common courses statewide that are approved for transfer has increased over the past couple of decades. Transfer Nebraska college websites and course syllabi are used by individual college registration staff and program chairs to determine course equivalencies and help ensure the information transfer students receive is correct and up-to-date.

The DACUM and curriculum review processes for all prerequisite courses (the VPAA, division chairs, program chairs, and faculty all participate in these processes) provide one way the college ensures the courses are compatible with its institutional learning outcomes. Course syllabi are all reviewed at least every three years, with changes made on a Master Course form by faculty, program directors, or continuing education directors. The Vice-President for Instruction gives final approval to the changes. The Registrar receives and processes the syllabus and course form, and the new syllabus with changes goes into the college catalog's annual update.

SCC's newly formed Curriculum Committee and Program Advisory Committees are responsible for establishing and maintaining course rigor. The Advisory Committees help college faculty and staff stay current regarding recent trends and needs within various business, industry, and educational organizations. Following the HLC's revised policy on what constitutes a credit hour, SCC created a new team to review the institution's guidelines and standards for student learning, lecture hours, lab hours, and career tech hours. The team's charge is to make necessary changes in order to ensure compliance. Practices from peer institutions are also being examined by team members as another way of making sure the college's guidelines and practices are in compliance with the new policy.

SCC's process for ensuring proper faculty qualifications is discussed in more detail in 3.C.2. Adhering to HLC program standards, complying with state and local statute requirements for specialized programs, and learning of needed faculty qualifications from local trade organizations are all ways in which the college endeavors to ensure that its faculty are properly credentialed and qualified in their respective areas of instruction. In 3.C.2. mention is made that a few full-time and adjunct faculty did not meet the minimum credentialing requirements. The full-time faculty who did not meet the requirements and did not retire have agreed to take the needed coursework. The adjunct

faculty are on action plans to bring everyone up to the mandatory requirement levels. Credential requirements are identical for faculty, regardless of the manner in which the courses are taught.

High school students interested in taking dual credit courses have several different options: The Career Academy, Southeast Nebraska Career Academic Partnership (SENCAP), and dual-credit advantage. The college has instituted an action plan to help more high school instructors become qualified to teach dual credit courses. SCC currently employs 127 dual credit instructors in order to meet the burgeoning demand from students. These instructors are required to attend an annual meeting to apprise them of the institution's expectations and policies.

Twenty-four programs at SCC undergo specialized accreditation processes. Examples include Nursing, Business and Automotive Technology. Graduates of some of these programs can become licensed or certified in their career fields. Specialized accreditation for other programs - for example, Business Administration - helps ensure that graduates of these program are appropriately prepared and qualified to compete in the job market following graduation.

Among the methods SCC uses to evaluate the success of its graduates in terms of employment or transfer rates are an annual Graduate Report, the annual Strategic Plan Progress Report, and surveys on employer and program demand. The college's Placement Office, working with the Office of Institutional Research, is in charge of systematically surveying graduates. Information from these surveys has been summarized and aggregated and appears in the 2016 Employment & Transfer Statistics Graduate Report. In addition, some individual programs survey their graduates and area employers in order to gain valuable, specific feedback on how they're meeting the employers' needs.

SCC's first Strategic Plan Progress Report contains several metrics that relate to graduate success. These measure course success rates, graduate and transfer rates, degrees awarded, participation in co-curricular activities, and CCSSE benchmarks. Several of the college's strategic objectives are listed under Strategic Planning Goals 2, 4, and 6. They deal with ways that SCC can promote and improve the success of its graduates. As time goes on and data from successive progress reports becomes available, it is hoped that SCC will be able to report on how its programs, departments and divisions have used this data to foster improved graduate success.

A good institutional start by the college in promoting continuous improvement involved Employer Demand Surveys that encompassed twelve instructional areas. They were administered to local businesses and organizations in 2015. They have provided SCC with data that can be used to foster curriculum changes and encourage program growth. An example of this is the college using survey results as part of a needs assessment on the possibility of creating a Plumbing program within the Construction and Electronics Division.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

