

# Elgin Community College - IL

HLC ID 1086

---

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Visit Date: 10/26/2015

---

Dr. David Sam  
*President*

Stephanie Brzuzy  
*HLC Liaison*

Kristy Bishop  
*Review Team Chair*

John Sloan  
*Review Team Chair*

Gary Burkholder  
*Federal Compliance Reviewer*

Paula Davis  
*Federal Compliance Reviewer*

Christopher Demaline  
*Team Member*

Karla Fisher  
*Team Member*

Cindy Krueger  
*Team Member*

## Context and Nature of Review

---

### Visit Date

---

10/26/2015

#### 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

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance
- On-site Visit
- Multi-Campus Visit (if applicable)

*There are no forms assigned.*

## Institutional Context

---

Elgin Community College was established as part of the Public School District U-46 on January 10, 1949 and joined the American Association of Junior Colleges the following year in May. ECC operated Under the direction of the U-46 School Board until 1965 when the Illinois General Assembly passed the Junior College Act creating the ICCB (Illinois Community College Board) and formed District 509 – Elgin Community College in the fall of that year. Based on understanding the direction the state was taking in offering higher education opportunities throughout Illinois, the U-46 Board of Education divested itself of Elgin Community College control on April 12, 1966.

This left the college open to form its own publicly elected governing Board of Trustees, which was done in June 1966. In March of 1968 ECC received full accreditation from the North Central Association (now The Higher Learning Commission – HLC) and has maintained this status uninterrupted. The college's last full review was in 2006.

The Elgin Community College District – 509 has continued to grow and over the next seven years three other school districts annexed themselves to the Elgin CCC District - 509.

Today the Elgin Community College District is one of 39 within the state of Illinois and covers approximately 360 square miles, midway between the cities Chicago & Rockford. The district currently includes 11 public high schools, 4 private high school; 21 separate municipalities (16 totally and 5 partially); has developed 3 satellite locations; and

enrolled 17,121 students in academic year 2013-14 who took over 201,700 credit hours. These students were taught and serviced by 1,169 very diverse groups of individuals in 8 different employment categories with the largest being the faculty. They are highly efficient and very transparent with their community. Every aspect of the college from its planning models, enrollment reports; transfer planning models and agreements; student planners; TRIO facts sheets; F-1 student and Global awareness opportunities; and minutes of the financial sub committee of the Board of trustees, district map; public activities; ECCTV; publications in Spanish and regularly scheduled Presidential reports (3 times per year) to the community are just a sample of information that is publicly available via a very comprehensive Elgin.edu website.

The college sponsors 3 Art Galleries, and a vibrant Musical & Performing Arts Center with 2015 celebration of the music by Carole King, Carly Simon & Joni Mitchell. The college offers several athletic teams and is a member of the NJCAA (National Junior College Athletic Association).

The districts population in these tough financial times rewarded Elgin CC by approving a \$178 Million dollar bond issue which was based of a facilities master plan allowed the college based on its needs to increase its facility square footage from 837,690 sq. ft. to 1,108,073 sq. ft. (26 new classrooms; 5 computer labs and significant upgrades in internet access; environmental data gathering, etc. and allowed the college to optimize these funds towards increasing student success (added advisors, wellness staff; created a student alert system along with a student success database & research; created an Alliance for College Readiness with local high schools; created a state of the art health care training facility that simulates a working hospital just to name few) and make several other upgrades within the entire main campus facility of 13 buildings on about 217 acres.

Not only has the district recognized ECC for their services in education and training but the college has also received awards and recognition from several other agencies and organizations.

The college is in a strong financial position and with the physical plant improvements are very well situated as it moves into the future.

## **Interactions with Constituencies**

---

### **Board of Trustees/Student Trustee**

4 Board Members and the Student Trustee

### **Accreditation Committee**

Unit Adjunct Librarian

Director of Grants Research & Development

Instructor of Mathematics

Executive Director of Human Resources

Executive Director of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness

Office Coordinator

Assistant Professor II of Speech

Managing Director of Enrollment Services

Dean of Health Professions

IMT Unit Adjunct Faculty

Director of Institutional Research

Controller

Managing Director of Institutional Compliance & Curriculum

Professor II of Physical Therapist Assistant

Manager of Institutional Research  
Asst. Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student Development  
Managing Director of Student Financial Services  
Manager of Outcomes Assessment

**Curriculum, Assessment and Program Review**

Director of Student & Academic Systems  
Executive Director of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness  
Assistant Professor II of Speech  
Institutional Research Analyst  
Director of Institutional Research  
Managing Director of Institutional Compliance & Curriculum  
Professor I of Economics  
Manager of Institutional Research  
Asst. Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student  
Instructor of Biology  
Manager of Outcomes Assessment

**Deans Council**

Dean of Liberal, Visual & Performing Arts  
Dean of Adult Education  
Executive Director of Auxiliary Enterprises & Continuing Ed  
Dean of Academic Development & Learning Resources  
Dean of Sustainability, Business & Career Technologies  
Executive Assistant  
Dean of Communications & Behavioral Sciences  
Dean of Health Professions  
Dean of Student Services  
Dean of Developmental Education & College Transitions  
Asst. Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student Development

**Distance Learning Advisory Committee**

English Unit Adjunct Faculty  
Distance Learning Operations Coordinator II  
Executive Director of Network Operations & Info Security  
Associate Professor I of Physics  
Professor II of Nursing  
Dean of Academic Development & Learning Resources  
Professor II of Psychology  
Professor I of Graphic Design  
Associate Dean of Library  
Instructor of Medical Imaging  
Associate Dean of Instructional Improvement & Distance Learning  
Instructional Technology & Distance Learning Coordinator IV  
Instructional Technology & Distance Learning Coordinator IV  
Instructional Technology & Distance Learning Coordinator IV

**President's Cabinet**

Managing Director of Community Engagement & Legislative Affairs  
Chief Information Officer  
Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student Development

Chief of Police  
Executive Director of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness  
Executive Director of Communications  
Senior Executive Administrative Assistant to the President  
Vice President of Business & Finance  
Paralegal, EEO/AA & FOIA Officer  
President  
Executive Director of Institutional Advancement & ECC Foundation

**Student Success Infrastructure (SSI) Equity Coordinating Council**

English Unit Adjunct I Faculty  
Managing Director of Community Engagement & Legislative Affairs  
Senior Director Emergency Mgmt & Professional/Org Development  
Business Unit Adjunct II Faculty  
Associate Professor II of English  
Executive Director of Human Resources  
Executive Director of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness  
Professor II of Management  
Senior Director of Technology Services  
Executive Director of Communications  
Assistant Professor II of Mathematics  
Managing Director of Enrollment Services  
Political Science Unit Adjunct Faculty  
Director of Institutional Research  
Managing Director of Institutional Compliance & Curriculum  
Asst. Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student Development  
Professor I of Office Administration Technology  
Managing Director of Student Financial Services

**Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council**

Chief Information Officer  
Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student Development  
Executive Director of Human Resources  
Executive Director of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness  
Vice President of Business & Finance  
Dean of Health Professions  
Controller  
Asst. Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student Development  
Asst. Controller

**Student Service Areas Meeting - total 20**

Manager of Disability Services  
Wellness Professional - 2  
Associate Dean of Advising, Transfer & Career Development Services  
Senior Director of Workforce Transition  
Director of Transfer Services  
Registrar  
Director of Orientation & Student life  
Managing Director of Enrollment Services  
Director of Financial Aid & Scholarships  
Associate Dean of student Success and ADA Coordinator

Records Specialist III  
Managing Director of Student Financial Services  
Director, Continuing Education  
Academic Advisor, Student Success  
Admissions/ Recruitment  
Office Coordinator of Admissions  
Library Associate Dean / Director Tutoring  
Athletics - 2

### **Individual Meetings**

President  
Vice President of Teaching, Learning & Student Development  
Executive Director of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness  
Vice President of Business & Finance  
Executive Director of Communications  
Human Resources

### **Open Meetings**

Students – 20 students attended including students from athletics and student government  
Support Staff  
Faculty

### **ECCFA Make-up / Drop in Time - total 4**

Director of Performing  
Managing Director of Community Engagement & Legislative Affairs  
Director of Medical Imaging  
Executive Director of Communication

## **Additional Documents**

---

Performance Report FY2014  
Performance Report FY2015  
Graduate Follow Up Survey  
Board of Trustees Manual  
ENG0101 Composition I Course Outline and Syllabus  
MTH0102 General Education Statistics Course outline & Syllabus  
PSY0100 Intro to Psychology Course outline & Syllabus  
A Source for Community College Trustees: Opportunities for Professional Development  
Agreement between Board of Trustees and Faculty Association  
Agreement between Board of Trustees and Support Staff  
A sampling of program reviews while at ECC.

## 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

---

There is clear evidence via board minutes; organizational structure; budget and strategic planning documents that there is a culture of data driven decision making. The five year planning cycle they have adopted and implemented (2013) automatically incorporates a review of all the colleges guiding documents and statements (Mission, Vision, Institutional Goals and Objectives and core principles) that get their final approval by the colleges Board of Trustees. It is clear that these guiding values are reviewed and comments are solicited from all employees, students, business and other stake holders which also include the Illinois Community College Governing Board.

The beginning of their Purposeful Budgeting Quality Initiative (2013) was developed as a result of a HLC Focus visit of 2009. It is evident the entire college community took to heart the recommendations from the prior HLC visitation (2006) and the focus visits to make some systemic changes in data collection via new Academic & Financial Data system; operational structure, budgeting (now zero based) and decision making. The college seems to have proven that they are open to suggestions for improvement from everyone involved in the college and those who have graduated via an active Foundation and Alumni Association.