SCC was instructed by the PEAQ Peer Review Team that visited the campus in October of 2012 to address four major concerns that the team identified in the college's Self Study. One of these was to show evidence that the institution has a plan in place which assures all of its General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) are addressed. The institution responded to this concern by updating all seven GELOs - 1. Oral Communication, 2. Written Communication, 3. Critical Thinking, 4. Problem Solving, 5. Ethical Responsibility, 6. Quantitative Reasoning, and 7. Computer/Technology Literacy. Improvements to these goals included creating a plan to assess all of them and include them in each course syllabus. These syllabi are available to all students and employees on SCC's intranet portal The Hub. At the end of Core Component 4.B. in the Assurance Argument, additional evidence addressing this GELO concern is presented - The Director of Assessment established a plan that included training for faculty on how to establish benchmarks and other measures of student learning. All GELOs have been assessed at the program level. At least one GELO that is pertinent to each program's curriculum is also included in the assessment plan. SCC reported that during the 2015-2016 academic year 75% of its instructional programs met their GELO benchmarks. As described in 4.B.2., a process is clearly in place (via program assessment reports and the three-year cycle) to enable programs that do not meet their targeted goals to make the necessary changes that will facilitate their doing so in the future.

A second concern of the 2012 PEAQ Peer Review Team was for the college to provide evidence that its program learning outcomes were also ingrained into both its traditional and online courses. In addition to GELOs, SCC's assessment plan also includes unique course level and program learning goals. These goals are included in each course syllabus. Each syllabus must include the following elements: (1) course description, (2) course elements, (3) student learning outcomes and GELOs, (4) content and topical outlines, (5) required instructional materials, (6) methods of presentation, and (7) methods of evaluation. The syllabus and learning outcomes for a given course are the same, whether it is taught in a traditional classroom mode or online. Student learning goals are connected to each program's mission statement. During the three-year assessment cycle, assessment data is collected

and measured at the program level. Each program identifies four to six major student learning goals, with each of these goals having two to three student learning outcomes. The college complies all completed program assessment reports annually into an institutional assessment report that provides an overall institutional view of progress made on learning outcomes.

The program results are tracked during each year of the three-year cycle. Each program is charged with completing a summary report at the end of the cycle. The college's "Closing the Assessment Loop" process, in which it analyzes and uses assessment data to promote institutional improvement, includes the following elements: GELO assessment results, two to three program learning outcome assessment results per each annual program report, an analysis of results and recommendations for changes during the following academic year, results of those changes, a summary of results/trends/lessons learned at the end of the three-year cycle, and connection to each program's strategic plan and budget. SCC has links to the assessment plans, feedback on the plans, assessment reports and feedback on the reports for ten of the instructional programs that went through the 2013-2016 assessment cycle. The college's Assessment Team, which is composed of faculty members from each instructional division and campus location, reviews program assessment reports and plans annually and provides valuable feedback to each program. Program directors have the option of changing parts of their assessment plans during the three-year cycle if the need to do so becomes apparent. SCC posts assessment plans, reports and Assessment Team feedback on them on The Hub.

The college is developing outcomes and an assessment plan for co-curricular programs and courses.. This process is being led by the Vice President for Student Services, who chairs a small planning team. Their mission is to develop a formal co-curricular assessment model for the Student Services Division. Members of this planning team are from the following college areas: Admissions, Disability Services, Student Activities, Registration and Student Success. The Director of Assessment is also involved with the team's activities. The team members' individual departments have agreed to serve as pilots for this mission. The team met three times in 2016 and are working to develop a department mission statement, create annual departmental goals, and create an annual co-curricular student learning assessment plan. The tentative length of the pilot project is 12 to 24 months. Assessment training conducted during the project will include terms; best practices; how to write, measure, and analyze student learning outcomes, and how to report assessment results. Processes, forms and templates will be refined and revised, prior to their being implemented throughout the entire Student Services Divisions. Fiscal and personnel resources have been allocated by the college for this project. SCC took advantage of a training opportunity for a few student services staff by sending three them to a regional assessment conference in May 2017.

Being able to show that changes have been made as a result of the implementation and use of program and student learning outcomes was another concern of the 2012 Peer Review Team. It would appear that the college is still in the early stages of developing and tracking its assessment results at the various levels - institutional, program, and course. After the program assessment process has been "up and running." for a few cycles, SCC should have an ample amount of "historical data" it can use to compare and map its assessment processes and determine how they are being used to improve student learning. The college cites two examples at the end of Core Component 4.B. as evidence that the above-mentioned Peer Review Team's concern is being addressed. These involve SCC's Polysomnography Technician (PSGT) and Radiologic Technology (RADT) programs. In the first case, the college responded to very low assessment results during the first two years of the cycle by changing assessment tools to add certain competencies to the curriculum. This enabled students to have more opportunities to interact with the material on which they were being assessed, In the second case the Radiologic Technology program director and faculty made some changes in the curriculum and assessment tools in order for students to better understand the course material and be able to demonstrate "hands-on" competencies. If SCC stays on its current "assessment path" it should

be able to clearly show that it has answered the Peer Review Team's concern.

SCC has shown consistency in terms of leadership in its assessment process and cycle since 2013. New members of the Assessment Team undergo training to enable them to provide quality feedback to the college's instructional programs. The Director of Assessment plays a pivotal role in this process. Participation in the assessment process across all instructional divisions is universal. SCC has processes in place for programs to not only collect and analyze assessment results, but to document how these results have led to changes in course and program curriculums that foster improved student learning. The college responded to a concern by the 2012 Peer Review Team over SCC needing samples of evaluation measures for GELOs that faculty can use if they need some guidance in deciding how to implement these learning outcomes. The Assessment team created a handbook and new rubrics to help faculty evaluate the GELOs in their courses. These rubrics can be accessed on the Assessment page of The Hub. Flexibility for program directors and faculty in adapting the rubrics to fit the needs of their individual programs is encouraged.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - 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.

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.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
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.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

SCC's 2015-2019 first ever institutional Strategic Plan has nine goals. Goal number 2 stresses the importance of student success by emphasizing improving student retention, completion, and academic excellence via "high-quality academic and career programs and responsible, innovative student services." Among the more than 75 quantitative and qualitative metrics in the college's Strategic Plan, Goal 2 metrics deal with retention (fall to fall), graduation and transfer rates, course withdrawal rates, and overall success rates. With every program, department, and division making an effort to align themselves with the college's mission and institutional priorities, more than 100 unit-level strategies were developed - all pointed toward improving student retention, completion, and fostering excellent academic achievement. During the 2017-2018 academic year SCC intends to examine its Strategic Plan metric trend data and use it to develop Key Performance Indicators related to the college's efforts at tracking and improving retention, persistence, and completion. This strategy is in line with the portion of SCC's mission statement that stresses taking a "proactive and evidence-based approach that continually assesses and responds to student, community and employer demand for higher education."

In response to a concern from the 2012 Peer Review Team, the college created a new Institutional Research Office in 2013. In the ensuing years, the office has added five additional employees to bring the total number to six. This has enabled the IR staff to broaden their efforts in data collection for retention, persistence, and completion. Both internal and external reporting is now being conducted. Examples include IPEDS (used by the college for a variety of comparisons to other peer institutions, including graduation and transfer rates) and a newly developed Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA) - especially made for two-year colleges. In 2015-2016, working with the college's Information Technology Division and third party vendor ZogoTech, a data warehouse was

created for the first time. Data is stored there, analyzed, and made into reports as needed throughout the academic year. Examples of institutional reports are mentioned in 4.C.3. and are also available on SCC's website. In 2015 the college was able to compare CCSSE data to that of other community colleges, using five benchmarks of effective educational practice. After the CCSSE data from the spring of 2017 is carefully analyzed, SCC will be able to focus on trend data for student learning, retention, persistence, and completion. Regarding graduates, the college's Placement Office collects data from them annually in order to track their job placement and continued education. The office takes the data it collects and compiles it into an annual Graduate Report.

 SCC has put in place some new improvement strategies for student success as a result of metrics in Goal 2 of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan. These include staffing increases, improvement in data collection, additional instructional and student services programming, and analyses to address strategic objectives. One improvement involved the college's Student Services staff and some faculty members creating a new student orientation success course - Success @ SCC, which began as a pilot in the Summer 2017 quarter and continues as such in the fall of 2017. Student success and persistence can be tracked through the process of gathering student assessment data based on identified learning outcomes in this course. The college also added additional personnel in Student Services. New positions - Director of Student Success and Dean of Student Enrollment - were created and filled in 2016.

In the area of technology - specifically the issue of using it to help faculty and staff track student progress and achievement - SCC has invested considerable resources in a higher education technology company called Ellucian. Consultants from the company are working with Student Services staff to fully implement a Student Planning Module during Summer 2017. It is hoped that by using this module, the college will improve communication between students and advisors, increase communication about degree requirements, and help students plan their course loads for succeeding semesters. The Student Services Division, including the new Dean of Student Enrollment, is currently working with IR staff in defining data collection needs, reviewing services and data, and designing processes to collect the data. To better serve the needs of its students the college has also switched to an open registration process for all students and has lengthened the time for students to withdraw from a given course. These changes are based on data-driven, retention-oriented decisions. Standard enrollment reports, which include information about high and low course utilization, are now being produced by the IR department. These will enable instructors to better determine if a given course needs more or fewer sections, based on student demand. Data from various programs continues to be reviewed to determine if changes are needed or changes already made have been effective.