The colleges Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is structured and aligned to the colleges goals.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

---

None

## 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

---

There are many ways the colleges Mission and values are communicated. These statements were viewed at various locations around the campus, mentioned in several places within the Elgin CC online web site (and other online social media outlets, Face Book, Twitter, etc.). The review of the Mission statement is done on a 5 year schedule within the Strategic Planning process, Employee survey (and other constituents) and finally approved by the Board of Trustees after their critical review and involvement. There is plenty of data that describes the community (District 509) that the college is charged by the state and the Board to serve. The president offers a report to the district on the colleges activities three times a year and also has a Spanish language newsletter.

There is a continuous stream of communication through different venues throughout the year and there is a Newsletter in Spanish. The college may consider making other strategic planning and budgeting information available in Spanish as well. Based on the research they have collected the college offers six university transfer degrees; offers an Adult Basic Education with GED; an annually Student Handbook and they have not abandoned (like so many colleges) and should be commended for continuing to produce the hard copy of the catalog. There is also recognition by the college of the non-college academic needs of the community and serve almost 4,000 students in there continuing education department.

### 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 has produced data to clearly show the various types of stake holders that live and work within their district. This data for the academic year 2014-15 which includes 16,598 students of which 55% are female and a student population average age of 27; 39% are Hispanic; 5% are African American and 45% are white. The college was identified as being Military Friendly by the G.I. Jobs magazine and employees a full-time VA specialist as well as a full-time ADA( American with Disabilities) services coordinator. The college has several clubs and organizations that reflect their population.

Support group for the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning students; Disabled students via ADAPT (Disabled & Able people Together; Black Student Association and Organization of Latin American Students. Elgin CC also has developed a Home Stay program for their F-1 population and has implemented a "Spartan Alert" which is to help in identifying the underlying issues that prevent student success. College in recognition of the unique needs of their population created a Home-Stay program for their F-1 students; Spartan Alert (student academic & needs based system to keep them from falling through the cracks).

The college has a good grasp of data they are now able to collect and use to know who resides, visits & works in there district. This data has affected faculty hiring and supported the hiring of 9 advisers and 2 administrators who's sole responsibility is "student wellness". They should be commended for this direct display of data driven decision making followed by actual funding which is clearly outlined within the Financial annual Comprehensive Report. All this data was also constructed to support their successful TRIO application and other funding sources and colabrative arrangements which in the end support student success and brings new programming to the college that they may not have had the internal funding to support.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

---

None

## 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

---

The college through its many and varied avenues of data collection has developed a budgeting system based on student success, current (and proposed future) community needs. Several types of communications are offered to the entire district via newsletters, ECCTV, Tri annual Presidential reports. The colleges web site is very user friendly and you can read Board Finance committee minutes & Board biographies (for example) within two or 3 clicks from the Home Page. There is even basic information about enrolling at the college in Española and Polski.

Partnerships with other community colleges; Federal Grants like TRIO to help support student success because the college understands they do not possess all the funds needed for their students so they have collaborative arrangements with other community college districts (Education & Work Center; job training through the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership), high schools (Mentoring Program) and state agencies to seek support funding and assistance to reach more students and businesses. Other programs to support community awareness are reflected in participation in College Nights, Money Smart Week, Financial Aid Application Completion workshops, College Goal Sunday, unemployment & career services via the hiring of permanent staff, and working with the local AARP for services to seniors.

### 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

---

Elgin Community College has clearly demonstrated that their Mission, Goals and Objectives, Vision and Values are clearly articulated to all the colleges state holders via multiple avenues (paper, social media, timely public reports to the community, ECCTV, ICC Reporting every five years for Recertification, and others) to all its stake holders both internal and external.

Since the last HLC visitation and focus visit, the college has developed new structures (Student Success Infrastructure 2.0, and Strategic Planning & Budgeting council, Spartan Alert system, updated academic & Financial database) who's memberships overlap to ensure decisions and planning is a collective process and decisions can be clearly identified and aligned with the proper goals of the institution. Academic and student success programming & planning has been positively affected via the new structures and zero based budgeting processes the college has adopted. The results have added new full-time and part-time employees as advisers and 2 specifically focused on student wellness in recognition that learning is composed of the whole person.

The activities of the college have also been recognized by the being designated by the U.S. Department of Education as a Hispanic Serving Institution; recognized by the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) with the 2014 Diversity & Equity Award; and being a nominee for the Central regional Equity Award form the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT).

While the specific terminology of the Mission Statement itself hasn't changed in many years and may not be memorized word for word it has received constant reaffirmation from the employees, community and Board of Trustees. I believe the team has found through out the visitation in reviewing many documents and talking so several groups and individuals (Faculty, Student, Deans council; Presidents Cabinet just to name a few) the SPRIT of the colleges mission is truly alive and active.

Documents Reviewed:

2006 HLC Visitation Report

2009 HLC Focus Visit Report

2013-14 Achieving The Dream Reflection Narrative

College Catalogue (Online)

College Career Readiness Guide

District 509 map

ECC Board of Trustee Policy Manual & Finance Committee Documents, ETC

ECC Community Newsletter

ECC Grading Chart

ECC Global Engagement & Home Stay Program Information (F-1 Student)

ECC Organizational Chart

ECC Organizational Profile

ECC Para Ti (Spanish Newsletter)

ECC Presidents Report to the District

ECC Program Development Guidelines

ECC SAP Guidelines for Financial Aid & non Financial Aid Students

ECC Strategic Plan 2013-2017 and Plan Report

ECC Student Alert System

ECC Student Handbook & View book

Financial Comprehensive Annual Report 2013-14

ICC African American Employment Plan March 2015

ICC Certificate of Recognition 9-20-2013 thru 9-20-2018

ICC Hispanic/Latino Employment Plan Report March 2015

Purposeful Budgeting Quality Initiative

Public Comments Report Sept. 2015

Reconciliation of Total Semester Credit Hour Report June 30, 2014

Resource Allocation Management Plan

Schedule of Enrollment Data June 30, 2014

SPBC - Structure, Organization & membership

SPC - Organization, Structure & membership

SSI 2.0 - Organizational Structure & Roles/Responsibility Statement & Membership

Transition Academy Schedule (High School Mentor-ship)

TRIO Fact Sheet



## **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**

---

There is ample evidence that ECC operates with integrity in the vast majority of its functions. Well-established policies and procedures govern the activities of the College. The Board sets the policies with recommendations from the President and senior leadership, and individuals throughout the administration may proposed new policies through their Cabinet-level supervisor.

The President and the Cabinet ensure policy compliance by documenting and maintaining administrative procedures, including the procedure for the regular review and update of established procedures. Procedure updates are conducted according to the schedule noted within the procedure. Each division is responsible for its procedures review. For example, the division of Teaching, Learning and Student Development (TLSD) relies on the standing Academic Procedures Review Team to review and help revise procedures related to the work of that division, and the Curriculum Committee to maintain the integrity of the courses and programs offered. The Program Review process also supports the integrity of the curriculum and program mix.

The College has established robust checks-and-balances within its financial planning procedures. The Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council demonstrated admirable stewardship of resources by linking planning to budgeting, instituting a zero-base budget process that has resulted in greater transparency while consolidating resources for reallocation to strategic projects and activities.

Several College personnel expressed concern that the number and complexity of procedures are, at times, a hindrance to work and that some areas have a tendency to write procedures to address singular outlier issues, rather than simply solving the issue. A concerted effort toward simplification may be warranted.

Additionally, there appears to be a widespread belief among staff and some administrators that established procedures or "rules" do not necessarily apply equally to all employees or areas of the institution; rather, individual relationships result in more advantageous outcomes for some. Whether this perception is or is not correct, senior administrators should be cautious to be and appear unbiased and fair.

### **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

---

ECC provides clear communication about its operations, offerings, personnel, leadership and accreditation to all constituents. Institutional documents like the Five-Year Strategic Plan and annual Performance Report are sufficiently detailed and easy to read. Documents intended for students like the Catalog and Student Handbook & Academic Planner provide clear guidance and contacts for support resources for new and returning students. Individual programs also publish handbooks to further detail requirements and resources.

ECC has established a consistent look-and-feel through a college-wide branding campaign that launched a new contemporary and iconic logo and recognizable color and design scheme that permeate the college. The College also has made a significant and highly-successful effort to provide way-finding assistance through airport-inspired signage for the buildings and parking lots, as well as campus maps.

In addition to marketing and publications, ECC has established a strong communications plan to use professional and social media to communicate with its constituent groups in a transparent and comprehensive way. Engagement with the College through social media has been growing steadily; the ECC Facebook page has more than 8,200 "likes."

The College should be commended on its transparency related to Safety and Security. Cleary Act information is thorough and readily available on the ECC homepage ([www.Elgin.EDU](http://www.Elgin.EDU)).

The presentation of Gainful Employment information and the Catalog disclaimer statement, however, are of concern:

- For federal compliance, Gainful Employment information must be presented with the program information. While this information is available on the ECC website through the search function, consumers cannot easily find it while looking at specific A.A.S. degrees. This information should be presented on the program pages.
- The Catalog includes a Notice of Disclaimer that states in part, "This Catalog is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contract" and the College reserves the right to modify it without notice. In other documents, readers are referred to the Catalog as the primary source document for the Institution. The Catalog should represent a stable structure for curriculum and assure students' a fixed path to completion.



## **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

---

With more than 70 years combined services, the ECC Board of Trustees are remarkably committed to the College. Each begins his or her six year term by pledging the Affirmation of Service which clearly outlines the expectations for the board member to participate collegially in policy governance of the college while respecting the role of the President. Trustees expressed respect and great support for the President, indicating their trust in his ability to manage the day-to-day administration and allow them to remain in their policy role. Others in the college validated this relationship between the board and the CEO.

The board also includes one nonvoting student member who serves a one year term. The student member praised the board's appreciation of the student voice in their deliberations.