The increase in IR staff, has greatly increased the college's ability to collect and analyze data that is relevant to SCC's internal and external stakeholders in their decision-making processes regarding improving retention, completion, and persistence. For internal data collection, the college mainly uses its own integrated student information system - Colleague. Data provided by this system includes student demographics, enrollment information, grades, and course information. Other information systems use the data generated by Colleague - for example Informer (generating reports), ZogoTech data warehouse (analyzing data) and Tableau software (creating interactive data visualizations.) The college uses the Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VTA) as an external data source. The National Student Clearing House is also a valuable resource. SCC's future plans include furthering its support for data-driven decision making by developing additional pointed enrollment reports, course utilization reports, student demographic reports, and continuing education reports involving both course offerings and student demographics.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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.

Evidence

The college exhibits a focus on student learning and effective teaching. SCC continues to mature in assessment at all levels - course, program, and institutional. The college shows its commitment to student learning and effective teaching through its assessment processes, planning processes, as well as its data collection and reporting processes. The college is poised to gain effectiveness through each of these processes which, in turn, should continue to improve student success measures.

In Core Component 4 B the college was able to articulate its response to issues addressed in its **Comprehensive Evaluation Report** dated January 16, 2013 regarding assessment:

1. Evidence of changes which have been implemented due to the implementation of program learning outcomes.

The college is at early stages in developing and tracking its assessment results at the carious levels - course, program, institution. The college indicates continued progress is needed in this area. Only two pieces of evidence were available to address this concern: PSGT and RADT programs. If SCC stays on its current assessment path, for its next comprehensive visit, the college should be able to address this concern.

2. Evidence of a plan in place which will ensure that all of the GELO's will be addressed.

All seven GELO's have been updated. They are included in all syllabi and are addressed through the assessment plan. The Director of Assessment has trained all faculty on establishing benchmarks and other measures on student learning. During the 2015/2016 academic year, 75% of SCC's instructional programs met their GELO benchmarks. the college has an opportunity to continue this process for the programs yet to comply.

3. Evidence that program learning outcomes as well as GELO's are included in both the traditional courses and on-line courses.

The syllabus and learning outcomes for a course for a course are the same whether they are taught in a classroom or on-line. Each syllabus includes the following elements: course description, course elements, student learning outcomes and GELO's, content and topical outlines, required instructional materials, methods of presentation, and methods of evaluation.

4. Samples of methods of measurement for evaluation GELOS's for faculty to use if they need assistance on determining how to use these outcomes.

SCC has shown consistency in leadership in its assessment cycle since 2013.The Director of Assessment and the Assessment Team play a pivotal role in engaging faculty and staff in the assessment process. A handbook and new rubrics to help faculty evaluate GELOs in their courses

have been developed. Participation across all instructional levels is universal.

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.

5.A - 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.

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.
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 a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Southeast Community College has the fiscal resources sufficient to support the operations of the institution. The college's analysis of their three primary revenue sources resulted in a tuition rate increase, general fund and capital levy increases, and proactive communication with state legislators. The college's Composite Financial Index remains strong with its FY16 reported score of 5.20. The balance sheet based measures of primary reserve and viability ratios carry 4.80 of the calculation with the balance generated from the income statement measures of return on net assets and net operating revenue. This is reinforced with data from the college's FY16 audited financial statements, which display an increase in net position of $6.22M (invested in fixed assets and restricted increased while unrestricted decreased from FY15 to FY16). SCC is well-positioned to invest in its future.

The financial data provided in 5.A.1 and to some extent throughout the assurance argument includes numerous reporting dates and in some cases isn't the most current information that should be available. For instance, in 5.A.1, the link to "revenues" reports data through FY16, "monitors trend analysis" includes data through FY15, while the data is labeled 2015-2016 accomplishments, "amount collected from tuition" runs through FY15, the "auditor's report" covers FY16 and the "Financial Fact Book" has FY14 as the most current data available. Finally, the annual profile report labeled "2015

and 2016" is for FY16 and FY17 and includes budgeted revenue and expense data, not actual. These multiple dates add a layer of confusion for the reader. The college should consider using a consistent date for all document links and adding notes to the assurance argument with updated information as it deems necessary.

Southeast Community College responded boldly to the need to hire additional staff as prioritized in the Strategic Plan. These new and expanded positions were in response to needs documented through the strategic planning process as well as investment in growth for the future. Through the past five years, the college has maintained a consistent instructional to non-instructional ratio of 1:1.

The college acknowledges the need to improve its physical infrastructure. This need was defined in Goal 7 - Educational Environment - Enhance and maintain educational environments that promote learning, engagement, innovation, creativity, and safety. To address the need, SCC prepared its first Facilities Master Plan, which was released in February 2016. The college has been pursuing various financing options and is now moving toward implementing the recommendations cited in the plan.

SCC surveyed employees in 2015 and 2016 regarding their technological infrastructure. The results of these surveys provided direction to the IT department regarding training needs and the need for process engineering changes in admissions and registration. Per the assurance argument, the college spent more than $2M on capital equipment in FY17. However, the evidence document indicated the equipment was approved, not necessarily purchased and the instructional budget document linked was for FY14, making it hard to assess the percent of instructional budget spent on equipment.

Southeast Community College's Board of Governors understands the mission and is dedicated to allocating its resources to fulfill it. This was evident in the Presidential search process through their primary selection themes and through the development and approval of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan. IPEDS data provides further evidence of the effective allocation of resources.

The mission of the college was reviewed and revised as a part of the strategic planning process. As identified in this review of the assurance argument, the college has the fiscal and human resources to fulfill its mission.

SCC's HR staff play an active role in hiring through the maintenance of position descriptions and the screening of candidates. These two activities provide assurance of consistency in the hiring process. The use of interview teams allows for an inclusive process. Faculty complete professional development and in-house safety training is provided – both of which are required. The college did not provide evidence of faculty participation in professional development beyond the three hours required, professional development activities of staff and administrators or sabbaticals (if available). The college should consider incorporating this data in the next assurance argument.

Southeast Community College's budgeting process is discussed in detail in 5.C. Expenses are monitored internally through a variety of reports and the Board receives financial reports at their regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - 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.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. 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.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The Southeast Community College Board of Governors are knowledgeable about the institution. The eleven-member board is publicly elected and the college provides member biographical information on it's website. The Board of Governors' actions are guided by policy. Board Policy A-6a and the Board meeting agenda and minutes supports its role of providing oversight of financial and academic policy and meeting its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The Board's regularly scheduled meeting agenda includes required business, college updates, and the opportunity for public comment. At each regular meeting, the Board is provided with a presentation from at least one academic program offered at SCC. Additionally, there is an orientation available to new Board members that covers the Board's general and legal responsibilities and includes an introduction to various other topics. It was unclear whether this orientation is mandatory. The college may consider maintaining a record of Board member participation.

The college's policy and procedures manual is provided to guide internal constituents. The document linked in the assurance argument includes 247 pages. A brief scan of SCC's website doesn't retrieve this document, which is likely housed on an intranet site. It was unclear if the college has a process to regularly review policy. For instance, many of the policies that relate to the Board were adopted in 1997 with no evidence of review since that date. Although these policies may not need revision, SCC should have a process in place to document the review even if it doesn't result in changes.

Students and employees have ways to effectively influence policy making through participation on standing and single purpose committees. Additionally, students have opportunity to make comment through the Student Senate and on various student surveys. Employees are offered both formal and informal opportunities to contribute through surveys and attendance at campus update meetings and Campus Coffee Meetings. It is important for the college to document the input provided at these meetings and include it in planning sessions as appropriate.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
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.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan provide the framework for aligning SCC's resources with its mission and priorities. This is especially evident for unit-level requests for expanded projects. Requests for expanded projects are submitted on a form that requires reference to the strategic objective along with justification for the request and can include funding for operating budget, equipment, or new/expanded staffing. The college provided consistent documentation of the budgeting process through four documents; Annual Planning Timeline, 2017-2018 Department, Division, Area Planning Schedule, Calendar of Budget Events, and SCC's Annual Planning and Budgeting Visual & Description. The schedule is well developed and reasonable. It is suggested that the college consider consolidating the budget planning documents into one. Doing so will reduce confusion related to referencing four separate documents and will decrease any concerns of transparency.

While the process used to align expanded projects to the Strategic Plan is very well developed, the college did not provide documentation of the process used for budget reductions and reallocations in the assurance argument. Integrating the steps and timeline used into the planning and budgeting document(s) will provide evidence of the role reductions and reallocations play in the budgeting process.