Throughout their tenure, ECC board members commit to many hours of work, including preparing for and attending two meetings per month: a work session on Monday (Committee of the Whole) and a formal board meeting the following Tuesday. Both meetings are held in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. In work session, the board hears presentations by internal constituents; in the formal meeting, the board hears public comment. Board members also commit to a two day retreat in June which is used to review strategic direction, prepare annual goals, and address substantial issues facing the college.

The board holds itself accountable for board recruitment and training. New trustees attend an extensive orientation; while not required, many established board members choose to attend the orientation, as well. Trustees also attend annual state and national conferences.

The board is committed to act as a whole, speak with one voice, and police its members according to its Affirmation of Service. When a trustee recently violated this commitment, spreading misinformation and causing great consternation throughout the College and in the community, the board reacted to manage the situation rather than expecting the President to do so alone..

Board members are conscious of their role representing the college in the community and listening to community constituents. Trustees noted some of their other activities and memberships which allow them to interact with a wide variety of community members. They are systematic in ensuring trustee attendance at events, even making assignments so key events will have a trustee presence.

### **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

---

Freedom of inquiry is one of the seven shared values articulated in the Five-Year Strategic Plan (FY13-17). Before each meeting, the Board of Trustees affirms the College's commitment to freedom of inquiry. Additionally, freedom of inquiry is evident in the contractual agreement between the board and the faculty (p.9).

Individuals in various roles confirmed that freedom of inquiry exists and is supported by leadership. Deans Council members noted that faculty are free to choose their texts, speakers and other enrichment for courses. The Arts Center, the Humanities Center, and other areas of the college reflect a true crossroads of discourse. Each determines its own programming and is supported by leadership.

Student organizations also represent the institution's commitment to open dialogue and academic freedom. From the United Students of All Cultures club to the Society for Extraordinary Men, from Spartan Christian Fellowship to the Muslim Student Association and many more, ECC culture supports a diversity of thought, belief, and practice in a respectful and productive atmosphere.

The great value placed on freedom of expression or "academic freedom" was cited by several individuals as a barrier to productive standardization. This can be seen in the lack of congruity to course outlines in syllabi within disciplines and departments, as well as the lack of standard procedures or practice among divisions.

### 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

---

Not Set

### Evidence

---

ECC is to be commended for actively pursuing undergraduate primary research in the STEM areas. This work is overseen and supported by an ECC Institutional Review Board, as well as the institutional research function. The College has an administrative procedure in place to insure the ethical and secure handling of student data.

Several areas of the institution help students learn how to use resources ethically. The Copyright policy is found on page 55 of the Student Handbook & Academic Planner. Training and information are available through the library, through a link in each online course, and through the College's writing lab The Write Place.

Students are introduced to the Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity policies on page 54 of the Student Handbook & Academic Planner. These policies are reinforced in many class syllabi. Failure to comply results in sanctions ranging from redoing work or retaking exams up to expulsion. However, these and other policies are available on the website only through the search function rather than an obvious direct link.

### 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**

---

ECC lives its mission and shared values. The diversity within the student population (50%+ minority) is reflected in the diversity within the leadership and Board of Trustees and in college-wide diversity training. Freedom of inquiry and expression are valued as demonstrated by academic programming, student clubs and activities, and individual interviews.

ECC operates with a high degree of integrity in its governance, operations, and communications and has established robust checks-and-balances within its financial planning procedures. Additionally, students are taught high standards of academic integrity and ethics through curricular and co-curricular activities.

Admirably procedure-focused, the institution should guard against bureaucracy hindering innovation.

## **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**

---

A program review process has been developed and all programs have gone through the process at least one time. The review documents goals, needs, improvements to the curriculum, student progress measures and financial costs. Elgin Community College uses feedback from reviews, employers, external advisory committees and professional accreditors to keep courses current. Additionally, new programs go through an extensive process before being added to the curriculum, and the review process allows the institution to eliminate low performing programs when necessary.

ECC faculty and administrators have mapped student learning outcomes to core courses. They have created master course outlines to document levels of performance with course outcomes, prerequisites, credit hours, articulation codes, books, and teaching qualifications. External advisory committees are used to keep levels of performance and requirements current and appropriate. This is evident in the examples of the truck driving and the radiography programs. These activities are evidence that ECC has degrees that are current and require appropriate levels of performance.

ECC uses CurricUNET, a computer software system, to track program outcomes and learning goals. The goals are shared with students on the website and in student handbooks. The team could find the program goals for nursing in the student handbook but was unable to locate program goals published for students in other areas. This would be an improvement for communicating with students. ECC is working with the CTE programs to create stackable credentials that move from a basic vocational skills certificate, to a vocational specialist certificate then to an AAS. There are articulation agreements established for the AAS degree.

The state has the Illinois Articulation Initiative that ensures courses and programs are aligned to other

state institutions. They have equivalent learning goals and the same course numbering system. It assures that students with a completed AA or AAS degree can transfer into a four year program with junior status. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its courses.

Currently, there are two locations, the Spartan (main campus), and the Education and Work Center. Courses are taught at the college for dual credit for high school students. Since there are not separate dual credit classes, there is not an issue with the same outcomes at both locations. Dual credit courses are taught at the ECC campus and by ECC instructors. There are minimum competencies established for students in these courses. There is articulated credit available through the Perkins Grant. Articulation agreements are reviewed every two years by ECC faculty and high schools must provide outlines, syllabi, sample tests, texts and other information to make sure the course content is aligned and has appropriate rigor. A team member visited the Education and Work Center.

Modalities at ECC include face to face, hybrid, and online. There are master course outlines for all locations and modalities and all are included in program review. Program review helped ECC determine that course success in telecourses lagged behind the other modalities. After they found that persistence rates were lower and withdrawal rates were higher, ECC discontinued telecourses.

The subcomponent requires that learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery. The team requested four sets of syllabi that contained both an onground class and an online or hybrid class. There were inconsistencies in how and if the learning outcomes were listed on the syllabi. The team recommends that ECC continue with its plans to implement a Syllabus Template to assist students in navigating online classes. However, there is evidence that Elgin Community College's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

### **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

---

ECC's general education outcomes are being constantly revised and updated as assessment work is being completed. The Student Learning Assessment and Advisory Committee develops and assesses the general education outcomes for student learning and it make changes as necessary to improve education standards. During the meeting with curriculum, assessment and program review, there was strong faculty involvement with the general education outcomes.

Learning outcomes can be found in the college catalog and on the website. The catalog includes the philosophy and full definition of each outcome. One suggestion for future faculty work would be to develop rubrics for each outcome to measure institutional outcomes from different disciplines. ECC has adopted the AAC&U's Liberal Education American's Promise Essential Learning Outcomes and the philosophy behind this approach.

All six degrees for transfer as well as the AAS degree include general education courses of communication, science, humanities, fine arts, and social and behavioral sciences. Program and general education outcomes have been mapped to the curricula to ensure that each degree program includes communication, research skills and critical thinking. An example of where ECC can expand their research skills is at the Renner Academic Library. The library offers research services and resources to assist faculty and students. Additionally, there are Honors and Phi Theta Kappa programs where students can apply research and investigation skills. There is a writing lab available to help students with communication and developing their research papers.

Diversity is a shared value of ECC and part of the college's strategic plan. Review of the curriculum showed the college's value of diversity in its vast number of courses with international and global perspectives. Since 2007, ECC has had a Global/International Studies Taskforce that provides leadership for curriculum, global exchanges and opportunities, work exchanges for faculty and administrators, and a goal to increase international student enrollment. There was evidence across campus of their support for international education. Even the art down one of the hallways showcased an exhibit from Spain which impacts student learning.

The other college committee involved with diversity on campus is the Multicultural and Global Infusion Committee which supports multicultural learning experiences, events and is involved in new hire search processes. The Embracing Cultures on Campus Team coordinates cultural competency and professional development for employees. It also supports recruitment and retention of diverse employees.

There is an expectation that ECC faculty create and disseminate scholarly and artistic work. Even though it is a community college, faculty are given freedom to participate in research publications. Faculty sabbaticals are available each year for one or more faculty members to devote to research and personal projects. A Faculty Research Community was recently established to enhance the value of research. For students, the Honors program challenges students to lead research investigations with faculty. ECC maintains an Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects and ethical use of data.

### **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

---

There is evidence that the institution has sufficient faculty to carry out the duties required in and outside the classroom. Leadership has expressed support to maintain sixty percent of the credits taught by full time faculty. ECC has a plan in place to hire six new full time faculty to balance the ratios. Faculty have a union contract that negotiates their work. They are involved with all standing planning committees. There appears to be enough faculty for instruction, curriculum, assessment, as well as committee work.

ECC has a minimum requirements for faculty qualifications policy. Descriptions for each faculty type are reviewed during negotiations. Qualifications are dependent on type of program and include college credentials and work experience or license or certification. These qualifications are checked at time of hire. A team member reviewed a sample of faculty qualifications that includes three files from every division. The files were found to be complete, well organized and showed evidence of both the credential and evaluations. Faculty evaluations are in the contract and detailed in the faculty handbook. Evaluations are conducted in the manner of the modality of the class unless the faculty requests.

ECC has a developed Faculty Development Committee and a budget for professional development and professional expenses. Conference participant, state events and in house professional development is available. The faculty contract requires professional development activities and there was evidence of a full catalog of opportunities through the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching

and Learning. There was a comment made that moving the CETL from Academics to Human Resources has changed the focus of trainings available and people wish there was more input from academics on the selection. Overall, the employee satisfaction survey rates professional development high and there is a good participation of faculty at the classes and workshops.

Full and part time faculty are available to students by email, phone, and required office hours. ECC scored high on faculty availability and helpfulness on the CCSSE as compared to national benchmarks. When the team asked students about faculty availability, the students thought that they could contact and meet with full time faculty without problem. There was some issue with part time faculty because of driving across town to teach at different colleges, these faculty did not have as much availability to meet students.

Student support staff members are supported with professional development that includes conferences, state meetings, and trainings at the college. There is opportunities to move up as a career path at the college with support from the president to build leadership. Minimal qualifications that include educational and work experience are required for hire in student services. Training is available on the and specific training to keep the areas such as advising and financial aid is provided.

The college showed that it has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services. The team was worried about the comments from many members of the campus about the roadblock in human resources for filling positions and that there are more than 20 open positions at this time. The President indicated that he is aware of the situation and working on the issue. The team as mentioned in Criterion 2, would like this issue addressed very soon.

### **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

---

The college has reviewed the demographics of its current student population and has projected the trends for the future. Even though the current high school senior population is projected to decline, younger families are moving into the district. There is a focus on meeting the needs of the current population and looking to the future as they focus on the returning adult student. The college is aware that over twenty-five percent of the district is Hispanic and have developed programs to meet the needs of this population. There is a vast number of services available for students. The team was impressed that the Financial Aid office had Spanish speaking staff to serve its students.

As an Achieving the Dream leader college, ECC has been trying innovative pilots for developmental education in both Math and English. The college is developing collaboration with public school districts to make pathways for students to enter prepared and ready for college. ECC has a College 101 first year seminar that is designed to help students be successful and learn how to navigate the college environment. This program recently moved from Student Services to Academics. Students felt that the course had too much busy work and interfered with their other coursework. There is also a required new student orientation for first time and returning students that includes meeting with an academic advisor to plan courses after taking the placement test.

ECC recently revised its advising model. When talking with the student group, students were extremely satisfied with their advisors. They liked that there was drop in advising when needed but had experience inconsistent answers when talking to a drop in advisor as compared to their assigned advisor. Overall, students felt that they received timely and accurate information. The students had positive comments about the Ellucian Student Planning Module and said that it improved their ability to register and plan for classes. They had no worries about courses transferring and felt the reputation of the college was good in the community.

In the 2006 review, ECC was cited on its library resources. In 2009, the college was able to pass a referendum that allow the school to finish the street that connected two major roads and to update its buildings. One of the building projects was an updated library. The library is impressive with many areas for students to gather for group and independent study. It [the library] includes tutoring, the Office of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning, computers with a help desk, and a large collection of books and electronic materials. During the tour of campus, the team viewed the Health simulation labs, up to date science labs, the behavioral science lab, the culinary facilities, the Theatre, some of the Art collection and the Art exhibit. The college also has an onsite Early Childhood Lab School and a truck driving area. There appears to be support for the college technological infrastructure and a Chief Information Officer sits on the President's Cabinet.

There is evidence that the college guides students in using research and information resources. Professional librarians provide student support. These skills are taught in many courses including English Composition, Fundamentals of Speech, and Psychology. ECC's general education outcomes include research and information literacy. There is ample evidence that ECC provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

### **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

---

The team was impressed by the student activity on campus. The renovations to the buildings added numerous study areas, activity rooms, and lounge areas for students to congregate. The Student Life Office coordinates activities and co-curricular programs. The office averages 295 events a year which were evidenced by the flyers, activities and art across the campus. When talking with students, they believed that there were many opportunities to get involved in leadership, educational and social events. One student mentioned that she would spend nine hours at the campus even on days that she did not have classes.

The programs are suited to the mission and Student Life has made a concerted effort to meet the students needs that are served on campus. There are activities for many different segments of the population as well as general events. There is a gaming space for computer gaming and the team notices a group of students playing Monopoly.

The Student Life Office developed co-curricular outcomes. They are assessing these outcomes with pre and post tests as well as focus groups. Additionally, the college has used CCSSE to benchmark student engagement in service learning and showed improvement from 2012 to 2014. The college has used data and made improvements based on the results in many areas but this is very evident in their co-curricular areas. They reorganized and added positions based on student needs.

### 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**

---

The team examined the written argument, reviewed the evidence on line and on campus, conducted interviews with a vast variety of college employees and students and toured the facility. There was evidence of high quality educational experiences both in the classroom and out of the classroom. There was some discrepancies in the syllabi for on ground and on line classes that does need to be addressed. The faculty and staff are highly qualified, engaged with the institution, provided professional development opportunities to stay current in their fields and care deeply about student success. Students are proud of their college and are highly engaged in and outside of the classroom. They are prepared for transfer or to enter the workforce. Dual credit courses are only offered on campus and future plans to move to the high school will require standardized of syllabi and course outcomes. The visit at the adult basic education facility was impressive and showed a high quality program.



## 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

---

Elgin Community College demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs. The college has an established a framework for program review which follows the Illinois state requirements. ECC's programs and support services undergo review on a five-year cycle. The Curriculum and Assessment Office guides programs through the 18-month review process that is divided into four phases. A uniform reporting template has been developed to guide the process. Reviews include statements with regard to program outcomes, student success and satisfaction, program need, and quality. The program review process also includes measures to track rates of attrition, graduation, transfer, and employment. Since 2012, the one-year and five-year action plans from program reviews are used more intentionally; these goals are monitored and reviewed during the

annual budgeting process. The college's process of regular program review allows for planning and reporting to both internal and external stakeholders. Several career technical programs have specialized accreditation through the professional organization. In addition to program review, advisory groups provide input on program status and for program updates and enhancements.

The college has established and enforces prerequisites for courses. Faculty are responsible for course development, delivery, and evaluation, including grading. Any changes made to programs or courses resulting from review or assessment review are approved by the curriculum committee. The curriculum committee ensures that courses are rigorous and that expectations for student learning are established. A sampling of faculty credentials from each academic area was reviewed and the college was found to have qualified faculty. Currently, all dual enrollment high school students attend classes on campus; there are no courses offered at any high school location.

The college evaluates all credit that it transcripts and accepts credit from other regionally and nationally accredited institutions. Credit reviews are based on the major selected by the student. The Records and Registration Office evaluates courses against the state-wide articulation agreements; courses that are questioned are reviewed by division faculty to determine if learning outcomes have been met. Faculty have reviewed all courses and identified whether a course is available for any type of prior learning credit. This information is readily available in the college catalog under the course description.

The college evaluates the success of its graduate in several important ways, including post-graduation surveys, university transfer and success statistics, employment placement, certificate, credential or degree attainment, non-traditional student enrollment and completion; passing rate on licensure exams; and departmental survey results. Success stories are communicated to the college community. One example noted on a campus tour was a banner noting the success rate of nursing students on the licensure exam.

### **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

---

The team found substantial evidence regarding the college's commitment to student success and the improvement of courses and programs through the use of assessment. Even though it appears to be a complicated process, the process is working at Elgin Community College. Student learning is a primary focus of the institution's strategic plan. Master course syllabi identify student learning outcome while program review documents list program learning outcomes. General education learning outcomes are identified in the college catalog. Within the last three years, seven of the eight the general education outcomes have been reviewed and rewritten. Writing was one of the outcomes that has been reviewed and updated following a review of student writing samples. Citations in the writing samples were found to be deficient which led to changes being made in composition classes. The courses changes followed the institutional processes and were submitted to the Curriculum committee. Student service areas and co-curricular programs are also assessed on a regular basis and includes a program review every five years. Changes within student services programs are handled at departmental meetings.

While program learning outcomes are reported in the program review documents, the program learning outcomes are not readily available to students. Some programs, mainly health programs, list program learning outcomes in their program student handbook. The college is encouraged to make all program learning outcomes readily accessible to students. In addition, there has been an effort to include the appropriate general education learning outcomes on course syllabi. ECC needs to continue their efforts to standardize course syllabi to include not only the course learning outcomes but the general education learning outcomes covered in the course.

ECC utilizes data to inform decisions; this was a theme repeated in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and administration. Institutional researchers and data analysts are assigned to various departments and committees to assist with data collection and review. In addition, basic data is available for individuals to obtain from an Excel pivot file. The college recently utilized course completion data, and data on student achievement, to redesign of its developmental course sequence

in English and mathematics. Faculty also identified improvements in the paralegal program, music program and accounting program as a result of assessment activities. The college's faculty and key administrators serve as members of the committees that provide oversight with respect to ECC's efforts to assess student learning and improve the institution's curriculum.

### **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

---

The team found ample evidence of ECC's attention to persistence, retention, and completion rates. The strategic plan includes goals to 1) foster a learning-centered environment and 2) promote student goal completion. The Student Success Infrastructure (SSI) group, whose purpose is to promote broad engagement around student success by focusing on innovations that produce systemic results, has identified initiatives that support the strategic goals. ECC has an institutional research department that houses three institutional researchers. In addition, there is an Executive Director of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness. Each division / department on campus has access to an institutional researcher to assist with data collection and review. Based on principles of the Achieving the Dream program, student success data is disaggregated by enrollment status, race/ethnicity, gender and income. This information is reviewed by the SSI group for more general student success initiatives while program data is shared with academic divisions and included in program reviews.

The college makes information on student demographics, retention, persistence, transfer and completion rates to the entire college community through an Excel pivot table and is presented to college employees during meetings throughout the year. This data has been used to make adjustments to college operations to improve student performance. For example, the college identified that students who enroll continuously the first year, register early, and complete 20 hours within the first year, were more likely to complete. As a result the college formed the Student Success Center, hired new student advisors and implemented a student planning module in 2014. Since implementation, 50% of current students have utilized the tool to plan or register for coursework.

In addition to collecting data on student success, ECC faculty and administrators also use data to

inform the steps that they take to improve teaching techniques and curriculum. For example, the team found evidence that the college's math department utilized statistical modeling data to determine student success rates in developmental math courses. Based on the analysis, an accelerated math course was developed for students placing at the higher end of the Compass test but below college-level cutoff score; thus saving the students time and money. The English department also completed a data analysis which prompted the development of an accelerated learning program for developmental English courses.

In addition to the data produced by the institutional research department, the college also participates in the Voluntary Framework of Accountability and the NCCBP survey. These surveys provide additional information for the institution to make comparisons with other institutions across the country.