Southeast Community College continues to work on its approach to link assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting. The link is evident in the process used for requests for expanded projects. The college has also pursued software to assist with the process and is working to define and ultimately clear up confusion that currently exists. The college's process should be fully developed and documented for the next accreditation visit.

The 2015-2019 Strategic Plan was created through an inclusive process. Both internal and external scanning and participation resulted in a product that SCC clearly relies on. While progress was made on the January 16, 2013 report comment regarding rolling the unit-level goals and strategies into one cohesive product, it is still unclear what process is used for approval of unit level strategies. While all goals and strategies submitted include justification and reference to the college's strategic plan, the compilation of documents from over 100 units may not take the college in the direction desired by the President and the Board. Continued refinement of this process is suggested.

The list of documents generated and reviewed through the strategic planning process included enrollment trends and academic programming. These two documents speak to the planning and budgeting process and they allow the college to assess the current environment and adjust as they prepare for the future.

Southeast Community College maintains relationships with external constituents. These relationships provide an opportunity to gather information on emerging factors including those in technology, demographics, and globalization. Through reports received, research shared and structured, and casual conversation, the college has access to information necessary to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges. Lastly, SCC is well positioned financially to invest in change.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Southeast Community College generates evidence of performance in its operations through various reports and documents. Examples provided in the assurance argument include monthly financial presentations to the Board and annual audited financial statements; participation in Voluntary Framework of Accountability; generation of an annual Fact Book (note: the financial information included in the factbook is through FY14 and has not been updated through FY16); CCSSEE survey results and the Graduate Report. It appears that the college is working to improve its performance, however it's not clear that they are approaching it in a systematic way. Each one of the report examples have value on their own, but it is integration of all the college's reports that will best assist the college in improving performance. An integrated process can help SCC to be more systematic in its approach and the college should explore this further while preparing for their next accreditation visit.

The creation of the college's first Facilities Master Plan was an invaluable exercise in generating and analyzing a host of data sets. Gathering course utilization data, staffing data, facilities inventory, floor plans of existing building, library data, student enrollment, and current and potential instructional programs involves a broad cross section of the college and the list of participants in the report indicates that internal input was garnered. For this, SCC is to be commended. Since the approval of the Facilities Master Plan by the Board of Governors in July of 2016, SCC appears to have concentrated efforts on exploring funding options and beginning in April of 2017, teams have begun to gather and analyze data for the next step in developing projects. Acknowledging that capital investment projects take a longer lead time to develop and secure adequate funding, a more detailed plan identifying, at a minimum, a near-term project list with timelines and costs would have been anticipated by this time. The College may want to provide updated information regarding progress for their next accreditation visit.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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.

Evidence

SCC is positioned to invest in its future with solid financial reports and the creation of a new strategic plan and a master facility plan. It has the fiscal and human resources to fulfill its mission. Tuition and levy increases along with solid communications with state legislators were implemented to support the vision and mission of the college.

Through its 2015-2019 Strategic Plan the college hired additional staff in key areas; in FY16 there were 68 expanded positions hired. The new plan provides a framework for aligning the resources with mission and priorities. In 2016 the college released its first Master Facilities Plan: the plan utilized several data sets and internal input. SCC is actively exploring funding options to implement the plan.

The 11 member Board of Governors are guided by policy and support the mission, vision, and values along with the Strategic Plan and Facility Master Plan. The Board regular meetings consist of the business agenda, college updates, public comment, and presentations from college programs. Minutes show oversight of financial and academic policy and meeting its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

SCC may want to consider the following opportunities:

- Utilize consistent dates for financial reporting and noting updated information.
- Provide evidence on faculty participation in professional development beyond the three hours required, professional development activities of staff and administrators, or sabbaticals (if available).
- Consolidate budget planning documents.
- Include evidence on process for budget reduction and reallocations.
- Document reviews of Board Policy.
- Maintain record of Board Orientation participation.
- Develop an integrated process between reports and data sets.

SCC is applauded for the development of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan and the Facility Master Plan. Aligning these plans with budget processes has the college well positioned financially to invest in change. It is evident that the college is engaged in planning for its future.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.D	Core Component 1.D	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.E	Core Component 3.E	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.D	Core Component 5.D	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	

Review Summary

Conclusion

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation
Met

Sanctions Recommendation
No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation
Eligible to choose

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.