### **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**

---

Through interviews with students, faculty, and administration, team members found evidence with regard to the quality of the educational programs at Elgin Community College. On site, and in a review of the college's documents and records, the team found evidence to confirm that ECC has developed a commitment to the assessment of student learning, the monitoring of student achievement, and the use of data in the service of continuous improvement. Utilization of data to support curricular and program changes was evident and routinely communicated at interviews. In a review of the college's personnel files, the team found evidence that ECC's full-time faculty, its administration, and its staff maintain credentials that are appropriate to their appointed positions.

## 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

---

College budgets are created after tax levies and tuition adjustments are considered. The College's CFI has been 2.5 or higher for the past several years indicating a strong overall financial condition and the College's ability to use sound budgeting practices.

The College projects a slight decrease in enrollment for 2016. Tuition rates will be raised to offset the enrollment decrease. Tuition rates have risen from \$99 per credit hour in 2012 to 119 per credit in 2016. Continued rate increases may affect future enrollment trends. Total term student head count has already shown a steady decline from 12,219 in the fall of 2010 to 10,937 in fall 2014.

According to statistical data released in the College's FY2014 CAFR, revenue has been consistently under-budgeted. For the past three years, expenditures were over budgeted. This conservative budgeting, along with the College's strong current position, helps to prepare the college for unforeseen downturns.

Several College employees expressed concern related to future state funding. In preparation of likely funding decreases, budget officers responded to specific request from finance to cut projected expenditures. the 2016 budget indicates that projected, non-compensation expenditures would be reduced by 15-20%. While these cuts were not directly related to compensation, all operating



expenditures have an effect of educational delivery. It is not clear if these cost reductions are feasible long term or if these reductions will have a material effect on College operations.

Audited financial statement showed that ECC has sufficient reserves to cover potential budget deficits in the short term. Moving forward, ECC should consider how expenditures may need to change if state funding is significantly reduced or eliminated.

The facilities are well-maintained. Classroom space, library and labs were supportive of student learning. In April 2009, the district residents approved a \$178M bond referendum to support capital growth. The facilities master plan suggests that the current and future infrastructure also includes sufficient classroom space and technology sufficient to college operations. Personal observation and discussion with faculty, staff and students confirms this assertion.

The college's ERP, Ellucian Colleague, is comprised of integrated modules related to curriculum, student records, finance, and human resources. SPSS is used to analyze data. Several employees noted that data is easily available to them. A few constituents noted that they had too much data. To address, data overload, IR representatives noted that the College has just acquired Tableau to make data analysis and reporting more user friendly.

Based on personal interaction, ECC has a vibrant, collegial and highly-motivated workforce. Faculty qualifications, as published in the College Catalogue and verified in HR records, suggest that instructors are adequately prepared to provide quality instruction.

Based on interaction with college representatives and a review of the College's 2015 Employee Survey, the College recognizes hiring time, on-boarding, and continuing education tracking as areas of needed improvement.

As detailed in the Hiring Process Improvement Study, the College recently hired a consulting firm to map existing hiring processes and develop a plan for improving those processes. Implementing new processes as well as adequately staffing and training HR are necessary to ensure ECC maintains sufficient human capital in the future.

ECC does not have a super-ordinate body to which it distributes revenue. The college operates as a political subdivision of the state of Illinois with a locally elected Board which, as obligated by voters, oversees the college's resources.

College policies include job descriptions and delineate minimum qualification for faculty and non-faculty positions. Faculty continuing education opportunities are presented in the College's Faculty Development Handbook. Interviews with faculty, staff and administration confirmed that many continuing education opportunities are available.

Qualifications for each administrative and support staff position are consistent with levels of responsibility listed on the College's Position Description Questionnaire.

Human Resources meets regularly with ECC labor unions to ensure that practices are adhered to. Evaluations for administrative and staff employees are conducted annually by managers or directors, filed in each employees' personnel file, and used to guide professional development opportunities. This practice was confirmed through review of HR files and discussion with ECC staff and administration.

Faculty and staff collective bargaining arrangements provide for professional development funds.

According to the CAFR FY14, The College's Professional and Organizational Development office is responsible for providing training to all employees. However, discussion with ECC employees suggest that professional development is decentralized.

The college follows the ICCB Fiscal Management Manual. This manual provides guidelines for collecting, allocating, and recording revenues. The manual also provides guidance on levying taxes, using funds and fund balances. The guidelines also require independent audits of the financial statements. The Illinois General Assembly approves state-funded capital projects. Finally, discussion with the budget committee confirmed that budgets have become more precise since implementing zero-based budgeting.

### **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 ECC Board of Trustees (BoT) operates under the principles of policy governance. Thus, the Board's decisions are expressed as policy. As delineated in the BoT Policy 1, the methods by which the college fulfills Board policies are left to the President, who is directly accountable to the Board. Interviews with Board members confirmed these practices.

Based on the Board member biographies, the members are well-suited to oversee the College. Regularly-scheduled public Board meeting are held wherein Board member consider the College's policies, strategic goals, and annual budgets. Publicly-available board minutes reflect these practices.

Meeting with Board members confirmed they were very knowledgeable in their roles. Several members had significant tenure and displayed an excellent understanding of their role. The BoT members receive initial, in-depth training once elected. The BoT remain up-to-date through continuing education as described in their impressive, self-produced "Professional Development Opportunities" booklet. The board minutes and discussion with the BoT also reflect that the Board regularly evaluates the President's performance consistent with the Board of Trustees policy.

The Board has a separate finance committee. According to written policy and recent minutes, this committee focuses on financial oversight by reviewing such things as audit exception reports, budget projections and proposed tuition rate adjustments. BoT minutes reflect that the Board is presented with program review reports to stay informed of academic practices.

Based on member interviews, The BoT appears very knowledgeable about their role and the institution. Publicly-available minutes verify that the Board provides oversight consistent with documented policies and procedures. The Board demonstrates fiscal oversight by reviewing and approving the College budget, major purchases and capital plans.

Interviews with Board member and constituents verified that proposed policies and practices are debated and approved to ensure the best interests of stakeholders were considered. According to Board members and ECC employees, the Board completes most of their research and deliberation during the Committee as a Whole meeting on the Monday before formal board meetings. For transparency the Board should consider posting minutes from the Monday meetings.

The President maintains an executive Cabinet which consists of 11 senior leaders. Cabinet members noted that they acted primarily in an advisory role. In turn, the SSI and the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee are granted significant decision-making authority.

Faculty are represented by the College's Faculty Association. Curricular and faculty needs are codified by contract in the form of standing committees including the Curriculum Committee and Faculty Development Committee. According to member directories, faculty are present on all College councils except for the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council. Discussion with faculty members revealed that some members felt they did not have a sufficient voice in major College decisions. Staff interests are represented through the Colleges Support Staff Association (SSECCA). According to member directories, faculty are present on all College councils except for the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council. Interviews with staff representatives revealed that some members did not feel their concerns were adequately considered by administration. In particular, certain faculty felt the SSI did not have enough faculty representation. Both Faculty and Staff representatives verified that they regularly meet with the College President in an advisory role.

The Student Government Association serves as the voice of the student body. There is also a Student representative on the BoT. Interaction with students provided evidence that students have a voice with administration and the BoT.

### **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

---

According to the College's Planning and Budgeting Guide, strategic plans outline college-wide goals for a 3 to 5 year time period. The current plan covers 2013 - 2017. It includes goals related to student success, cultural competency, operational and process improvements, community service, and employee development. The Strategic Planning Committee is meant to represent faculty, administrators, support staff, students, and community members. Interviews with the committee suggested that the previous planning process sought but did not receive significant input from students and community members. Discussions with several employees confirmed that all employees were given the opportunity to be involved in the 2013-2017 strategic plan development. However, further discussion suggested that external stakeholders need to be more involved in the next planning process.

ECC recently implemented Zero-based Budgeting to develop more accurate budgets. Discussion with the budget committee confirmed that budgets have become more precise. In addition, each budget item must be linked to a strategic goal. Further the budget officers must prioritize each budget item. However, the prioritization is not based on how or to what extent, the expenditure item leads to strategic goal accomplishment. The Budget Committee noted that they are continuing to refine this part of the process. Budgets for capital and deferred maintenance projects are also compiled consistent with Illinois State code.

According to its members, the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council considers annual departmental budgets as they relate to the College's goals. In addition, the Strategic Planning Committee created a Planning and Budgeting Guide that explains how the budget and operating plan are linked. This Budgeting Guide also explains why assessment of progress is an important step in the budget process. Several employees noted that the College compiles individual department goals in a "goals database". The Budget Committee noted that previous years' goals are reviewed to inform current year budgeting decisions. These goals are also reviewed during the program review process.

ECC uses program review reports – which includes assessment reports - to find evidence of a program's ongoing need and cost effectiveness. The College's Program Development Guidelines delineate how new programs are introduced. Interviews with program directors and administrators provided that new program budgets were designed through a structure research process involving external consultants, external stakeholder input and assistance from ECC finance personnel. The budget approval process is included in this guidance. The College's most recent Performance Report, summarizes how strategic goals are aligned with student indicators, financial health and operations. This practice was confirmed by several ECC employees.

College budgets are created after tax levies and tuition adjustments are considered. The College's CFI has been 2.5 or higher for the past several years indicating a strong overall financial condition and the College's ability to use sound budgeting practices. The College's Budget Reports shows that the CPI, property valuation and enrollment trends are considered in their calculations. This practice was confirmed by finance department representatives.

The College has experienced a reduction of state funding over the past several years. Based on the State's current fiscal position, these funding decreases are likely to continue. Many ECC employees expressed concern related to future state funding. In preparation of likely funding decreases, budget officers cut projected expenditures. The 2016 Budget indicates that projected, non-compensation expenditures would be reduced by 15-20%. While these cuts are not directly related to compensation, all operating expenditures have an effect of educational delivery. It is unclear if these cost reductions are feasible long term or if the reductions will have a material effect on College operations. The ECC finance department is aware of the potential revenue decrease and they are considering contingency plans accordingly.

ECC employees confirmed that the college uses statistical models to predict the impacts of various entry characteristics on student success. IR representative that they regularly update their databases and reports in response to the College's changing needs. Many employees praised the IR department for providing accurate, useful and timely information.

## **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

---

Interaction with ECC employees makes it clear that the College is driven by a desire to continuously improve. The Government Finance Officers Association awarded the College with a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. This award recognized the College's well-designed 2013 CAFR for its well-organized, easy-to-read design and its conformance to generally accepted accounting principles.

As mandated by the College Board's Policies Handbook, ECC compiles and reports quantified performance indicators such as enrollment trends, graduation rates and key financial ratios. The College also participates in several national benchmarking efforts such as the National Community College Benchmark Project, The CCSSE and IPEDS. Program review reports document performance evidence. CAFRs provide an overall summary of the College's annual performance.

The College's Equity Coordinating Council has relied on logic models to guide future planning and budgeting for student success. Zero-based budgeting requires department directors to justify annual goals and projects before allocations are made. ECC also participates in the Government Finance Officers Association's Partners in Practice program which allows the finance team to their budgeting practices to national best practices.

Discussion with ECC faculty and staff revealed that ECC has devoted significant time and resources to outcomes assessment. The assessment manager, along with the assessment committee oversee course, program and general education assessments. Several faculty members shared how they use assessment to inform curriculum and program changes.

Recently, the College documented results have garnered national recognition. In addition to being named an Achieving the Dream Leader College in 2012 and 2015, a group of researchers funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation recently visited the college to study best practices in student retention and completion. This recognition is evidence of the College's continued effectiveness.

### 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**

---

ECC's strategic plan reflects current goals. The goals, vision and mission are consistent. Future plans may benefit from a documented path to achieve each goal. Proactively gathering and considering input from internal and external stakeholders might be helpful in preparing future plans.

Students, faculty and staff interviewed were generally positive about the college their experiences with few exceptions. Faculty were well qualified and well-equipped to provide quality instruction.

The combination of the current fund balances, the college reserves, and a long history of conservative budget practices provide a strong foundation for the college.

Overall, the documents and personnel interviews are indicative of an organization that supports innovation, strives for continuous improvement and fills the communities' educational needs.



## 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	Met
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	
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	Met
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	Met
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	Met

## Review Summary

---

### Conclusion

---

Elgin Community College was established on January 10, 1949 as part of the U-46 Public School District and they joined the American Association of Junior Colleges the following year. On July 15, 1965 the Illinois General Assembly passed the Junior College Act and District 509 was formed as a Class II Junior College. This action was quickly followed by an application for Class I status that the State Board of Higher Education approved on April 5, 1966. On April 12, 1966 the U-46 Board of Education divested itself of Elgin Community College and the initial board was elected on June 4th 1966. In 1967, School District 300 voted to annex itself to Elgin Community College, doubling its original boundaries. In March 1968, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (now the Higher Learning Commission) accredited Elgin Community College.

After reviewing hundreds of documents, discussions with the Board of Trustees and a significant number of employees that included the president and his council, union members, faculty, secretarial staff, maintenance personnel, public safety, students and other stake holders, it is our belief that Elgin Community College is an outstanding institution. The college has maintained as its "**core**" the essence of its mission, "**to improve people's lives through learning**". This was described in the assurance argument and the team found it to be well documented. The mission is also a key part of the new Strategic Plan that is guiding the college forward as new challenges (less funding from the state for example) arise.

Elgin Community College took recommendations from the 2006 Higher Learning Commission (HLC) comprehensive evaluation, as well as, directives from the Illinois Community College Board and held holistic and inclusive discussions that resulted in significant opportunities for growth. The institution structurally reorganized itself utilizing a new database system to implement data driven decision-making that yielded many positive results. Elgin Community College has implemented zero based budgeting while making significant increases in student services and co-curricular activities. They have increased staffing for advising and developed new committee structures as well. The college has received several awards and recognitions from state, regional and national associations for their new initiatives.

Though the focus and mission of the college is clear, the amount of new data now available and the restructuring that occurred left the team with the view (which was also stated by employees) that the change came quickly and there may have been structures developed with overlapping responsibilities and complexity. Some internal groups expressed feeling left out of significant decision-making groups. The college is encouraged to continue these improvement activities but with an awareness to guard against bureaucracy that could actually hinder innovation.

The college is to be commended in having an expectation (supported by funding) that faculty create and disseminate their scholarly and artistic work. Future funding from the state was a stated concern throughout the institution but decision making and non-compensation cuts have been made that have kept the institution in good financial standing.

The BOT is to be commended for their commitment to Elgin Community College. The board meets twice per month and has a clear understanding of the difference between policy and operations. They participate in significant training activities and have an annual "retreat" where they focus on the planning processes and financial matters

## Overall Recommendations

---

### Criteria For Accreditation

Not Set

### Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*



## Federal Compliance Worksheet for Evaluation Teams

### Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components

The team reviews each item identified in the Federal Compliance Guide and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. Teams should expect institutions to address these requirements with brief narrative responses and provide supporting documentation, where necessary. Generally, if the team finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised in appropriate sections of the Assurance Section of the Team Report or highlighted as such in the appropriate AQIP Quality Checkup Report.

This worksheet outlines the information the team should review in relation to the federal requirements and provides spaces for the team's conclusions in relation to each requirement. The team should refer to the Federal Compliance Guide for Institutions and Evaluation Teams in completing this worksheet. The Guide identifies applicable Commission policies and an explanation of each requirement. **The worksheet becomes an appendix to the team's report. If the team recommends monitoring on a Federal Compliance requirement in the form of a report or focused visit, it should be included in the Federal Compliance monitoring sections below and added to the appropriate section in the team report template.**

**Institution under review: Elgin Community College**

---

### Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

*Address this requirement by completing the "Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours" in the Appendix at the end of this document.*

---

### Institutional Records of Student Complaints

*The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.*

1. Review the process that the institution uses to manage complaints as well as the history of complaints received and processed with a particular focus in that history on the past three or four years.
2. Determine whether the institution has a process to review and resolve complaints in a timely manner.
3. Verify that the evidence shows that the institution can, and does, follow this process and that it is able to integrate any relevant findings from this process into its review and planning processes.
4. Advise the institution of any improvements that might be appropriate.

5. Consider whether the record of student complaints indicates any pattern of complaints or otherwise raises concerns about the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices.
6. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
  - ☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
  - ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
  - ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
  - ☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: Comments: Extract of the Board policy shows that there is a student complaints policy that is reviewed on a regular basis by the Vice President for Teaching, Learning, and Student Development by June 30 of every even-numbered year and that has been reviewed and revised by the board on a regular basis. A policy also exists that allows students to appeal decisions made against them. The Federal Compliance Report contains a detailed list of all student complaints and resolution; all appear to have been resolved in a timely manner. Two examples are provided where student complaints were used to create improvements – the development of academic integrity modules as a result of complaints about allegations of violation of academic integrity policies, and communications to students regarding the distinctions between satisfactory academic progress and standards of academic progress policies.

Additional monitoring, if any: None

---

### Publication of Transfer Policies

*The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.*

1. Review the institution's transfer policies.
2. Review any articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and program-specific articulation agreements.
3. Consider where the institution discloses these policies (e.g., in its catalog, on its web site) and how easily current and prospective students can access that information.

Determine whether the disclosed information clearly explains the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions and any articulation arrangements the institution has with other institutions. Note whether the institution appropriately lists its articulation agreements with other institutions on its website or elsewhere. The information the institution provides should include any program-specific articulation agreements in place and should clearly identify program-specific articulation agreements as such. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution under Commission review: 1) accepts credit from the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; 2) sends credits to the other institution(s) in the articulation agreements that it accepts; or 3) both offers and accepts credits with the other institution(s).

## 4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- ☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
- ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
- ☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: IBHE Policies on Undergraduate Education allow for easy transfer of undergraduate, general education credit among Illinois institutions of higher education. The website has a section for transfer students, and students are directed to iTransfer (Transferology) to determine which courses taken at ECC will transfer to other schools in Illinois through the statewide transfer agreement. A page on the ECC website is dedicated to articulations and contains detailed information on transfer options (and also contains information on the NIU agreement; <http://elgin.edu/students.aspx?id=1140&terms=Northern%20Illinois%20University>). The team also verified that transfer instructions and information is located in the ECC Catalog 2015-2016 (pp. 24-25).

Additional monitoring, if any: None

---

### Practices for Verification of Student Identity

*The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education and appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students and to protect their privacy.*

1. Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams, and earns a final grade. The team should ensure that the institution's approach respects student privacy.
2. Check that any fees related to verification and not included in tuition are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance courses (e.g., a proctoring fee paid by students on the day of the proctored exam).
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- ☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
- ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
- ☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: In order for a student to login for the first time, users are required to enter a number of details: Name, Last 4 digits of Social Security Number or student ID number, birthdate. In addition, students are offered the option to set up security questions which will help further identify them the next time they need to reset their passwords to gain entry to the student portal. Students enroll in courses in the secure environment (Colleague) that requires authentication against their school account. Information regarding that enrollment, and access to classes is provided solely through that school account. ECC is currently piloting a software that provides added access information as well as video monitoring capability for its online environments. When students in online classes go to the testing center to take exams, government identification card are required and are cross-checked against the roster or the student's proof of enrollment.

*The review team met with the distance education committee and determined that there was a secure log on through the school's portal for taking courses remotely.*

Additional monitoring, if any: None

---

#### Title IV Program Responsibilities

*The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program.*

**This requirement has several components the institution and team must address:**

- **General Program Requirements.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Financial Responsibility Requirements.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion Five if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)*
- **Default Rates.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its three year default rate. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. Note for 2012 and thereafter institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012; if the institution does not provide the default rate for three years leading up to the comprehensive evaluation visit, the team should contact Commission staff.*
- **Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*
- **Student Right to Know.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices*

*for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion One if the team determines that disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)*

- ***Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance.*** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students. In most cases, teams should verify that these policies exist and are available to students, typically in the course catalog or student handbook. Note that the Commission does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.*
  - ***Contractual Relationships.*** *The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships (If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the change request form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Contractual Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*
  - ***Consortial Relationships.*** *The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a consortial relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Consortial Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*
1. Review all of the information that the institution discloses having to do with its Title IV program responsibilities.
  2. Determine whether the Department has raised any issues related to the institution's compliance or whether the institution's auditor in the A-133 has raised any issues about the institution's compliance as well as look to see how carefully and effectively the institution handles its Title IV responsibilities.
  3. If an institution has been cited or is not handling these responsibilities effectively, indicate that finding within the federal compliance portion of the team report and whether the institution appears to be moving forward with corrective action that the Department has determined to be appropriate.
  4. If issues have been raised with the institution's compliance, decide whether these issues relate to the institution's ability to satisfy the Criteria for Accreditation, particularly with regard to whether its disclosures to students are candid and complete and demonstrate appropriate integrity (*Core Component 2.A and 2.B*).
  5. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
    - ☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
    - ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.



- \_\_\_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
- \_\_\_ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: ECC has provided the commission with the information about fulfillment of Title IV Program responsibilities and has addressed any issue(s) arising from audits (one such issue involved a student who changed enrollment status, which resulted in the student being entitled to additional amount of PELL grant). The College created a report at the end of each term to match students to enrollment status.

While the institution is primarily funded through property taxes, they appear to have worked to improve their financial ratios and remain solid based on their CFI's.

ECC's default rates follow the national trend and increased between 2009 and 2011. The College, though not required to develop a default prevention plan, has initiated one-on-one counseling, hired a third party agency to contact students by phone to discuss repayment options, added student budget development and analysis as a student tool, and offers counseling to assist students.

Campus crime information is available on the website and at the ECC Police Department. ECC also reports athletic statistics and equity on the ECC Athletic website.

Americans with Disabilities Act assistance and the FAFSA are available online. Student right to know information is available on the *College Facts* page of the ECC website, National Center for Education Statistics College Navigator, and ECC Annual Performance Report. The *College Facts* page also has job placement rates. The Catalog has the list of academic programs. Web links cited provide a list of accrediting agencies, faculty and staff directories, and tuition and fees. ECC also reports a growing Study Abroad Program with specific application and requirements.

ECC clearly defines satisfactory academic progress and measures progress in three ways, and students must meet all three criteria: cumulative GPA (2.0), cumulative course completion rates (66.67%), and maximum completion time frame (150% of attempted credit hours relative to the number of credit hours to complete the program). A process is followed in working with the counseling of students to help them be successful.

ECC reports two contracts with district hospitals to provide (EMT) coursework. Both contracts are currently under review in the HLC substantive review process. They report they have no consortial agreements. However, it appears that the joint agreement and chargebacks section identifies an agreement to complete career and technical coursework. It is not clear if the institution giving the coursework gives the degree or ECC. Additional information is needed to determine if this is a consortium arrangement (program partially delivered by another institution) or just an articulation agreement.

Additional monitoring, if any: None

---

### Required Information for Students and the Public

1. Verify that the institution publishes fair, accurate, and complete information on the following topics: the calendar, grading, admissions, academic program requirements, tuition and fees, and refund policies.

2. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- ☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
- ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
- ☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: ECC has cited in their report links to these areas on their college web site. The links are functional and provide the required information.

Additional monitoring, if any: None

---

**Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information**

*The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.*

1. Review the institution's disclosure about its accreditation status with the Commission to determine whether the information it provides is accurate and complete, appropriately formatted and contains the Commission's web address.
2. Review institutional disclosures about its relationship with other accrediting agencies for accuracy and for appropriate consumer information, particularly regarding the link between specialized/professional accreditation and the licensure necessary for employment in many professional or specialized areas.
3. Review the institution's catalog, brochures, recruiting materials, and information provided by the institution's advisors or counselors to determine whether the institution provides accurate information to current and prospective students about its accreditation, placement or licensure, program requirements, etc.
4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 

☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: ECC, based on the materials reviewed including the college catalog, recruiting materials, and brochures, has provided accurate information to the students regarding accreditation, placement or licensure, and program requirements. They have provided the correct information to students along with the HLC mark of affiliation on their website.

Additional monitoring, if any: Non

### Review of Student Outcome Data

1. Review the student outcome data the institution collects to determine whether it is appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs it offers and the students it serves.
2. Determine whether the institution uses this information effectively to make decisions about academic programs and requirements and to determine its effectiveness in achieving its educational objectives.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
  - ☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
  - ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
  - ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
  - ☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: Student outcomes assessment is coordinated by the Manager of Outcomes Assessment. All faculty are required to participate in departmental assessment activities (by the requirements of their job descriptions). All ECC programs undergo comprehensive 5 year program reviews, and the results of those reviews are made public on the ECC website (<http://elgin.edu/aboutus.aspx?id=738>). 82% of the graduates have full or part time jobs at graduation, and 71% are employed in a field similar to the program of study. Examination pass rates for professions that require examination/licensure range from 86% to 100%. Annual performance reports are posted and available on the ECC website (<http://elgin.edu/aboutus.aspx?id=738>) located under students in the catalog. Review of Assurance Argument, Core Component 4.3, indicates several examples of how improvements are made based on analysis of student survey data as well as course performance. Examples include the institution of the "math bootcamp" to provide developmental math instruction; revision of the entry level student success course based on student feedback; and mandatory participation in the new student orientation program based on data that showed improvement in retention for those who participate.

Additional monitoring, if any: None

### Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies

*The institution has documented that it discloses accurately to the public and the Commission its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.*

*The team has considered any potential implications for accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of sanction or loss of status by the institution with any other accrediting agency or loss of authorization in any state.*

***Important note: If the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action (i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial, or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this action. In addition, the team must contact the staff liaison immediately if it learns that the institution is at risk of losing its degree authorization or lacks such authorization in any state in which the institution meets state presence requirements.***

1. Review the information, particularly any information that indicates the institution is under sanction or show-cause or has had its status with any agency suspended, revoked, or terminated, as well as the reasons for such actions.
2. Determine whether this information provides any indication about the institution's capacity to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. Should the team learn that the institution is at risk of losing, or has lost, its degree or program authorization in any state in which it meets state presence requirements, it should contact the Commission staff liaison immediately.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
  - ☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
  - ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
  - ☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
  - ☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: ECC has provided documentation regarding continuing accreditation of its accredited programs as stated in their assurance report. While the college had some reporting requirements with the accrediting agencies, the college has addressed each of these instances; the team sees this as a great example of continuous quality improvement at this institution.

Additional monitoring, if any: None

---

## Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

*The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments. Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.*

1. Review information about the public disclosure of the upcoming visit, including sample announcements, to determine whether the institution made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public and seek comments.
2. Evaluate the comments to determine whether the team needs to follow-up on any issues through its interviews and review of documentation during the visit process.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

☒ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

☐ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

☐ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: ECC provided evidence of appropriate notifications and opportunities to comment. *The review team evaluated the received documents.*

Additional monitoring, if any: None

---

### **Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team**

Provide a list materials reviewed here:

Provide a list materials reviewed here:

- ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 4.401 (Complaints Procedure)
- ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 4.103 (Student Academic Records)\
- ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 4.402 (Student Code of Conduct)
- ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 3.501 (Individuals with Disabilities)
- ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 4.408 (Appeal for Complaint Procedure)
- Request for Evaluation of Prior Educational Experience
- Policies and Procedures Manual for the Illinois Articulation Initiative
- IAI core curriculum GEPanelsDocument\_1998-May-01
- Memorandum of Agreement Northern Illinois University and Elgin Community College Reverse transfer credit articulation project
- <http://elgin.edu/students.aspx?id=1140&terms=Northern%20Illinois%20University>
- ECC Catalog (2015-2016) at: <http://elgin.edu/searchsite.aspx?searchterm=Catalog+2015>
- Federal Compliance Report ECC (Final)
- Data: <http://elgin.edu/aboutus.aspx?id=738>
- Teaching, Learning & Student Development (TLSD) Division FY2013 Academic Goal Accomplishments
- ECC Program Review / Self Study Process
- ECC Course Assessment Process
- Course Assessment Template
- ECC GenED Schedule Grid
- GENED Inventory
- Regarding Degree Programs: <http://elgin.edu/students.aspx?id=412>

- ECC Credit hours worksheet (2015Fall)
- ECC Credit hours worksheet 2015Summer
- Courses Offered at 6 or More Credit Hours
- Administrative Rules of the Illinois Community College Board
- Master course outlines, Campus syllabi, and online syllabi for the following courses: BUS100; ENG101; MTH102; ACC100; COL101; PSY100
- Master course outlines and syllabi for the following courses: EGR152 (3cr/10 weeks); CUL100 (1cr/1week); BRG 101 (6cr/4 weeks), 202 (4cr/2 weeks); GRM101 (4r/16 weeks); NUR114 (8cr/15 weeks); NUR124 (1cr/10 weeks); ACC205 (1cr/8 weeks); ABE008 (6cr/15weeks)
- Credit Contact vs Schedule Report Sample.pdf
- Credit Contact vs Schedule Report Specifications.pdf
- Credit Hour Contact Hour Determination.pdf
- FY2016 Class Scheduling Guidelines - FINAL.pdf
- Illinois Community College Board Administrative Rules.pdf
- Independent Study form updated 3-07.pdf
- Program Development Guidelines FY14.pdf
- Public Community College Act.pdf
- QOCI - ECC Current.pdf
- QOCIRubricChecklist.pdf
- Revised - online-hybrid course development.pdf
- The Veterans Access Choice and Accountability.pdf
- ECC Student Planner (handbook)
- Financial aid audits and reports
- Financial Auditor's reports
- HLC's annual financial report on CFI
- Default rates
- College Fact web page
- ECC's Annual Performance Report
- National Center for Educational Statistics College Navigator
- ECC Assurance Report
- Advertising Materials and Brochures
- Syllabi
- Letters and reports from accrediting and Licensure agencies
- HLC letters and reports on actions
- ECC Athletic website <http://elgin.edu/athletics.aspx>
- Standards of Academic Progress 1.102
- Accrediting Agencies websites for a few programs to check status.

## Appendix

### Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Program Length and Tuition, Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours

Institution under review: Elgin Community College

#### Part 1: Program Length and Tuition

---

##### Instructions

The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).

Review the "*Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours*" as well as the course catalog and other attachments required for the institutional worksheet.

---

#### Worksheet on Program Length and Tuition

##### A. Answer the Following Questions

Are the institution's degree program requirements within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Comments: Review of several of the programs listed on the website and through the corresponding links to catalog pages shows that generally, programs are approximately 60 credits (some are slightly higher, such as Nursing at 63 credits; the program length is appropriate to meet requirements to sit for NCLEX licensure).

Are the institution's tuition costs across programs within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Comments: Instate tuition rates are modest (3270.00 per year); the website has very detailed information regarding comparisons with other colleges in Illinois as well as cost savings by attending ECC (<http://elgin.edu/students.aspx?id=148>).

##### B. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's program length and tuition practices?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date: None

## Part 2: Assignment of Credit Hours

### Instructions

In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps:

1. Review the Worksheet completed by the institution, which provides information about an institution's academic calendar and an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats, and the institution's policy and procedures for awarding credit hours. Note that such policies may be at the institution or department level and may be differentiated by such distinctions as undergraduate or graduate, by delivery format, etc.
2. Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level. The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:
  - Associate's degrees = 60 hours
  - Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours
  - Master's or other degrees beyond the Bachelor's = at least 30 hours beyond the Bachelor's degree
  - Note that one quarter hour = .67 semester hour
  - Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.
3. Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution.
  - At semester-based institutions courses will be typically be from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14-16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The description in the catalog should indicate a course that is appropriately rigorous and has collegiate expectations for objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.
  - Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a full-time load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)
  - Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode, and types of academic activities.



- Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the above federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution. Commission procedure also permits this approach.
4. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course. Pay particular attention to alternatively-structured or other courses with particularly high credit hours for a course completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor.
  5. **Sampling.** Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.
    - At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.
    - For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.
    - Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.
    - For the programs the team sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several of the courses in the program, identify the contact hours for each course, and expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.
    - The team should pay particular attention to alternatively-structured and other courses that have high credit hours and less frequently scheduled interaction between the students and the instructor.
    - Provide information on the samples in the appropriate space on the worksheet.
  6. Consider the following questions:
    - Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?
    - Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?
    - For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe allotted for the course?
    - Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)
    - If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?
  7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:

- If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently-detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and evidence of implementation.
- If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or single department or division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.
- If the team identifies systematic non-compliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify Commission staff immediately and work with staff to design appropriate follow-up activities. The Commission shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

---

## Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

**A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team** (see #5 of instructions in completing this section)

**B. Answer the Following Questions**

**1) Institutional Policies on Credit Hours**

Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: Both traditional and distance delivery credit assignment information is provided. Credits assigned to courses that include labs is also described.

Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: It is expected that students will spend two hours of time out of class on a course for every one hour of contact time.

For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with

intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: None

Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: None

## 2) Application of Policies

Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: None

Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: None

If the institution offers any alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, were the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: The institution offers a number of courses that vary from the traditional semester credit assignments. These include courses that have laboratory components (e.g., coursework in nursing); courses that are a combination of theory and practical instruction (e.g., truck driving courses); and courses that are strictly application in an independent study format (for example, the Excel course in the business curriculum). Several examples of these were reviewed, and the course outcomes and topics covered are appropriate to the number of credits and contact hours.

If the institution offers alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in

keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonably capable of being fulfilled by students in the time allocated to justify the allocation of credit?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: None

Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments: None

### C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

*Review the responses provided in this section. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign Commission follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.*

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Rationale: A review of syllabi and master course outlines indicates that credit hour assignments are within the guidelines of what is expected at the level of the course. Learning outcomes appear appropriate to the instruction regardless of format (online or ground) and regardless of course length (courses at ECC range from less than 1 week to 16 weeks).

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date: None

### D. Identify and Explain Any Findings of Systematic Non-Compliance in One or More Educational Programs with Commission Policies Regarding the Credit Hour

## Part 3: Clock Hours

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs in clock hours?

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_X\_\_ No

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs that must be reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs?

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_X\_\_ No

**If the answer to either question is “Yes,” complete this part of the form.**

---

### Instructions

**This worksheet is not intended for teams to evaluate whether an institution has assigned credit hours relative to contact hours in accordance with the Carnegie definition of the credit hour. This worksheet solely addresses those programs reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes.**

Complete this worksheet **only if** the institution offers any degree or certificate programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs. Non-degree programs subject to clock hour requirements (an institution is required to measure student progress in clock hours for federal or state purposes or for graduates to apply for licensure) are not subject to the credit hour definitions per se but will need to provide conversions to semester or quarter hours for Title IV purposes. Clock-hour programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.

For these programs Federal regulations require that they follow the federal formula listed below. If there are no deficiencies identified by the accrediting agency in the institution’s overall policy for awarding semester or quarter credit, accrediting agency may provide permission for the institution to provide less instruction provided that the student’s work outside class in addition to direct instruction meets the applicable quantitative clock hour requirements noted below.

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8)

1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction

1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution’s requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour include at least 20 semester hours.

---

## Worksheet on Clock Hours

### A. Answer the Following Questions

Does the institution’s credit to clock hour formula match the federal formula?

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_ No

Comments:

If the credit to clock hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class?

Did the team determine that the institution's credit hour policies are reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that if the team answers "No" to this question, it should recommend follow-up monitoring in section C below.)

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_ No

Comments:

Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_ No

Comments:

**B. Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit to clock hour conversion?**

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_ No

(Note that the team may approve a lower conversion rate than the federal rate as noted above provided the team found no issues with the institution's policies or practices related to the credit hour and there is sufficient student work outside of class as noted in the instructions.)

**C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate**

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:



**Higher Learning Commission**  
A commission of the North Central Association

**Internal Procedure**

## STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS WORKSHEET

**INSTITUTION and STATE:** Elgin Community College IL

**TYPE OF REVIEW:** Comprehensive Evaluation

**DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:**

**DATES OF REVIEW:** 10/26/2015 - 10/27/2015

☐ No Change in Statement of Affiliation Status

### Nature of Organization

**CONTROL:** Public

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**DEGREES AWARDED:** Associates, Certificate

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

### Conditions of Affiliation

**STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS:**

Prior Commission approval is required for substantive change as stated in Commission policy.

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

**APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS:**

Prior Commission approval required.

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

**APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES:**

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

*Recommendations for the*  
**STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

---

**ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES:**

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

---

**Summary of Commission Review**

---

**YEAR OF LAST REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION:** 2005 - 2006

---

**YEAR FOR NEXT REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION:** 2015 - 2016

**RECOMMENDATION:** 2025-2026

---





**ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET**

**INSTITUTION and STATE:** 1086 Elgin Community College IL

**TYPE OF REVIEW:** Open Pathway: Comprehensive Evaluation

**DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:**

☒ No change to Organization Profile

---

**Educational Programs**

	<u>Program Distribution</u>
Programs leading to Undergraduate Associates	47
Bachelors	0

Programs leading to Graduate

Doctors	0
Masters	0
Specialist	0

Certificate programs

Certificate	97
-------------	----

**Recommended Change:**

---

**Off-Campus Activities:**

In State - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

**Recommended Change:**

---

Out Of State - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

**Recommended Change:**

## **ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET**

---

Out of USA - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

### **Recommended Change:**

---

#### **Distance Education Programs:**

Present Offerings:

Associate 24.0101 Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies Associate in Arts Internet

Associate 52.1803 Retailing and Retail Operations Associate of Applied Science in Retail Management Internet

Associate 52.0402 Executive Assistant/Executive Secretary Associate of Applied Science in Office Administration Technology - Administrative Office and Information Processing Professional Option Internet

Associate 22.0301 Legal Administrative Assistant/Secretary Associate of Applied Science in Office Administration Technology - Legal Office Professional Option Internet

Associate 51.0710 Medical Office Assistant/Specialist Associate of Applied Science in Office Administration Technology - Medical Office Professional Option Internet

Associate 52.0401 Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General Associate of Applied Science in Office Administration Technology - Virtual Assistant Option Internet

Associate 22.0302 Legal Assistant/Paralegal Associate of Applied Science in Paralegal Internet

Associate 30.0101 Biological and Physical Sciences Associate in Science Internet

Associate 24.0101 Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies Associate in Liberal Studies Internet

Associate 52.0301 Accounting Associate of Applied Science in Accounting Internet

Associate 11.0601 Data Entry/Microcomputer Applications, General Associate of Applied Science in Microcomputer Specialist Internet

Associate 43.0107 Criminal Justice/Police Science Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice Internet

Associate 52.0701 Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies Associate of Applied Science in Entrepreneurship Internet

Associate 52.0201 Business Administration and Management, General Associate of Applied Science in Management Internet

Associate 52.1401 Marketing/Marketing Management, General Associate of Applied Science in Marketing Internet

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET

### Recommended Change:

---

#### Correspondence Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

None.

### Recommended Change:

---

#### Contractual Relationships:

Present Offerings:

Certificate 51.0904 Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)

### Recommended Change:

---

#### Consortial Relationships:

Present Offerings:

None.

### Recommended Change:

---